



## **2006 Report on Implementation of the Whois Data Reminder Policy**

**30 November 2006**

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## Executive Summary

Since 31 October 2003, all ICANN-accredited registrars have been obliged to comply with the "Whois Data Reminder Policy" (WDRP - <http://www.icann.org/registrars/wdrp.htm>). The WDRP is intended to improve the accuracy of Whois data by requiring registrars to send an annual reminder to registrants to keep their Whois records up to date. The *2006 Report on Implementation of the Whois Data Reminder Policy* provides information on the WDRP for the period between December 2005 and November 2006. It is a statistical and narrative summary of experiences with the WDRP which describes the implementation status of the policy, registrar compliance, problems encountered and impact on the accuracy of Whois data. The report uses a variety of means to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the WDRP, including results from the "Whois Data Reminder Policy Survey and Compliance Audit" that was sent to all ICANN-accredited registrars in October 2006.

Overall compliance with the WDRP is strong, and has further shown improvement on the compliance findings of 2005.<sup>1</sup>

The following are key findings of the 2006 report on the WDRP:

- 87% of ICANN-accredited registrars participated in the 2006 WDRP survey;
- 303 more registrars responded in 2006 to the survey than in 2005, reflecting increased participation and a larger registrar marketplace;
- Registrar compliance with the WDRP's requirement to send registrants reminder notices has remained strong overall;
- Compliance with the form and content requirements for reminder notices sent by registrars has improved, although there remains room for further improvement;
- The inability of registrars to track responses to WDRP notices has hampered ICANN's ability to measure the effectiveness of the policy.

This year as in previous years, registrars were asked to share their experiences with the WDRP in a part of the survey that allowed for free form input. Registrars taking the opportunity to provide their own comments reported largely positive experiences in their implementation of the WDRP. The most frequently cited problem with the WDRP involved concerns that WDRP notices are confused with SPAM by recipients and SPAM blocking software. However, it appears that registrants are becoming more accustomed to receiving WDRP notices.

Regarding the WDRP's impact on the accuracy of Whois data, the survey results indicate that WDRP notices lead to some changes in registrant data. The precise extent to which the WDRP has improved Whois accuracy can only be inferred from the high rate of compliance with the policy.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2005 report is available online at <http://www.icann.org/whois/wdrp-survey-report-30nov05.pdf>.

## Introduction

This report summarizes various community members' experiences with implementation of the Whois Data Reminder Policy (WDRP) from December 2005 to November 2006. The WDRP (<http://www.icann.org/registrars/wdrp.htm>) was adopted by ICANN as a consensus policy on 27 March 2003. The policy is intended to improve the accuracy of Whois data by sending an annual reminder to registrants to keep their Whois records up to date. The WDRP requires registrars to contact registrants annually with the current Whois information for each registration and remind registrants that the provision of false data can be grounds for cancellation of a registration. Registrants are asked to review their Whois data and make any necessary corrections.

For the last two years, ICANN has published reports on implementation of the Whois Data Reminder Policy in accordance with Amendment 6 to its Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Department of Commerce (DOC). (<http://www.icann.org/general/amend6-jpamou-17sep03.htm>). Although the Joint Project Agreement made effective between ICANN and the DOC on 29 September 2006 no longer requires publication of this report, ICANN continues to monitor registrar compliance with the WDRP and will continue to publish its findings on a periodic basis.

This report describes the requirements relating to Whois data and the WDRP and provides statistical and narrative information on implementation status, registrar compliance, problems encountered, emerging practices and possible impact on Whois accuracy.

ICANN would like to express its appreciation to the many registrars and other stakeholders who participated in the "Whois Data Reminder Policy Survey and Compliance Audit" in October and November 2006. The experiences and insight they shared are the central component of this report.

## I. WDRP Requirements

The WDRP was adopted as a consensus policy on 27 March 2003 by ICANN's Board of Directors in [resolution 03.41](#) by a 13-1-0 vote. All ICANN-accredited registrars must comply with the WDRP with respect to registrations they sponsor in all generic top-level domains for which they are accredited.

The WDRP was one of [four policies](#) concerning Whois issues that the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council recommended be established as consensus policies. The GNSO Council and Board votes were based on the [Final Report of the GNSO Council's Whois Task Force on Whois Data Accuracy and Bulk Access](#) (GNSO Whois Report). That report documented [the extent of agreement and disagreement among impacted groups](#), the outreach process used to achieve adequate representation of the views of groups that were likely to be impacted, and the [nature](#)

[and intensity of reasoned support and opposition to the proposed policy](#). The GNSO Whois Report was posted on the ICANN web site on 11 March 2003, with a call for public comment. [Various public comments](#) were received and considered by the Board. The report was discussed at the [ICANN Public Forum session held in Rio de Janeiro on 26 March 2003](#), prior to its adoption by the Board the following day.

On 16 June 2003, ICANN provided notice of adoption of the Policy to all registrars and posted the "Whois Data Reminder Policy" (<http://www.icann.org/registrars/wdrp.htm>), a copy of which is contained in Appendix A. All registrars were required to come into compliance with the WDRP by a specific "Compliance Date." The Compliance Date for registrars accredited before 16 June 2003 was 31 October 2003. The Compliance Date for registrars accredited since 16 June 2003 is the effective date of their accreditation agreements. Accordingly, all registrars are now required to comply with the WDRP.

Pursuant to the WDRP, each registrar must provide, before the passage of the anniversary of the creation date of each registration under its sponsorship, a WDRP notice (also called a "reminder notice") to the registrant. The notice must include a copy of the data elements contained in the registrar's database for that registration (as specified in the [Registrar Accreditation Agreement \(RAA\) at subsection 3.3.1](#)). The notice must also include a statement reminding the registrant that under the terms of its registration agreement, [the provision of false Whois information can be grounds for cancellation of the domain name registration](#).<sup>2</sup>

A WDRP notice can be presented via web, fax, postal mail, email, or other appropriate means. It can be presented in one or more languages, including at least the language of the registration agreement. The notice may be presented to the registrant either directly or through the administrative contact for each registration.

