Appendix B: Next Steps for the Development of the WHOIS Accuracy Reporting System (ARS)

This Paper is published by ICANN to accompany the NORC Final Accuracy Pilot Report (NORC Report) to describe the next steps for development of the WHOIS Accuracy Reporting System (ARS).

Public Comment and Consultations in Singapore

As described in the NORC Report, a public comment forum will be open until February 27, 2015.   In addition, ICANN plans to engage with affected stakeholders at the ICANN 52 Meeting in Singapore in February, 2015, to obtain feedback on the proposed design for the ARS as described in the NORC Report. Upon review of these comments and feedback, ICANN will update the design of the ARS and begin development in phases, as described below.

During the Public Comment, ICANN is seeking input on:

1. Study Design & Methodology
2. Types of Accuracy Reports to be published through the ARS
3. Whether ICANN should conduct Identity Validation in subsequent phases of the ARS Development
4. Whether the methodology should treat registrations under privacy or proxy services differently, and if so, how
5. Any other aspect of the ARS

a.   Phase 1 – Syntactic Accuracy

Phase 1 will focus on reporting accuracy levels that examine the syntactic aspects of the email, telephone number, and postal addresses.   As these examinations can be conducted with the use of largely automated processes, it is expected that this portion of the ARS can be launched in early to mid-2015. A **Final Implementation Plan - Phase 1**

will be developed to specify the sample size, process, and classification methodology to be deployed for examining the accuracy of WHOIS from the syntactic perspective.

b. **Phase 2 – Operational Accuracy**

Next, ICANN plans to further develop the ARS to report accuracy levels that examine WHOIS records from an operational perspective, with regard to the email, telephone number and post addresses.   As this examination involves largely manual processes, smaller sample sizes are likely to be deployed. ICANN will develop a **Final Implementation Plan - Phase 2,** to take into account any lessons learned during Phase 1, for a launch in mid-late 2015.

c. **Phase 3 – Exploring Accuracy from an Identity Perspective**

The final phase examines whether and how to conduct ongoing accuracy studies from the perspective of confirming the identity of the registrant. The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) Los Angeles Communiqué has advised ICANN to take steps to scope and examine the risks, feasibility, costs and benefits of conducting ongoing accuracy studies to validate and verify the identity of the registrant. Staff is in the process of developing a response to the GAC that will provide this additional information in January, in advance of the ICANN 52 Singapore Meeting.   Phase 3 of ARS will assess the feasibility and costs to conduct accuracy studies based on the identity of the registrant.

Process for Correcting Inaccurate Records: ARS Implementation Advisory Group

A key function of the ARS will be to forward records identified as potentially inaccurate to registrars for follow-up to confirm their accuracy. The ARS is being designed to track and report on the progress of these records.

Initially, ICANN will kick-off a Compliance Pilot in January 2015, to examine the results of the Pilot to determine if a compliance response is appropriate for the WHOIS records that have been categorized as inaccurate from a syntactical perspective. ICANN's Contractual Compliance Department is in the process of auditing the results of the Pilot Study as part of a compliance pilot to determine whether a compliance follow-up is needed.

In addition, ICANN plans to engage with registrars and other interested stakeholders as necessary to define how to integrate transmitting, reviewing, and updating, as appropriate, the volume of identified WHOIS records that have been identified as potentially inaccurate into the existing Compliance processes and systems. ICANN plans to work with registrars and the broader Community in the months ahead in order to develop and refine this process.

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