

WEBINAR: WHOIS Policy Review Team Recommendations - Implementation Update

24 April 2013

Operator: Hello. This is the operator. The call is being recorded. If there are any objections, you can disconnect at this time. Thank you.

Margie Milam: Thank you very much. Good morning, good afternoon and good evening, everyone. This is Margie Milam. I'm a senior director of Strategic Initiatives at ICANN, and it's my pleasure to welcome you to the webinar today on the WHOIS Policy Review Team Recommendations and Implementation Update.

Before we begin, I'd like to remind all the participants of a few housekeeping items. First of all, the webinar is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. At the end of the webinar you'll be given an opportunity to voice your comments and questions during the question-and-answer session. Your lines at the moment are currently muted and will be opened during the question-and-answer section. In the meantime, you are more than welcome to submit your questions or comments through the Adobe Connect chat box. The slides and recordings of the transcript will be made available following the session.

The goal of this webinar is to provide you with an update on ICANN's ongoing and planned activities to enforce the existing WHOIS policy and contractual conditions for gTLDs. These activities address ICANN's obligations to support access to accurate information and are consistent with the objectives that were laid out in the WHOIS Review Team Final Report Recommendations.

Today, ICANN staff will walk you through and respond to questions on these projects so that you can get more familiarity with the status of the implementation of these obligations.

And so I have today on this slide the agenda, which will cover a vast array of content issues beginning with the overview and strategic priorities. And then we'll have some detailed discussions related to the agreement and current status specifically with regard to negotiations of the RAA and new gTLD registry agreements. As well, you'll hear a little bit from the Compliance Department on the recent activities related to compliance. And

then we will have some discussions on the IDN issues to bring up up-to-date on the latest developments with respect to that. We'll also give you some information on the information portal and automated tools, and then talk a little bit about outreach and communication.

So, the presentation will take about an hour. At that point we'll open it up to questions for about a half hour. And with that I'll hand it over to Denise Michel, who will give you further information on the strategic priority initiatives of ICANN. Denise?

Denise Michel:

Thank you, Margie. Next slide. So, in October, ICANN's President and CDO, Fadi Chehade, announced an ambitious plan to address WHOIS. And in November, the Board passed a resolution to take a two-pronged approach to the WHOIS challenge. The first prong and the one we're focusing on today in this webinar is to fully enforce the existing WHOIS policy. The second prong was to appoint an Expert Working Group to develop a proposed new model and to help redefine the purpose and scope of what they're calling Data Directory Services.

The WHOIS Review Team report contained a number of recommendations. The Board spent a significant amount of time last year listening to a range of community input, and several stakeholder groups and constituencies had varying views on the recommendations and the approach that the WHOIS Review Team recommended. Many supporting those recommendations, some opposing, some asking for different action.

On the whole, the Board adopted the WHOIS report and offered fairly detailed instructions to staff and notes to the community on what action should be taken to ensure that the objectives, the overarching objective of each recommendation, if not the detailed recommendation itself, be implemented.

And so you'll find connected to the Board resolution, in addition to the Board rationale, links to a Board paper and an appendix that lays out each recommendation, the details of the action the board is recommending, and some additional rationale that supports that.

And so staff has been taking that Board direction and used a whole variety of tools and approaches to implement the recommendations, and we'll walk through that with you today.

Each of the recommendations has a detailed action plan on implementation and they include really a variety of approaches. Some are being pursued through negotiations in the proposed RAA, Registrar Authorization Agreement, and the new proposed gTLD Registry Agreement. Others involve action with ICANN compliance staff, others communications, and so on. And so we'll go in detail on these recommendations today and the implementation activities. Next slide?

And before I turn it over to the next speaker, I just wanted to touch on actually the very first recommendation and a list from the WHOIS Review Team, and that was to ensure that full enforcement of existing WHOIS policies is a strategic priority. And that recommendation was started working on even before the Board adopted the WHOIS Review Team Report in October. I'm highlighting WHOIS is an organizational priority as well as a personal priority, thus reflected in our budget and operating plan. Also reflected in the reorganization of staff to bring the Compliance Department directly under the CEO and to expand that department, to ask the Strategic Initiatives Department to focus on WHOIS and help support an Expert Working Group, and also coordinate and track and communicate to the public on the status of all the implementation.

The CEO and the Board remains involved and continually updated on our activities here. And we're using a variety of different approaches to provide the community access, too, and keep them updated on our activities in this area.

There's a March blog post that goes into significant detail on activities in the area of WHOIS. We also [speak with] the constituencies at ICANN's meetings, and, of course, hold these webinars and the overall accountability and transparency Web page, which tracks implementation and action on all of the (inaudible) also provides information on what's happening in this activity. Next slide.

And another approach that should be noted today is the [body] also uses its meetings with various constituency groups and in particular the registrars and registrees to advance the objectives around WHOIS. So, the topic has been discussed in the CEO roundtable and, of course, as I mentioned, incorporated in the proposed agreement for both the registrars and gTLD registrees. He'll speak more today. And that focus on the part of the CEO and reporting to the board will continue throughout the multifaceted project. With that, I'll turn it over to the next speaker to address in detail the next set of recommendations. Samantha?

Samantha Eisner:

Yes. This is Samantha Eisner. I'm senior counsel with ICANN, and today I am going to speak to you a little bit about how we're trying to make sure that we have WHOIS items taken care of within the agreements that we are trying to -- we're in the process of negotiating. So, one of the major agreements that you might be aware of is the new gTLD Registry Agreement. Now, that agreement is not yet complete. It's not yet finalized. However, the WHOIS obligations in there have remained fairly stable. The expected WHOIS obligations that we'll have in the new gTLD Registry Agreement include a requirement for every registry to offer thick WHOIS, which provides for more information within the WHOIS records. Each registry will also be required to provide both Port 43 and Web-based directory services.

Another thing that you'll see is a Standardized Output format across the gTLDs, so when you go into WHOIS record, there will be the option for registries to add additional information, if necessary, that the primary information will be in a standardized template, which will make it easier when you're looking at the records. And then registries will have the opportunity -- it's not mandatory -- to offer searchability among their WHOIS records. Next slide?

And then one of the things that we'll see within the new gTLD Registry Agreement is a service level agreement, which imposes obligations on availability of WHOIS services, the response time when a user submits a query, as well as a time to update the WHOIS responses for each registry.