Registrars [must maintain](#) either copies of each WDRP notice or an electronic database documenting the date and time, and the content, of each WDRP notice sent under this policy. Registrars are required to [make these records available for inspection by ICANN](#) in accordance with the RAA. ICANN will consider proper notification to have been given for a registration if the registrar can show that a WDRP notice meeting the requirements described above was given at any time in the year before each anniversary of the registration's creation date. A [Model WDRP Notice](#) was posted along with the Policy and is contained at the end of Appendix A to this Report. The sections of the Registration Accreditation Agreement on Whois-related obligations of registrars are reproduced in Appendix B of this report.

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<sup>2</sup> As noted above, section 3.7.7.2 of the RAA provides that a registrant's "willful provision of inaccurate or unreliable information, its willful failure promptly to update information provided to Registrar, or its failure to respond for over fifteen calendar days to inquiries by Registrar concerning the accuracy of contact details associated with the . . . registration shall constitute a material breach of the [agreement] . . . and be a basis for cancellation" of the domain name.

## II. Methodology

This report was prepared based on information obtained through a survey emailed to all ICANN-accredited registrars. The 2006 survey questionnaire was similar to that of 2005.

The survey was designed to elicit important information about registrar implementation of and compliance with the WDRP. The questions covered:

- The size of the registrar;
- The percentage of registrations for which WDRP notices had been sent;
- The primary and secondary methods of transmitting the notices;
- The percent of notices that were undeliverable;
- The language(s) in which the notices were sent;
- The percent of notices that led to changes in registrant data; and
- The fields that were most frequently changed.

The survey invited registrars to use a free text box to describe any problems they encountered during implementation and to provide any suggestions for improving the WDRP or the accuracy of Whois data generally. Registrars were also asked to provide a sample copy of an actual notice to ICANN for review for compliance with the WDRP requirements. A copy of the survey is contained in Appendix C.

## III. Survey Participation

All currently accredited registrars are required to comply with the WDRP.

As part of the WDRP's requirements, registrars are required to provide each registrant with a reminder notice containing the relevant Whois data before the anniversary of the creation date of each registration. All registrations more than one year old should therefore have already been the subject of a notice. Newer registrations are not required to be the subject of a notice until just before the one-year anniversary of their creation date.

A total of 747 registrars (87% of all ICANN-accredited registrars) responded to the 2006 Whois Data Reminder Policy Survey and Compliance Audit. These registrars are responsible for approximately 92% of all gTLD domain names. Compared to last year's response rate (85% or 444 registrars), the additional participation of 303 registrars this year represents a marked improvement over last year. Twenty-one of the twenty-five largest registrars participated in the survey this year, representing among them an estimated 91% of all gTLD registrations.

Size of Registrar	Number of	Total Number	Percentage of
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		Registrars Responding	of Registrars in Category	Registrars Responding per Category
Registrar participation in the 2006 WDRP Survey by size of registrar	0 names	261	281	92.9%
	1 - 999 names	170	206	82.5%
	1,000 - 9,999 names	216	243	88.9%
	10,000 - 99,999 names	41	61	67.2%
	100,000 - 999,999 names	47	55	85.5%
	1,000,000+ names	12	13	92.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>87.0%</b>

While ICANN is pleased that this year's survey response rate increased over last year's, the number of non-responsive registrars remains a focus for contractual compliance follow-up.

As part of last year's WDRP compliance data collection, ICANN distributed surveys to registrars via email twice before the close of the survey and publication of the 2005 Report on Implementation of the Whois Data Reminder Policy. In continuance of ICANN's efforts to assess compliance, staff notified the 79 non-responsive registrars via email that they would have a second opportunity to complete the survey, extending the deadline to respond until 31 January 2006. Among those 79 registrars, ICANN observed a 41% response rate by the extended deadline. Compliance staff then contacted the remaining non-responsive registrars again by email, fax, and telephone. An additional 33 registrars responded after this third attempt. Of the remaining 14 registrars, 11 responded following a fourth attempt, one was deaccredited, and two did not respond. Through this compliance effort, ICANN observed that an appreciable number of registrars required more than one notice before they provided the requested survey information. In addition, staff discovered that a significant number of registrars – approximately 6% – had outdated contact information. These registrars have provided updated contact information to ICANN.

## IV. Registrar Compliance

Compliance with the WDRP was assessed using two sources: the survey responses and the actual WDRP notices that were provided to ICANN. The survey was designed to measure two primary compliance benchmarks; specifically, whether required WDRP notices were transmitted to registrants and whether the notices contained the substantive items required by the WDRP.

### Notification Requirement

Of the 482 registrars who had gTLD names under management for at least a year and could determine the number of WDRP notices sent to registrants, 471 (98%) reported sending the notices this year. Of all registrars who reported that they had not sent WDRP notices this year, 97% had legitimate explanations for not doing so. For

example, a registrar may have been in operation for less than a year or had no registrations under its management for a full year. Accordingly, only nine respondents (less than 1% of all responding registrars) who were obligated to send WDRP notices wholly failed to do so. Of these, five cited technical difficulties, one cited legal concerns related to privacy laws that were being addressed, and three apparently misunderstood the question. In nearly all instances, the registrar expressed that it intends to comply with the WDRP going forward.

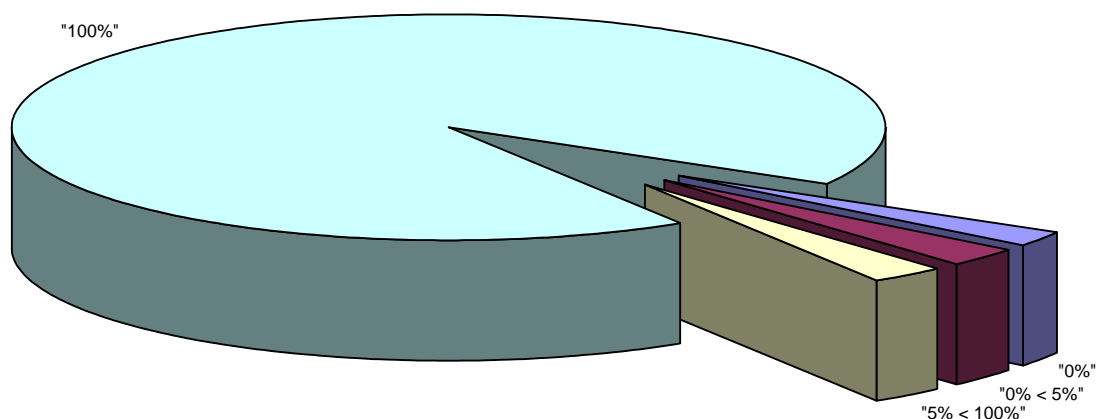
The survey results indicate a continued positive trend in compliance with regard to the WDRP's notification requirement. Compared to last year, only a very small number of registrars were unable to determine how many WDRP notices, if any, they sent. In 2005, ICANN reported that 7% of responding registrars were unable to determine the number of WDRP notices sent. This year, less than one half of one percent of registrars were similarly unable to provide statistics about their compliance with the WDRP's notification requirement.

