Transcription ICANN Beijing Meeting

IETF Update meeting

Sunday 7 April 2013 at 16:30 local time

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Man: And for the transcript this will be the IATF GNSO working session.

Jonathan Robinson: Thank you. So the recording has now started. Welcome formally to Olaf and Steven Sheng.

Steve Sheng: Thank you Jonathan. Just to give a very brief introduction, I think the - I've heard a lot today the issue of Whois that's been debated for over ten years. And there are lots of policy issues on this topic and it's a very difficult topic.

Today the focus is on the technical side. We shared, you know, in a number of occasions that there are quite a few technical limitations of the original Whois protocol.

And that is not suitable as we move into the next generation. And really, the IATF, we chartered a working group to develop a Web based (extendable) registration data access protocol. And I'm happy to have Olaf here to give the presentation.

So we will take questions towards the end. I want to begin by saying that the - one of the early IATF sessions, I think Wendy made - you were there in Paris when making the point that the technical community developed the protocol and provides the capabilities.

And then it's up to the policy communities to do policies on top of that and I think Olaf is going to touch on that. So I want to make a quick distinction there. Olaf, the floor is yours.

Olaf Kolkman: Thank you Steve. Yes, my name is Olaf Kolkman. I work for a (number) of labs and I volunteer as a chair in the IATF (rich) working group, co-chairs, (Marie Kucharari) and some of the slides were stolen from other people.

So in the context of what is the context (WERT)? If I'm not sounding completely coherent, that's because of the Red Eye and the jet lag kicking in which makes me lose my English but Whois is actually the context of (WERT). As you all know, Whois has this weird thing where you basically type something into the comment line and you get a response - a response compliant registration data.

And what you get back is, well, it's unstructured so the how is unstructured. The how is - the how for the question itself - how you ask the question is (unintelligible) for instance, is in question here. How you ask that question is complex dependent.

You have to sort of know how to construct that query. And then how you get the information back is also unstructured and what is in the information is complex dependent and policy dependent.

(WERT) is playing a role in separating the what and the how. The protocol is making that how more structured and (extending it) and enable what can be done in the several contexts that exists and the (association) allowed what is

going to be put, what information is going to be (sure) to users is a policy question that is discussed in the broadest senses of the community.

And I'm mentioning here several of those pieces, policy buddies. Protocol work is done in the IATF and the IATF is charted to created that how, to put it very simply. And create a how that allows to the various decisions about what to send online to take place.

There is a very nice paper about - which I forgot her name - no, it doesn't come back. Anyway, allowing for the (tussle) to play out in the protocols so the policy space can go either way. That's the paper's content, paraphrase it.

Anyway, standardize a single data framework, deliver objects and capsulate it in that framework for service over HTTP and following requirements from earlier work on standardizing registration of protocols.

These - this is chartered text. If this sounds a little bit vague, then that is because it's chartered text. But this more concrete. So this is a simple, easy to (include in) protocol supporting internationalized (bridge) station data and specify for name registries capturing the need to internationalize domain names in the data model.

And to allow a possibility of differential services based on client authentication. So this protocol needs to be able to deal with our authentication and then deliver a certain set of answers to one particular client and a different set of answers to other clients.

And, for instance, (more important) is interested in having - might have interest in different content than the general public and this is the way a protocol would support that.

So I talked about (rest tool), (rest tool) is a term of art. It's called - it extends for representational (state of) transfer and it uses verbs like get, put, (post)

and you need to get objects from objects from and to Web servers, essentially, or to servers or to databases.

Those resources are generally represented by URIs and the (WERT)s protocol is very easy because it only uses the get verb. So basically what you do is you say I want to get and something that is represented by a URI like on the bottom of the slide - I want to get the URI that is the operator - is the abuse contact for the operator (open) IP block or the registrants for a certain domain. So that's the way you form the query.

The answer you get back in the data structure that's called (Jason) and I won't go into the details. Deliverables - we have a bunch of documents that describe all these protocols, all these things that go on the wire. It's using HTTP so that's documented first.

It's basically the transport layer and some of the authentication mechanisms go in there. That document is actually finished or almost finished. And there was a working group last call going on. That means that the working group thinks there are no more issues.

If there are more issues brought up then we have to solve them. If not , this document will be submitted to the (IHG) for publication. There's an RFC and there was an IATF last call in the proce- the IATF process (belongs).

There're a bunch of other documents. I won't describe them all but basically that gives the basic framework, the basic course specifications for doing the work. Currently we're discussing within the working group doing that other work.

And I'll get into that in a second, specifically that search thing. The object in inventory draft is actually an interesting draft. It basically looks at what is - what are the objects that are currently served by a great many of TOBs so

that if decisions are - need to be taken about, you know, standardizing certain base functionalities, that is the document we're looking at.

So major issues - internationalized data issues - (V cart) for (Jason). This is the list of issues and federated authentication and search. Those are the issues. Let's go into details.

(V cart) for (Jason), it's - this is really going into the protocol depth. But in the responses, we need to standardize contact information and contact information for several types of contents, all share address data and telephone numbers and those kinds of things.

