

Registrar Advisory Group (RAG)

Minutes of the Registrar Advisory Group Meeting held in the InternetNZ Offices, Grand Arcade Tower, Willis Street, Wellington on Thursday 11 February 2010 at 10:30am.

PRESENT Debbie Monahan (DNCL) – Meeting Chair
Andrew Scott (Domainz/MelbourneIT), Dave Baker (NZRS), Glen Eustace (Godzone Internet Services), Jay Daley (NZRS), Lee Miller (1st Domains/Net24), Paul McKitrick (DNCL), Peter Mott (Swizzle), Richard Clark (Red Spider Development).

In attendance: Sebastian Castro

APOLOGIES Apologies were received and accepted from:
Adam Griffiths (DNCL).`

WELCOME

Debbie Monahan, Domain Name Commissioner (DNC), opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for their time and asked everyone to introduce themselves to the group. The DNC also acknowledged and thanked Adam Griffiths for this time making preparations for this meeting.

MINUTES

The DNC reviewed the agenda and commented that both DNCL and NZRS are interested in feedback from the RAG today on the Internationalised Domain Names (IDN) plans.

INTERNATIONALISED DOMAIN NAMES

The DNC asked Paul McKitrick to provide an update on the IDN implementation. Paul outlined the proposed criteria and process for Registrars to obtain an *IDN Friendly* status. Paul also noted that the concept of an *IDN Friendly* status was a suggestion from the September 2008 RAG meeting.

The following draft criteria were provided:

- *Integration of unicode versions of names in all communications between registrars and registrants, including billing, and online systems.*
- *Information, such as a help section, about IDN's and how they are implemented in .nz, on the registrar's website.*
- *Support staff are trained in what IDN's are, and how they have been implemented in .nz.*

The following process was outlined:

- *Registrars will need to make a request to DNCL stating that they should be considered IDN friendly and that they meet the above criteria.*

- DNCL will review the request and where possible verify the claims that have been made.
- IDN Friendly registrars will be identified in a similar fashion as those who are offering IPv6, in the Authorised Registrars table on DNCL website. Registrants will be directed towards these registrars if they want to register an IDN.

Paul then outlined the IDN Sunrise Registration process and associated timeline as follows:

- The Sunrise Registration period runs from Tuesday 6 April to Tuesday 6 July.
- Registrants of currently registered domains names will be able to apply for a macronised variant of their domain name during this period. This process will be available via DNCL's website.
- Following the Sunrise Registration period DNCL will review the applications of the variants that have been requested and will then pass this to NZRS.
- Registrars will be sent a list of the variants that their registrants have requested prior to the system going live.
- At 10am on Monday 26th July, which is during Maori Language Week, registrations will be open to everyone. Registrations made during the sunrise period they will be created prior 10am, the exact time will be dependant on the volume that needs to be processed. Registrars will be charged for registered variants at this point.
- The standard five-day grace period for cancellations will apply for the registered variants when the system goes live.
- During the sunrise period the whois details for the macronised variants that are applied for will be exactly the same as the ASCII version of the domain name, including the name servers.

There was then a general discussion about the IDN implementation. During which the DNC stated that her intention with the *IDN Friendly* status was not to force a standard on registrars, but to provide the options and criteria for those registrars that did want to obtain it. The DNC also stated that the IDN communications package that is being prepared by DNCL will be available for registrars to use as well.

Jay Daley presented some relevant statistics from the *NZRS 2009 Customer Satisfaction* survey, which is due to be published soon. 45% of respondents are planning to use IDN in the future, and 15% of respondents are currently using IDN with another registry.

A suggestion from the RAG was it would be useful for Registrars to be able to provide a link, as part of their normal domain registration process, which would take the registrant to the first page of the IDN Sunrise Application process and automatically populate the domain name attribute. The DNC acknowledged this suggestion and said that it would be followed up. It was noted that this would need to occur once the normal domain registration was complete, as the IDN Sunrise Application process first checks that the domain existed before offering macronised variants.

The RAG also suggested that it was preferred that the Name Server details for the macronised variants were also populated with the same Name Server details as the currently registered ASCII domain name.

It was agreed that, during the sunrise period, all applications for the registration of macronised variants of a domain name will automatically have the same details as for the ASCII version of the domain name, including name servers.

Through out the sunrise period DNCL will be monitoring the numbers of applications and will provide updates to registrars as appropriate. Depending on the volumes of applications DNCL may also look to notify relevant third parties, such as hosting providers, where appropriate.

The DNC thanked Paul for the update and invited Sebastian Castro to provide an update on DNSSEC implementation.

DNSSEC IMPLEMENTATION

Over the last four months NZRS and DNCL have been working on the DNSSEC implementation.

The NZRS have been working in the test environment on the technical elements of signing the .nz zone. Internal testing has been carried out using Open DNSSEC, which enables easier management of cryptographic key material and operations relating to DNSSEC. Prior to Open DNSSEC the process was a lot more convoluted and manual.

