
ICANN77 | PF – ccNSO: ccTLD News General
Wednesday, June 14 2023 – 15:30 to 17:00 DCA

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

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NICKLAS POUSETTE:

Thank you, Claudia. And welcome to the ccTLD News session. In this session, we will get an update about what's cooking at some of our peers around the globe. For those of you who doesn't know me, my name is Nicklas Pousette, and I work for the Swedish Internet foundation Internetstiftelsen, who is the top level domain owner for .se and .nu. I will host this session today.

As a friendly reminder, if you have any questions or comments for the presenters, please start with telling us your name and which organization you're affiliated with. And please speak slowly to make the life for our interpreters easier. We have a very packed schedule for today, so we'd better get started right away. Our first presenter is Molehe Wesi from .za, who will tell us about digitizing the un-domain. Molehe, the floor is yours.

MOLEHE WESI:

Thank you. My name is Molehe Wesi for the records. I have the privilege of working for the zadna domain name authority, which is the ccTLD

manager of .za. For today, I think it's important if I can just share who zadna is with everyone. I'm always asked this question by many young people. It's quite difficult at times to explain simply because we are a regulator by formation. And in the same breath, we have members that we report to and accounting to a ministry within our country, which is department of communications and digital technologies. Core to our mandate is of course administering the .za namespace and also raising public awareness within and around, of course, the country around what we do, how individuals within and outside the space can benefit. The other obligation or mandate is we are the custodian of the Internet governance within the country acting as the secretariat .za IGF or the IGF at national level.

This slide details our mandate in full which we derive from a piece of legislation from our country code, the electronic and communications transactions act, which brought us to life. Interesting enough, we have been existing for 21 years now. So a little bit older than the ccNSO by merely 12 months. And we have another non legislated mandate of looking after the dotcities, which is the three gTLDs within the country.

From this mandate, we have five strategic outlooks. The very first one is building a sustainable and resilient domain namespace, empowering communities, engaging stakeholders, and effectively regulating the domain namespace, and becoming a smart regulator. Most of our work that we do as a regulator flows around empowering communities as it is detailed in our desired impact statement, which is to create digitally enabled and economically empowered communities.

The previous slide was just a snapshot of the statistics from the digital report on essay, which merely just shows a snapshot of how connectivity and, of course, how many devices people have access to in the country, which of course speaks to in part to exactly the work we are trying to achieve. But on the slide that is projected on the screen, currently is just to show contrary to popular belief, regulation is good. And how from a South African perspective, we view regulation, it enables market creation and growth, it enables competition, and it protects consumers. From a South African perspective, of course, what we talk about market creation and extend growth. Since the adoption of EPP in our space, we have seen the ease of our registrars, our credited registrars integrating back to the registry system and offering services through our registrants. Furthermore, competition enablement. As at March 2023, we had 762 accredited registrars in the country. A portion there of being international registrars, mostly being, of course, local registrars. Last but not least, protection of consumers where through ADR processes, we are able to protect brand identities online, and subsequently since, of course, adopting DNSSEC, we have improved our security controls. And one other aspect which we use to protect consumers is to provide capacitate the sector by providing free technical training. And I will articulate that much more clearly in the next slide.

Hoping that one is not out of time. I will summarize what's presented on the screen. We have three anchor programs that we are running. The very first one which we launched the pilot there off is the ZA School digitization project. The intent is quite clear. We hope to digitize 22,000 schools across the country. Of course, this is a country with a

population of 60 million, whether it translates to ultimately, we hope to provide 14 million learners within the system with email addresses, a little above 400,000 educators with email addresses. And the focus will be on what we call quintile one to quintile three schools, these being the poorest of the poor in our country. Then, of course, we also provide industry capacity building and capacity building for emerging entrepreneurs within the space.

We have partnered with an education and training authority within the country to develop what we call a DNS practitioner course. We are currently setting up a panel made up of experts within the country, where we are hoping this particular course will empower young people in particular with the necessary skill sets. Why we are going that route is simply because our country is faced with high unemployment rates with a lot of young people live in the basic education and not transitioning into the higher education. So we are trying to bridge that by availing the opportunities.

We would be training, of course, in the interim a 150 young people with a short course on DNS practitioner. On an annual basis, we conduct, I would say, awareness campaigns or training sessions. Last year we hit 800. We are hoping to exceed that, where we train young people. In particular, young women to show them of the benefits of the space. Lastly, we would be doing an introductory in advance DNS technical training for 40 industry participants. So this is geared for those that already are within the space and would like to equip themselves.

Lastly, the last program is the core which is digitizing the un-domained. Because of South Africa's historical past, we are looking towards

partnering with a number of organizations. In the main, we are hoping to digitize NGOs and nonprofit organizations within the country. And this, of course, will allow those that are offering services through these NGOs to reach more people. And out of the nine provinces we have in the country, I think eight of them have highly prioritized agriculture. That's why it's important would be to digitizing emerging farmers, and, of course, SMMEs. As we all know, industries and economies are driven by small-medium enterprise entities. So it's quite important we offer the technological means to digitize and reach more markets.

Second last one. We have seven recognized royal houses in the country. That's where most of the constituents within the country, or the citizenry of South Africa are. So it's quite important to digitize those royal houses as they wield much influence in the communities that they lead. Unfortunately, at the moment, there isn't any means of them reaching and communicating in one form or the other using digital platforms. So we are hoping through this exercise, they would be provided with digital presence. Beyond digital presence, it means to communicate.

And lastly, we are intending with the newly appointed registry within the country to support--

NICKLAS POUSETTE:

Sorry, Moleche, we're running a bit short of time. We're keeping the time on some questions as well. But please go ahead and finish up.

MOLEHE WESI:

Okay. That was the last point. Myself, our sales and the registry, we would be supporting or close subsidizing the noncommercial second level administrators. This, of course, creating the important critical mass in the pipeline into the namespace that is up for sale or the commission one. So those are the activities that we would be engaging in, where we will be utilizing regulations that we oversee and also implementing a number of activities. Thank you. Sorry, I ran over time.

