I've said before that it was the conclusion of the small group that the term "authoritative" was problematic because multiple uses of the term (both formal and informal) naturally apply in areas relevant to our Phase 1 deliberations, and so is likely to cause confusion. Further discussions have demonstrated that this remains an issue even when we are aware of those issues.

The term is referenced only in one requirement in our deliberations so far. The most recent version of that requirement and had relative agreement (84%) but not consensus was: "A purpose of RDS is to facilitate dissemination of authoritatively-sourced gTLD registration data, such as domain names and their domain contacts and name servers, in accordance with applicable policy."

That was the most strongly supported wording of our poll on 28th of March.

Following the recommendation of the small group that the term authoritative (and by extension, authoritatively), I recommend that we use none of the variations presented in that poll, but take the most strongly supported and remove the wording that directly references "authoritatively."

Instead, focusing on the idea that that requirement referred originally to the data theoretic sense of the term authoritative, I recommend that we consider a variation of that requirement that uses the term "data of record", and replace "authoritatively-sourced gTLD registration data" with "gTLD registration data of record" so the wording becomes "A purpose of RDS is to facilitate dissemination of gTLD registration data of record, such as domain names and their domain contacts and name servers, in accordance with applicable policy."

In turn, we need to define the term "data of record", and Andrew Sullivan has provided this definition  "the data set at a given time relevant to a given registration object that expresses the data provided in the then-current registration for that object."

My intention is not to reject the idea of a requirement that specifies the source of the data, but that we make that requirement separate to the one about access to the data of record. Going forward I encourage Working Group members to find a requirements statement about the source of data that capture the idea of "authoritatively sourced" or similar for WG discussion.

David