Also, within the WHOIS obligations, ICANN has the ability to specify alternative formats and protocols if those are adopted in the future. And, also, there is a placeholder for the new IEGF standards. You may have heard about work such as WEIRDS or RESTful WHOIS, or other types of work that are going on that require information for IDN records and others. So, as IETF standards update, there is a placeholder for that within the new Registry Agreement.

And then, finally, the new gTLD Registry Agreement currently has in it a requirement that registries will only be able to use registrars who are under the 2013 RAA. Margie Milam, the next speaker, will be telling you about some of the new WHOIS obligations that we anticipate to come in under the new 2013 RAA, which is currently posted for public comment. And there you'll see that there are some advancements within that agreement.

And so one of the things that ICANN is trying to do is to help leverage that by making sure that new gTLD registry operators must use those registrars that are under those new obligations. With that, I will turn this over to Margie to continue on with her presentation.

Margie Milam:

Thank you, Sam. I'm going to touch upon several topics related to WHOIS, to give you an update on some of the staff work related to that. The first thing I wanted to talk to you about was the recommendation from the WHOIS Review Team related to consolidating all of the various provisions that relate to WHOIS in a single location. The WHOIS Review Team has noted that a lot of the WHOIS obligations were decentralized and were difficult to find. And we're pleased to let you know that we've, as of April 15, have actually published a Web page on the ICANN site. You can take a look at it at the link provided on the slide that basically points out all the various contract obligations and GNSO consensus policies that relate to WHOIS. And so we're excited that it's up there and, as you can see, the page can be updated in the future as the WHOIS obligations change. And for more information on the single Web page, there's a blog post that was provided more information on that and the link is provided on the slide.

The next thing I wanted to talk to you about was the RAA negotiations and the current status. And as many of you may know, ICANN has been involved in the negotiation process with the Registrar Negotiating Team since end of 2011. And we're pleased to announce that the negotiations have come to a close and that supposed final 2013 RAA is now posted for public comment. This took place this week, and so we invite you to take a look at all of the documents, which include a fully revised 2013 RAA, and a number of important specifications attached to it.

This document took into account many of the comments that were received during the prior public comment posting that closed last week. In the March 7 posting, which was the earlier posting, we were able to take a look at some of the comments that were received and try to incorporate them into the 2013 RAA.

As you look at the document that is now currently posted and will be open for public comment until May 13 for the initial comment period, and then June 4 for the reply period, we'd like you to take into focus specifically the changes that took place from the prior posting and to provide comments with respect to that.

One of the things that we noted in the earlier public comment forum was that many people from various stakeholder groups in the community recognized that the 2013 RAA is a vast improvement over the current version, and it significantly raises the bar for registrars.

The document that you see posted as a proposed final 2013 RAA is an agreed-upon document with the registrars and the registrars have noted that this agreement represents an important milestone for the GNS ecosystem, because it really introduces a lot of new concepts that will help clean out some of the issues that currently exist in the domain space. And, as Sam noted, this agreement will be required for all registrars that want to participate in the new gTLD program.

And so with regard to WHOIS obligations, this slide really points to the significant improvements that have been negotiated related to access and accuracy. And there are several very extensive documents that increase the obligation that registrars have with these (inaudible) WHOIS obligations.

For example, there is a new specification called the WHOIS Accuracy Program that talks about requirements now for the first time registrars will have to validate and verify certain aspects of the WHOIS records. And with respect to validation, you will see

registrars checking the formatting of the WHOIS records. The registrars will also verify whether the e-mail address provided or the phone number provided is accurate. And this validation and verification process is to take place within 15 days of registration.

There is also a new specification on privacy and proxy services, and it's an interim specification that lays out a minimum baseline level of obligations with respect to privacy and proxy services. And the idea behind this interim specification is that it's meant to provide some basic framework while the ICANN community develops additional policies and accreditation rules so that a whole accreditation program will be in place with regards to providers of privacy and proxy services. This was one of the recommendations from the WHOIS review team, and we're pleased that this specification is now included in the 2013 RAA.

There is also a specification, in addition to accuracy, that deals with statistical analysis, Service Level Agreements, on some of the WHOIS obligations, such as the Port 43 access. This is a new obligation and the registrars were willing to commit to having the access available at certain levels for Port 43.

The specification also includes standard formatting for the field. Again, this is something that is new that wasn't in the prior WHOIS obligations, and you'll see a more consistent formatting in the actual WHOIS field that are included in the WHOIS records.

And there is also, similar to the new gTLD agreement, there is also transition language that would allow for adoption of the new IETF protocol that helps with -- create capabilities to address international domain registration and IDN information.

And so we're pleased with these enhancements and we think that this will go a long way in improving the access and accuracy that is related to the WHOIS record.

The other aspect of the RAA that touches upon some of the WHOIS Review Team recommendations relates to the education element, because there is this observation that there isn't a lot of information available regarding what is the obligation related to WHOIS records. And in the new 2013 RAA, you'll actually see a Registrant Rights and Responsibilities document that informs registrants and is going to be communicated widely and publicized, and you'll hear a little bit more about that later in the session today.

But, really, one of the elements of this Registrant Rights and Responsibilities document is an education aspect, where it informs registrants of the registrant's obligation to maintain the accuracy of the WHOIS, and that's a very important aspect as we try to ensure that the WHOIS is more accurate in the future. And after the public comment period, the next step with regards to the 2013 RAA is to finalize it and then seek Board approval for use in the new gTLD program.

Next, I want to talk to you a little bit about the Expert Working Groups, which is a different -- brings a different dynamic to the WHOIS discussion. As part of the Board resolution that Denise Michel referred to earlier related to the adoption of the WHOIS Review team recommendations, the Board also asked ICANN to step back for a moment and go beyond the WHOIS protocol and really let's see if there is a better way of dealing with what we call Data Directory Services.

And so as part of that resolution, there was a new effort ticked off to basically see if there's a way to go beyond the existing WHOIS protocol and come up with a new system. And so since November there has been what we call the Expert Working Group, that has convened to try to take a look at this issue from a different perspective, to reexamine the purpose of WHOIS, and to ensure that there is a clear and concise purpose for the access

of this information, and to see whether there's a better model or blueprint to address the data accuracy and access issues. And also to make sure that safeguards for protecting data are in place.

