

EAC FAQ

What is the EAC and what is it for?

The Emergency Action Channel (EAC) is a mechanism to facilitate urgent communications relating to transfers. The goal of the EAC is to quickly establish real time communication between registrar representatives who can take steps to resolving the issue, but this policy only addresses establishing that communication not resolving any disputes that may arise.

What's the scope of the EAC?

The EAC only addresses the need to establish communications between registrars in emergency situations. The EAC requirements outlined in this policy consciously exclude all aspects of resolving any disputes that may arise between parties in order not to disrupt processes that already exist to do that. The EAC is limited to domain-transfer emergencies at this time, although other PDPs may expand this scope in the future.

What happens when the gaining registrar does not respond to an EAC request?

The losing registrar informs the registry that they have not received a response to their EAC request and the registry performs a “transfer-undo” in accordance with Section 6 of the existing IRTP.

How can a gaining Registrar eliminate the threat of a transfer undo?

The gaining registrar simply responds to the request. They do not need to return the domain, they do not need to resolve any disputes, they just need to respond to the EAC request of the losing registrar and initiate communication between the two registrars. As soon as the gaining registrar responds to the losing registrar, the threat of transfer-undo vanishes. The whole aim of this policy is to get decision-makers talking to each other.

The policy requires a four-hour response time. Isn't that going to be hard for smaller registrars to cover, especially at night or on the weekends?

No. Even the smallest of registrars can simply rotate this function among operational staff, just as they rotate other “emergency” aspects of their business. The number of EAC requests is likely to be very small and quite infrequent, but when they occur there is a genuine emergency that needs to be dealt with quickly.

Who can use the EAC?

The EAC is reserved for registrars, registries and ICANN staff.

Can the EAC be used to initiate urgent, but not emergency, communications?

No, the EAC is only for emergency communications relating to domain-transfer situations (primarily domain hijacking). It is not to be used for non-emergencies. It is not to be used for situations outside of domain transfers.

Can Registrants use the EAC?

No, the EAC is only available to registrars, registries and ICANN staff.

How is the EAC protected from abuse by registrants or registrars that want to game the system or claw back a domain name?

The EAC is not available to registrants, only their registrars so a registrant would need to enlist their registrar in the scheme. The EAC only initiates communication, so as soon as the gaining registrar responds to the request, the EAC request is fulfilled and the threat of transfer-undo is eliminated.

What is the definition of “emergency” in this context?

In order to qualify as an EAC emergency, the issue has to be a serious, unexpected and harmful situation related to a domain-transfer,

What happens if a Registrar abuses the EAC?

The same thing that happens if a registrar violates any ICANN consensus policy. This is a question that is outside the scope of the IRTP working group.

What escalation options does a Registrant have with regard to hijacking and where does the EAC fit in?

The first, and best, source of help for a registrant whose domain has been hijacked is their registrar. The EAC is aimed at helping that registrar quickly get in touch with the gaining registrar so that they can resolve the issue quickly (or quickly discover that there is a dispute that needs to be escalated to a higher level for resolution). In the event that the registrars cannot resolve the situation, the registrant can then move on to the other existing dispute-resolution processes (through the courts, ICANN Compliance and/or the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy).

How long is the timeframe that the EAC is available, after an incident or problem is identified?

This timeframe is consciously not defined, for several reasons. The primary reason is that by not specifying availability we avoid providing a roadmap for hijackers to time their activities. But another reason why this is not defined in the policy is the ease with which the threat of a transfer-undo can be avoided by the gaining registrar – they simply get in contact with the losing registrar and the requirements of the EAC are fulfilled.