Registration Data Accuracy - Scoping Team

The topic of registration data accuracy is not new; it is provided for in ICANN’s contracts and has been the subject of many community discussions and work streams over the years. Following its agreement to start a more holistic effort, the GNSO Council received the ICANN org Briefing and held further discussions on the topic of registration data accuracy. The GNSO Council confirmed the formation of and instructions to a Registration Data Accuracy Scoping Team during its meeting on 22 July 2021. In addition, a call for expressions of interest to find a chair for the Scoping Team was launched (see https://www.icann.org/en/announcements/details/expressions-of-interest-chair-of-registration-data-accuracy-scoping-team-4-8-2021-en).

The Charge to the Scoping Team

1. Enforcement and reporting: The Scoping Team will assess the measures, including proactive measures, used by ICANN Compliance to monitor, measure, enforce and report on the accuracy obligations as specified in the Registry Agreements (RAs) and Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA). This assessment will include consideration of what compliance with the existing contractual data accuracy obligations means. The Scoping Team shall, with reference to the resources that will be included in the index of relevant resources cited below, consider whether there is an agreed definition of registration data accuracy and, if not, consider what working definitions should be used in the context of the Scoping Team’s deliberations. Particular attention should be given to the definition that ICANN Compliance employs for “accuracy” in ICANN’s contracts. Note, this does not preclude any subsequent effort from formalising the definition(s) that should be applied in the context of any existing and/or new accuracy requirements that may be developed.

2. Measurement of accuracy: The Scoping Team is expected to provide recommendations for how accuracy levels can be determined and measured, including, but not limited to, whether the WHOIS ARS needs a revamp to make it fit for purpose or whether there are other ways in which accuracy levels can/should be measured. The information and data resulting from these recommendations are expected to help inform the Scoping Team’s work under 3.

3. Effectiveness: The Scoping Team will, on the basis of its assessment under 1. and data resulting from 2., undertake an analysis of the accuracy levels measured to assess whether the contractual data accuracy obligations are effective at ensuring that Registered Name Holders provide “accurate and reliable” contact information.

4. Impact and Improvements: Based on its findings under 3., the Scoping Team will (taking into account estimates of benefits and costs) assess whether any changes are recommended to improve accuracy levels, and if so, recommend to the GNSO Council how and by whom these changes would need to be developed (for example, if changes to existing contractual requirements are recommended, a PDP or contractual negotiations may be necessary to effect a change).

For clarity, it is the expectation that the Scoping Team will first address items 1 and 2 and only once those are completed it will commence work on items 3 and 4. Any recommendations stemming from 1-4 will need to be approved by the GNSO Council before these are directed to the appropriate parties for action.