And that's a problem that we see elsewhere in the IATF as well for instance, in address databases. So there's a separate working group that (Randolph) chartered to provide a solution in a few months to come with a standardized pack which we then use and encapsulate within the protocol (stripe).

Internationalization issue - that's an interesting one. In the last IATF, my neighbor, Steve here, reported on a comparison he did against the internationalized registration data working group, the group's final report, and our analysis in the working group was that basically all the requirements that are set in the document can be met by (WERT).

Domain name fields - the fields that need to be internationalized in the protocol according to that report should be the domain names, it should be main server fields, email and entity names and addresses.

And, in fact, all those fields can be internationalized within the (WERT)s protocol and the details of the way that it's being done is currently ironed out. In base spec, we have to do a query response so you have to essentially craft a question for an object that will always match.

We're looking at search, how can we do search and then there's a whole bunch of questions about what type of search you want to do, sub string searches like you do one search on something that's in the middle of a string. Do you only want to search on prefixes or anything?

Unicode equivalences - if you have actions, do you treat those letters the same as the MX accented letters? And those are easy cases. Bullion operators - all kinds of difficult things that you run into with search. The direction that the working group seems to go in, that is still an ongoing debate, is to keep it reasonable.

That's prefix matches on existing fields. But again, that is going around. An important part of the IATF culture is rough consensus and running code and both of those are actually a good thing and there're a bunch of implementations out there that have been demonstrated in the working group.

Not quite interoperability test but clearly things that people can talk to and test their implementation against. We have two (boss). In June, the working group chartered, we had three new things until now and there's an active mailing list.

If you want to contribute, please subscribe to the mailing list. That's where the work takes place. Next IATF meeting will be in Berlin and these are further coordinates for if you want to join or read or look further on this work. Yes, so far.

Jonathan Robinson: Thank you Olaf. Questions? Mikey? Oh, okay.

Mikey O'Connor: That's nice. Sorry to all who are listening on headphones. Thanks. That's fantastic. My name's Mikey O'Connor and among other things, I'm the chair of the thick Whois working group here at ICANN and the GNSO.

Olaf Kolkman: And I need an education. If - I'm going to presume that the distinction between a thick Whois and thin Whois is well-known. Could you describe how

this would work for a thick registry as opposed to a thin registry? When I query it, would it look that same?

So one of the things that we're talking - one of the things that is available in the protocol is a redirection mechanism. So if you're going to a place and that place doesn't have the answer but it knows where to look for that answer, it will redirect to the place where the answer can be found.

Another thing is the general bootstrap problem that has not been solved yet because we actually don't know how that's going to be solved in the real world and the general bootstrap problem is that I type in the name for a certain registry and I actually do not know where the server is that has that information.

And that is - that needs an external knowledge broker, so to speak. I think those will start to exist once the protocol is out there. It might be that ICANN will operate one and I don't know, but speculating here.

But that is, at this moment, is something that we don't have (solved) also in the working group. But redirection work, I think those are the ones that you need to - you can use them in thick Whois registry cases.

Mikey O'Connor: So this is Mikey again. Thanks Olaf. Is there - and maybe I'm going to lean on Wendy just a little bit here because you hang out in both cases - is there kind of a way that we in the thick Whois working group could work with the IATF working group to educate ourselves on the implications of this protocol for the work that we're doing in our working group?

What's the kind of procedural mechanism there? Because it seems to me here - let me back up just one notch. One of the things that I was involved with was the working group the caused this working group to happen, which was the inter-registrar transfer working group a couple of generations back.

Olaf Kolkman: And this working group is your working group. It's not (WERT)?

Mikey O'Connor: Yes, this is all mine. This is all the ICANN.

Olaf Kolkman: Yes, right.

Mikey O'Connor: And the - one of the really big underlying reasons that we're tackling this issue the way we are is because of that redirect problem which occurs when there's a change of registrant and the gaining registrar needs to verify the identity and contact information of the registrant at the losing registrar.

I mean, in thick, it's pretty easy because it's all up in that one database. But in thin, the gaining registrant doesn't really have a good mechanism to go find that out. And I'm - I don't want to tie up this meeting.

Olaf Kolkman: Yes, yes. Right.

Mikey O'Connor: It's a really narrow question but I'm trying to figure out a way to get that communication channel going to see if there's a solution to a problem that's in my working group, working and the work that you're doing. So I just want to make sure I don't tread on procedural toes.

Olaf Kolkman: Well, yes, that's - well, the procedural toes are that - I don't think we have a procedural line between the working groups here. In these kinds of cases, it's best (unintelligible) that know about the game, play it both sides of those groups.

And we're both organizations in that sense so that works. What we do have to make sure is that there are people who know those issues in both groups. And then I think we'll be fine. That's not a procedural answer as such in the sense that these things work best if the people who are the interested parties or the stakeholders, however you want to call them, know of the existence of where this work is done and join. That's fairly lightweight and easy.

