

Communications

1. Seek input from the Providers about the processes they have in place for sending notices.
2. In Providers' Supplemental Rules, are there reasonable ways of communicating?
3. How is ADNDRC not in breach of the URS Rules Clause 2(a)(i) and Procedure Clause 4.3 in relying SOLELY on email as the mode for issuing a Notice of Complaint?
 - *URS Rules 2(a)(i): sending the Notice of Complaint to all email, postal mail and facsimile addresses shown in the domain name's registration data in the Whois database for the registered domain-name holder, the technical contact, and the administrative contact, as well as to any email addresses for the Respondent provided by the Complainant;*
 - *URS Procedure 4.3: The Notice of Complaint to the Registrant shall be sent through email, fax (where available) and postal mail. The Complaint and accompanying exhibits, if any, shall be served electronically.*
4. What percentage of communications were done in ways rather than electronically/via the Internet?
5. Do the Providers conform with the communications timeline in accordance with URS Rules 2(g)?
 - *URS Rules 2(g): Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, all time periods calculated under these Rules to begin when a communication is made shall begin to run on the earliest date that the communication is deemed to have been made in accordance with Rule 2(f).*
6. Have the Providers received notifications from Registry Operators via email regarding the completion of URS actions on a domain name?
7. Have the Providers received notification via email from Registry Operators if a URS Locked or URS Suspended domain name has been either deleted or purged?
8. Have the Providers received information from ICANN with regard to the point of contact of the Back End Registry Operator (BERO) appointed by Registry Operators?

The Complaint

1. Do the Providers accept Complaints that don't contain all the elements required in the URS Rules 3(b)? Please provide your online forms for complaint filing.
 - *URS Rules 3(b): The Complaint, including any annexes, shall be submitted using an electronic form made available by the Provider and shall:*
 - (i) Request that the Complaint be submitted for determination in accordance with the URS Procedure, these Rules and the Provider's Supplemental Rules;*
 - (ii) Provide the name, contact person, postal and email addresses, and the telephone and telefax numbers of the Complainant and of any representative authorized to act for the Complainant in the URS proceeding;*
 - (iii) Provide the name of the Respondent and all other relevant contact information from the Whois record as well as all information known to Complainant regarding how to*

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contact Respondent or any representative of Respondent, including contact information based on pre-complaint dealings, in sufficient detail to allow the Provider to notify the Respondent of the complaint as described in Rule 2(a);

(iv) Specify the domain name(s) that is/are the subject of the Complaint. The Complainant shall include a copy of the currently available Whois information and a copy, if available, of the offending portion of the website content associated with each domain name that is the subject of the complaint;

(v) Specify the trademark(s) or service mark(s) on which the complaint is based and the goods or services with which the mark is used including evidence of use – which can be a declaration and a specimen of current use in commerce - submitted directly or by including a relevant SMD (Signed Mark Data) from the Trademark Clearinghouse;

(vi) Identify which URS Procedure elements (URS 1.2.6) the Complainant contends are being violated by Respondent's use of the domain name. This will be done by selecting the elements from URS Procedure section 1.2.6 that apply from the list provided on the Provider's Complaint form;

(vii) An optional explanatory statement of no more than 500 words in a separate free form text box;

(viii) Identify any other legal proceedings that have been commenced or terminated in connection with or relating to any of the domain name(s) that are the subject of the Complaint;

(ix) State that Complainant will submit, with respect to any challenges to a determination in the URS proceeding, to the jurisdiction of the courts in at least one specified Mutual Jurisdiction;

(x) Conclude with agreement to the following statement:

“Complainant agrees that its claims and remedies concerning the registration of the domain name, the dispute, or the dispute's resolution shall be solely against the domain-name holder and waives all such claims and remedies against (a) the Provider and Examiner, except in the case of deliberate wrongdoing, (b) the Registrar, (c) the Registry Operator, and (d) the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, as well as their directors, officers, employees, and agents. Complainant certifies that the information contained in this Complaint is to the best of Complainant's knowledge complete and accurate, that this Complaint is not being presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass, and that the assertions in this Complaint are warranted under these Rules and under applicable law, as it now exists or as it may be extended by a good-faith and reasonable argument.”;

2. Do the Providers ask additional information beyond what is required in the URS Rules?
3. Have the Providers encountered any issues when dealing with Registrants from EU nations whose WHOIS info is needed for URS proceedings?
4. How does the FORUM handle the submission (through its online complaint filing site) of a relevant SMD proof of use from the TMCH which is expressly provided for in the URS Rules Clause 3(b)(v)? Does ADNDRC's electronic complaint form (Form C_URS) also allow the uploading of .smd files as MFSD?