NZRS are now reviewing all the changes to the SRS that will be needed to be made to the NZRS system and will be working with DNCL on the policy changes that will need to be made and implemented.

The timeline for this project is still being planned, however it is envisaged to occur in 2010.

There was a discussion around the implementation of DNSSEC during which the DNC noted that while currently there is a lot of internal work happening both within DNCL and NZRS this will be a consultative process and that in due course draft policies will be sent out for comment.

The DNC thanked Sebastian for the update and invited Dave Baker to provide an update on the EPP implementation.

EPP

Dave Baker stated that originally NZRS were going to have an EPP proxy for registrars to use to talk to the SRS, however it was determined whilst this was a good solution for NZRS, it would be harder on registrars. So it has been decided to bring the EPP proxy into the SRS. The SRS data model needs to be enhanced to provide EPP support but backwards compatibility has been maintained for those registrars that do not want to use EPP. Also EPP style contact object

management and message polling will be available through SRS transactions in addition to being available via the EPP transactions using the EPP proxy. The EPP proxy complies with all the EPP standards.

The EPP interface and the new SRS transactions are optional and registrars can continue to use their normal set of SRS transactions if they wish to do so. Registrars that want to use EPP can move to a native EPP solution, or access EPP style functionality using the SRS XML interface.

It is planned that it will be available on the test system by April 2010 and that it will be implemented on the production system by July 2010. If registrars want to be involved earlier then an Alpha release of the protocol can be provided now for them to look at.

Jay Daley reinforced that NZRS are fully committed to maintaining SRS, and there are no plans to get rid of it.

The RAG asked the motivations behind implementing EPP. Jay responded that there is a market drive for this, based on the *NZRS 2009 Customer Satisfaction* survey. Jay also noted that registrars who are currently just offer .nz registrations would be better positioned to offer other gTLD registrations if they implemented EPP.

The RAG suggested that there would be a lot of interest in a seamless SRS interface to an ICANN accredited registrar.

This suggestion was noted as a good suggestion by the DNC and that it will be taken on board and reviewed.

The DNC then asked NZRS to provide an update on the NZRS Annual project programme.

NZRS ANNUAL PROJECT PROGRAMME

Jay stated that NZRS have moved from a five year plan to an annual plan, with the intention to establish it as a consultative process, including providing monthly updates, at which point Jay invited Dave Baker to provide the first monthly update.

Dave stated that the project plan was published half way through last year and included about a dozen initiatives. Dave outlined the following list:

- Infrastructure upgrades completed, including POSTGRES, Apache and Debian, which has resulted in improved SRS response times.
- This month a dedicated fibre-to-fibre intra site connection will be created with both SRS clusters in Albany and Wellington. This is being provisioned by TelstraClear. This link should result in increased stability for inter cluster communications and allow for various management functions to take place over this link without impacting on the registrar SRS connection.

- NZRS are working with TelstraClear to provide DDOS mitigation using a service provisioned by DMZ global, who will monitor activity at both sites, and if there is a DDOS then they will be able to filter it out.
- DNS monitoring and reporting:
 - The WAND group at Waikato University have built the AMP monitoring probes around NZ and in addition to several probes located with a number of ISPs and the universities, there is one at each of the .nz DNS sites. NZRS commissioned WAND to upgrade the monitoring and reporting of the AMP system and this work has just recently been completed. This can be viewed at <http://erg.wand.net.nz/amp/matrix.php/latency/NZ/NZ+DNS>
 - This can be used to get idea of latency and packet loss from different sites around the country to the DNS servers.
 - In addition if there are no probes located close to where you are and you want to host an AMP probe then we can put you in touch with the WAND group to host a box, which will increase the number of monitoring points around the country.
 - RIPE in Holland provide a similar DNS monitoring system but it is a global system, so you can get a global picture of the .nz DNS space. NZRS are getting additional probes installed in Albany and Wellington which will be useful for a DNS health picture both nationally and internationally.
- Upgrade SRS Test Network
 - Later this year work will be done to improve our test cluster network. Currently the test cluster does not fully replicate production the environment. This upgrade will allow for full testing of changes including performance testing, stress testing, and security testing.
- NTP Server
 - There are not many NTP servers in NZ. The DNS has had issues with existing NTP servers. NZRS view certain elements of NZ internet infrastructure as being critical and will support these such as NTP and PGP. The NTP roll out is planned for later this year, and potentially offering a public time service as well.
- Code review of the SRS
 - The SRS is several years old now and this project will look at where the existing code base can be improved/refined.

The DNC thanked NZRS for their update and for their items.

DNS TTL

There was a brief discussion around this issue with the conclusion that more information was needed as the various solutions discussed could impact on more than just the registrars. NZRS offered to have Sebastian look at the various technical scenarios around DNS TTL and the implications of each, and then present this material back to the RAG. The RAG agreed that this would be of benefit as it is still an important issue.

The DNC thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting at 1:00pm.