

# CNNIC Comments on WHOIS Review Team Final Report (Draft)

## About the CNNIC

China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), the state network information center of China, was founded as a non-profit organization on June 1997. CNNIC is the registry for the “.CN” and “.中国/.中國” country code top-level domain, serving more than 513 million Chinese internet users.

## General comments

CNNIC acknowledges that the consensus-based WHOIS policy is necessary and helpful for maintaining global consumer trust. Therefore, CNNIC appreciates the WHOIS review team’s effort on improving the current WHOIS policies by collecting comments from the global internet community.

By reviewing the final report of WHOIS REVIEW Team, CNNIC is in support of the ICANN’s proactive approach of improving global user experience of WHOIS. CNNIC’s past experience of improving WHOIS data quality has helped us to build safe and reliable reputation. By adopting a proactive approach of improving the WHOIS accuracy since 2009, CNNIC has already achieved a lot in terms of building consumer trust and reducing domain name abuse. For example, the domain name abuses of .cn have been significantly reduced by the pre-registration authentication procedure. Spam emails sent under .cn URL have fallen to less than 5% in 2010 from 15% in 2009. Reported phishing websites under .cn has been reduced from 86.5% to less than 0.6%. It is predictable that if global registrants, registrars, registries and ICANN itself take the responsibilities of improving WHOIS accuracy, the global internet community will all benefit from much more safety and reliability.

## **Specific comments**

Regarding the 20 recommendations of WHOIS Review Team Report, CNNIC has commented specifically as following:

### **About Single WHOIS Policy**

A well defined WHOIS Policy should be helpful to clarify the best practice of processing registration data and reinforce WHOIS policy among current TLD registries, new gTLDs registries and ICANN accredited registrars. CNNIC acknowledges that discussion and cooperation among multi-stakeholders will help to achieve adaptability of WHOIS policy in different jurisdictions. Thus, CNNIC proposes a local collaboration mechanism led by local Internet industry authorities , which should involves the local registries and registrars in discussing issues related to the local compliance of WHOIS policy. Driven by the demonstration of the best practice among various participants within the community, a more effective regional collaborative model can be developed.

Besides, we also believe that ICANN WHOIS policies should respect national laws and policy regulations in different countries. Therefore, we suggest that ICANN should keep the requirement of accurate and complete WHOIS data, while give some flexibility to local restrictions of public access of certain WHOIS data items in accordance with the law and regulation of data privacy in different jurisdiction. This should be kept particularly in mind when discussing the wishes of some parties to increase the uniformity of the diverse WHOIS directories.

### **About WHOIS Data Reminder Policy**

Despite the dedication both by Registrars in sending out WHOIS Data Reminder Policy notices and ICANN's Compliance Team in auditing compliance, the lack of follow-up steps renders the entire action ineffective. Instead of reminding the registrants to update their WHOIS information by themselves, we suggest that ICANN should initiate a third party audition mechanism to investigate the WHOIS accuracy of each gTLD registries. A dedicated Whois accuracy review team should also be set up to track the status of inaccurate WHOIS data and send notification to respective registry for high level of inaccurate WHOIS data's existence. Within certain time limit, the registry must deal with the WHOIS data problem along with respective registrar and return a timely feedback to the team. Registrants who submit inaccurate registration information or fail to update their WHOIS data timely should be warned by their registrar. Those who fail to execute the required treatment to the inaccurate Whois data timely may subject to incremental sanction. Meanwhile, the team should also be responsible to help ICANN for producing and publishing a WHOIS accuracy report focused on measured reduction in unreachable WHOIS registrations on an annual basis.

### **About Outreach**

We fully support ICANN's dedication to enhance consumer awareness of WHOIS. We suggest that ICANN can take a special focus to educating people in developing countries. The awareness of WHOIS is relatively low in those countries, which significantly impedes the consumer trust to Internet and widens the digital division. ICANN can cooperate with local registrars and registries to build diversified cross-community outreach.

### **About Data Accuracy**

We strongly support ICANN's determination of reducing inaccurate WHOIS data in these years. We believe these actions can also encourage fair competition among registries and registrars. However, because the global standards of WHOIS accuracy varies, stakeholders are not sure about whether unreachable contact information or invalidated identity counts for inaccurate WHOIS data. Nevertheless, there are different authentication requirement in different registries and registrars. The reason for this problem lies in the fact that the current policies have not clearly defined how to measure WHOIS accuracy. So registrar and registries often feel difficult to evaluate the exact effect of self-regulation. Many registrants who do not have a clear vision of WHOIS accuracy principal may provide inaccurate information because of misunderstanding. So far we suggest that ICANN shall propose accurate guidelines for measuring WHOIS data accuracy for gTLD registries.

In addition , other than an annual goal of reducing inaccurate WHOIS data in general, this WHOIS review report fails to explain the detailed steps of how to reduce unreachable WHOIS accuracy. We are regretted to see that certain TLD has extremely large number of inaccurate WHOIS data at present, which need to be re-authenticated and updated as soon as possible. The current strategy, however, has not clearly defined the obligation of each registry and registrar to reach certain WHOIS accuracy level, which undermines the trustworthiness of the ultimate goal. Therefore we suggest ICANN to establish incremental goal of WHOIS accuracy level for each gTLD registry based on their current WHOIS data quality.

### **About Privacy Services**

CNNIC understands the necessarily of privacy service in some circumstance. We suggest all the privacy service providers shall be accredited and closely supervised by ICANN. And the accreditation agreement shall stipulate the privacy service provider's responsibility including diligence checks on registrant's contact information. Who violate the requirements for times will face a clear path to de-accreditation

### **About Proxy Service**

Since the proxy service providers maintains a relationship in which the registrant is acting on behalf of another. Sometimes the proxy service provider is difficult to examine, not to mention the imposition of minimum conditions for their operation. Therefore CNNIC suggests that the proxy service shall be required to share equal

responsibilities for domain name abuse as the real domain name holder unless they have reported to ICANN for approval. They shall also take responsibility for diligence checks on registrant's contact information and revealing the domain name holder's information for legal enforcement.

### **About Common Interface**

CNNIC agrees with the initiative of multilingual interface. However the languages to be display should be depends on the real consumer needs, in order to avoid unnecessary cost for registrars and registries.

### **About Internationalized Domain Names**

CNNIC appreciates ICANN's effort of regulating international registration data. CNNIC has processing Chinese (UTF8 encoding) WHOIS data ever before the delegation of .中国 fast track ccTLD. Our services support both UTF8 encoding registration data (local version) and ASCII registration data (international version). In other word, we can accept and display both Chinese and English registration data. The UTF8 version WHOIS information is prioritized to be displayed when responding to IDN WHOIS queries, while ASCII version is an optional way of recording Non-IDN registration data. Our maintenance of Chinese domain name registration records has been proved successful in terms of availability and accuracy. We strongly recommend that IDR-WG shall keep consistency of approach with our ccTLD space. And we are willing to cooperate with ICANN in developing international recognized Chinese IDN WHOIS policies.

In addition, we suggest that IDN variant issues should be taken into careful consideration while ICANN regulating the WHOIS policy. Because of the existence of IDN variants in a number of languages, a proper WHOIS policy should be flexible and robust enough to allow IDN variants involved in users' registered WHOIS information to be displayed in a general way in order to reduce users' confusion.