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- An SMD is typically a file with the extension .smd and such format is not expressly provided for under the FORUM's Annex A. As comparison, MFSD's Supplementary Rules Clause 3 expressly specifies acceptance of .smd file as an annex.
 - URS Rules 3(b)(v): Specify the trademark(s) or service mark(s) on which the complaint is based and the goods or services with which the mark is used including evidence of use – which can be a declaration and a specimen of current use in commerce - submitted directly or by including a relevant SMD (Signed Mark Data) from the Trademark Clearinghouse;
5. What other circumstances -- not included in the non-exclusive list in the URS Procedure 1.2.6.3 -- have the Providers seen that the domain was registered and is being used in bad faith?
- *URS Procedure 1.2.6.3: that the domain was registered and is being used in bad faith. A non-exclusive list of circumstances that demonstrate bad faith registration and use by the Registrant include:*
 - a. Registrant has registered or acquired the domain name primarily for the purpose of selling, renting or otherwise transferring the domain name registration to the complainant who is the owner of the trademark or service mark or to a competitor of that complainant, for valuable consideration in excess of documented out-of pocket costs directly related to the domain name; or*
 - b. Registrant has registered the domain name in order to prevent the trademark holder or service mark from reflecting the mark in a corresponding domain name, provided that Registrant has engaged in a pattern of such conduct; or*
 - c. Registrant registered the domain name primarily for the purpose of disrupting the business of a competitor; or*
 - d. By using the domain name Registrant has intentionally attempted to attract for commercial gain, Internet users to Registrant's web site or other on-line location, by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant's mark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement of Registrant's web site or location or of a product or service on that web site or location.*
6. Has any Complainant expressed any difficulty with regard to the 500 words limit?
7. Do the Providers check whether a domain case is already subject to an open and active URS or UDRP proceeding? If so, how do they find out?
8. Do the Providers check court cases in the event a Respondent doesn't respond?
9. Have the Providers accepted a Complaint that multiple related companies were against one Registrant?
10. Have the Providers accepted a Complaint that was against multiple related Registrants?
11. How many Complaints listed fifteen or more disputed domain names registered by the same Registrant?
12. How will the rules pertaining to privacy or proxy services be affected if full access to WHOIS data is no longer available due to GDPR implementation?

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Fees

1. Obtain feedback from the Providers on filing fees received. The feedback should help the Working Group in its consideration of a “loser pays” model.
2. Among the Complaints that each listed fifteen or more disputed domain names registered by the same Registrant, how many Respondents paid the Response Fee?

Notice of Complaint and Locking of Domain

1. Obtain feedback from the Providers regarding experiences in getting the disputed domain name(s) locked. Have the Providers experienced any difficulties having the URS Lock activated within 24 hours after sending the request to Registry Operators?
2. Is there a way to know whether a Registrant has received the hard and electronic copy of the Notice of Complaint, and confirmed receipt?
3. Have the Providers received any notification of delayed communications?
4. Have the Providers received any notification of non-delivery of communications? If Respondents did not receive notifications the first time, how could they report on the bounce back?
5. Are the Providers following the URS Rules 4(c)?
 - *URS Rules 4(c): The electronic copy of the Notice of Complaint may be provided via email or an emailed link to an online platform requiring users to create an account.*
6. What does "a normal domain name lifecycle" mean (mentioned in the Registrar Requirement 2 in the URS Technical Requirements)?

The Response

1. Have Examiners received Responses alleging any abusive Complaint? If so, how did Examiners act in those cases?
2. Is the statement in the URS Rules 5(a)(v) included in the Providers' forms?
 - *URS Rules 5(v): Conclude with the following statement followed by the signature (in any electronic format) of the Respondent or its authorized representative:*

"Respondent agrees that its claims and remedies concerning the dispute, or the dispute resolution, shall be solely against the Complainant and waives all such claims and remedies against (a) the Provider and Examiner, except in the case of deliberate wrongdoing, (b) the Registrar, (c) the Registry Operator, and (d) the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, as well as their directors, officers, employees, and agents. Respondent certifies that the information contained in this Response is, to the best of Respondent's knowledge, complete and accurate, that this Response is not being presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass, and that the assertions in this