NICKLAS POUSETTE:

No problems. Thank you very much, Molehe. Any questions for Molehe? No questions? Thanks a lot, Molehe. Our next speaker out is Edward Duarte from .pt. Eduardo is the IT director at .pt, who will tell us about doing more with less, how can AI help a ccTLD. I leave the mic to you.

EDUARDO DUARTE:

Hi. So my name is Ed. He always told me. So my name is Edward Duarte. I'm the IT director for .pt. And I will be talking you a bit how we implemented the machine learning artificial intelligence algorithm to help us validate the registration data and the domain detail.

First a bit about .pt. So .pt is a nonprofit multistakeholder private association. We recently made F's 10 years. We have three members, the consumer association, the FCT, that is the government representatives, and SFB, that's the digital economy association, which has mostly of our registrars. So our main responsibility is to manage .pt TLD. We also manage the CONFID Trustmark, and we give some technical support to African country speaking Portuguese. And lastly, we are a founder of LusNIC. That's the Portuguese speaking top level domains

association. So before I go a bit on numbers. So since the beginning of the registration, we have 1.7 million domain registered. And that's since the beginning of .pt.

So what did we do? So we pick up and created the automation model, a model that validates the registration data. First and foremost, we validate vat and the tax number. That is mandatory for the .pt registration. And we do the syntax validation for this for some countries. The countries that are now covered are Portugal, Spain, United States, France, Brazil, Great Britain, and the Netherlands. This means that more than 90% of our registrations or the countries where our registrars [inaudible - 00:16:48] are covered by this algorithm. We also use external tools like VIES. That's a European validation tool, and we do the address validation using Google map API.

For the domain, we pick up on historical data. We search if the domain itself looks like a geographical name, or if it looks like a trademark, if AI has a trademark on the domain name. We also search if the domain name is similar to the registrant name. So we pick up all of this, and we create the score for the entity that registered the domain, and for the domain itself. And if the score is low enough, the domains and the entities are auto validated, and we don't look at it. This process is out of it itself, so it's a machine learning system that over the time will improve the results.

Why do you validate data? That's the most important. So legislation is a big part of it. So GDPR needs to. National legislation are big part of it. So also our terms and conditions. But we want to guarantee data accuracy on our registry and provide a better service to the community.

Next slide. So if we didn't automate this, we had a very time consuming administrative burden that was to validate 400 domains and entity every day. This is not viable, so we have to create a solution to automate the product and to make it more efficient.

So this is really new in production. We have put it in since mid-April, so we don't have that much results. We hope to have it better over the time. Until the moment we analyze the approximately 13,000 domains, and 97% of them were automatically validated. And we validated about 7,000 entities, and 56% of them were auto validated. This means that the manual work was reduced by a very substantial value, and that we have a lot less of that work. That's the slides that I had. I hope I have questions, if anyone has questions.

NICKLAS POUSETTE: Any questions for Eduardo?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I have one question. At least at .se open source is a very hot topic. Have you considered open sourcing this project?

EDUARDO DUARTE: We may consider it in the future. For the moment, we still didn't do it, but we may do it in the future and contribute to the community.

NICKLAS POUSETTE: No more questions for Eduardo? Okay. Then we carry on. Our next speaker is Bruce Tonkin, who will tell us about process for launching registration at the second level of .au.

BRUCE TONKIN: Thank you, Nicklas. If we can go to the next slide. The .au namespace is divided up into a series of sub domains. So we have com.au and net.au for registered businesses, org.au for registered not for profit organizations, edu.au for training providers, gov.au for government, id.au for individuals, and asn.au for associations or unincorporated. Our policies are that we validate all data and registrants before they get into the registry. And we validate that against government databases. So, that's why we use the term registered here that operator business in Australia need to register. And we check that government database before we issue a com.au or net.au name.

We introduced the ability to reach the names at the second level in March of last year. They still need to be validated. Basically, they need to meet one of the criteria above. So they need to be a registered business or not for profit, or they need to be an Australian citizen or resident. The benefits, partly with it, people could get a shorter name, so basically being able to register at the second level. It's a bit easier to find an available name than in com.au. Com.au has got more than 3 million names, and a bit more attractive for individuals as an email address compared to id.au.

This just shows the growth from the beginning of last year to where we are now. And so, we started around about 3.4 million names and saw the launch of registrations at the second level. We've grown to 4.2

million. So we've had about a 24% growth rate. This one is showing just the .au direct numbers. And we had a six-month process from March of 22 to September 2022, where if you have an existing name, you have an existing com.au, or net.au, or any of the other names, you could apply for a matching .au. And you can see that quite steep processes, people sort of generally left it to the last minute, literally, and gives you the very steep rise in registrations in the last month. And then since then it's been growing at about 10000 names a month. And so we're now over 3 quarters of a million names in just at the second level.

This is showing how really comparing from February last year until May. The black represents where it was at February, and the green represents where it is now. And we've seen a slight growth in com.au in that time, so just over, it's a few percent, 1- 2%. We see net.au and org.au. The others have been declining slightly. And .au has grown quite significantly, such that registration at the second level is now about a quarter of the size of com.au and about three and a half times the size of net.au. And .au now represents about 18% of all the names in the .au registry.

Some of our challenges is had we allow existing registrants the opportunity to register a name before it sort of opened up to the rest of the market. So we had a long process. Sort of multistakeholder went for about five years to develop the process. But essentially, preexisting registrants were given priority to register their exact match of the name, and they had a six month period to do that. And in that period, about 467,000 names were allocated.

Then we had to look at the situation. Well, if, for example, a com.au and net.au applicant both wanted the same name, how would we decide which of those parties got the name? So the first thing we took into account was the creation day. And generally, the earliest creation date had priority, except if the name was registered prior to 2018. If we had multiple parties that had their names, the com.au and net.au registered before 2018, then the name was not allocated, and we basically asked those registrants to reach some form of agreement, potentially commercial agreement to register the name. And then, out of that process, there was about 82,000 names that were allocated in that situation where there were multiple parties wanting the same name.

