

.nz NEWSLETTER – March 2009

Conficker

We have put in place measures to counter possible misuse of the .nz domain by the Conficker C worm. Conficker C is the latest variant of a malicious Internet software program that acts in two stages. The first stage has infected potentially millions of computers around the world and, beginning April 1, is expected to try to communicate with command codes placed on web sites by the worm's authors.

In an effort to shield their activities from Internet security authorities, Conficker C's authors have programmed their worm to randomly generate domain names from 110 country-code domains around the world, including .nz. We have put in place a plan to counter this potential misuse of the .nz registry.

SRS Action Taken

40,000 .co.nz randomly generated names will be used between the 31st March and the 30th June by the Conficker worm. These Conficker .co.nz names will be prevented from being registered using a blacklist. There are 162 names already registered in the SRS that are on the list. These names and 33 duplicates have been removed from the blacklist giving a total of 39,805 names on the blacklist.

All the Conficker names already registered in the SRS have been checked and they appear to be legitimate.

All the Conficker .co.nz names minus the names already registered will be added to the blacklist for the period outlined below.

The blacklist will remain in place from the 28th March until the 1st July.

Reviews on this policy and the status of Conficker will be ongoing and any changes will be communicated to Registrars and publicly.

Some people may try to legitimately register the blocked domains during the period they are on the blacklist. There is a process in place between registrars, the registry and the DNC to enable legitimate registrations to be processed. Parties seeking such a registration will need to satisfy the registrar and the DNC of the legitimacy of their request.

Background and Details

Conficker is a family of malicious code that can propagate by scanning and exploiting hosts vulnerable to MS08-0671. Conficker is also spread by infected USB keys utilizing the standard Autorun feature. Later variants of Conficker also have the capability to spread, and communicate via a customer Peer to Peer (P2P) network.

The Conficker family of malware contains functionality that will prevent certain domain names from being resolved, disabling or terminating a variety of security related products including system administration programs and Windows Updates, Error Reporting and Defender services. Conficker also has the capability to manipulate System Restore points and adjust the Windows built-in firewall rule set.

This latest variant will begin on April 1 generating a daily list of 50,000 country-code domains in which these files could be hidden. These names are drawn from 110 country-code domains, including co.nz.

Without a clear idea of the motive behind the creation of the worm and its variants, or the actions the botnet will take, Conficker is being regarded as a potential threat to Internet infrastructure around the world.

The Conficker Working Group site is a good resource for tools, info and resources about Conficker: <http://confickerworkinggroup.org/wiki/>

:: DNC ::

Privacy Policy Review – Consultation

The DNC is now reviewing the Privacy Policy. This policy relates to the collection and use of personal information to effectively operate the DNS.

Only personal information that is directly related to the function of the .nz register, and that is necessary for, or directly related to this functioning, will be collected. This is in line with other Internet domain name registration services worldwide

No operational issues have been identified with the current policy. It is being reviewed as part of the regular, ongoing review of .nz policies.

Therefore we are now seeking comment regarding any suggested changes to the above policy as identified by interested parties.

Submissions should be by email to policies@dnc.org.nz . They may also be made by fax to +64 4 495 2115 or by post to Domain Name Commission, PO Box 11 881, Wellington 6142, New Zealand. All submissions will be published at <http://www.dnc.org.nz/pri-review> . All submissions should be received by midday on Monday 4th May.

DNCL Board Meeting 13/3/09 – Minutes

The minutes of the DNCL Board meeting held on 13 March 2009 are now available.
[.html](#) | [pdf](#)

Statistics

In January, the number of active .nz domain names increased from 349,802 to 351,464, a net increase of 1662.

Figures as at 28 February 2009:

	<i>Active names as at 1 February</i>	<i>Active names as at end 28 February</i>	<i>New registrations February</i>	<i>Renewals February</i>	<i>Net Growth</i>
.ac	1656	1680	49	322	24
.co	300919	302527	5974	57069	1608
.cri	15	15	0	3	0
.geek	875	870	12	196	-5
.gen	1211	1206	12	290	-5
.govt	982	985	3	785	3
.iwi	65	65	0	11	0
.maori	531	535	17	67	4
.mil	16	18	2	6	2
.net	20300	20266	333	3598	-34
.org	20407	20454	337	3509	47
.parliament	5	5	0	4	0
.school	2820	2838	26	1134	18
TOTAL	349802	351464	6765	66994	1662

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

SRS production system availability:

	SLA	December	January	February
SRS Availability %	99.90	100	99.96	99.92
Whois	99.90	100	100	99.92
DNS	100	100	100	100

Response time performance figures on the production environment for the previous three months were:

Avg Response time (in seconds)	SLA Target	December	January	February
Domain Details Query	≤1.5	0.02	0.04	0.04
Domain Update	≤0.8	0.34	0.39	0.39
Domain Create	≤0.8	0.43	0.45	0.44

GetMessage performance	≤0.8	0.03	0.05	0.05
Whois	≤0.8	0.10	0.12	0.12
Whois queries at back end including Registrar (volume 000's)	N/A	2734	2921	2851
Whois Server Queries (volume 000's)	N/A	342	336	382
UDAI Valid Query	≤0.8	0.13	0.16	0.17

DNS

Server	% Availability		
	December 08	December 08	February 09
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 February 2009

Outage Type	Total Duration
SRS Unscheduled	33 minutes & 11 seconds
WHOIS Unscheduled	33 minutes & 10 seconds
DNS	0

Scheduled Outages during February 2009

Outage Type	Total Duration
SRS Scheduled	2 hours
Whois Scheduled	2 hours

SRS Releases / Planned Scheduled Outages

Sunday 29th March 2009, 07:00 - 09:00 NZDT

The SRS Primary Site was successfully switched from Wellington to Albany during this outage window.

19th April 2009 07:00 – 09:00 am NZDT

For the SRS release 3.0, scheduled for the 19th April, NZRS are planning on making a change to the DTD that would make the DTD not backwards compatible with previous SRS versions. NZRS recommend that all Registrars test their systems against the 3.0 release when it is made available for testing and that they upgrade to version 3.00 when it is released on the 19th April.

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

Staff changes

Our new Chief Executive, Jay Daley, has now started in his role taking over from Nick Griffin, to whom we send our thanks for many years of good service. Jay was formerly the CTO of Nominet the .uk registry and has long experience of managing registry operations and infrastructure. If you wish to contact Jay directly then you can do so at jay@nzrs.net.nz he would be pleased to hear from you.

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. For all other matters, contact Debbie Monahan at info@dnc.org.nz.

Please Note

If you would like to be notified of future updates, please use the [SUBSCRIBE](#) function on the DNC site and select the category 'Newsletters'. If you ever want to stop receiving our newsletter, please send an email with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line to unsubscribe@dnc.org.nz.