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Response are warranted under these Rules and under applicable law, as it now exists or as it may be extended by a good-faith and reasonable argument.";

3. Have the Providers received any request for extension of time to respond?
 - If so, how often has the Respondent asked for an extension?
 - Was the request received after Default (14 Calendar Days), or after Determination (no more than 30 Calendar Days)?
4. What are considered "exceptional cases" in URS Rules 5(e)?
5. Have the Providers received affirmative claims for relief by the Respondent for reasons beyond an abusive Complaint?
6. Have the Providers conducted a compliance check for a Respondent for factors beyond the two items stated URS Rules 5(g)?
 - *URS Rules 5(g): The Provider's compliance check for a Response shall at least consist of: (1) ascertaining the Response has been filed in a language acceptable under the Rules for that case; and (2) checking for payment of required fees.*
7. Who determines whether a Response is non-compliant – the Provider or the Examiner?
8. How many Responses were determined non-compliant?
9. How many Responses were filed but with fees not paid?
10. Can the Providers identify any case in which the Response was determined non-compliant for reasons other than the payment of the fee?
11. Is the deadline for filing Responses long enough?
12. Have the Providers received any late Responses?
13. What are the fees associated with these late Responses?
14. Is there a reasonable balance of the word limits for the Complaint (500 words) and the Response (2,500 words)?
15. Have the Providers received Responses that contain facts refuting the claim of bad faith registration by setting out any other circumstances not included in URS Procedure 5.7? Is the list of circumstances exhaustive?
 - *URS Procedure 5.7: The Response can contain any facts refuting the claim of bad faith registration by setting out any of the following circumstances:
5.7.1 Before any notice to Registrant of the dispute, Registrant's use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the domain name or a name corresponding to the domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services; or
5.7.2 Registrant (as an individual, business or other organization) has been commonly known by the domain name, even if Registrant has acquired no trademark or service*

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mark rights; or

5.7.3 Registrant is making a legitimate or fair use of the domain name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service mark at issue. Such claims, if found by the Examiner to be proved based on its evaluation of all evidence, shall result in a finding in favor of the Registrant.

16. What percentage of URS cases contain elements of domain investing?
17. What is the purpose of FORUM Supplemental Rules 5(d)?
 - *FORUM Supplemental Rules 5(d): Multiple Respondents.*
 - (i) Where a case has multiple respondents, the first respondent to use the encrypted link to respond will be the Respondent for the case. No other responses will be permitted.*
 - (ii) If you are named in a case that contains domain names not registered or controlled by you, you may request that the Examiner dismiss the case as to any domain names not owned by you. It is up to the Examiner's discretion to make a factual finding as to whether or not the evidence supports your claim.*
18. Have Examiners received requests for separate hearings from the multiple Respondents in the same URS proceeding?
19. What other anecdotal feedback have the Providers received from Respondents?

Stay of the Administrative Proceeding

1. Have the Providers received joint requests for a Stay of the Administrative Proceeding? If so, was the case reinstated or dismissed as a result of the Stay?
2. Have the Providers received any requests for a Stay post appointment of the Examiner?

Examiner

1. Obtain information from the Providers about how Examiners are selected and what background they have.
2. Obtain information from the Providers on the training they provide for the Examiners.
3. Seek Providers' views about whether and how their processes and practices pertaining to Examiners' selection and training should be evaluated.
4. Have the Providers maintained and made public available the list of URS Examiners and their qualifications?
5. Why the qualifications of some Examiners are not published (ADNDRC, FORUM)?
6. What is the conflict of interest policy established by each Provider? Do the Providers make the Examiners aware of their needs to be impartial and independent?

