

Statement on the Draft Applicant Guidebook

(Proposed Mar 28 2009)

Summary:

The signatories below were participants on the Inter-Registrar Transfer Policy Working Group for Part A (IRTP-A). This statement is the result of discussions that took place during that work, but it is a statement of the signatories and not the statement or position of the IRTP-A, nor has it been endorsed by the GNSO Council.

During the course of deliberations within IRTP-A, the topic of "thick" versus "thin" registries was discussed, particularly in regard to its impact upon inter-registrar transfers.

The signatories noted that this topic is not discussed within the Draft Applicant Guidebook (v.2) for New gTLDs and recommend that the ICANN Board and Staff consider adding language in the next version of the DAG requiring all new gTLD registries to adopt the "thick" model for capturing and maintaining registrant data.

This recommendation is not intended to pertain to any aspects of registries beyond their operational abilities to facilitate inter-registrar transfers. Furthermore, it does not advance any position or recommendation that concerns existing gTLD registries.

Background:

Issue #2 of the IRTP-A charter asked:

"Whether there could be a way for registrars to make Registrant Email Address data available to one another. Currently there is no way of automating approval from the Registrant, as the Registrant Email Address is not a required field in the registrar Whois. This slows down and/or complicates the process for registrants, especially since the Registrant can overrule the Admin Contact." (Sec. 1.3 of the Issues report, GNSO Council Motion, and IRTP-A Charter)

While considering this issue, it was determined that registries can be classified as belonging to one of two categories: (excerpted from IRTP-A Draft Final Report)

A "Thin" Registry is one for which the Registry database contains only domain name service (DNS) information:

- Domain name
- Name server names
- Name server address
- The name of the Registrar
- Basic transaction data

It does not contain any Registrant or contact information. Registrant or contact information is maintained by the Registrar. Examples of Thin registries are .com, .net and .jobs (see table 1 for a complete overview).

A "Thick" Registry is one for which the Registry database contains:

- Registrant and contact information
- Domain name
- Name server names
- Name server address
- The name of the Registrar
- Basic transaction data

All authoritative information is kept within the Registry.

Registrant Email is collected and maintained by all registrars, and submitted to all "Thick" Registries. A check of gTLD WHOIS data shows that Registrant Email is also displayed for all Thick Registries.

"Thin" registries do not maintain any registrant information.

It should be noted that "Thick" registries are not obliged to include the registrant mail address in Whois data, so requiring all "Thin" registries to become "Thick" registries would not change anything for the particular issue at hand, unless the inclusion of the registrant e-mail address would be mandated.

If the registrant email address would be required for inclusion in Whois data, it should not even matter whether it is the registry or the registrar that is required to maintain Whois data

Conclusions:

The signatories noted that inter-registrar transfers function differently within the two models, and that the Thick registry model eliminated the need for a second WHOIS lookup at the registrar of record.

The signatories also noted that the Draft Applicant Guidebook (v.2) does not contain any provisions favoring New gTLD registries adopting either the "thick" or "thin" model. Nor does it advise against creating a third (heretofore unseen) model.

For these reasons, the signatories recommend that the ICANN Board and Staff consider adding language in the next version of the DAG requiring all new gTLD registries to adopt the "thick" model for capturing and maintaining registrant data.

Supporting Members:

(Members listed below are expressing their support as individuals, and do not represent the views of the IRTP-A Working Group, or their respective constituencies or organizations.)

Michael Collins
Kevin Erdman
Mike O'Connor
Mike Rodenbaugh
Marc Trachtenberg