Mikey O'Connor: Thank you.

Jonathan Robinson: Thank you. Next question.

Man: (Unintelligible). This question is on behalf of (unintelligible) what we have discussed. As you said, it's of great importance to have an easy and functional Whois system and when it comes to the - I mean, when it comes to ccTLDs, we quite used to have internationalized, so to speak, or nationalized and with basically pretty good search systems.

But it doesn't work on the internationalized base and now we have both TLDs and subdomains in Cyrillic and Cantonese and whatever, that also can't be added to that. And we don't have so much time left to get a system that works. And I'm a little bit afraid we might still have - that you can see it can be internationalized and you have working groups and so.

But when can we see a functional system that works? And the problem is that it's not just that - the work you do, but it's also that it must be out there and function and everybody must know about it so they can use it.

Olaf Kolkman: I'm thinking on how to answer this in the best possible way. We are organizing this work in the IATF to deliver a working and functional specification as soon as possible. The history of this was that within the IRR community, so the IP addresses community, people were working on standardizing a solution (be a proposal) over the IRR space.

And they brought it to the IATF and said we would like to standardize this, and then the names people, so to speak, and that's the broad set of DNS related services, essentially said we want to join too. We think this is a good thing to have and we would like to join, too.

And at that point - moment - the community decided, yes, let's do this but let's make sure we work on a pretty tough schedule to get this done so - and that's what we're trying to do now.

That's said, as soon as the specifications over the ITS work is done, then it becomes an implementation task for the community, the interested people. The IATF has tried this before. It has done other protocols for registration data service, which the community did not pick up whatsoever. That failed.

This might fail again. But the stakes are high. The elements of the protocol that meet the functionality are there and if you are interested, I would say join one of those teams here, write an implementation and do the tests that you think are needed to be done. If it goes to search and you have very specific requirements or ideas about search, bring it to the (domain names).

Steve Sheng: Yes, I just want to add onto to Olaf's point. I think it's important to get it right, too, and to get right protocol design. But having said that, once the protocol design works, this work will need to come back to the policy, the various policy communities, you know, ccTLDs. You know, in the ICANN sphere, it's probably coming back to a GNSO for adoption, so that work needs to be done as well, so.

Man: It allows it in the (queue) and I think at that point, we should close things up. Sorry, (Chenel), I wasn't sure - okay, so we Lars and Ching and then we'll call it a day. It's been a long day. It's an interesting subject but we should draw a line under it at this point. Okay, so Lars, Ching and then we'll call it a day.

Lars Hoffman: Yes, another question from America (from Liz Williams). I think on - refer to Slide 8, and she's asking whether any of the major issues have an impact on the new TLD implementation pathway.

Olaf Kolkman: I cannot answer that.

Man: I can answer that. I think the - this protocol, it's in development and when it's finished, I think probably - maybe some of the TLDs are already validated. So this is not going to be in time for that.

So if an applicant today, a new TLD applicant today, should follow the guideline specifications set forth in the (acronym) guidebook, I think it's specification four on Whois to implement those, so yes.

Man: Thanks. So this is clearly a protocol under development that may or may not be adopted in the future as Lars said. Lars, did you want to add something else?

Lars Hoffman: One thing is important. This is not about what is stored in databases. It's not stored about - it's not about what internal policies are for gTLDs. It is only about making that data that is available in the database accessible for the outside. So from a policy perspective, I think that allows for a lot of (tussle) again.

Jonathan Robinson: Thanks Lars. Ching, it looks like you're going to have the last word.

Ching Chiao: Thank you, Jonathan. I should be responsible for part of the conversation here. Thank you for the - I always show my (extra) respect to people who are coming from the - on the technical community. So when you talk to - so when the technical geeks are trying to talk to the policy geeks, we would just - I mean, from time to time, we're trying to build a bridge here.

But just to warn you, and also a reminder to all of us here at the council, actually at the GNSO community, a lot of learning process from us. I will hope that we will have - we will be able to greet you with more people in this room.

But let me offer two kind of comments and I will just shut myself up. First of all is that we are going through this (IRB) recommendation two. You probably heard on that particular transliteration - sorry, the internationalization

registration data, recommendation two, particularly on how the registrant and registrar should deal with the internationalized or localized and (expand us on its) grid.

So we kind of deal with a situation here, you probably hear from Steve as well, is that we kind of - we need to start the process in order to wait for another expert group to have their results down first and then we'll be able to move on our policy work.

So it's just kind of a reminder for us and also to use that we pretty much relied on your words and I will hope that a closer call coordination on this. My second point, I literally forgot it, but maybe I'll just jump offline. It's been a long day. I will get that second point I would like to raise.

Man: I'll be giving a similar update throughout the week, so if it comes back, I'll keep you posted.

Ching Chiao: Thank you.

Man: All right.

Man: Well, let's wrap it up at that point. Thank you Ching. Thank you Steve and thank you Olaf for your presentations. We appreciate you taking the time to come and talk with the council about your work.

Man: My pleasure.

Man: Thank you.

END