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7. How does an Examiner confirm his/her impartiality and independence?
8. Can FORUM provide a copy of the oath taken by the Examiners for being neutral and independent? Is the oath signed by the Examiners?
9. Do all three Providers undertake independent inquiries to adequately satisfy themselves as to the impartiality and independence of their Examiners? Or do they merely rely on the oath or declaration made by each Examiner?
10. Has any Examiner voluntarily disclose any conflict of interest? If not, what happened? If so, did the Examiner disclose this before and/or during the case proceeding?
11. Does the Respondent have the ability/opportunity to point to the conflict of interest/bias from an Examiner? Can they do so in their Responses?
12. Has there been any incidence of allegations of partiality or non-independence or bias of an Examiner being raised by any party of an URS proceeding either during the initial determination process or as ground for a review or Appeal? If so, how was the conflict of interest discovered?
13. When a conflict of interest has been discovered, what remedial actions have been taken?
14. Why the request to challenge the selection of an Examiner must be filed within one (1) Business Day according to FORUM Supplemental Rules 10(d)? Has any party filed a challenge beyond the required time period? Have there been any difficulties to meet the deadline for filing a challenge?
 - *FORUM Supplemental Rules 10(d): A request to challenge must be filed in writing with the FORUM within one (1) Business Day of the date of receipt of the notice of the selection.*
15. Has ADNDRC experienced an event where an Examiner refused or failed to act per its Supplemental Rules Article 8.4? What motivated ADNDRC to include that Article 8.4?
 - *ADNDRC Supplemental Rules 8.4: Where an Examiner has been appointed but before rendering a Determination the appointed Examiner fails to act or refuses to act, the Relevant Office of the Centre may appoint a substitute Examiner upon request by the Parties or in its discretion.*
16. What procedures do the Providers have to rotate the Examiners?
17. Is there any possibility for Examiner-shopping?

Language

1. Obtain feedback from the Providers as to whether there have been any difficulties or issues with the current language requirements, and on what they are doing to implement the current requirements.
2. Is there any challenge in the URS proceedings caused by the linguistic deficiencies of the Examiners?

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3. Are the Providers checking WHOIS info in order to determine the language to be used to transmit the Notice of Complaint?
4. Do the Providers think it will be feasible to make it mandatory to send Registry and Registrar notices in the same language(s)?
 - The URS Documents Sub Team has noted that the current practice seems to be that Registry notices are sent in English while Registrar notices are sent in English as well as (where applicable) the language of the affected registrant.
5. Are all Examiners indeed fluent in English?
6. Are the assigned Examiners fluent in the non-English language of the Respondents?
7. Obtain feedback from the Providers as to whether, and in how many instances, it has been demonstrated that a Respondent had the capability of understanding English.

Further Statement

1. Has any Examiner violated URS Rules 10 by requesting further statements or documents from either of the Parties?
 - *URS Rules 10: In order to ensure expedience of the proceeding, the Examiner may not request further statements or documents from either of the Parties.*

In-Person Hearings

1. Has the lack of in-person hearings been raised as an issue?

Withdrawal

1. Why the phrase “without prejudice” is used in 12(a) but “with or without prejudice” is used in 12(b) of the FORUM Supplemental Rules? Why the inconsistency?
 - *FORUM Supplemental Rules 12(a): Prior to the first issued Determination, the Complainant may withdraw the Complaint without prejudice. A withdrawal request must be Submitted to the FORUM via the online portal. Upon the FORUM’s receipt of the withdrawal request, the Complaint will be withdrawn without prejudice and the administrative proceeding will be terminated.*
 - *FORUM Supplemental Rules 12(b): Prior to the first issued Determination, the Complaint may be withdrawn pursuant to a joint request made by both parties. A withdrawal request must be Submitted to the FORUM via the online portal, must be consented to by both parties, and may request dismissal either with or without prejudice.*

Default

1. Does the Registry Operator, in locking a domain, also have the technical capability to prevent the Registrant from changing the content on the Registrant's site? Or does the Notice of Default sent by the Provider to the Registrant (and also to the Complainant) merely instructs that the Registrant is prohibited from doing so, hence the ability to enforce that prohibition?
2. What percentage of cases that the Respondent submitted an answer within six (6) months after a Default Determination?
3. Has any Examiner drawn inferences per URS Rules 12(f) when a party is not in compliance with URS Rules, Procedures, and Supplemental Rules, in the absence of exceptional circumstances?
 - *URS Rules 12(f): If a Party, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, does not comply with any provision of, or requirement under, these Rules, the URS Procedure or the Provider's Supplemental Rules, the Examiner shall draw such inferences therefrom as it considers appropriate.*

Examiner Determination

1. Has any Examiner mistakenly rendered his/her Determination due to factors beyond the three elements mentioned in URS Procedure 8.1.2?
 - URS Procedure 8.1: The standards that the qualified Examiner shall apply when rendering its Determination are whether: 8.1.2 The registered domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a word mark: (i) for which the Complainant holds a valid national or regional registration and that is in current use; or (ii) that has been validated through court proceedings; or (iii) that is specifically protected by a statute or treaty currently in effect and that was in effect at the time the URS Complaint is filed;
2. Do the Providers know any situation that the nominal registrant changed after the Complaint was filed? If so, how was it handled?
3. How many Complaints have been dismissed on the basis of the wrong Respondent being named with the domain(s) registered with a privacy/proxy service?
4. Has any Examiner evoked rules beyond the URS Rules, Procedures, and Supplemental Rules?
5. What guidance that Providers have formally or informally given to the Examiners?
 - What are the "guidelines" referred in URS Rule 13(c)? Are they referring to Provider's Supplemental Rules? If not, can the Providers provide a copy of their guidelines?
 - Both the Forum and MFSD provide a template or guidelines to their Examiners in writing a determination. Does ADNDRC do the same?