And then after the end of the priority period of six months, any name that did not have an application for that existed in say com.au or net.au, and the other name spaces was then made available to the general public to register. And so in October, we've got another 137,000 names registered. Now of those names where we had multiple applicants for the same name, where those applicants had registered their names before 2018, we're now left with about 6,100 names left in contention, which is a pretty good result given there was sort of 3 million potential names where there could be potential contention, and we're left with 6,000. Of those 6,000, generally, it's just two parties in contention. But there are some names where there's 10 applicants for the same name.

Partly represents the fact that Australia is a federation of states, and so each state government in Australia generally applied for the names of their government departments, like health, energy, etc. And so, we have every government state and every federal state applying for the same name, plus commercial organizations. And so these are the sort

of generic, almost names of economic sectors. So I suspect those are not going to reach agreement, but those names can remain not basically, they're not registered until there is an agreement.

One of the big challenges was how do we raise awareness. It's similar, I guess, to ICANN with its new GLD program. But how do you get the knowledge out into the community. So Sophie Mitchell, our chief communications officer led a team to raise awareness. So I just thought I'd give a bit of idea of what we had to do to achieve that. The first step was the consultation on the process for a priority application. So that went on for sort of four to five years. We did many surveys of respondents, and generally, in those surveys, the majority of people were in favor of launching .au.

We did a lot of work on briefing industry, government and media to let them know what we're proposing to do. We also directly communicated with registrant generally through registrants. So, they did extensive email campaigns to advise existing registrants that .au was coming. We did five public webinars, and then we did a lot of website updates and so on. We also did quite extensive outdoor advertising. So we're a population of around about 25 million. We put advertisements on public roads, we had it on TV screens, looks like we had it in gyms, all up, and we did TV campaigns, billboard, we had radio campaigns and digital advertising. So pretty extensive awareness raising campaign.

This shows the gist of how we were trying to do the marketing. We were picking common English words and then picking words that had a meaning that might be unique to Australia. So for example, most

people when they're thinking of a station, they're probably thinking of a train station. In Australia, a station is basically a big farm or in the US, you would refer to it as a ranch. So we call it a station. So if someone says they want a bit a sheep station, that's a big bit. So we have another number of similar words.

What we've done in just recently in March is now that we're sort of one year on from launching .au, we did a market research to it to find out just in the general community, what's the awareness of .au as an option for domain names? We found that one in five consumers and small business had registered .au name, and that's kind of reflected in the numbers that you saw earlier, roughly 25% of names. New names these days are registered in .au. We did a multichannel, so we did TV, radio, email, etc. And that turned out when we asked people, where did you hear about .au? It was generally through one of those channels.

And then the other most common area they heard about it was from their registrar. And I guess the difference here is that the direct communications from registrar is really reaching the registrant contact, which might be a technical person within an organization, whereas the public awareness campaign was much broader, so it reached business owners and general consumers. And what we found is about a third of those that did not have a domain name, but were thinking about getting a domain name, about a third of those had heard of .au direct. So we're pretty pleased with the awareness campaign, and that was reflected in the numbers where we basically have 750,000 names registered in a population of 25 million. I think that might be the last slide.

NICKLAS POUSETTE: Any questions for Bruce?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I have a question. Thanks for a really interesting presentation. What trends are you seeing for direct .au names now since you launched? And are people that have com.au websites converting their websites to .au directly or just being registered to select a brand?

BRUCE TONKIN: Yeah. Well, what we're seeing in terms of new registration, so in the last month, we had about 11,000 .au direct and about 40,000 .com.au's in the last month. So it's roughly around about a quarter of all new names, .au direct. It's a mixture in terms of what's driving. So we're seeing people registering bundles. So they're registering partly from what registrars are selling, I guess. So registrars are selling bundle. So people are registering com.au and .au at the same time. Your question is, are people moving from an existing com.au website to .au direct? Generally not. So generally, they're keeping their com.au website and the .au might be being used for a separate marketing campaign, or the .au is redirected to their existing website.

What we do see though is that there are small businesses that are creating new businesses, and their preferred name that they might want has already taken in com.au, and so they're registering in .au and building a unique website. So we do have, if you like, com.au, net.au and .au names that are all completely different companies and completely different websites.

NICKLAS POUSETTE: Any more questions? Come on, folks, don't be shy. We have another.

JOHN: I have a question. I'm John from .id registry. So your domain space size now is coming from Australia only or also outside?

BRUCE TONKIN: It's Australian only. Yeah, you have to have an Australian presence. So that means that you have to be a business or a citizen of Australia. The one exception to that is that we do allow foreign companies if they have a registered Australian trade mark in Australia. But, yeah, the majority are Australian.

JOHN: Yeah. The next question may be, how many registrars do you have?

BRUCE TONKIN: We've got about 33. Yeah. It's a bit of a long tail. So, the top six registrars account for about 90% of the registrations and then there's a bit of a long tail of registrants.

JOHN: Yeah, your number is quite interesting for us actually. I mean, compared to your population size is quite huge penetration for .au. I mean, what is the main strategy for that?

BRUCE TONKIN: Yeah, I think what we're finding is that most businesses with, say, more than 10 employees, nearly every one of those have got .au domain name. The penetration of smaller businesses, the sort of micro businesses, say less than 10 employees, the penetration is lower, so it might only be 50% penetration there. And we're seeing that some small businesses like a coffee shop, a number of them are choosing to register or create Facebook or Twitter pages. So social media, if you like, is our main competitor there. And so our growth strategy really is to reap some of those smaller businesses and convince them that a domain name is a good option for them.

NICKLAS POUSETTE: Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL: Bruce, there is a question online and I hope you allow it. It's a question from Robert Martin-Legene, and the question is, do you plan to close .com.au for new registration.

BRUCE TONKIN: No. We still see com.au. It's very strong recognition as a commercial namespace to do business in. There has been some discussion going back a few years, would we close some of the other namespaces like net.au? But those people that have net.au think it's still the greatest thing. And so, yeah, we've got no intention of closing any of those namespaces for new registrations.

