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Conficker Worm Warrants Vigilance, Not Panic ICANN Joins Coalition in Urging Public Awareness

Washington, D.C. ... March 30, 2009.... ICANN is joining leading global Internet security experts in encouraging Internet users to take precautions to deal with threats posed by the so-called Conficker worm, but at the same time is cautioning against over-reaction to an increasing public fervor encircling the worm.

“There’s absolutely no doubt that this particular worm grows a bit more sophisticated with each new variant that its unknown author releases,” said Greg Rattray, ICANN’s Chief Internet Security Advisor. “But that is not to say that the Conficker Working Group, of which ICANN is a member, has been sitting idly by while waiting for this threat to do its thing on April 1 or any date thereafter.”

The Conficker Working Group is made up of top security experts from Microsoft, Symantec, ICANN and dozens of other companies, software vendors and organizations dedicated to preserving the security and stability of the Internet. Over 100 organizations have been involved in an on-going effort to investigate and limit any risks posed by the Conficker threat.

The media has accurately reported that the latest variant, called Conficker C, may become active on April 1, but Rattray notes that is *NOT* to say that Internet users will likely see a sudden wave of disruption or activity from the infected computers.

“As is the case with many past threats, the likelihood is that April 1 will come and go without most people noticing anything different on the Internet,” said Rattray. “Basically what changes on that day is the way that Conficker updates itself, a kind of alteration of the way it phones home.”

Currently, Conficker has been polling 250 different domain names every day to download and run an update program. On April 1st, the latest version of Conficker will start to poll 50,000 domains a day to do the same thing.

ICANN is joining other members of the Conficker Working Group in urging Internet users to make certain their computers, networks and anti-virus software have been appropriately updated and patched. To learn more about the Conficker worm, visit the web site of the Conficker Working Group... www.confickerworkinggroup.org.

About ICANN:

To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn't have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. ICANN doesn't control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn't deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. **For more information please visit: www.icann.org.**