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- *URS Rules 13(c): Examiner Determinations shall normally comply with the guidelines as to length set forth in the Provider's Supplemental Rules. If the Examiner concludes that the dispute is not within the scope of the URS Provider, it shall so state.*
6. How do FORUM and MFSD compel their Examiners to comply with such template or guidelines?
 - Noting previous remarks that the quality of determinations vary from Examiner to Examiner.
 7. The URS Documents Sub Team is suggesting that a Guide for URS Examiners be developed, to assist them with understanding the distinction between easy and more difficult cases. Who should develop this guide – ICANN, each Provider, or all Providers to collaborate on a consolidated guide?
 8. How do Examiners determine the standard of proof in URS cases?
 9. How do the Providers ensure that Examiners actually provide the reasons of their respective Determinations?
 10. Among Examiner's Determinations, how many do not provide the reasons on which the Determination is based?
 11. How often was the URS Rules 13(d) invoked? What factors have been considered by Examiners in making that determination?
 - *URS Rules 13(d): If after considering the submissions the Examiner finds that the Complaint was brought in bad faith or was brought primarily to harass the domain name holder, the Examiner shall declare in its Determination that the Complaint was brought in bad faith and constitutes an abuse of the URS proceeding.*

Remedies

1. Obtain feedback from the Providers regarding implementation of the suspension remedy.
2. How many successful Complainants have requested to extend the registration period for one additional year?
3. Do the Providers know any cases that Registry Operators refused to offer the option for URS Complainant to extend a URS Suspended domain name's registration for an additional year?
4. Why during the one additional year of URS Suspension, the domain name must remain registered to the original Registrant, instead of the successful Complainant?
5. To implement the URS Procedure 10.3 / Registry Requirement 10 (Technical Requirements), there seem to be eligibility restrictions for TLDs. Why the inconsistency?
 - *URS Procedure 10.3: There shall be an option for a successful Complainant to extend the registration period for one additional year at commercial rates.*

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- *Registry Requirement 10: In cases where a URS Complainant (as defined in the URS Rules) has prevailed, Registry Operator MUST offer the option for the URS Complainant to extend a URS Suspended domain name's registration for an additional year (if allowed by the maximum registration policies of the TLD), provided, however, that the URS Suspended domain name MUST remain registered to the registrant who was the registrant at the time of URS Suspension. Registry Operator MAY collect the Registrar renewal fee if the URS Complainant elects to renew the URS Suspended domain name with the sponsoring Registrar.*

Determinations and Publication

1. Have the Providers published all URS Determinations?
2. Has any Examiner decided to publish both the Default and Final Determinations, when the Final Determination changed the Default Determination outcome for the same case?
3. Has any Examiner decided to publish both the Default and Final Determinations, when the Final Determination upheld the Default Determination outcome for the same case?
4. What are Examiners' practice with regard to the publication of Appeal Determination?
5. In the URS Rules 15(f), what is the rationale in behind not linking the Determinations related to the same domain names and/or parties?
 - *URS Rules 15(f): Determinations related to the same domain names and/or parties, but not part of the same case, need not be linked in any way on the Provider's website.*
6. Have the Providers ever linked the Determinations related to the same domain names? If not, why not?
7. How many Final Determinations were made by the same Examiner who also made the Default Determinations for the same case?
8. What is the purpose of FORUM Supplemental Rules 15(b)? Has any party requested to include or exclude certain information from a publicly available Determination? If so, how did FORUM act on such request?
 - *FORUM Supplemental Rules 15(b): All requests pursuant regarding what information a party wants included or excluded from a publicly available Determination must be made in a timely, compliant Complaint or Response.*

Settlement or Other Grounds for Termination

1. How many incidents, per URS Rules 16(b), have been recorded by the Provider (i.e., before the Examiner's Determination is made, it became unnecessary or impossible to continue the URS proceeding for any reason)?