NICKLAS POUSETTE: Thank you very much, Bruce. Our next presenter is Crystal Peterson from .us, who will tell us about accountable WHOIS in the usTLD namespace.

CRYSTAL PETERSON: Thanks, Nicklas. Hello, everyone, and good to see you here today. I have a lot of information to get through, so hopefully not be speaking too fast. But as Nicklas mentioned, my name is Crystal Peterson. I work with GoDaddy registry, who is the registry operator for the .us domain. Senior Director of Operations and Account Management. I'm also the key liaison for our relationship with NTIA.

So, I am sharing today a proposal that we have worked with NTIA to develop and then propose to them around what we call accountable WHOIS. The proposal is for a secure WHOIS gateway. And I'd like to first start talking about why we're looking at this and also the framework of what we're looking at from the information perspective. So within our contract, we have a mandate to have publicly accessible information. But as we were looking at what and how to propose, we wanted to be able to define that public and publicly accessible does not necessarily mean that it has to be anonymous or unaccountable data.

There are many cases within the US that showcase this. From books and libraries you have to be able to provide information to sign up for a library card, even though those books are publicly accessible. There are certain information data sources from the US government that you do need to provide, name, phone number, email, different types of

information in order to be able to access the publicly accessible data. And there are many, many different examples. But just as we were looking at our WHOIS data, which currently today is anonymous and unaccountable, we wanted to be able to develop a proposal that still kept data publicly accessible, but we're looking towards how can we provide certain safeguards and become accountable.

So, this is where we come to, why are we looking at accountable WHOIS? With the anonymous and unaccountable access, we have seen that that has provided registrants an increasing misuse of their data upon registration. Many registrars and resellers that you go out to today to register at .us have put some warning statements there because data has been used for spam, for phishing, for identity theft, for all of the different types of data access that we do not want, and can be harmful. Again, we see that registrants will abandon registrations and go to another TLD and or another website name because of certain issues that they may have had, and that we also have our distribution channel that may be reluctant to promote .us, because of some of the issues that we are finding within the, WHOIS access. And so, this is why we are looking at an accountable WHOIS system in order to be able to provide some of the safeguards there.

So, what is and is not the accountable access? This is not an actual privacy or proxy service. And that is very important to us to state upfront because of some of the mandates within our contract with the department of commerce, NTIA. It does ensure that we do remain a Thick WHOIS as a registry. And does say that we remain fully compliant with our contract, which, and I'm going to read here, public access to accurate WHOIS information is required. And our system will return

near real time access to the WHOIS data for non-marketing uses, even though it will be an accountable format. We're looking to utilize the RDAP service for doing this and also have authenticated RDAP for law enforcement investigations ongoing.

So how will it work? Accountable WHOIS will operate on, as I mentioned earlier, the RDAP user interface, and we would be able to maintain that Thick WHOIS registry data as an authoritative registry operator. There would be an email sign up to be able to access any data. Users would be presented with certain legitimate uses that they would need to choose in order to be able to receive that data, providing no answer or other or some form of nasty words would end up in a denied situation, but as long as there is a legitimate use that is non-marketing users would be provided that data. And then the unredacted WHOIS data would be provided to a working email address and not be displayed on screen as an unaccountable source. And then we again, as I mentioned before, we would make authenticated access available to law enforcement to help protect certain investigations and confidentiality.

So this does meet our existing US contract requirements in the fact that we do have to provide publicly accessible data and that also that .us administrator is the authoritative database for WHOIS registrations. Also that privacy and proxy registrations will continue to be prohibited, and that we will deliver in near real time the unredacted registrant data. And we believe that this does not involve any changes to any of the registry policies and in fact, it will help enable us to enforce our existing policies, where we do prohibit the use of registrant data for marketing and or abusive purposes.

So some of the proposal highlights that we did provide to NTIA, again, the fact that we remain the authoritative database, that it gives registrants the opportunity to opt in or opt out of making their WHOIS data accountable and that we will continue to work with law enforcement agencies to ensure that they do you have access and confidentiality when needed. And we will also be able to satisfy our obligation to provide access to registrars, and registrars within their contracts must provide access to WHOIS, and that is enforced through the proposal.

So, I wanted to go through a few of the technical highlights and what we are proposing for how this will work. So you go to the next slide. So users of WHOIS will come to a user interface where they will be able to provide certain information in order to then receive the full unredacted data. Registrants, back at the purchase path of .us, will be able to opt in or opt out through their sponsoring registrar reseller. So that is not what I'm talking about, or those technical pieces are not here now. This is just the basic use of WHOIS function as we see it today from the registry.

So, from proposed anonymous WHOIS search. So, when you come to WHOIS today for .us when you do a search, you get full unredacted data. Our proposal is that we are putting up a speed bump, if you will, that if you do an initial search that is anonymous and hasn't provided any accountability that these are the details that you will see. And then once you will also receive a link to be able to request actual registration data and the unredacted registration data.

So this is an example of that form that you would see online to be able to fill out, choose your legitimate reason, and accept the terms and conditions for receiving the data. Which would then lead to the actual approved response, which would come to a working email. This would not be displayed on the screen, but this would come to that working email. So, if you do provide a false email address, you are not going to receive the data. And this then would receive the full unredacted data, which today is displayed on screen anonymously to anyone that looks up without any legitimate reason. Lastly, if you do not provide any reason or if that reason would be denied, this would be the proposed denied response for not receiving the data.

So, one of the last points that we have with this proposal is the fact that we are looking to be able to provide reporting and audits from WHOIS looking up, WHOIS data. Should there be any abusive actions that happen, we will have certain records to be able to review in light of those abusive complaints. And it can also help to facilitate certain compliance with some US Congressional mandates related to WHOIS data that NTIA is required to uphold. So, I believe that comes to the end of the presentation. No. Sorry. One last piece.