As well as asking whether or not WDRP notices were sent, the survey also asked registrars to approximate the percentage of notices sent in relation to the number of registrations sponsored by that registrar. The questionnaire allowed registrars to indicate if (a) 0% of registrants had been sent WDRP notices, (b) less than 5%, (c) at least 5% but less than 100%, or (d) 100%. (As noted above, registrars also had the option to indicate that they were unable to determine the number of WDRP notices sent.)

When those registrars not yet obligated to send WDRP notices were removed from the data set, a great majority (92%) of the remaining registrars reported that they had sent notices to 100% of their registrants. Three percent (3%) of obligated registrars sent notices to at least 5% but less than 100% of registrants, and three percent (3%) sent notices to less than 5% of registrants. Approximately two percent (2%) of obligated registrars sent no WDRP notices to their registrants and less than one percent (1%) were unable to determine how many notices were sent. This data is illustrated below.



**Registrants Sent WDRP Notices**  
(by registrars required to send notices)



Of the registrars obligated to send WDRP notices, the following table details the number of notices sent, according to registrar size .

Registrar Size	Percentage Of Registrants To Whom WDRP Notices Were Sent					Total
	<5%	<100%	100%	unknown	no notices	
< 1,000 names		1	167		2	170
1,000 - 9,999 names	10		199	3	4	216
10,000 - 99,999 names		3	34	1	3	41
100,000 - 999,999 names	3	9	33		2	47
1,000,000+ names			12			12
Total	13	13	445	4	11	486

Of the 26 registrars who reported sending a number of WDRP notices less than 100%, 10 provided legitimate explanations for their responses, 9 provided answers that demonstrated confusion with the question, 6 reported technical challenges that were being resolved, and one reported that it was intentionally not complying with the WDRP in specific, limited circumstances.

Registrars responding to the survey were also asked to identify their primary means for communicating WDRP notices. As in previous years, email proved to be the most

commonly used method. Several registrars sent email notices to registrants asking them to visit a web site to validate Whois information. The following table depicts the WDRP notice communication methods used by registrars.

Registrars		
<b>web</b>	2.1% (10)	Primary method of communicating WDRP notices, by percentage of registrars using each method.
<b>fax</b>	0.0% (0)	
<b>post</b>	0.2% (1)	
<b>email</b>	97.7% (464)	
<b>other</b>	0.0% (0)	
<b>Total</b>	100.0% (475)	

This year registrars were also able to indicate a secondary method for communication of WDRP notices. Their responses are provided in the table below.

Registrars		
<b>web</b>	15.6% (24)	Secondary method of communicating WDRP notices, among registrars indicating use of a secondary method.
<b>fax</b>	3.9% (6)	
<b>post</b>	5.8% (9)	
<b>email</b>	66.2% (102)	
<b>other</b>	8.4% (13)	
<b>Total</b>	100.0% <sup>3</sup> (154)	

Registrars were asked to indicate the percentage of WDRP notices that were returned as undeliverable in order to evaluate the potential effectiveness of each method of communication. A comparison by method of communication is provided.

Primary Method of Sending	Percent of WDRP Notices that were Undeliverable					
	<1%	<10%	<50%	50%+	unknown	Total
web	8	1		1		10
fax						
post	1					1
email	31	155	13		265	464
other						0
Total	40	156	13	1	265	475

It appears from this data that most messages were received by registrants, but the vast majority of responding registrars indicated that they were unable to count undeliverable messages. As demonstrated, around half of registrars were able to measure the success of their communications attempts. Although not a requirement of the WDRP, greater efforts by registrars to monitor communication effectiveness would contribute to a more reliable evaluation of the WDRP's effectiveness overall.

<sup>3</sup> Percentages may not appear to add up to 100% due to rounding.  
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## Content of Notices

Registrars were asked to send a copy of an actual WDRP notice to ICANN for review. As noted above, each WDRP notice must contain: (i) a copy of the data elements listed in Section 3.3.1 of the RAA and (ii) a statement reminding the registrant that the provision of false Whois information can be grounds for cancellation of a domain name registration. Section 3.3.1 requires the following data elements: the domain name; the primary name server and secondary name server(s); the identity of the registrar; the original creation date of the registration; the expiration date of the registration; the name and postal address of the registrant; the name, postal address, email address, voice telephone number, and (where available) fax number of the technical contact for the domain name; and the name, postal address, email address, voice telephone number, and (where available) fax number of the administrative contact for the domain name.

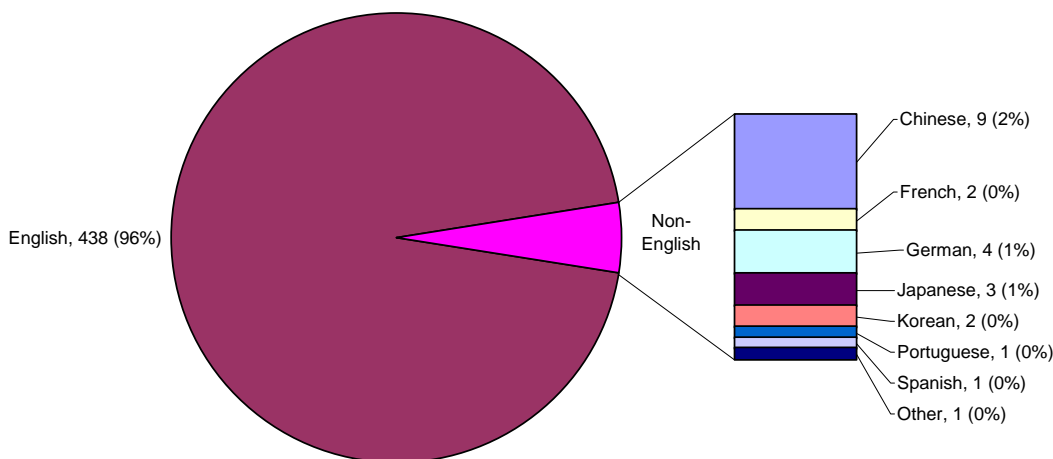
Five hundred thirty-four (534) registrars – about 71% of those responding to the survey – followed the survey's instruction to provide a sample WDRP notice. (Compared to last year's rate of 34%, this reflects an additional submission of 383 exemplar notices.) The samples were examined to determine whether they complied with the WDRP requirements stated above, including providing the registrant with the current Whois data by actual text or a link and providing a warning to the registrant that provision of false Whois data could be grounds for cancellation of the domain name.