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- *URS Rules 16(b): If, before the Examiner's Determination is made, it becomes unnecessary or impossible to continue the URS proceeding for any reason, the Examiner shall terminate the proceeding, unless a Party raises justifiable grounds for objection within a period of time to be determined by the Examiner.*

Effect of Court Proceedings

1. How often was a legal proceeding initiated prior to or during a URS proceeding? Have there been any intervening lawsuit?

Abusive Complaints

1. How have the Providers complied with the obligation to establish and maintain a process to monitor URS abuse?
2. Are Providers coordinating abusive Complaints among themselves? How Do the Providers share information about abusive Complaints?
3. Have Examiners found any abusive Complaint?
4. Have the Providers registered any case of abuse?
5. Have the Providers set forward any penalty for abusive Complaint?
6. Do the Providers, incorporating it as a standard procedure, verify the admissibility of the Complaint against the abuse case database for every single URS case?

Appeal

1. What is the Appeal rate from each Provider? Do the Providers have any insight as to why there are few Appeals?
2. How do the Providers implement URS Rules 19(b)? Do the Providers conduct administrative check on this?
 - *URS Rules 19(b): Appellant shall have a limited right to introduce new admissible evidence that is material to the Determination subject to payment of an additional fee, provided the evidence clearly pre-dates the filing of the Complaint.*
3. How do the Providers determine that the Appellant is in fact seeking to introduce new admissible evidence that is material to the Determination, clearly pre-dating the filing of the Complaint?
4. Has there been any case that the same Examiner was selected for the Appeal Panel whose Determination was Appealed?
5. How often was a three-member Appeal Panel requested?

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6. To appoint Examiners to the three-member Appeal Panel, did FORUM encounter any difficulties appointing Examiners from each parties' list to the Panel?

Exclusion of Liability

1. Was any Provider or Examiner directly sued for a URS Determination?

Others

1. Do the Providers envision any difficulty complying with the provisions related to WHOIS in the URS Rules, Procedure, Technical Requirements, and Supplemental Rules, given the uncertainty after GDPR goes into effect on 25 May 2018?
2. Do the Providers undertake their own internal reviews of their Supplemental Rules? If yes, how often? Have the Providers found a need to tighten or provide greater clarity on their Rules in any way?
3. Do the Providers have any difficulties complying with the highly technical requirements (e.g., PGP Keys, etc.)?
4. Has ICANN ever enquired any information or data from the Providers?
5. Do ICANN and the Providers maintain regular communications?
6. Do the Providers think it would be feasible to add a requirement that Respondents who abuse the process should be sanctioned?
 - o The definition of "Respondent abuse" needs to be clarified. How does the abuse of the URS process by a Respondent look like?
7. If a domain is used to further a phishing attack, do their online filing systems accept evidence of email abuse, such as the email header?
8. If the WG were to recommend the URS apply to legacy gTLDs (as a consensus policy), can the Providers easily scale their services accordingly or would they anticipate challenges doing so?
9. Question to FORUM: According to:

[A]

<https://fedsoc.org/commentary/publications/national-arbitration-forum-settlement-with-minnesota-attorney-general>

"On July 20, 2009, Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson announced that the country's largest arbitrator of credit-card and consumer-collection disputes would no longer handle consumer arbitrations.

The National Arbitration Forum's decision to end its consumer-arbitration business resulted from a settlement it reached with the State of Minnesota less than a week after Attorney General Swanson sued the company in Ramsey County, Minnesota, accusing the company of violating

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Minnesota's consumer-fraud, deceptive-trade-practices, and false-advertising statutes."

[B]

<https://www.creditcards.com/credit-card-news/minnesota-attorney-general-lawsuit-national-arbitration-forum-1282.php>

"The lawsuit claims the NAF, the largest arbitration company in the United States, violates state consumer fraud and deceptive trade laws by hiding its financial ties to collection agencies and credit card companies. The lawsuit also claims the company violates false advertising laws by misrepresenting themselves as a neutral organization. "

Questions are:

(1) In light of [A], how do NAF's business practices in handling domain name disputes differ from those in the consumer-arbitration business which it left, and how can domain name registrants be confident that the same abuses which were alleged in consumer arbitrations are not present in its domain name dispute business?

(2) In light of [B], who are the beneficial owners of NAF, and do they have any ties to the trademark industry, law firms, or anyone else that might affect its neutrality? In other words, what is the "Statement of Interest" (SOI) for NAF itself as an organization?