The NTIA has put out requests for comments in this past month, and they had a blog, and they had then a page put up. Those requests for comments closed on May 31st, but you can go to these websites that are posted in the presentation. Once the comments are opened and reviewed, they will actually be then publicly available there as well, so that you can see any comments that come in. In addition, we will be providing a summary ourselves to NTIA for those comments as well. So, please be watching this space for news of being able to push through to

the proposal or any changes that may need to happen. That's it. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL: Nicklas, there is an online question. So, the question is from Vladimir Mikhaylov, and the question is, am I understanding correctly that in the .us zone WHOIS request via TCP Port 43 doesn't work? You have only web interface for WHOIS?

CRYSTAL PETERSON: No, that is a misunderstanding. We do have Port 43 and then these proposed changes would also push through to the Port 43 access to WHOIS as well. So, it would only show the anonymous proposed view and not full unredacted data.

NICKLASS PAUSETTE: Yes. We have a question over there.

ALAN CAMERON: Thank you for that. Alan Cameron from .au. Would you mind showing us again the slide that shows what the redacted information looks like? Because I think there'd be a lot of consumers who'd be reluctant to go through your process, and I'm just therefore interested to see what you will get if you don't go through the process. Yes. I think this is the slide.

CRYSTAL PETERSON: Yes, this is the slide. So, this is the registrar information, the domain name information, the domain status, and then name servers, in addition, for certain information, you are directed to be able to request those details at what we call our RDS service. So, you'll see that there. And again, we are planning to hyperlink that so that you can click in and then provide your details, and, again, in near real time, you'll receive an email with the rest of the data.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Any more questions?

ALAN CAMERON: Just in terms of the request process. It doesn't look like there's anything stopping a creating a false identity, mickeymouse@mickey@gmail.com. Is that right? So, you're not doing any validation of the request as long as they filled it in.

CRYSTAL PETERSON: So, we're not doing any validation of the email address. No. And so, the user must choose a legitimate reason, and that would be from a drop down.

ALAN CAMERON: But they're not going to choose a lot. They get to choose one of those.

CRYSTAL PETERSON: You'd be surprised at our RDS requests today that we have within other domain extensions, how many people say just because, or because I want to.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: I think we have time for one last question. We have one over there.

ANGELA MATLAPENG: It's Angela for the record. Three questions, actually. One is maybe considering the rate of queries that you get daily towards your WHOIS, what does that mean then in terms of, well, the anticipated response time for giving back this information upon request since it just might need extra careful look at whether the request is genuine or it's worth giving back the information? And then secondly, I don't think I had quite well what would be the prerequisites of giving law enforcement access. So, I think what is becoming common practice might especially do with relation to abuse would be do you have a court order and stuff like that? Or are you the exact responsible officer to be having access to the platform? So maybe just talk a little bit to that. Thank you.

CRYSTAL PETERSON: Okay. I'm so sorry. The first question was about WHOIS queries and that timing there. So, from the anonymous view, WHOIS response time would be exactly as it is today. And then the time between that first WHOIS response and the receiving the data via email, would be the time it takes to fill out the form, because then after that, we do have, as I mentioned, a near real time. Near real time, meaning it does have to go

through the system and then send the email. So, depending on that email chain, which is not necessarily our system, but getting into the user system. But from a WHOIS queries perspective, the response time for the anonymous view has not changed and would not change.

As far as law enforcement agencies, we are looking to provide what we call an authenticated service. It's authenticated RDAP, is what we call it today, but incorporating that and building that for them to be able to register for that authenticated use, which would allow for look ups to WHOIS data just as it is today anonymously, but because they have authenticated access, and they are entering through a user point, they would then be able to do views and bulk lookups behind that login, so to speak.

ANGELA MATLAPENG: Thank you.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: I think we had one last question.

BART BOSWINKEL: Yeah. We had a follow-up question on that point, and I know there is one in raising his hands, but the follow-up question on last point is from Rubin School. Is .us going to accept accredited legal enforcement agencies from non-US non-Five Eyes countries, for example, Interpol?

CRYSTAL PETERSON: Thank you for that question. That is actually still under review. First and foremost, US LEA will be provided access. The extent to which non-US LEA are provided access? I can't answer right this moment. That is still under review, but it is not a no.

BART BOSWINKEL: There is a question from Pablo. He raised his hand.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much. Thank you, Crystal, for the presentation. Most informative. I have many, many questions, but we'll take that offline. The one question that I have is that you have pointed out that most of this path that .us is following is as a result of a contractual agreement with NTIA. Is that correct?

CRYSTAL PETERSON: So, the path in the proposal that we are following is in response to registrant concern, to registrar concern, to NTIA concern, and to registry services, us, our concern around the anonymous access to WHOIS data. What we were looking to do in the proposal was to ensure that we were staying true to our mandates of our contract. So, our contract hasn't changed. Our contract has been our contract for many years. So, as we developed the proposal, that's what we were looking to do. So, it's not necessarily where you asked because of the contract are we writing it? No. But as we developed it, we wanted to make sure that we were staying true to our contract.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Thank you very much, Crystal. Our next presenter is Knut Aksel Wadat from Norid who will tell us about the Data Access for Third Parties: a framework for the Norwegian Registry.

KNUT AKSEL WADAT: Yes. Okay. Thank you, Nicklas. My name is Knut Aksel Wadat. I work as a senior legal adviser for Norid. And I'm stepping in for my colleague, Ann-Cathrin, since she has lost her voice, so she can't be here. So, I will give you a short overview of the framework for giving access to the main name data for third parties in Norway, but first, a little background about us.

Norid is the registry for .no domains, and to be a subscriber, you have to have a local presence in Norway. That means that we only allow Norwegian organizations and private individuals over 18 years old to subscribe to a .no domain name. The organizations must have an organization number and be registered in the Central Coordination Register for Legal Entities. Private individuals must have a national identity number and be registered in the national population register. In addition, domain subscribers must have a Norwegian mailing address. So, Norway is not a part of the European Union, but as an EEA member, we follow the GDPR, the General Data Protection Regulation from European Union.

