

# 'Thick' Whois Policy Development Process



# The difference between thick and thin Whois

- ICANN specifies Whois requirements through the registry and registrar agreements
- Registries have historically satisfied their Whois obligations under two different models. The two models are often characterized as “thin” and “thick” Whois registries. This distinction is based on how two distinct sets of data are maintained.
- WHOIS contains two kinds of data about a domain name;
  - one set of data is associated with **the domain name** (this information includes data sufficient to identify the sponsoring registrar, status of the registration, creation and expiration dates for each registration, name server data, the last time the record was updated in the Registry database, and the URL for the registrar’s Whois service),
  - and a second set of data that is associated with **the registrant** of the domain name.

# The difference between thick and thin Whois

- In a **thin registration model** the Registry only collects the information associated with the domain name from the Registrar. The Registry in turn publishes that information along with maintaining certain status information at the Registry level. Registrars maintain data associated with the registrant of the domain and provide it via their own Whois services.
- In a **thick registration model** the Registry collects both sets of data (domain name and registrant) from the Registrar and in turn publishes that data via Whois.

# Why is this important?

Thick Whois has certain advantages e.g. IRTP, but there may be negative consequences that should be explored in order to determine whether 'thick' Whois should be required. Topics we're considering include:

- Response consistency
- Stability
- Accessibility
- Impact on data and privacy protection
- Cost implications
- Synchronization/migration
- Authoritativeness
- Competition in registry services
- Existing Whois applications
- Data escrow
- Registrar Port 43 Whois requirements

# Recent Developments & Next Steps



- WG started its deliberations in November 2012
- Created a number of sub-teams to address charter questions
- Formed ad-hoc Expert Panel
- Requested input from other ICANN SO/ACs & GNSO SG / C
- Working its way through input received topic by topic

# Also

- Should the PDP WG reach consensus on a recommendation that ‘thick’ Whois should be required, then also consider: cost implications; guidelines as to how to conduct such a transition; need for special provisions / exemptions

# Next Steps



- F2F meeting in Beijing (see <http://beijing46.icann.org/node/37029>)
- WG intends to publish Initial Report for public comment by Durban
- Further information, see <https://community.icann.org/display/PDP/Home>

**Thank you!**  
**Questions? Comments?**