

**Transcription ICANN Los Angeles  
Translation and Transliteration Contact Information PDP WG Update to the  
Council meeting  
Saturday 11 October 2014**

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(Jonathan): I'm sure one way or another we'll get there. All right everyone, can we start the afternoon session please? So there's a slight change to the agenda. Just to let you know we're going to reorder these items. We had - originally we were going to go into the GNSO PDP improvements now.

We will instead swap that until 17:15, quarter past 5:00, and bring forward the translation and transliteration of contact information PDP, which I believe (Rudy) here is going to give us some update on. I think it's relatively brief but let me hand over to you, (Rudy), and we'll pick up with that.

Are we good to go with the recording? Thank you. So it's the translation and transliteration of contact information PDP working group presented to you by (Rudy) (unintelligible). Go ahead,(Rudy).

(Rudy): Thank you, Jonathan. I have to excuse (Chris Dylan) who is co-chairing this working group with me and is doing quite all of work - impressive work in drafting and documents. We can go to the next slide.

Maybe it's good to refresh our memory and have a look at what is the task of this working group. In fact, we have two questions on the table. The first one is whether it is desirable to translate contact information to a single common language or transliterate contact information to a single common script.

Second question is who should decide - who should be the burden translating contact information to a single common language or transliterating contact information to a single common script.

Those two questions when we were drafting the charter - we have been trying to add a few other questions to those two and that are the benefits of transformation, translation, or transliteration in light of potential costs? Should transformation be mandatory in all gTLDs?

And the last question we have been adding to it is should transformation be mandatory for all registrants or only those based in certain countries and/or using specific non-ASCII script?

When we started generally working on these questions we started sending out questions to the SOs and ACs and other stakeholder groups, and we obtained a lot of information back from them and especially from - for example in countries that are affected by having non-US or non-ASCII scripts.

So the recent developments are after we've been handling the inputs from the different SOs and ACs, we also looked into the visibility study that has been published.

We're - it shows that there's no responding registrars or registries currently transforming registrant data, which is important to know, and provisioning (unintelligible) protocols are lacking either support of deployment for international live registration data, and that none of the tools tested is providing a high level of a courtesy and consistency in this transformation of international live registration data.

Recently we started - after London, drafting a straw man proposal and that actually in a status where we're at the end of discussion and going to the phase where we want to obtain a clear consensus among the members of the working group.

So the next steps we have are face-to-face meeting on Monday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon where we will discuss the option of either recommending for or against mandatory transformation of contact information, that's the point we are. We need to know if it's yes or no.

We will publish initial report shortly after the ICANN 51 meeting, that's work to be done in the next two weeks. And the goal is to have the final report published for the ICANN 52 meeting. This is a bit after the plan we have to have this final report in December that was what we try to have accomplished, but it looks like we need to a bit more time to get this done.

For those who want to have more information on the working group and the charter you can find the URLs on the slides. I think that's what I have to tell you about the status today and I'm open for questions and eventually input from other participants in the working group. I see (unintelligible) being present also.

The weekly calls have been very extensively participated by a lot of people and I'm quite happy that there's very interesting input coming each call we have from each member of the group. And we have a good representation of the different stakeholder groups in the working group, that I think is important to know. So I'm ending up here my report and open for questions.

(Jonathan): Thanks, (Rudy). You can leave up the recommendations. I don't know if there's - yes, I mean the last slide there is next steps or more information. Any questions or comments? Have you a sense of where this is going to go in terms of - I mean, I know you probably don't want to preemptor, you said discuss the option of either recommending for or against mandatory transformation.

It seems like a pretty big deal. I don't know how the registrars or others feel about this, I mean it seems like a potentially big...

(Rudy): Looking into the question itself, transformation, translation or transliteration has an impact and will cost money, and that's, I think, one of the big questions that has to be solved. Who's going to pay for that?