So personal data is defined in the GDPR article 4, section 1, as any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person. So, it is obvious that the domain name can contain information that directly identifies an individual, especially if the subscriber uses their name or their address in the domain name. But domain names are also connected to information in our database that identifies the subscriber. And because of this, Norid assumes that all domain names constitutes provisional data for Norid. And disclosure of a domain name constitutes processing of personal data for us. And that means that processing, this processing requires legal basis according to GDP article 6, section 1.

The reason why Norid collects and processes subscriber data, the purpose behind it is to ensure that individuals and organizations can subscribe to a Norwegian domain name, and it is to administer the Norwegian TLD in a way that contributes to robust operation of the Internet as an infrastructure. So, it is our conclusion that we must have a lawful basis under the GDPR to disclose the data regardless of whether it is personal data for the recipient. This conclusion is in line with the Breyer ruling. That is ruling from the European Court of Justice. It is called the case C582-14.

So Norid has a public lookup service. It is a WHOIS service, and we are currently rolling out RDAP. And in our lookup service, the public can get information on how to contact the domain name subscriber. On this slide, you can see what information we are publishing on our lookup service. There is information on the domain holder, the technical contact, and the name server, and the registrar. For domain holders, we distinguish between organizations, sole proprietorships companies,

and private individuals. And if you see on this slide, for organization, we publish the organization number, then the organization name, email address, postal address, and telephone number if and that is voluntary for organizations to put in our database.

For sole proprietorships companies that are really small companies owned by an individual, not a non-liability company, we publish the organization number, organization name, email address, and, of course, since we have a local presence, it is always Norway. And for the private individuals, we publish the email address. For name servers, we publish name and IP address. Technical contact is the role name, email address, and the country. And for registrars, we published the organization name, email address, postal address, country and the website URL for the registrar.

So, this information should be enough for a third party to get in contact with the subscriber. So, if for some reason, a third party wants more information than what is available in our public lookup service, or they want a compilation of information that is available in our lookup service, they must meet the requirements of the Norwegian data protection law. And the disclosure must not be contrary to the agreement we have signed with our subscribers.

This means that Norid generally do not disclose personal data unless the recipient can cite statutory, regulatory authority, or another legal basis resulting in a duty for Norid to disclose the data, or unless the disclosure is necessary in order to fulfill either of the two purposes we use for collecting the data, as I mentioned earlier. And that is to ensure that individuals and organizations can subscribe to a Norwegian

domain name, and to administer the Norwegian TLD in a way that contributes to the robust operation of the Internet as an infrastructure.

There are some authorities in Norway that has been given regulatory authority by the government, and that is like the police, the prosecuting authority, the tax authority, consumer authority, gaming authority, and data protection authority. But we will need to see the legal basis that imposes a duty on us to disclose the information that they seek.

So, in short, Norid has a long, consistent practice in which domain names and other information are generally not disclosed, unless Norid is obliged to disclose the information or the disclosure is in accordance with one of Norid's two primary purposes, as I mentioned. So having this principle have been important for us for a long time to avoid hollowing out the subscribers' privacy rights. And that is a short presentation on how we accept third party. Yeah. So, if you have any questions, please let me know.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE:

Thank you, Knut. Any questions? We have one question online, I think. Or is it a statement? Robert Martin Legene says that's is a very interesting approach by Norid. Not sure how great this is for the rest of the world, but an interesting interpretation of GDPR. Thank you. No more questions for Knut? We have one over there.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Yeah. One quick one. I think from the last one but one slide, it did say that you need maybe consent from the subscriber or the owner of the

data. So, I just wanted to understand if that would somehow delay the process if the owner of the data maybe just says "I don't want that to be disclosed". I'll go back to abuse. If maybe in a case of abuse, but then you have the right to overthrow, I don't want to say overthrow, but, yeah, supersede that decision for the data not to be disclosed.

KNUT AKSEL WADAT:

Okay. Thank you for the question. We have a written agreement with all the subscribers. And it states in that written agreement that we will use the information with the purpose that Norid has for processing the information and that we can use the information and give it out if there is legal basis in the Norwegian legislation. So, if police come to us and tells us and gives us, we have to give it out. The subscriber agreement we have gives us and the subscriber have to accept that we give it out. It's consent from the subscriber, but they have to accept the subscriber agreement to be able to subscribe to a Norwegian .no domain.

BART BOSWINKEL:

We have one online question from Ruben School. Has Norid considered replacing the email address with a forwarding service?

KNUT AKSEL WADAT:

I don't know how to answer that. Can you repeat the question?

BART BOSWINKEL: Yes, I will. The question is, has Norid considered replacing the email address with a forwarding question service? For instance, the admin contact of example.no would become example.admin.id.no.

KNUT AKSEL WADAT: Okay. Thank you for the question. I don't think we have considered that. But for the technical contact email, you don't need to use an email that identifies you as an individual. You can use an email address that would belong to the corporation. So, we don't consider this an GDPR issue. I'm not sure if that answers your question. But I don't think or I'm not sure if we had considered that.

BART BOSWINKEL: There is a follow-up comment in the chat, so I will not read it out loud, but that might be of interest to you as well. Thanks.

KNUT AKSEL WADAT: Okay. Thank you very much.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Thank you very much, Knut. So, our last presenter of today is Abdalmonem Galila from .masr, who will tell us about Universal Acceptance Readiness and Business opportunities for ccTLDs.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Thank you, Nicklas. I don't know if I am lucky or not to have my slot at the end of the session, but I am sure that I will grab your attention by

the orange color I used for my presentation. Today, I will talk about Universal Acceptance, which is the technical requirement that all domain names, all valid domain names and all valid email addresses, whatever the language, whatever the script, work for all Internet-enabled application devices and system that will open the gateway for the next billion Internet user, whatever their language, whatever their script to be existent online and have the rights to use their own local language.