And so the idea is that rather than trying to fix the whole WHOIS system and deal with some of the legacy issues, it's a clean slate approach that's taken. In other words, if you start from a very clean slate, you may actually be able to come up with a new system that would be better serving the needs of today.

And so that work is currently underway. There is an Expert Working Group that has been convened to lay the foundation for future policy work, and the idea is that this would feed into a GNSO policy development process to create new policies related to Data Directory Services.

In that light, there has been an issue report published by the policy staff, which is currently open for public comment as part of the process. Once the Expert Working Group concludes its work, that work would feed into the GNSO policy development process for further community input and eventually go to the board for adoption.

And, as I mentioned, the work is currently underway. There has been an extensive amount of work done through this Expert Working Group, including conference calls and face-to-face meetings. If you look at the work that's being done with regard to this Expert Working Group, you'll see there is a significant amount of resources and attention placed on the project to ensure that it is successful.

If you were in the Beijing meeting that concluded a few weeks ago, you heard -- you may have been able to attend the session conducted by Jean-Francois Baril and members of the Expert Working Group that are really trying to seek information from the community regarding how to deal with some of these important issues related to Data Directory Services.

This group includes a broad cross-section of expertise and experience, and the plan is to come up with a blueprint for discussion by the Durban meeting. And, as part of this group, there is also involvement of Board liaisons Steve Crocker and Chris Disspain, to really try to help make sure that this work is effective and to provide expertise that each of them has, in addition to the Expert Working Group members.

And so we're very pleased with this work and hope that by Durban the community will be able to get better sense of what kind of Data Directory Services are to be recommended.

And before I turn to the next speaker, Bruce Tonkin, I believe, had a question. Bruce, let me -- try to unmute your line, if you'd like to ask your question now. Bruce? Okay, I think we must be having some difficulties unmuting his line. Bruce or anyone on the call, if you'd like to have a question input in the pod on the actual -- on the question-and-answer pod, we'll get to it towards the end of the session. And with that, I'll hand it off to Maguy, who will provide you with additional information related to the compliance efforts underway with respect to the WHOIS obligations. Maguy?

Maguy Serad:

Yes, thank you, Margie. Good morning, everyone. My name is Maguy Serad. I'm the vice president for Contractual Compliance at ICANN. Okay, somebody is driving here. So, today I would like to provide you an update on the efforts that the team has been working towards contractual compliance as it relates to the WHOIS Review Team recommendations, but also tying it to the November 2012 Board resolutions.

The first level of effort was focused on improvement to the enforcement of the current obligations on gTLD WHOIS. These efforts that were put in place are efforts to help us

reestablish a foundation as a Contractual Compliance Department and the update today, as I said, specific to WHOIS.

So, the first update is how are the efforts to improve the process? The WHOIS inaccuracy complaint processing in the past was not structured and did not follow a consistent process. So, in September of 2012, we revised the process, communicated it at all stakeholder meetings and prior ICANN meetings to ensure that everyone understands the process, understands the approach and the requirements. And the rollout of the process took place mid-September, and that was done in parallel with the old application that was in place. So, now we have a consistent process and approach to process all WHOIS inaccuracies.

This consistent process has reduced or shortened the time to resolution. In the past, the complaint was submitted, there was an initial 15 days given to the contracted party to respond, and there was another 45 days and then so on and so forth. So, what we've done with this process is aligned it with the overall contractual compliance process to take the complaint, 15 days followed by 5 days, followed by another 5 days, which gives us an opportunity to work with the contracted party at three different times, which we call it Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3, to resolve the issue.

It also, in this process, would improve the processing quality and efforts by requiring proof of investigative effort. We all know the contractual obligation is to take reasonable steps to investigate and correct, so the best way to address that, which was a very vague approach, is to focus on what were the steps taken to investigate and correct this effort?

Another step that we launched in November 2012 is the audit program, which has also been communicated at several ICANN meetings, with updates also in our monthly updates. With the launch of the audit program, a section of the audit focused on WHOIS inaccuracies by reviewing the inaccuracy responses we get from the complaint, but also reviewing the WHOIS data element population by making sure the website for free public access, free public access is up and running. But also doing an audit on the registry that the escrow match against the (inaudible) on file.

The next step on the WHOIS improvement is focused on the system. So, once the process was agreed and communicated, we went and did the migration into a new complaint processing management tool. And the first complaint type to migrate was the WHOIS inaccuracy. This was accomplished in March of 2013. What this has done is removed filing a complaint on the Internet website to the icann.org website, which turned into a user-friendly with easier navigation.

Now, the complainant or the reporter can go to that website. There are different guidance, there are frequently asked questions by topics, and they are all provided in the six UN languages. Filing a complaint at this time remains in English.

So, the system has been up and running since March, and the system, in addition to that, we have activated what we call a False Survey, to collect feedback on our process and on our communication by not only taking feedback from the reporter or the complainant, but also from the contracted party. So, this allows us to have a closed loop from beginning to end of this processing of this WHOIS inaccuracy complaint to know how did it go? Did it get resolved properly? And did we meet the expectation?

The next effort we also launched within our team is to ensure that all the operational staff have been trained on how to process inaccuracy complaints, but also how to review and validate the information that's provided.

The next effort from the Board resolution is to increase our transparency, communication and outreach activities. The best way to increase the transparency is really to build on the metrics. How can we measure the performance and the efforts that are underway? So, contractual compliance put together several metrics, and these metrics have been leveraged not only to report back to the community, but also to allow us from an operational perspective to take a proactive approach to improving noncompliance areas. Not just WHOIS inaccuracies, but other contractor compliance areas.

We also published the annual report in six UN languages, and have resumed what we call our ongoing monthly updates. These monthly updates capture the activity highlights of the prior month and the updates are published on the icann.org website in six UN languages.

As we all heard in the Beijing meeting, Fadi announced the launch of the compliance metrics that's available on My ICANN, and I remind everyone, at this point the compliance metrics are provided in a more static format and reflect only the metrics from the last meeting. So, efforts are underway to get us to become more real time in providing compliance metrics at the global level.