In reviewing the sample WDRP notices provided, ICANN discovered that approximately 18% of notices did not comply with the requirements of the WDRP. In 91 cases, registrars did not provide the requisite Whois data, in five instances, the registrant was not warned of the consequences of providing false contact data, and in one case, neither requirement was met. Upon closer review, it was determined that 88 of the non-compliant notices were originated by one provider of back-end registrar services. This provider has assured ICANN that its WDRP notices have been modified to conform to the requirements of the WDRP. ICANN's compliance staff is currently working with the other non-compliant registrars to address the remaining issues raised through this audit.

## Language of WDRP Notices

Registrars reported transmitting WDRP notices in several languages, with English being the most common. The following chart details the primary language(s) used by registrars in transmitting WDRP notices.

#### WDRP Notice Primary Language



## V. Registrar Comments

Registrars responding to the survey had the option to provide a description of any problems encountered throughout the WDRP process. In total, 69 registrars took the opportunity to provide substantive comments. Over half of these respondents (37) indicated there were no problems, while others raised concerns or made suggestions for improvement. Highlights of these survey responses are provided below.

### Consumer Concerns

As in the past, SPAM remains one of the most frequently cited concerns about the WDRP. Four registrars complained that, by sending a large number of email notices and notices containing links to web pages, messages were frequently caught by users' SPAM filters, preventing communication of the notices. One registrar noted that some registrants distrust notices received by postal mail due to consumer awareness of potential registration renewal notice scams.

As in previous years, a couple registrars complained this year about perceived redundancy in emailing one WDRP notice per domain name when an individual registrant might hold dozens or even thousands of registrations. Some registrars have addressed the problem by emailing registrants with a link that provides Whois data for all of the associated registrations, while other registrars have included multiple domain

name Whois records in WDRP notices. To be clear, the WDRP does not require that each registration result in a unique WDRP notice.

One registrar observed that consumers do not generally see value in receiving WDRP notices. Another registrar commented that “many customers are irritated by Whois Data Reminders.” Calling the WDRP a “waste of time and resources for registrars and their customers,” one registrar recommended that the WDRP be repealed.

After initiating its WDRP survey last year, ICANN received a number of inquiries from consumers who received WDRP notices that contained confusing registrar contact information or came from an <icann@\_\_\_\_> email address. ICANN recommended that registrars avoid use of icann@ email addresses and provide clearer contact information as well as a link to ICANN's WDRP FAQ page. Several registrars voluntarily complied.

This year, ICANN staff received considerably fewer questions from registrants related to confusing WDRP notices. A couple registrars also reported that it appears consumers are becoming more accustomed to receiving WDRP notices.

#### Concerns Applicable to Specific Registrar Business Models

In responding to previous WDRP surveys, several registrars reported difficulty in implementing the WDRP where resellers serviced accounts. This year, a couple registrars repeated that comment, but another reported that it had successfully implemented a system of distributing WDRP notices to the customers of its resellers. Another registrar observed that it was occasionally difficult to answer registrant questions about the WDRP notices where the registrant (and ostensibly, the reseller) spoke a primary language other than that of the registrar.

One registrar pointed out that names registered through “delete pools” are most likely to have “inadequate” Whois data.

#### Other Issues & Suggestions

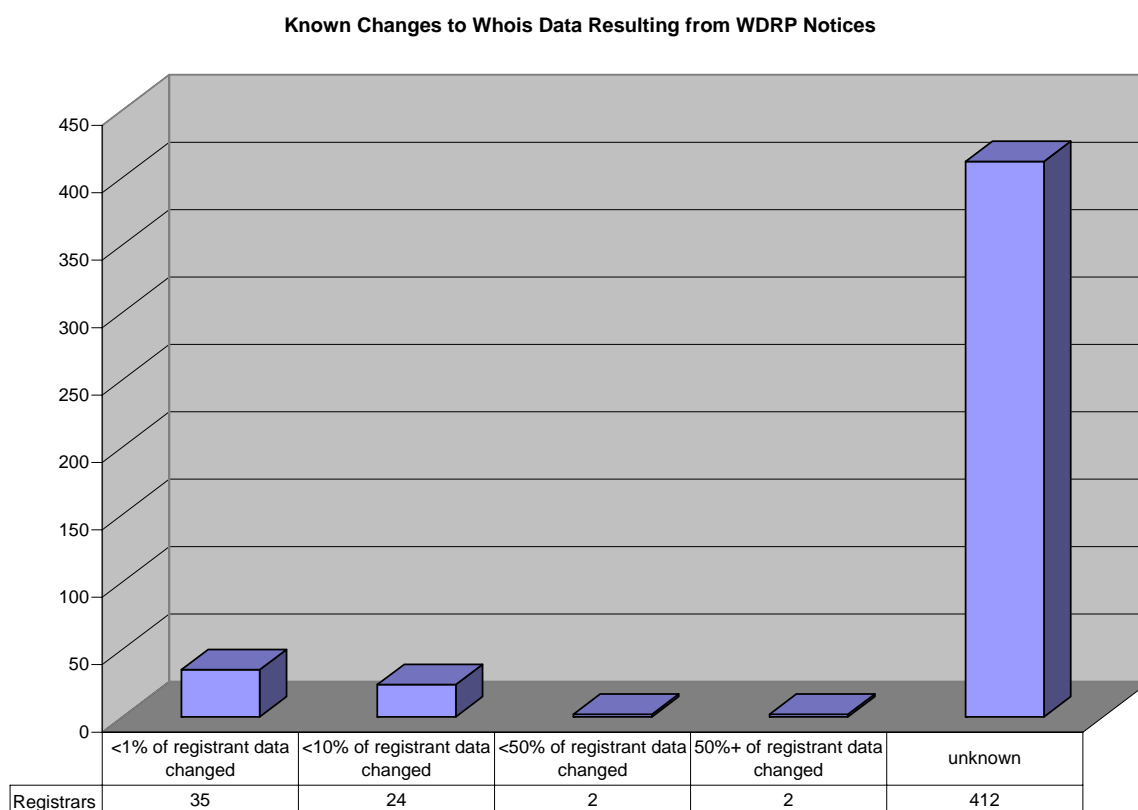
Although not all were directly related to the WDRP, several registrars raised concerns about the use of “privacy services” in their survey responses. In particular, one respondent noted that customers may be confused when presented with the contact data of a proxy-registrant, adding that it now presents its privacy service customers with both the customer contact information and the proxy's contact information. Another registrar suggested that registrars should not be permitted to offer proxy registration services.