We know that from law enforcement it is something they'd say, okay, it's mandatory anyway, we need that. But otherwise if we're looking to - the aspect of the new design - the new directory design that's also on the table, up until today we didn't see any structure allowing to have different languages for contact information in that structure.

So I think it's already something that has to be triggered to that group to schedule a modification in the data model in order to allow to have more than one language. And that's where - how a decision saying that it is mandatory or not mandatory impacts also the work to be done in defining the data model for the directory services.

So I think it's quite important that we have a broad scope on what the mission is in itself, impacting not only the registrars, not only registries, but everybody around.

(Jonathan): I've got some - I've got a queue. I've got (James) here and then to Alan and (unintelligible).

(James): So thank you for the update and I think we have one registrar participating and giving updates.

And I've got to tell you registrars are fairly concerned about the direction that this group is going down because it seems like it's accumulating a wish list of multi lingual omniscients and then kicking the responsibility for making that a reality to commercial and contracted parties and then of course onto the registrants.

So I have a question for a scenario and perhaps it's something you've discussed in your working group. Could a - for example, a Chinese law

enforcement agency request that all existing domain names be translated from English to Chinese?

(Rudy): Of course they can request. The answer is is it task of the registrar, the registry to do that? I don't think so. There's no contract in engaging you in doing translation or transliteration of contact information today because there is no space for it.

(James): Understood, understood. I'm thinking that for example I think that when we approach some of these issues we usually approach them as from the perspective of, let's say, U.S. or English-speaking law enforcement or intellectual property. I can't understand the language of this Whois contact and I need it translated.

But presumably any policy recommendations resulting from this group would not be bias towards any one language pair set. It would be any requester in any language requesting immediate translation to any other language. And I think that's where we kind of throw up our hands and say solve that in the real world first and then we'll be glad to put into Whois.

(Rudy): But maybe to answer that is that in the discussions we had it is clear that it is directed most often by countries where there's no ASCII script used for registering domain names. And it makes it difficult to get, for instance, the address of a Chinese company that's registered its domain name if that is written in Chinese. It's not easy to see if - you check up the address, if it's really a good address so that's one of the issues. But (Lars), want to add something?

(Lars): Thank you, (Rudy). (Lars) for the transcript. Just very briefly, to (James's) point, so I'd just like to point that the group is very aware that - and it's also part of the larger charter question that its task is also to assess the benefits and the costs that's associated with potential mandatory translation and transliteration.

So it's not something that there is a list has been drawn up and just do we think it's a good or better idea, yes or no, let's go that way. So people in the group are aware of this, they understand that also translation and transliteration doesn't necessarily mean just from one language into ASCII. It could also potentially then mean, you know, why not from Russian into Chinese.

So these are all issues that are being considered and that obviously would also increase or make things - increase the issue that (unintelligible) in order to make a final confirmation on which way to go and I think once there is some outcome of the group, at the moment there's different opinion on which costs outweigh which benefits.

And I think that's where we're trying to work on to get a consensus from everybody that there's a solution being reached but it's not that there's - a list has been drawn up and nobody thinks about what the implications might or might not be for the contracted parties.

(Jonathan): All right, I've got a queue with Stephanie, Alan and (unintelligible). Stephanie?

Stephanie Perrin: Thanks very much, Stephanie Perrin for the record. And I just wondered (Rudy), you mentioned that law enforcement for them, it was a mandatory, they wanted this. Did they give you any other examples where their costs of transliteration and translation were being born by the investigated parties?

(Rudy): To be clear, officially we didn't get any request from law enforcement. It's because we've been consulting during the ICANN meetings, the physical meetings in London. We had a session where we had the chance to talk to them, but it's clear that they're requesting this to be done so that in fact they don't have to do the work themselves.

However, the complexity of this issue makes that - there is no perfect solution. Actually there's no translation or transliteration tool that enables to

produce correct translation. And that's already an issue if you say okay, it's mandatory, you need also to provide some ideas about solutions. And I think that from the law enforcement side they have also the struggle to find a way of doing this in a cost effective way.