We have committed and continue to deliver outreach sessions and the outreach sessions are Contractual Compliance's efforts to educate, to collaborate either with the contracted parties, with the reporters, and that level of collaboration is sometimes done on a one-by-one, or by region, or at ICANN meetings. With that, I would like to turn the slides to Steve Sheng, who will be presenting to you on the IDN.

Steve Sheng:

Thank you, Maguy. Good morning. Hello, everyone. My name is Steve Sheng. I'm a policy staff. I'm going to briefly update the community how we're planning to implement the internationalized registration data recommendations in the WHOIS Review Team Report.

As a very quick background, traditionally the registration data is mostly in US ASCII, although the registrants come from all over the world. And as we are moving to the next, serving -- aiming to serve the next billion Internet users, many of whom will come from countries that do not use English or Latin script as their native language or script. So, this issue has become important.

The steps we are planning to take as required by the WHOIS Review Team is essentially four steps. So, the first step is we would task the working group to determine the appropriate IDN registration data requirements, as well as producing a data model. There has been already some community work done on this area. For example, last year the GNSO and SSAC had issued a final report on the internationalized registration data, that in the report had specified some requirements for the IDN registration data.

Separately, the SSAC has also released SAC054, the SSAC report registration data model. So, the working group will take those useful input of the community work as a starting point to work on this data model and requirements. So, once those are completed and what we'll do is incorporate the data model in the relevant registry and registrar agreements. So, that's the second step.

In parallel of step 1 and 2, we are going to commission a study to evaluate available solutions. Today, some of these issues have been handled in somewhat ad hoc manner, but there are useful case studies to learn from. For example, in the ccTLDs in the registration market [world], but the issue is not really a new issue. It has been tackled in other areas as well. So, for example, translation, transliteration, those are tackled in a variety of applications, we learn from those -- once we learn from those experience and the feasibility of the systems.

Also requested, we are to provide regular updates on the development of internationalized registration data, and we have been doing so since the last two ICANN meetings, both in Toronto and the latest in Beijing.

So, those are quick update on how on our four-step plan to address the WHOIS Review Team recommendations in this area, and the timeline to finish is probably sometime early next year. Thanks. With that, I'm going to hand over to my colleague, Chris, to talk about information portal and automated tools. Chris?

Chris Gift:

Thank you very much, Steve. This is Chris Gift. I'm responsible for online community services. So, next slide, please. There are four areas of activity that I am engaged in. The first is an information portal, and it's to create information, a space or place where there is detailed information on how to access existing WHOIS information. The plan here is to build on the excellent work that had already been done and that Maguy discussed a little bit earlier.

But to take a lot of that work and duplicate it and add to it, extend it, and put it on a centralized place that is simply for WHOIS. So, it will be a more -- an area where people can directly find tools as well as information on how to access WHOIS data.

Right now the work is scheduled to begin in early June, and we have a launched scheduled right now for end of August of this year. There are no foreseeable issues at this time for a move forward on this work. The next slide, please?

The second work we are working on is data accuracy reporting, and this is to provide automated tools to sample and report globally accuracy of WHOIS records. So, it is not to report on individual records and whether they are accurate, but rather to paint a picture for the community on globally how are we doing with WHOIS records.

So, we are currently working on the requirements for this automated -- for this application. The requirements are currently schedule to be completed by the end of July, roughly, and at that point we'll have assessment of development efforts on what it will take basically to complete this application, this service, and launch it to the community.

As was already discussed, it is for dynamic reporting of the completeness. The definition of accuracy remains critical, so are we a simply accuracy of the address? How do we test that data in an automated fashion? To what level we define that remains an ongoing issue and one we will probably seek community help from within the near future. Next slide, please?

The third activity is a global WHOIS search. There was the requirement to have one place where all gTLD WHOIS records could be searched. So, again, we are working on requirements for this service, to be completed by, again, end of July. And then an assessment for application for how to develop the service -- not how to, but timing around developing the service will follow soon after that.

We don't foresee any issues at this time for developing it. For now, after we have the requirements completed, it will be an issue of resources and scheduling. Last slide, please.

IDN, Internationalized Domain Name WHOIS records, Steve Sheng just spoke about this. So, we are waiting for the IDN. So, the issue here is how do we provide automated tools to search the Internationalized Domain Name WHOIS records, much like we were talking about earlier.

So, how do those Internationalized Domain Name records influence the services we're going to be providing? So, in this case we are waiting for the registration, Internationalized Domain Name registration requirements to be completed before we can design any tools around them. So, we're waiting for those to be tentatively, I think, now - - correct me if I'm wrong later, Steve -- at the end of July of this year. And then we expect to take about 30 days to evaluate the requirements and then come up with a service to be able to fill this need. And that point, once we have those requirements, we'll then provide a launch date, a tentative launch date, a scheduled launch date for the service. The same thing that applies to the other automated services in terms of the sampling of the data, the definition of accuracy is critical for this service.

At this time I'd like to turn it over to Lynn Lipinski, who will talk about outreach and communication.

Lynn Lipinski:

Hi. Thanks, Chris. Hi, this is Lynn Lipinski. I'm the publications manager here at ICANN, and if I could have the next slide, please. Basically, how I view Communications role in this and how the Communications team does is that we're here to support all the work going on, all of this great work you just heard about. Whether it's work that Compliance is doing or Online Services or the Policy team, we're here to communicate about that and make sure that the appropriate audiences hear about it. And that as much as possible, we're writing and communicating clearly and in a way that everyone can understand.

In terms of the WHOIS Review Outreach and Communication Plan objectives we put together, basically it's a two-prong approach. We're looking at raising awareness of policy development efforts so that if people -- and this could even be people, if you think about the general public saying why is this data collected? What purpose does it serve? We want to talk about how we -- how ICANN develops that policy and how they can have a voice in that.

We also want to promote the information portal that Chris Gift just talked about as an easy way to access what's there, and also to notify people of data accuracy issues and give them an easy way to report them. Next slide?

We've identified a broad number of audiences for our Communications plan. First of all, of course, ICANN community, and that's all the supporting organizations and advisory committees. We also see the importance of talking to the Internet community about the work we're doing and how we can make sure to get them more involved and be involved in what they're doing. Governments and law enforcement are obviously an important audience as our consumer rights and privacy organizations, the business community and domain registrants. Next slide? Can I have the next slide, please? Thank you.