As a procedural suggestion, one registrar expressed that registrars in compliance with the WDRP should not have to complete ICANN's annual survey each year since their answers will rarely change from one year to the next.

ICANN is reviewing the feedback received through this survey with a view toward improvement in processes and communication with both registrars and registrants.

## VI. Impact on Accuracy

When asked to what extent WDRP notices improved Whois data accuracy, Registrars responded most frequently that they did not know or were unable to determine this information. Approximately 87% of responding registrars said they could not track the changes resulting from the WDRP notices. Changes resulting from WDRP notices that were tracked by registrars are reported below.



Just as most registrars had not tracked the number of changes resulting from WDRP notices, when asked which registration fields changed most frequently in response to WDRP notices, most registrars were similarly unable to answer. In fact, 91% of responding registrars answered with “unable to determine” when asked which Whois fields were changed most frequently. Among registrars who did have tracking data, 23 found the registrant fields to be the most frequently changed, 17 found the administrative contact fields to be most frequently changed, and 1 found that most changes were made to the technical contact fields.

Because so little information is available about the resulting changes to registrant data following WDRP notifications, it is difficult to measure, statistically, the effectiveness of the WDRP on Whois data accuracy. ICANN encourages all registrars to do a more comprehensive job of tracking response rates to WDRP notices in the future.

## VII. Conclusions

Several positive improvements were shown in this year's WDRP survey. In particular, registrar participation in the survey again improved over last year, and compliance efforts by registrars, overall, have been strong. Among the registrars able to track responses to their WDRP notices, only about 6% observed changes to over 10% of their registrant data although 44% observed changes to at least 1% of their registrant data. As a result, Whois data accuracy is believed to be improved, but technical limitations in tracking WDRP notification results have made meaningful analysis difficult.

While compliance among registrars responding to this survey has been very good, ICANN is mindful of the possibility that non-responsive registrars may not be complying with the WDRP. Continued success in improving Whois data accuracy will depend on increased compliance with the policy and a strengthened commitment by registrars to the process of evaluating the effectiveness of the WDRP. For its part, ICANN will continue to monitor compliance with the WDRP through follow-up to this survey and compliance testing during the registrar accreditation renewal process. Over the last year, ICANN has appointed two staff members to its Compliance Department. These new team members will help augment ICANN's ability to test compliance with the WDRP as well as other provisions in the RAA and consensus policies aimed at improving Whois data accuracy.

## Appendix A - Whois Data Reminder Policy

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### Whois Data Reminder Policy

- At least annually, a registrar must present to the registrant the current Whois information, and remind the registrant that provision of false Whois information can be grounds for cancellation of their domain name registration. Registrants must review their Whois data, and make any corrections.
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#### Notes

**Introduction:** The Whois Data Reminder Policy (WDRP) was adopted by ICANN as a consensus policy on 27 March 2003. All ICANN-accredited registrars must comply with the WDRP with respect to registrations they sponsor in all top-level domains for which they are accredited. Details of compliance requirements are provided below.

**Process by Which the Policy Was Adopted:** The WDRP was established as a consensus policy by ICANN Board [resolution 03.41](#), which was adopted by a [13-1-0 vote by ICANN's Board of Directors on 27 March 2003](#). It was one of [four policies](#) concerning Whois issues that the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council, by a [21-3-0 vote on 20 February 2003](#), recommended be established as consensus policies.

The GNSO Council and Board votes were based on the [Final Report of the GNSO Council's Whois Task Force on Whois Data Accuracy and Bulk Access](#). That report documented [the extent of agreement and disagreement among impacted groups](#), the [outreach process](#) used to seek to achieve adequate representation of the views of groups that are likely to be impacted, and the [nature and intensity of reasoned support and opposition to the proposed policy](#).

The report was posted on the ICANN web site on 11 March 2003, with a call for public comment. [Various public comments](#) were received and considered by the Board, and the report was discussed at the [ICANN Public Forum session held in Rio de Janeiro on 26 March 2003](#).

Pursuant to [Resolution 03.42](#), notice of the adoption of this policy was given to all registrars on 16 June 2003.



**Time for Coming into Compliance:** As provided in subsections [3.7.8](#), [4.1](#) and [4.4](#) of [the ICANN Registrar Accreditation Agreement](#), all ICANN-accredited registrars must come into compliance with the WDRP by their "Compliance Date", as described in the next two sentences. The Compliance Date for registrars accredited before 16 June 2003 is 31 October 2003. The Compliance Date for registrars accredited after 16 June 2003 is the effective date of their accreditation agreements.

Beginning on its Compliance Date, each registrar must provide, before the passage of the anniversary of the creation date of each registration the registrar sponsors, a WDRP Notice (described below) to the registrant for that registration. By way of example, a registrar with a Compliance Date of 31 October 2003 is required to give a WDRP notice for registrations it sponsors on the following schedule:

<b>Compliance Date is 31 October 2003</b>		
<b>Domain Name</b>	<b>Creation Date</b>	<b>WDRP Notice Required No Later Than</b>
example.com	14 October 1995	14 October 2004 (and by 14 October of every year thereafter)
example.biz	25 June 2003	25 June 2004 (and by 25 June of every year thereafter)
example.info	15 June 2003	15 June 2004 (and by 15 June of every year thereafter)
example.net	12 November 1997	12 November 2003 (and by 12 November of every year thereafter)
example.org	1 January 1993	1 January 2004 (and by 1 January of every year thereafter)
example.example.name	31 December 2002	31 December 2003 (and by 31 December of every year thereafter)

(Note: WDRP Notices for registrations with creation dates of 29 February may be given no later than 1 March in non-leap years.)