But actually, Universal Acceptance is not caring only about internationalized domain names and email address internationalization, but also for the new generic top-level domain names. If I am at your position, I will think that we are here all ASCII ccTLD manager. So Abdalmonem is the first IDN one, but what he is talking about, actually you as ASCII ccTLD manager for the top-level domain name, you could have second level to be IDN. I could go for your register interface to register an interface for your registry and register a domain name that have one of the letters to be Unicode. At this time, it will be considered as internationalized domain name. So Universal Acceptance also affects ccTLDs.

So, this is why I am presenting the email today. Actually, I have more sections for today with a lot of colors to have your attention. The first one, I will have some effects and the statistics to get more attention from your phone. So here, you will see the tree map of the most spoken languages worldwide. We have more than 7,000 languages exist worldwide covering more than 80 billion worldwide population. Here, you will see that we don't only have English, but also we have many

other languages that have more population more than English languages speakers.

Let's go for the next slide. Here you have some statistics behind why IDN, why email address internationalization. Here for the root zone file, we have 150+ IDN TLDs, whatever it is, IDN ccTLDs or IDN gTLD, and the others are ASCII whatever gTLDs or ccTLDs. At the same time, it is expected at the future to have more than 75% of the contents that exist online to be in non-English versus 25% English only. Currently, it is 50/50. It's 50% non-English and 50% English. That is the idea behind using internationalized domain names. But at the same time, there is most popular service that's used online worldwide, which is email addresses. Email addresses is the most popular application or service used all over the world. We have billions of email users that are propagating towards the highness from 2022 till 2026. We will reach about 4.7 billion email user accounts. There are billions of emails sent and received per hour in daily basis.

So why IDNs, why email address internationalization? It will help customers to remember a domain name more easily, will help to better communicate or market with addresses verbally or easier for local customer to use, will help a better reach out to local customer base. This is a slide only for .masr. It the used the IDN ccTLD of Egypt. It is called .Egypt but it is the Arabic one of Egypt. It is called .masr. We started registration of IDN name since 2010. Our registry system based on 3-R model, registrant, registrar, registry model. We have four registrars, three of them are ISBs and the fourth one is for academia responsible for registering governmental domain names. And now we currently have more than 300 IDN domain names.

Now it is the main topic for today, which is Universal Acceptance Readiness. As I said before, it is all domain names, all email addresses should work for all Internet-enabled application devices and system. What are the criteria for evaluating this? What are the criteria to say that I am UA-ready, I am able to handle the future Internet users that will exist online, whatever the languages?

Yes. This is a difference between Universal Acceptance-ready and not-ready Universal Acceptance application. For Universal Acceptance-ready seen here, you will find that it is soap.organic. It is gTLD. And maybe you have instead of soap, you will have one character to be a Unicode, so it will be IDNs. Maybe this organic, it will be one of the ccTLDs. And the sub level is the second-level domain name have at least one Unicode character, so it will be IDNs. So, it will be affected by Universal Acceptance. So, the time I use IDN domain name, I should go to the content of this website. That time I use IDN top-level domain names and second level to be in English, I should go also for the content of this website.

I wanted to go to my Internet banking application and try to sign up using my EAI address, my own local language email address. I wanted to sign up for Internet banking using email others that have a domain name that have second level to be Unicode. One of the letters is a Unicode. I wanted to go for the Internet banking and sign up using my new gTLD domain name for my email address. That is Universal Acceptance readiness.

What are the verbs for Universal Acceptance Readiness? How could I certify myself in order to see that my application, my registry system,

my customer service system, is Universal Acceptance Ready? There are five verbs for UA Readiness: accept, validate, process, store, and display. It should accept all valid domain names, all valid email addresses. Maybe accept here for this verb it is just a frontend application try to check the error if this domain name or email address have some error or not. But for validation, the second verb you will validate that this domain name already exists or not, this top-level domain name is valid or not. Maybe your application couldn't understand that there is a new trend of top-level domain names that are more than three letters, ASCII more than three letters. Maybe your application couldn't understand that maybe there are TLDs that have Unicode letters and already valid and delegated at the root zone.

For the process verb of your readiness, it is the most critical verb as UA Readiness verbs. It's used to have, for example, Unicode domain name and next example processing, and translated to ASCII compatible encoding, translate it for masr and the DNS could understand for masr that go for the database to be stored. Maybe one will say that "I will store this kind of domain names that are in Unicode as it is inside the database".

Maybe another one, "No, no, no I will not use Unicode. I don't understand Unicode, but I will store the compatible encoding for this Unicode domain name inside the database". Maybe another one will go say that, "I will not store these domain names or email addresses inside database. I need to store it inside a nud bat file". So, you need to select the proper encoding for this nud bat file in order to display or store this Unicode data correctly. Display, it is better to display of that top-level domain name or email addresses.

What are the criteria affected by Universal Acceptance? For domain names, we have new short top-level ASCII domain names: example.sky. New long top-level ASCII domain names: example.engineering. Internationalized Domain Names. Email address internationalization. We have ASCII@ASCII that have top-level domain name more than three letters. It is ekrem@misal.istanbul. ASCII@IND, it is marc@societe@eg. It is top-level. It is IDN domain name for the email address that have one of the letters to be a Unicode. Also, we have a Unicode@ASCII, the mailbox itself, it is in local language. It is in Arabic. It's in French. It is in Germany. It is whatever the language as a Latin language script.

So, ICANN conduct as a way to check how much UA Readiness are the ccTLDs in order to support them, in order to make the application to be universally accepted. Or support them maybe--

BART BOSWINKEL: Can you please slow down? The interpreters have a little bit--

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Okay. I am sorry for that.

BART BOSWINKEL: Thank you.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Okay. So, for this survey, the main goal behind this survey to check what are the barriers that prevent ccTLD manager in order to have their system to be universally accepted in order to support them. So, this

survey was in March 2023, was found that not all ccTLD manager responded for this survey. But actually, what the responses were received, most of them say that it is most of the percentage are partially ready. It means is that some domain names or some email addresses are accepted and the go for Universal Acceptance seen and other no. And a little bit of these replies for ccTLDs said that we're Universal Acceptance ready. We could accept, validate, store, process, and display all domain names and email addresses in a consistent way.