The fun stuff of Communications plans usually has to do with tactics, and this is just a quick list of some of the tactics we're looking at using as these different aspects of the WHOIS review program come out. Making sure that we're announcing the program with a kickoff announcement, news release, lots of social media outreach, making use of the platform we built on Twitter, to make sure we're talking to a lot of different people and not just to the ICANN community.

Creating factsheets and brochures in the different UN languages. Working with the global engagement team to identify and work with organizations like law enforcement, privacy, government, that we want to get them involved in the issues. We're going to, of course, promote program milestones, utilize our speaker's bureau as a way to talk about what's going on by just keeping up-to-date slide decks on that. And also supporting new users who might be interested in accessing WHOIS data and talking about how to use the

portal that we're building in different languages. Next slide? And so with that, I guess that is the end of the presentation. I'm turning it back over to our emcee Margie.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Lynn. And now we're going to ask that the lines be unmuted and so that we can open the floor to questions. We'll use the enhance feature in the Adobe Connect, where you can raise your hand and create the queue. And if you're on the bridge -- excellent, excellent. If you're on the bridge and don't wish to speak, please be sure to mute your line, star, 6, and then to unmute your line, press star, 7. And so with that, we'll start the queue. It looks like we have Steve Metalitz as one of the hands up, followed by James Bladel. Steve?

Steve Metalitz: Thank you very much, Margie, and thanks to all the presenters. I think it's clear there is a lot of important work going on here, so I want to thank all the presenters for all the presentations. Really, two questions. One has to do with the output of the Expert Working Group and what happens after that? I'm a little confused about that. There had been a provision in Specification 4 of the draft new gTLD Registry Agreement that called for the registries to implement what the new directory service that would be adopted by the Board of Directors based on the work of the Expert Working Group. That was deleted and I don't think anything was put in its place.

There was some reference in the Board resolution or some of the materials surrounding that to an expedited PDP that would occur after the Expert Working Group reports or perhaps this -- and then I saw there's a First Issue Report coming out, which would suggest that maybe we'll have a plain, old-fashioned PDP and perhaps get a result by 2017 or so.

Could someone clarify what is expected to happen with the output of the Expert Working Group and what are the steps before that is implemented in the gTLD registries and registrars?

Margie Milam: Thank you, Steve, it's Margie. I'll answer that. As I mentioned earlier, there was a prior public comment on the RAA which included that language. There was a significant amount of opposition to including that in the RAA. And part of the Board resolution really talked about having the Expert Working Group work feed into the policy development process.

So, the plan going forward is to have the Expert Working Group come up with its blueprints. The PDP is expedited in the sense that -- and since there has already been a Preliminary Issue Report and it's now open for public comment, the Final Issue Report would be issued once the work from the Expert Working Group has concluded, and that's what the PDP was focused on. The PDP would be focused on the output of the Expert Working Group in order to take a look at it and try to assess the (inaudible) of it and whether to recommend its adoption.

And so as part of staffing the Expert Working Group, some of the things we're looking at is trying to make sure that there's a lot of transparency to what the Expert Working Group is doing. You'll see consultations and such once the output is a little more concrete, but they're in the information-gathering stage and doing some of the development work. And the hope is that the Expert Working Group would be there as a resource to the GNSO as it tries to evaluate the output.

And so if you think of things that have happened in the past, it's not that dissimilar to what happened when the IRT did its work and then the GNSO, and did the STI work to follow up on that. And the process certainly is expedited in the sense that some of that work has already kicked off and then it's really a question of how much work is done during the PDP itself. Does that make sense?

- Steve Metalitz: Well, yeah. This is Steve again. So, the only expedited aspect to it is that you already have a Preliminary Issue Report out; is that what I'm hearing? And otherwise it's going to be -- it is expected to be the same old PDP process?
- Margie Milam: With one exception in that the PDP process is not starting from scratch. It's starting from the output that the Expert Working Group comes up with, so if that report and that final product is something that has a lot of analysis and substance to it, then it may speed up the work in the PDP process.
- Steve Metalitz: Thank you. My other question had to do with Chris's work and just to get a better sense of when we would have a little more insight into that and the community would be able to comment on it? I saw in Margie's blog post there's some references to a plan due for review April 7 on some of these topics. That kind of overtaken by events, when do we expect there will be something for us to have input to on these issues, like the single portal for access to WHOIS data, universal WHOIS data across the gTLDs and the accuracy sample?
- Chris Gift: This is Chris Gift. Steve, I can respond to those. When it comes to the accuracy and the global WHOIS search, end of July is when I hope to have something to the community that they can -- in terms of requirements and wire frames that they can look at. It's a, yeah, this is something that would be useful for us and would fulfill the needs as stated. So, that's when I hope for those two things.
- The IDN a little bit later, a little bit after that. It will follow the same basic scheme, though, in terms of how to implement it. But, again, that will follow probably about a month after that.
- With respect to the information portal itself, to be frank, I hadn't planned on going to the community with any further plans. I mean, I can, if that's what the community would like, but that was just something I was going to go ahead and just implement. I don't see that as -- the portal itself, I just -- I just see that as more of, again, a centralizing of information that's already out there, as well as documenting some new things, perhaps putting up some sort of knowledge base that people can work their way through if that's required. So, I didn't have any plans to go to the community with that. Again, if people think that I should, then please let me know.
- Steve Metalitz: This is Steve. I agree with your approach on that one. When I referenced the portal, I meant what you're calling the gTLD global search.
- Steve Gift: Gotcha, yeah, yeah. So, expect to have something from me by end of July at the latest. I'm trying to get it sooner, but that's the latest I'm committing to right now.
- Steve Metalitz: Okay. Well, thank you very much and thanks again to all the presenters.
- Margie Milam: Thank you, Steve. I have James, (inaudible), Alan and then Oliver. James?
- James Bladel: Hi, Margie. This is James Bladel speaking from GoDaddy, and also a former member of the WHOIS AOC review team. Just a minor point that we did cover, I think, in our WHOIS Review Team Final Report, is that I don't know that the term IDN is appropriate when we're referring to Internationalized WHOIS data. It's really a separate problem that we're trying to solve that's not connected necessarily to internationalized domain names, although we can borrow some of the same coding standards and some of the transliteration and transcription problems.