It's something that's in the group. We have been looking into the issue of are there solutions available today that allow us to give it a good direction of should it be mandatory or not? And that's where the group is a bit - pushing from one side to the other depending on what we discussed in essence - in how certain groups are willing to have this being done.

And actually it's about - for me it's a terrific experience to see - the longer you're on the discussions, the more you see complexity growing in an issue that in fact affects everybody and the question is who should take care of the cost of doing all this work? And actually, personally, I don't have any answer to that question.

(Jonathan): Okay (Alan), you've been patient.

(Alan): Thank you, a question first and then maybe a comment. My recollection is this PDP is presuming that the Whois database is capable - as already capable of representing the native language in which the domain was registered. So if it's Chinese then it can hold Chinese.

We're not in the 7 bit ASCII world. So really we're saying should there be a translation, not so that the RAA can be satisfied, that is, and represent the true address but translated or transliterated into yet another language other than the one in which the registrant originally used.

Okay, and I don't see how one can go forward answering that unless you specify what language. We're not going to translate everything into every known language. So I'm not quite sure what the target is.

(Rudy): To answer directly to that question, it would be in another script. We are not saying that is going to be in several other scripts, that's clear. Even today data model doesn't allow you to have several scripts - several languages used for contact information.

You're limited to one. You cannot say that the address, one's in English, the other one in Chinese, the other one in Russian. No there's only address information in the contact information.

So if you're looking to how we have been addressing the issue, it was from the one language into another one, not in several other ones. Maybe (Lars) you can add something too?

(Jonathan): Go ahead (Lars). I'm conscious of the queue to let you know who's waiting to talk, (Peter). I've got (Amr) and (Motley) and Edmon up at the mic.

(Lars): Yes, just very quick to (Alan)'s point. So the charter's set around that the group should consider whether contact information should be translated or transliterated into one common script.

And so the group - obviously the general assumption of people in this room and in this community will go from should - for example, Chinese group (unintelligible) into ASCII. But would be the group is obviously conscious of it is why should it be ASCII? And if it's English yes, well, English - well sure.

So the point being is that it should be one script and then the reasons - if it is just one script (unintelligible) why should it be English and not something else for example? It's an issue of it's a very concentric point of view, right?

The FBI would like to see it in ASCII whereas the KGB or whatever they're called now would probably like to see it in Russian. So I'm just saying that the group is aware that you could open a Pandora's Box as well if you translate and transliterate into different languages.

(Alan): Could I have a follow (Jonathan)?

(Jonathan): Yes, if you could be brief because I'm conscious of...

((Crosstalk)).

(Alan): I'll be very brief.

(Jonathan): Go ahead.

(Alan): I'll be very brief. So the issue is a domain is registered in Chinese and we're now asking should we change - transliterate it or translate it to something else for representation in the Whois database in today's world, we're actually saying should we make it less accurate? That seems to be counter to where the way we're supposed to be going.

(Jonathan): Okay. I see (Rudy) nodding there. There's some concern a similar way. I've got (Peter) then (Amr) then Edmon then (James). (Peter) go ahead.

(Peter): Thanks, (Peter Rainfort) IBC. First of all I'd like to thank our two co-chairs for the great work that you're doing because this is obviously not a very simple topic to work on and as we've seen it's difficult to find a solution.

What we have said from - basically from the IPC point of view is that we think it's important to have a readable basic Whois that is - and that system should be mandatory.

From the pure legal aspect, of course, the original contact information will have the first instance but to get a possibility actually to read Whois and to get some initial contact information we think that's very important and that should be mandatory.

And finally as we discussed previously here, the representation and participation from GAC members - this is actually one of the groups where we

have got good feedback from from GAC members so that's a very good example of that, thanks.