Yeah. What are the motivations to become Universal Acceptance Ready? I grip that from these survey results. Most of them said that "I wanted to grow my customer base through having more customer from the customer who want to keep their brand, they are looking to use generic top-level domain names. And also have more customer from the customer who will use IDN names and email address internationalization". And the some of this ccTLD said that "we wanted to gain more international customers".

There are many e-government application published online. Let's go for one of the examples. You have e-visa application. You have a lot of different visitors come to your country. I wanted to make this e-visa system that collects the data from this customer to be universally accepted. Maybe some of these customers will use their own local language for email addresses. The time I make my application Universal Acceptance Ready, the time my e-visa system was able to succeed to send emails to this IEA address or see for IEA address and have the satisfaction from this user. And the other says that, "I wanted to be more competitive". Other says that, "in response to the request from our customer". Other say that "we wanted to implement UA

before the next round of the new generic top-level domain names applications".

Actually, I'm supposed to have two questions from Nicklas. I know this question, by the way. I expected them. One of the questions, the first one says that what must a ccTLD manager do internally to update their own system to be Universal Acceptance-Ready? The second question I expect from Nicklas is that, who are the local stakeholders for Universal Acceptance and how can ccTLD managers encourage UA adoption by these stakeholders?

Actually, it's a standard web application architecture. We have user going for the frontend and this frontend have direct communication with the backend, and this backend have a direct communication with email modules or database modules. Each of these parts for frontend and backend should be universally accepted. I showed here at the frontend and the backend by the five verbs of Universal Acceptance Readiness. Accept, validate, store, process, and display.

Actually, this is the standard registry environment architecture. Now we have here four types of actors. We have end user. We have registrar staff. We have registry staff. We have registrant. For the end user, maybe this end user will make some queries for the DNS that host my top-level domain names. So maybe this user will have the domain name in Unicode. So, it should be processed in order to change from this Unicode to ASCII compatible encoding so that the DNS could understand and resolve.

For registrar staff, they are going to the registrar interface in order to make some managerial actions, and the same for registry, but for

registry modules for the top-level domain name. And for the registrant, this is the actual customer for this registry. Maybe it his domain name through the registrar interface. So, the communication between these actors and the modules, the front in the modules of this registry system should be universally accepted. And even the communication between the modules of the frontend and the backend should be universally accepted.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Abdalmonem, we're running a little short on times, so I think you have to finish up in about one minute.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Okay. So, all of these modules should be on Universal Acceptance. The backend should be able to send to EI address or received from EI address and send notification to the registrant. And so, I need to make my email server and all the email server module to be universally accepted. So, ccTLD manager play a significant role in the propagation and promotion of Universal Acceptance through generate awareness and undertake training and educational activities. Adopt Universal Acceptance as a role model, provide technical support and help coordinate Universal Acceptance-related effort with other public and private organization and influencers.

What are the activities that could ccTLDs manager help on that? The domain name industry to adopt Universal Acceptance. Universal Acceptance outreach and training for broader technical community. Awareness support and the incentives for the community. Public sector

and policy development. Metrics and reward. Local and global coordination in Universal Acceptance adoption.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Hold on, Abdalmonem. I think we have--

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Just one minute.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: One minute?

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yeah. Finally. So, what are the ccTLD business opportunities behind that? You know that while we were in COVID-19, all things went online. All the governmental service are now published online or even their international service are going to online. So, they are looking for domain names or IDNs are looking for new trend of domain names that use generic top-level domain names or have Unicode letter. And also, for non-governmental service now for local user needs to be more domain names in ASCII or IDNs. It has opened the way, IDNs opens the way for the new services for email address internationalization.

We have here, get involvement, you have to go to our website, uasg.tech. You will find a lot of materials related to Universal Acceptance, IDN, EAls. Some relevant to material you will find here is the link for the Universal Acceptance roadmap for registry and registrar system and the response for the survey conducted by ICANN related to ccTLD manager

Universal Acceptance. This is my name in Armenian. Thank you very much.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Thank you, Abdalmonem. I think since we're over time, we might take-
- Oh, Bart.

BART BOSWINKEL: I have one question online. I don't know if you want to take it.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE: Go ahead, please.

BART BOSWINKEL: Okay. This is a question from Ruben School. Does the Universal Acceptance steering group consider linkification to be part of Universal Acceptance like in posting a WhatsApp message, message with a domain and that is made clickable or not?

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yes. Actually, he is talking about linkification. It is one of the issues that are affected by Universal Acceptance. More about linkification, it will exist online at uasg.tech, who are trying to fix all of the issues that are related to linkification. Maybe you open a word file and write mail to and email address, it will be displayed in an appropriate way. Maybe you are trying to make the protocol HTML 2 and then Arabic email address, it is one of the issues. All of these issues we are trying to

handle. We have many work groups within Universal Acceptance, extended group that are dedicated to grip these issues and forward it to the other worker group in order to handle it with an open-source provider, software developer, system administrator, etc. Thank you.

NICKLAS PAUSETTE:

Thanks a lot, Abdalmonem. So, with that, we've come to an end with today's presentation. And I'm the guy that got the task to summarize this on overtime. I can be the one between you and tonight's cocktail. At first, we heard Molehe Wesi telling us about digitizing the un-domain. After that, we heard Eduardo Duarte telling us about doing more with less, how AI can help us a ccTLD. Bruce Tonkin, to my right, told us about the process for launching registration at second level of .au. Then Crystal from .us told us about accountable WHOIS in the usTLD namespace.

After that, we had Knut from Norway who told us about data access for third parties, a framework for the Norwegian registry. I hope I didn't out someone too much during that presentation. Sorry for that. After that, we had Abdalmonem who tell us about Universal Acceptance-Readiness and business opportunities for ccTLDs. And last and not least, we would be very happy if you could fill out the survey to get us feedback on this session to make it even more valuable for the next meetings. With that, we say thank you for today and close this meeting.

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Thank you all very much. You can now stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]