But I just wanted to point out that unfortunately I think we need a new term and possibly even a new acronym to refer to what we're talking about when we're talking about internationalized non-ASCII WHOIS data.

And as a former member of the review team, I think I see a couple of others in the list. I just wanted to say I really appreciate the follow-up on this and our recommendations are progressing within ICANN. Thanks.

Steve Sheng: James, this is Steve. Thank you for that clarification. I agree with you, that you can have an ASCII domain registration but the registration data itself is internationalized. So, I agree with you, and thank you for that clarification.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Steve. We now have Alan in the queue.

Alan Greenberg: Thank you. I actually posted a question in the Q&A slot about 20 minutes ago. If you could answer that, I would appreciate it. I have to drop off the call, but I'll listen to the answer afterwards.

Margie Milam: I don't see it, unfortunately. Can you read it out, Alan?

Alan Greenberg: I can. It's on my Q&A in the chat. I'll read it out. Question for Q&A section: According to the Board document provided with the rationale for the resolution, the Expert Working Group is expected to provide output which will be used as the basis for the tightly focused Board-initiated GNSO PDP. ICANN will provide a project plan for completion of the work by end of 2013. Are we still on target, or if not, what's the new timeline?

Margie Milam: This is Margie. It all depends upon when the Expert Working Group completes its work. So, if that's Durban, it's just a question of how quickly GNSO can do its work. It seems it would be unlikely end of the year, but I'll ask Denise to see if she has anything else she'd like to add.

Alan Greenberg: Margie, I have to leave, so one more comment quickly. The call for volunteers for the Expert Working Group said they expected their work to be completed by April. That's when they asked for the staff or the people to volunteer. The wording I'm now getting is maybe by the end of the year. So, that looks like that may be pushing this out very far.

Denise Boxberger: Yes, as you well know, Alan, it's a very complex area. We'll make sure that community is kept apprised of the status and progress of the Expert Working Group. They're now looking at potentially having sort of a blueprint approach for that community to discuss in July time frame. And then depending on how that discussion evolves and [whether that works, there is the potential] to wrap it up soon after that. But it has an aspirational target date and we'll just have to keep the community apprised of the progress and timing of this. But the intention here is to ultimately feed into the final issue report and, of course, this was a Board-requested PDP, the expectation is that it will be tightly focused using as a foundation the proposal and blueprint that comes out of the Expert Working Group. That in and of itself we expect to escalate the normally drawn out GNSO PDP process.

The Expert Working Group members have already indicated their desire and willingness to have a working relationship, if you will, with GNSO, to make sure that they're available to answer questions and respond to requests from the GNSO that might arise, that they start to address the PDP and blueprint that comes out of the Expert Working Group.

In addition, of course, the Board, its staff and CEO are very engaged and will continue to be very engaged in this, and the PDP and work, of course, will be fully supported. So,

we have high expectations that, as someone said, won't be the same old PDP, but rather will be very focused with a lot of attention and support, and have some additional input and support mechanisms, including the Expert Working Group members themselves hope all of that will result in a more streamlined and quicker than usual PDP result.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Denise. I'll turn now to Oliver, who has a question.

Oliver Guimaraes: Yes, hello. This is Oliver Guimaraes speaking. I have a question regarding the trend to proxy our private services. So, how in terms of compliance can it make sure that information, the WHOIS information behind the proxy or private is correct? Is there any way to get the proxy or private service to prove this information (inaudible)?

Margie Milam: So, the question is related to the privacy and proxy information and how to ensure that the underlying information is accurate; is that correct?

Oliver Guimaraes: It's correct, yes.

Margie Milam: Okay. As I mentioned in my presentation, there is a privacy and proxy specification that provides a minimum baseline with the idea that, as I mentioned, is temporary and there would be opportunities for community input. This is one of those areas where community input would probably be ideal, because trying to understand how the privacy and proxy services work and whether it makes sense to have underlying data be accurate is something that certainly could involve community input, and we hope that that will happen as the accreditation program proceeds. Sam, do you want to add anything to that?

Samantha Eisner: No, I think that's correct, Margie. I think --

Oliver Guimaraes: (Inaudible) solution how to maintain proxy service (inaudible). Okay, thanks.

Samantha Eisner: Thank you.

Margie Milam: Sam, did you want to add anything else?

Samantha Eisner: I think that he summed that up. Yeah, thank you.

Margie Milam: Okay. I have Kathy in the queue.

Kathy Kleinman: Hi, can you hear me?

Margie Milam: Yes.

Kathy Kleinman: Okay, great. I'm Kathy Kleinman. I'm an alumna of the WHOIS Review Team, and I wanted to join James in thanking you very much. It's very exciting to see the recommendations of the WHOIS Review Team going forward to implementation. This is great.

I have a few comment/questions. They're brief -- two to Chris and one to Lynn. So, I wanted to share this. Chris, and we haven't met, so it's nice to meet you by phone and webinar. Regarding the definition of accuracy, I wanted to point you, and I know you've read it closely, but point you in the community to recommendations 5 through 9 of the WHOIS Review Team on data accuracy. And here we use the terms that are a little confusing. We talked about that ICANN should reduce the number of WHOIS registrations that fall into accuracy groups called Substantial Fail and Full Failure as defined by a very important study, the [North] Data Accuracy Study of 2009, and I think this can be very helpful.

The Substantial Fail and the Full Fail really meant that the registrant was not contactable, and that was the standard that the WHOIS Review Team used. Not that all data be accurate, but the data you need to contact the registrant. So, I'm really glad to see the RAA moving forward with verification or telephone, because that makes the registrant contactable. And so that might be useful for your definition of accuracy.

I also wanted to point out that the end of July is a lousy time to post anything for public comment, particularly something that involves individual rights or issues like privacy, because you have most of Europe on vacation for the month of August. So, if it's possible to do it early July or early September, but I would really, really recommend that something this important not be posted for comment in August. You will also find a lot of government officials on vacation. Just a lot of the community that you would want to do the outreach to is simply not available during that period.

Lynn, speaking of governments, there was a nice point in the slide where you talked about outreach, and this was one of the things the WHOIS Review Team very much wanted, was active outreach by ICANN to communities that have expressed their interest in the WHOIS issues but don't want to follow everything that comes out of the ICANN Board and the GNSO.