**What the WDRP Notice Must Include:** Each WDRP notice must include a copy of the data elements listed in [RAA subsection 3.3.1](#) as contained in the registrar's database for each registration, plus a statement reminding the registrant that under the terms of the registration agreement [the provision of false Whois information can be grounds for cancellation of a domain name registration](#).

**How, and to Whom, the WDRP Notice May Be Presented:** The WDRP Notice can be presented via web, fax, postal mail, e-mail, or other appropriate means. It can be presented in one or more languages, including at least the language of the registration agreement. The Notice may be presented to the registrant either directly or through the administrative contact for each registration.

**Documentation Requirements:** Registrars [must maintain](#) either copies of each WDRP Notice or an electronic database documenting the date and time, and the content, of each WDRP notice sent under this policy. Registrars shall [make these records available for inspection by ICANN](#) in accordance with the usual terms of the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. ICANN will consider proper notification to have been given for a registration if the registrar can show that a WDRP Notice meeting the requirements stated above was given at any time in the year before each anniversary of the registration's creation date (for anniversary dates on or after the Compliance Date).

**Model WDRP Notice:** In order to assist registrars in preparing the required notice, ICANN has provided the following [Model WDRP Notice](#):

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### [Sample] Whois Data Reminder

Dear Valued Customer,

This message is a reminder to help you keep the contact data associated with your domain registration up-to-date. Our records include the following information:

Domain: example.com  
Registrar Name: IANA\_RESERVED

Registrant:  
Name: Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)  
Address: 4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330  
City: Marina del Rey  
State/Province: CA  
Country: US  
Postal Code: 92092

Administrative Contact:  
Name: Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)  
Address: 4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330  
City: Marina del Rey

State/Province: CA  
Country: US  
Postal Code: 92092  
Phone: 310-823-9358  
Fax: 310-823-8649  
Email: res-dom@iana.org

Technical Contact:  
Name: Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)  
Address: 4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330  
City: Marina del Rey  
State/Province: CA  
Country: US  
Postal Code: 92092  
Phone: 310-823-9358  
Fax: 310-823-8649  
Email: res-dom@iana.org

Original Creation Date: 11/01/2001  
Expiration Date: 11/01/2001

Nameserver Information:  
Nameserver: a.iana-servers.net.  
Nameserver: b.iana-servers.net.  
Nameserver: c.iana-servers.net.

If any of the information above is inaccurate, you must correct it by visiting our website. (If your review indicates that all of the information above is accurate, you do not need to take any action.) Please remember that under the terms of your registration agreement, the provision of false Whois information can be grounds for cancellation of your domain name registration.

Thank you for your attention.

Best regards,  
Your ICANN-Accredited Registrar

A set of frequently asked questions concerning the WDRP, from the perspective of the registrant, can be found [here](#).

## Appendix B - RAA Whois Requirements

Whois data for generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs) includes information about the registrant, administrative contact, technical contact, and name servers associated with each domain name. Whois services have been available on the Internet since the early 1980s and are widely used. Whois accuracy is important to many users of the Internet.

The Registration Accreditation Agreement (RAA - <http://www.icann.org/registrars/ra-agreement-17may01.htm>) with ICANN-accredited registrars requires registrars to obtain contact information from registrants, provide it to published Whois services, and investigate and correct any reported inaccuracies.

Several provisions of the RAA relate to Whois data:

**“3.3.1** At its expense, Registrar shall provide an interactive web page and a port 43 Whois service providing free public query-based access to up-to-date (i.e., updated at least daily) data concerning all active Registered Names sponsored by Registrar for each TLD in which it is accredited. The data accessible shall consist of elements that are designated from time to time according to an ICANN adopted specification or policy. Until ICANN otherwise specifies by means of an ICANN adopted specification or policy, this data shall consist of the following elements as contained in Registrar's database:

3.3.1.1 The name of the Registered Name;

3.3.1.2 The names of the primary nameserver and secondary nameserver(s) for the Registered Name;

3.3.1.3 The identity of Registrar (which may be provided through Registrar's website);

3.3.1.4 The original creation date of the registration;

3.3.1.5 The expiration date of the registration;

3.3.1.6 The name and postal address of the Registered Name Holder;

3.3.1.7 The name, postal address, email address, voice telephone number, and (where available) fax number of the technical contact for the Registered Name; and

3.3.1.8 The name, postal address, email address, voice telephone number, and (where available) fax number of the administrative contact for the Registered Name.”

**“3.7.7** Registrar shall require all Registered Name Holders to enter into an electronic or paper registration agreement with Registrar including at least the following provisions:

3.7.7.1 The Registered Name Holder shall provide to Registrar accurate and reliable contact details and promptly correct and update them during the term of the Registered Name registration, including: the full name, postal address, email address, voice telephone number, and fax number if available of the Registered Name Holder; name of authorized person for contact purposes in the case of an Registered Name Holder that is an organization, association, or corporation; and the data elements listed in Subsections 3.3.1.2, 3.3.1.7 and 3.3.1.8.

3.7.7.2 A Registered Name Holder's willful provision of inaccurate or unreliable information, its willful failure promptly to update information provided to Registrar, or its failure to respond for over fifteen calendar days to inquiries by Registrar concerning the accuracy of contact details associated with the Registered Name Holder's registration shall constitute a material breach of the Registered Name Holder-registrar contract and be a basis for cancellation of the Registered Name registration.

3.7.7.3 Any Registered Name Holder that intends to license use of a domain name to a third party is nonetheless the Registered Name Holder of record and is responsible for providing its own full contact information and for providing and updating accurate technical and administrative contact information adequate to facilitate timely resolution of any problems that arise in connection with the Registered Name. A Registered Name Holder licensing use of a Registered Name according to this provision shall accept liability for harm caused by wrongful use of the Registered Name, unless it promptly discloses the identity of the licensee to a party providing the Registered Name Holder reasonable evidence of actionable harm.”