(Jonathan): Thanks (Patter). (Amr) has been patient online. (Amr), see if we can hear you come in.

(Amr): Thanks (Jonathan), this is (Amr). Can you hear me?

(Jonathan): Yes, nice and clearly. Thanks (Amr).

(Amr): Thanks. I'm sorry I couldn't be there in person but I just wanted to perhaps chime in with a few comments in response of some of the questions and concerns that have been raised right now by (James) and (Alan).

I think (James)'s point is well taken regarding what if, for example, the Chinese government asks that all the Whois databases transform, which is the word being used for translation and transliteration, into Chinese language.

And (Alan)'s question on whether if it's sort of - it doesn't make sense to make this decision on what this desirable or not if we don't determine a language at this point to be transformed into.

For the first issue on the charter at large made clear earlier - the charter question is really on whether it's desirable to translate and/or transliterate into a single common script.

So it wouldn't be a case where whether this PDP pass, like, a recommendation that, yes, it is desirable then you would have translation/transliteration into any language on the script that when one stakeholder asks for it but it would be a uniform transformation into one single common script by one registration database in the form of other scripts.

Regarding the issue of how can we make a decision if we don't consider what languages, well, this is actually a problem that we faced back when we were drafting the charter of this working group.

And it wasn't something that was included in the issue reports leading up to that and it did come up very early on. We wanted to sort of discuss whether - what language and script we were talking about.

But it was something that'd be handled by a different PDP, perhaps the post expert working group PDP. And I should probably also mention that there's another expert working group on registrar - on international on the registration database that's also ongoing right now and the two working groups are communicating and coordinating.

We are trying to consider a lot of these complexities as (Rudy) has mentioned on this working group. There are a lot of them and a lot of them are actually linguistic complexities.

So when we say - if we're translating and we're transliterating contact information, if we're actually making the Whois database less accurate or not, that is a very real concern. And it's linguistically - after exploring several different languages and scripts it has proven to be very challenging.

And the idea is that the original language and script that the contact information is provided in would probably remain to be the authoritative set of contact information and not the alternative set, which is MD transliterated and translated script and language.

I hope that clarifies a few things but I also wanted to raise another point that is of specific concern to council, that is if I'm not mistaken - and please correct me if I'm wrong but I think (Shing) who is the GNSO council liaison to this PDP is going to be an outgoing councilor at the end of this meeting. So the GNSO council does need to appoint a new liaison. I'm on this working

group and so is (unintelligible) I believe so we should probably get that on the council agenda at some point, thanks.

(Jonathan): Thanks (Amr), nice to have you with us. (Steve) you got that? Right. So that's - we'll need to appoint a new liaison to this working group. I just want to check before we go to you Edmon, Jim you've arrived. Are we waiting for (Patrick) as well as part of the SSAC or you're - I see (unintelligible) slipped in so quietly into the back that I wasn't even sure you were there.

All right, so we're driving this to a close with the next two comments from Edmon and (James) and then we'll be done with this session.

Edmon Chung: Thank you, Edmon Chung here. So I just want to mention - I apologize. I missed the beginning of the presentation so this might have already been covered. I understand the - what (James) was mentioning and now there's in terms of the anxiety of, you know, how this is done and what the costs are and those kind of things.

Kind of the reason why, I think there was a group before that looked into this - called the IRD before and we punted this into the PDP that's now going through. And specifically for that reason because we thought - we realized that there's certain cost involved.

But I think one fundamental issue is it's very important for other people to get a sense of in terms of the aim of this work is that fundamentally a person, let's say from Arabic region and they registered an Arabic domain name, they should be able to provide their information, their contact information in Arabic, that's the fundamental aim of this whole exercise.

The question then - the low level question then for this group is whether some kind of transliteration or transformation could assist them in, you know, transforming that data back into a form that, you know, current English speaking people in the ICANN world can decipher.