So, on your slide you had a bullet point that talked about governments and law enforcement, and I would urge you to expand that to governments, law enforcement and data protection commissioners. Because both law enforcement and data protection specialties in government are very interested in the area.

So, again, thank you for this very good and comprehensive webinar, and appreciate the major strides going forward.

Chris Gift: If I may respond?

Kathy Kleinman: Please.

Chris Gift: Yeah, so thank you very much for pointing me in those directions. I had read some of the information, but nonetheless a good reminder to go back to the section of the recommendations and review that again. So, again, I truly appreciate that.

As for the end of July for polling comment, you're absolutely right, it's a lousy time, so I'll definitely rethink that and see if there is any way I could pull that in. Because I'd rather pull it in rather than leave it out to September or beyond, and I'll get back to the community about that.

About the public comment, though, if I could hear from people, maybe to on this webinar, but some other time, whether -- or maybe Kathy, do you mean specifically a true public comment process or -- because I hadn't intended that, to be frank. You know, the requirements documents that I was going to produce, I was going to share that with the community, but in a more informal means, probably through a webinar or something like that. A means of getting feedback, but not through a formal public comment process. Is that what you intended? Do you think that's necessary or do you think something more informal, where I can interact with people? Because this is -- truly, I'm designing an application, a service, and I really wanted to get people's more direct feedback on that. Any thinking on that?

Kathy Kleinman: It's a very good questions and I know others on the call might have thought --

Chris Gift: Yeah.

Kathy Kleinman: I think there are people on the list who could help you, if you wanted to do informal outreach, that could help you -- help that outreach go, even if it's informal, even if it's an e-mail or two that are going out to point people in the right direction.

Chris Gift: Sure, sure.

Kathy Kleinman: That could help put certain law enforcement, certain data protection commissioners who are particularly interested in the issue and very well connected to their own network, as well as consumer advocates, privacy advocates. There are these groups beginning to gel around the issue, or have gelled for a long time, that we could kind of help you with, that might not be following webinars. But if you reach out and point them to it, they'll probably respond and come on. So, it's a great question and there are a lot of us who I see on the webinar today who could help you. That's a great way to approach it.

Chris Gift: Okay. Okay. Thank you. I truly appreciate that. That would be very, very useful for us, for me particularly, to get more direct feedback on the actual implementation itself. Is it useful? Does it work? Do we need to change things here and there? Anyway, so I'll definitely do that and I'll reach out to people.

Kathy Kleinman: Great idea. Thank you.

Margie Milam: Lynn, did you want to comment on her question related to communications?

Lynn Goodendorf: I just think that's a great idea and I have definitely written that down as an addition to our audiences. And like with Chris, I think we'd love to work with people who are on this webinar in making sure we're reaching the right people with our efforts.

Margie Milam: Great. Thank you, Lynn. Thank you, Kathy. And now I turn to Bruce Tonkin.

Bruce Tonkin: Thank you. Margie, can you hear me?

Margie Milam: Yes, we can.

Bruce Tonkin: That's good. I just wanted to follow up a little bit on some of the concerns that Steve Metalitz raised just regarding timing of the GNSO process. I think from a principal stage we're starting with a closed working group, so the membership is closed and it's deliberately done that way to try and have a focus group of people of experts that can reach convergence on an essentially workable set of proposals. And it's not that dissimilar to the process that we used for the trademark protections and that were used in an expert group called the IRT Group. But then we sent it to the GNSO for refinement, and I guess a more open process where pretty much any member of the (inaudible) stakeholder community can join.

So, I think the principle of sending it to the GNSO is that it can have an open working group model, but I think the key, though, and when we did the trademark (inaudible), we actually gave a time [limit], I believe, and I think it was probably quite tight at the time. It might have been 30 days or similar. And the GNSO did actually get together and come back with feedback very quickly.

So, I think what's key in this step is if, assuming the Expert Group produces a workable report, that we would ask the GNSO to look at that within a set time frame, and I think the Board would work with the GNSO Council to agree on a suitable time frame. And then if resolution can't be reached by the GNSO within that time frame, then I think it comes back into the Board in the staff's court, and there are mechanisms in the new registrar agreement, at least, and presumably in the new registry agreement, for the Board

to actually undergo a process to make changes to those agreements, and so we'd use another mechanism.

So, I think just to sort of set expectations, and this is just a personal view, I don't think the approach would be just to leave it open-ended and to throw it out to the GNSO and say come back in 2017, using your date. I think it's more likely to be come back within a certain date and if you've reached resolution, that's great, we've got a policy we can approve. But if you haven't reached resolution, then the Board's got some other mechanisms they can use. Hopefully, that helps a bit.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Bruce. We'll turn now to Amr.

Amr Elsadr: Hi, this is Amr. I just want to say I'm fairly new to the process here. Really grateful for the webinar. It's very informative, really great. Thank you all. My question is regarding the global WHOIS search, and on one hand my impression is this is sort of an interface, where someone could search the global WHOIS data. On the other hand, I've heard mention of a centralizing of information, and that confused me a little bit. So, would you mind just repeating again how this portal would work? Is it just an interface or is it actually a collection of data and information? Thanks.

Chris Gift: Yeah, sure. Amr, this is Chris Gift. I'll go ahead and respond to that. It's a great question and the answer is I don't know yet. I'd rather -- the way we're looking, I'd rather do the former. In other words, have it as an interface to existing search mechanisms that are out there and it's just a centralized means, or a means of just collecting those in the one place and having a simplified view into that. Having a central data repository of all WHOIS records seems impractical, but we haven't -- we're working on that implementation -- not the implementation, but the requirements and how we could implement this requirement. So, we're working on that right now trying to figure out the best means. But we're certainly leaning towards the former if at all possible. Does that answer your question?

Amr Elsadr: I guess in a way. I'm assuming you guys haven't made up your mind yet?

Chris Gift: No, we haven't made up our mind yet. We're working on requirements. The finalized requirements are going to be end of July, and then as we're just posting right now, and I'm going to try to pull all those dates in so that I can have them out to the community and we can have these discussions again in a better time frame, so it's not mid-summer, when everybody is out. So, we have not made up our mind. We're still working on that right now and when we do and have a proposal, we will definitely come back to the community and seek input.