**“3.7.8** *Registrar shall abide by any specifications or policies established according to Section 4 requiring reasonable and commercially practicable (a) verification, at the time of registration, of contact information associated with a Registered Name sponsored by Registrar or (b) periodic re-verification of such information (emphasis added).* Registrar shall, upon notification by any person of an inaccuracy in the contact information associated with a Registered Name sponsored by Registrar, take reasonable steps to investigate that claimed inaccuracy. In the event Registrar learns of inaccurate contact information associated with a Registered Name it sponsors, it shall take reasonable steps to correct that inaccuracy.”

In summary, and based on the above provisions of the RAA, a registrar must:

- Require each registrant to submit (and keep updated) accurate contact details (3.7.7.1);
- Provide both a web-based and Port 43 Whois service providing access to complete contact information for all TLDs covered under the RAA (3.3.1);
- Require registrants to agree that willfully submitting inaccurate contact details (or failing to respond within 15 days to an inquiry regarding accuracy) shall be a basis for cancellation of the registration (3.7.7.2); and
- Take reasonable steps to investigate and correct the contact details in response to any reported inaccuracy (3.7.8).
- Comply with any consensus policies adopted by ICANN (4.1)

## Appendix C - Whois Data Reminder Policy Survey and Compliance Audit, 2006



### Third Annual Whois Data Reminder Policy Survey and Compliance Audit (2006)

Response Date: Friday, 27 October 2006

**Registrar:** XXXXXXXXXX  
**IANA-ID:** XXXXX

Note: Registrar responses to this survey will assist ICANN's efforts to ensure registrar compliance with the Whois Data Reminder Policy (WDRP). The data from this survey also will be aggregated to provide statistical information for a public report describing experiences with the implementation of the WDRP. At this time ICANN has no plans to publish individually-identifying registrar responses to this survey and compliance audit.

#### Instructions:

- Please review the text of the Whois Data Reminder Policy before completing this survey: <<http://www.icann.org/registrars/wdrp.htm>>
- Please send a sample copy of the WDRP Notice that was provided to your registrants, either by email to <[wdrp-survey@icann.org](mailto:wdrp-survey@icann.org)>, or by fax to +1 310 823 8649, or by using the upload box below.

**Please respond by Friday, 27 October 2006**

**1. Please indicate how many total names were under your registrar's sponsorship as of 1 January 2006, in all TLDs in which it is accredited by ICANN:**

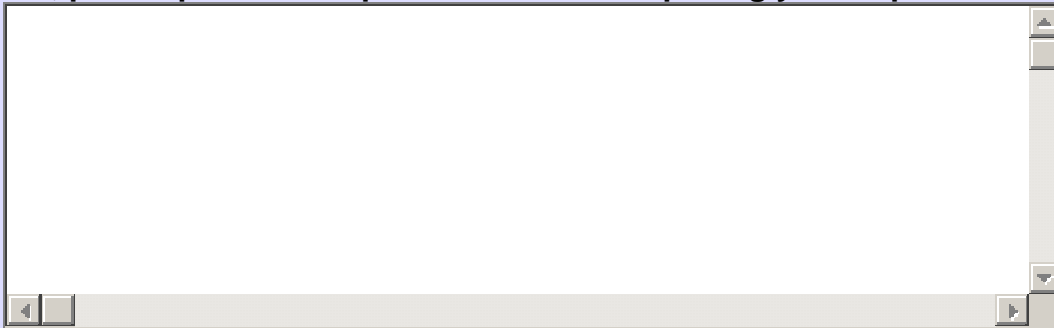
- ☐ a. 0
- ☐ b. Between 1 and 999
- ☐ c. Between 1,000 and 9,999
- ☐ d. Between 10,000 and 99,999
- ☐ e. Between 100,000 and 999,999
- ☐ f. 1,000,000 or More

**If you select "a", no further responses are required; you may submit your survey now.**

**2. For what percentage of all gTLD registrations that are at least one year old have WDRP Notices been sent during the past year by your registrar?**

- ☐ a. 0%
- ☐ b. less than 5%
- ☐ c. 5% or more, but less than 100%
- ☐ d. 100%
- ☐ e. Unable to readily determine this information

**If you selected an answer other than "d", please explain why. If you selected "a", please proceed to question 9 after completing your explanation.**



**3. Were the WDRP Notices sent/presented (primarily) by:**

- ☐ a. Web
- ☐ b. Fax
- ☐ c. Postal mail
- ☐ d. Email
- ☐ e. Other

**4. If an additional method was used to send/present WDRP Notices, which secondary method did your registrar use?**

- ☐ a. Web
- ☐ b. Fax
- ☐ c. Postal mail
- ☐ d. Email



☐ e. Other

**5. What percent, if any, of these WDRP Notices were undeliverable?**

- ☐ a. Less than 1%
- ☐ b. 1% or more, but less than 10%
- ☐ c. 10% or more, but less than 50%
- ☐ d. 50% or more
- ☐ e. Unable to readily determine this information

**6. In which language(s) were most WDRP Notices sent?**

- ☐ a. Arabic
- ☐ b. Chinese
- ☐ c. English
- ☐ d. French
- ☐ e. German
- ☐ f. Italian
- ☐ g. Japanese
- ☐ h. Korean
- ☐ i. Portuguese
- ☐ j. Russian
- ☐ k. Spanish
- ☐ l. Other
- ☐ m. More than one language

**7. Of the WDRP Notices sent successfully, what percentage led to changes in registrant data?**

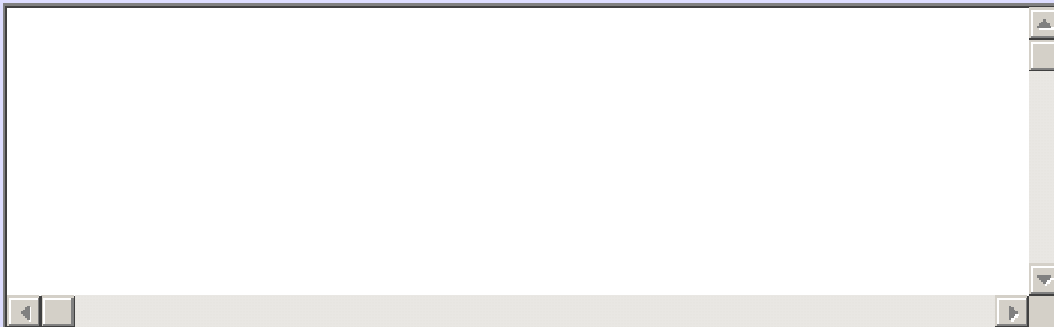
- ☐ a. Less than 1%
- ☐ b. 1% or more, but less than 10%
- ☐ c. 10% or more, but less than 50%
- ☐ d. 50% or more

