.nz NEWSLETTER – February 2010

:: Domain Name Commission ::

Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) in .nz – Countdown to launch

Sunrise Registration Period – Things to be aware of

The sunrise registration period for IDNs will launch on 6 April, and run until 6 July 2010. This has been implemented so people who have currently registered .nz domain names can secure the macronised vowel variant (i.e. māori.co.nz) of their current names.

The process will be as follows,

- o Current registrants can apply for variants during the sunrise period;
- o At the end of this phase, DNCL will review the applications and all those that fit with the requirements of the [policy](#) will be registered;
- o The names will be made live on the IDN launch date, which is Monday 26 July. This will be the date of registration for all names requested during the sunrise period, so please be aware that if you wish to cancel these names during the 5-day grace period, you must contact your registrar before 30 July 2010.

We would like to take this opportunity to point out a few key things to remember if you wish to take advantage of this pre-registration period

- o Please note that only the current registrant of the .nz domain name in question will be allowed to register the macronised vowel variant of this name;
- o The registration details for the current name will be used as the registration details for the variant you are requesting;
- o If a name that was registered to you when you applied for the variant, subsequently changes hands, then you will not be allowed to register the variant as part of the sunrise period. Details for the two versions of the name must match at the registration date of 26 July 2010;
- o Also note that if you change any of the contact details of your current name, such as the registrant contact email, you may miss out on receiving important communications regarding your application;
- o It is possible to apply for up to 8 variants of a currently registered name, per application;
- o Your registrar will notify you and confirm billing arrangements if your application is successful and the variants you requested are to be registered.

Statistics

In January, the number of active .nz domain names increased from 381,964 to 384,895, a net increase of 2,931.

Figures as at 31 January 2009:

	Active names as at 1 January	Active names as at end 31 January	New registrations January	Renewals January	Net Growth
.ac	1,713	1,721	23	330	8
.co	329,928	332,459	6168	58417	2531
.cri	15	15	0	3	-
.geek	941	945	13	195	4
.gen	1,247	1,241	10	293	-6
.govt	1,021	1,024	4	942	3
.health	97	97	0	0	-
.iwi	70	70	0	11	-
.maori	554	562	13	65	8
.mil	21	21	0	3	-
.net	21,437	21,639	470	4012	202
.org	21,959	22,128	375	4019	169
.parliament	7	7	0	7	-
.school	2,954	2,966	17	1217	12
TOTAL	381,964	384,895	7,093	69,514	2931

Note: these figures do not include names in the 'pending release' status. They incorporate all active domain names in the .nz register. For more statistics, see http://dnc.org.nz/statistics

:: .nz Registry Services ::

Availability

Availability %	SLA	November	December	January
SRS	99.90	99.91	100	100
Whois	99.90	99.92	100	100
DNS	100	100	100	100

SRS Response times

Performance figures on the production environment for the previous three months:

Avg Response time (in seconds)	SLA Target	November	December	January
Domain Details Query	≤0.5	0.03	0.03	0.03
Domain Update	≤0.8	0.28	0.22	0.26
Domain Create	≤0.8	0.33	0.26	0.30
Get Message	≤0.5	0.05	0.03	0.05
Whois	≤0.5	0.11	0.10	0.11
Whois queries at back end including Registrar (volume 000's)	N/A	3,075	2,461	2,420
Whois Server Queries (volume 000's)	N/A	537	622	613
UDAI Valid Query	≤0.5	0.13	0.12	0.12

Server DNS % Availability

	November	December	January
NS1	100	100	100
NS2	100	100	100
NS3	100	100	100
NS4	100	100	100
NS5	100	100	100
NS6	100	100	100
NS7	100	100	100

Unscheduled Outages during January 2010

Outage Type	Total Duration
SRS Unscheduled	0
WHOIS Unscheduled	0
DNS	0

Scheduled Outages during January 2010

Outage Type	Total Duration
SRS Scheduled	3 hours
Whois Scheduled	3 hours

Planned Scheduled Outages

28th February 2010 7:00 - 9:00 am NZDT

The next SRS release scheduled for the maintenance window on 28th February 2010, 7:00 - 9:00 am NZDT is an upgrade of the SRS to version 4.0, which is a not backward compatible upgrade.
With the migration, all major IDN code and protocol changes will be release to the production SRS. However the actual 'go live' date of IDNs is not until the 26th July 2010. Before that date any attempts to create or query an IDN on the production SRS will result in empty or negative responses.

NZRS recommend all Registrars upgrade to version 4.0.

NZRS recommend that Registrars that choose not to upgrade, SHOULD test their system against the SRS test environment. Registrars that do not upgrade MAY encounter errors.

Details of SRS releases and planned scheduled outages can be found on the NZRS website. http://www.nzrs.net.nz/notices/updates.shtml

SRS EPP Changes

Over the last 12 months we have been working on implementing an EPP interface to the SRS. There has been a change to the original plan to have an EPP proxy for registrars to use to talk to the SRS. After getting feedback from registrars and looking at the solution in detail, it was determined that 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. In order to do this the SRS data model needs to be enhanced to provide EPP support and maintain backwards compatibility for those registrars that do not want to use EPP. Also EPP style contact object management and message polling will be available though SRS transactions in addition to being available via EPP transactions using the EPP proxy. The EPP proxy will be standards compliant, with no .nz-specific extensions.
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 a beta EPP interface will be available on the test system by April 2010 with a subset of the EPP functionality and then regular incremental releases to the test system through to June with additional functionality. At this stage we are planning to have the interface implemented on the production system by July 2010. If registrars want to be involved earlier, then an Alpha release of the SRS protocol can be provided now. Please contact NZRS if you require any more information or would like to be involved in early testing of the EPP interface.

NZRS are fully committed to maintaining the existing SRS XML interface and there are no plans to replace it.

Project Programme Update

As published last year NZRS have moved to an annual Project Programme for systems and infrastructure development. This is a brief update on the current status of that programme:

Task	Status	Comments
Implementation of EPP	In Progress	See above
Implementation of IDN	In Progress	SRS code changes to be implemented in the February release and the "Go Live" date scheduled for July.
SRS Test Cluster	Not started	
DDOS Mitigation	In Progress	Due to be completed Feb/Mar.
DNS Test Cluster	Not started	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.
PGP Key Server	Completed	
Intra-site Connection	In Progress	Due to be completed Feb/Mar. 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.
Postgres/Apache/OS Upgrade	Completed	Has resulted in improved SRS response times
Hardware Upgrade	Completed	
DNSSEC Implementation	In progress	Over the last few months NZRS and DNCL have been working on the DNSSEC implementation. 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 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.
Hidden Primary (3rd)	Not started	

DNS Monitoring/Reporting	Completed	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.
		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.
NTP Server	Not started	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	In progress	The SRS is several years old now and this project will look at where the existing code base can be improved/refined.

If registrars require any further information please let us know.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Thanks again to those of you that participated in this survey. In a break from tradition we will be publishing the results, without any comments made by respondents, in a summary form on the NZRS website. This should be available in the next day or two.

NZRS Board agendas

As part of a drive for increased transparency we are now publishing the agendas of our board meetings on the NZRS website. If you wish to discuss any items of interest with the NZRS Chief Executive then please email him at jay@nzrs.net.nz

Any Comments?

If you have any questions or concerns about the SRS, please don't hesitate to contact us. For registry or technical matters, contact Dave Baker at support@nzrs.net.nz or on 04 931 6970. For all other matters, contact Debbie Monahan at info@dnc.org.nz.

Please Note

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