Amr Elsadr: All right, thanks. Appreciate it.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Chris. Amr, I can also perhaps answer from a different perspective as well, that the Expert Working Group is looking at all models at the moment. Because as it looks at this issue from a clean slate perspective as opposed to looking at the legacy system, one of the options on the table is to look at it from a centralized perspective, and that is something that the Expert Working Group had asked questions about in its session in Beijing a few weeks ago. And so that might be where you had some of the confusion, because there has been discussion about it. But that would be something that might be part of the new system versus what Chris is working on, which is dealing with existing systems and what's currently available.

Amr Elsadr: Okay, thanks.

Margie Milam: Great, excellent. I next have Carlton in the queue.

Carlton Samuels: Yes, hi. Carlton. I want to echo the previous speakers about the congratulations to the WHOIS Review Team and my delight to see some things are happening with the report. A couple or three things. The first one, I want to endorse Kathy Kleinman's recommendation for the outreach case to data commissioners. I tell you why. The historical situation is that data protection laws tend to be only one place, but they have spread all over the world. And if you look at them, I've been tracking them, because I'm interested. But one of the things that you see is that there are common themes in them, but some of the details are definitely different, even with long established data protection regimes. For example, in Europe, the UK seems to have some slight differences in how it's interpreted. Of course, they could have serious impact, so I quite agree with Kathy, the data commissioners should be a part of any outreach and we should make a sustained effort to get to them.

Olivier mentioned the issue about privacy proxy and wanted to know they were, and to my mind that's a very important issue. Because if there is going to be a privacy proxy [regime], an official privacy proxy regime, I would imagine and I would think that all of the other requirements and specifications would still be incumbent in them. For example, the accuracy standard, and here again I agree the accuracy standard certainly has to be contactable WHOIS record. So, it seems to me that whatever the specifications for accuracy that would be adopted, the privacy proxy providers who would be licensed -- or maybe not licensed but certainly accredited, who would have to obey them. And my perspective, of course, is that to ensure that they are obeyed, they must be in the regime, a requirement for strict liability for that proxy and privacy provider.

One other thing, the issue of centralized and how it might be useful to the community. As Marge pointed out, we have been looking -- I'm a member of the Expert Working Group, we've been looking at that. It's come up quite often and certainly I would encourage all of you who you would have seen by now from the Beijing meeting, a requirement, an opportunity to help the review, the expert team thinking about this by submitting questions or information that you think might be useful.

There was a publication that gave an e-mail address and so on. I would urge you to use it and let your voices be heard. We are really very interested in hearing from members of the community who have spent a lot of time thinking about this, what it is, so that we don't get too much of a navel-gazing attitude in this area especially. Thank you.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Carlton. It looks like I have addressed everyone in the queue. Is there anyone else with questions? Okay, I'm sorry, did I hear someone?

Cheryl Langdon-Orr: Cheryl Langdon-Orr here. I just put a couple of things into -- comments rather than questions into the Q&A. I just wondered if, like, Alan Greenberg, what I'm seeing in my QA pod is not being reflected in the master. And if so, you may have missed other questions.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Cheryl. For some reason I can't see the Q&A. I don't understand technically what happens. Normally, that's accessible to the presenters. Would you be so kind as to read your question?

Cheryl Langdon-Orr: Sure, happy to do so. Cheryl Langdon-Orr, for the record. I was just saying thanks, indeed. This has been an excellent presentation, I must say, to Lynn and I would now add Chris. I trust this, in other words, recording, etc., will also be subject to your communication and outreach process at least insofar as going to the ICANN and (inaudible) communities interested. So, that was put in this early on, but (inaudible) that issue as well.

And specifically in response to Chris, while he was in deliberations in response to other issues raised, I did say that I thought that informal outreach, but that it should be proactive as well as the information and feedback mode towards the end of his processes would be perfectly fine, from my personal point of view, at least. But my main concern was that you may have in fact missed other bits from other people.

Carlton Samuels: This is Carlton. I just want to tell you the test in the Q&A that is on my screen and asks anyone to respond to me, and I have not seen any response, and neither have I seen anything from anyone else. So, there is something wrong with the Q&A tablet.

Margie Milam: Okay. Do we have Steve back in the queue, Steve Metalitz? I saw your hand raised.

Steve Metalitz: Yes. Yes, thank you. If I could, I just want to underscore what I heard from Oliver and Carlton and others about this proxy, the issue of accuracy of the data of the customer of the proxy service, if you will. I think that's the language that's used in the RAA draft. It strikes me this is an extremely important question and one that has to be addressed in the accreditation process, but it shouldn't be -- we shouldn't have to wait for a PDP that hasn't even started on the accreditation process to address this question. It just seems, unless there is some responsibility to make sure that the information of the customer, once it's appropriately made public or made available through a responsible proxy service, that that be accurate information. It really needs to be treated at that point like registered nameholder data.

So, I would encourage folks to look at that in the draft RAA that is up for comment now, because unless that is adequately addressed, I think most of the forward steps that are taken in the RAA and elsewhere to improving WHOIS accuracy will be seriously undermined. You know, just provide a path for people who still don't want to be contactable under any circumstances, to provide inaccurate data to the proxy provider. And then there will be no recourse at all, since that's not considered registered nameholder data.

So, I would encourage that we look at that topic sooner rather than later in order to really achieve the objectives of the WHOIS accuracy, which I think were the thrust of the review team report and also very much underlying the Board resolution. Thank you very much.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Steve. I have Volker in the queue.

Volker Greimann: Yes, just to quickly respond to Steve's question or comments here. The thing is that any change of WHOIS data will also trigger validation and verification of the new data. So, if the privacy service removes itself from the WHOIS, the new data will be checked and validated by the registrar, according to the terms of the new RAA, leading to deactivation of the domain name or at least further consequences when this validation and verification fails.

Margie Milam: Thank you, Volker. Any further questions? Bruce, is that your hand up? Bruce? It looks like Bruce doesn't have a question.

Volker Greimann: It's from the last round, I think.

Margie Milam: Okay. Well, if there aren't any further questions, it looks like we'll be wrapping up this session. We want to thank you very much for participating in the webinar, and wanted to let you know that the recordings and the slides and the transcript will be made available. Thank you very much for listening in on this important topic and for your interest. Bye-bye.