- ☐ e. Unable to readily determine this information

**8. Which field was changed most frequently following a WDRP Notice?**

- ☐ a. Name, postal address, email address, or telephone/facsimile number of registered name holder
- ☐ b. Name, postal address, email address, or telephone/facsimile number of technical contact
- ☐ c. Name, postal address, email address, or telephone/facsimile number of admin contact
- ☐ d. Unable to readily determine this information

**9. Did you encounter any problems in implementation of the Whois Data Reminder Policy? Do you have any suggestions for how to improve the WDRP, or the accuracy of Whois data generally?**



**Please remember to send a sample copy of the WDRP Notice that was provided to your registrants, either by email to <[wdrp-survey@icann.org](mailto:wdrp-survey@icann.org)>, or by fax to +1 310 823 8649.**

Alternatively, you can upload a plain text, HTML, Microsoft Word, or PDF file:

Note: some configurations (browser and system) may not be able to use this facility. Filenames must not include special characters or spaces (the allowed characters are "-", "\_", "A"-"Z", "0"-"9", "a"-"z", and "."). Your system must correctly report the content type of the file.

# Appendix D - Registrant WDRP FAQ Page

## WDRP FAQs For Domain Name Registrants

### **What is the WDRP?**

The Whois Data Reminder Policy or WDRP is a consensus policy adopted by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), which requires domain name registrants to review the contact information associated with their domain names and make corrections when necessary. As a part of this, domain name registrars are required to formally remind their customers once a year to review and update their contact information. For detailed information about the adoption of the WDRP, see <http://www.icann.org/registrars/wdrp.htm>.

### **I just received a WDRP notice. Is this a legitimate request?**

The purpose of the WDRP notice is to remind domain name registrants of their obligation to update contact information on file for their domain names. Although you should always be wary of phishing messages and other fraudulent emails, a legitimate WDRP notice email serves an important purpose. For suggestions to avoid phishing scams, visit

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/phishingalrt.htm>.

### **Why is ICANN contacting me regarding the WDRP? ICANN is not my registrar.**

ICANN oversees the domain name system, but it does not send out WDRP notices. WDRP notices are sent by domain name registrars or resellers in order to comply with an ICANN policy. Although some registrars or resellers might send out messages from an "icann@" email account, these messages do not come from ICANN. ICANN requires domain name registrars to send WDRP notices to registrants in order to ensure that Whois records are maintained accurately.

### **What is a Whois record? What is my duty to keep the information in the record current?**

Your registrar maintains a public database of contact information for all of the domain names it maintains. This database is known as a Whois database, and it is available to be searched by members of the public in order to allow rapid resolution of technical problems and to permit enforcement of consumer protection, trademark, and other laws. Your domain name registration agreement with your registrar requires that you keep this information accurate and current.

### **I received a WDRP notice, but my information is correct. Is any action required on my part to ensure my domain registration is not affected?**

When sending WDRP notices, registrars are required to remind their customers that the provision of false Whois information can be grounds for cancellation of a domain name registration. If your information is correct, your domain name will not be cancelled and you do not need to take any action.

### **Does the WDRP notice indicate that someone complained about my website or domain name?**

Annual WDRP notices are sent to all registrants of gTLD domain names (such as .com, .org, .info, etc.). If you received one of these notices, it does not mean that someone complained about your site or your domain name. Although your registrar might contact you if it receives a complaint about your domain name, this would not be in the form of a WDRP notice.

### **How do I update my contact information / Whois record?**

ICANN does not maintain Whois data. In order to update your contact information in the Whois database, you will need to contact your registrar (or your reseller if you registered your domain name through a reseller).

### **I tried to update my information, but I cannot remember my user name or password. How can they be retrieved?**

Because ICANN does not maintain Whois data, you will need to contact your registrar or reseller to update your contact information. If you lost your password or user name, only your registrar or reseller will be able to assist you.

**The person who is listed as the administrative contact for my domain name is no longer available or is not responsible for my domain names any more. Can I still change my Whois record?**

The person or organization listed as the registrant of the domain name can make changes to the whois data, including changes to the administrative contact. Contact your registrar or reseller to make the necessary changes.

**Who is my registrar? How can I contact my registrar or reseller?**

To locate your registrar, visit <http://www.internic.net/whois.html> to perform a Whois search for your domain name. The results of the search will display the name and web address of your registrar. If you registered your domain name through a reseller and do not know how to contact the reseller, the registrar for your name should be able to help you.

**I don't recognize the name of my registrar. What should I do?**

There are several reasons why you might not recognize the name of your registrar.

If you registered your domain name through a reseller instead of directly with the registrar, the reseller's name might not appear on the Whois record. You should contact the company or person used to register your domain name to see if your registrar is correct.

It is also possible that your registrar's name may have changed since you registered the domain name. You should contact your registrar or ICANN ([icann@icann.org](mailto:icann@icann.org)) to determine if there has been a name change.

If you believe your domain name was transferred to another registrar without your permission, you should contact your original registrar or reseller for assistance. If you continue to have questions about the transfer of your domain name, please email ICANN at [transfer-questions@icann.org](mailto:transfer-questions@icann.org).

**I'm having trouble updating my Whois data. Can I just send it to ICANN?**

No. ICANN does not maintain Whois records. We will gladly help you locate your registrar, but we cannot change your Whois information.

**I cancelled the registration of my domain name and am still receiving WDRP emails. Is this appropriate?**

You should contact your registrar or the sender of the email message for more information.

**Who should I contact for any other questions I may have?**

Most questions about your domain name registration can be answered by your registrar. To locate your registrar, visit <http://www.internic.net/whois.html> to perform a Whois search for your domain name. The results of the search will display the name and web address of your registrar. Domain name questions may also be directed to ICANN at [icann@icann.org](mailto:icann@icann.org).