So that's kind of what I understand from the group. So one question on that is, which I've always had this question since I was co-chairing the IRD before, is did the group also look into transformation? And this touches on the issue of accuracy.

Did the group also look into possibly transforming the data into a form that is readable, you know, for people who read English but doesn't necessarily could be used to send a postal mail back to the guy?

When you send the postal mail back to the guy you'd use the original form, you know, it's not difficult to cut and paste. But what's important is you somehow need to be able to read it so that, you know, you can do customer support or some form of that.

So the transformation doesn't need to be a form where it's completely linguistically acceptable but a form that, you know, customer support or some people can use to - a little bit like the A label for the IDM but not - hopefully not as difficult to read or write out. But is - does the group also look into that? Kind of like a Meta language, that's not quite - kind of direction.

(Rudy): Thank you Edmon for that question. Indeed we've been discussing this in the group. We have been looking to the issue of are there available in the market translation tools that allow you to translate that contact data into - for your language readable language and correct address?

And that's a big question mark saying that you would like to have a kind of labeling of transforming data. The question then is who's responsible for transforming that data and the impact of it?

And that's a big question because that's something that if it's done inside the ICANN constellation it would be responsibility of ICANN if it's wrong.

So labeling to me seems to be not the correct way of doing this because we have been looking into, for instance, the international post federation that has typical ways of addressing postal addresses.

But still it's a question that you cannot solve by saying we're allowing to have a transformation. Our question was translation and transliteration not having a solution in between that is transforming data into something that eventually could be helpful to read and understand the address you will find in the Whois data.

But still it's discussions that we're having in the group. It doesn't help us really to get a solution to all the questions we have. But we think that we are addressing now the point where we will separate and have a clear view on is it a yes or a no.

And all the other smaller questions will be taken care of once we've taken that decision. I think that's the first step to go through, if we can continue having these discussions for ages but that doesn't help us.

We need to have an answer to the first question, is it desirable, yes or no. Once we have that we can address the other issues and find ways to propose solutions but we need first - the first question will be answered.

(Jonathan): We have to bring it to a last word to (James). We're already running 15 minutes behind schedule and we've got SSAC colleagues waiting to talk us. (James).

(James): Thanks (Jonathan), I'll be very brief, mindful of the schedule. First to the point of accuracy, registrants give us their contact information in the language that those contacts exist.

If we are - or whomever is asked to translate them without the registrant providing that information then you're asking us to guess. And then the translation errors would then fall into whoever is doing that.

Second point regarding cost, these costs are already occurring.

They're occurring on an ad-hock basis, not from millions of domain names but just the ones that are causing problems. And they're being incurred by the individuals or organizations who seek to consume that information.

It's economically inefficient as well as patently absurd to suggest that we should centralize all of those costs with one industry and translate the entire database in advance of any of those domain names being a subject of a problem or an investigation.

And thirdly - and I'm going to channel Milton Mueller who I don't believe is here, I haven't seen him anyway, who made I thought a very astute comment back in London, that we should be wary even under the best of intentions.

We should be wary of attempts or efforts to make Whois into a better surveillance tool so that it can be used as a surveillance mechanism. Regardless of what we believe the right intentions are we should be aware of that and we should be wary and I would suggest even resist those calls particularly when it's being born by this industry, thanks.

(Jonathan): Thanks, (Rudy). That got a little bit more complicated than involved - than you might have anticipated but that's great. It was a full discussion and appreciate all the contributions. Thanks very much.

Okay. We're going to hear from and meet with our colleagues from SSAC now. I unfortunately have to excuse myself at this point so (David) is going to take over chairing this session and then Volker thereafter so apologies publicly to you, (Patrick) and Jim.

Man: (Unintelligible)

(Jonathan): Something like that. It's just I'm a little frightened when it comes to security and stability issues.

(David): Do we need to stop the recording on the next session?

Man: Yes, wait for the last one to finish first.