



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

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Memorandum Concerning Merge of Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information Implementation into Work Stream of “Thick WHOIS” Implementation Review Team

From: GDD Staff

To: GNSO Council

As you may be aware, the ICANN Board has directed GDD Staff to develop an implementation plan for the GNSO Recommendations on the Translation and Transliteration (T/T) of Contact Information as approved by the ICANN Board on 28 September 2015.¹

GDD Staff has identified a number of potential synergies between the T/T recommendations, the “Consistent Labeling and Display” (CL&D) work stream of the “Thick WHOIS” implementation project, and related implementation of the Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) currently in progress. Considering these potential synergies, Staff is proposing to merge the implementation of the T/T recommendations into the CL&D work stream of the Thick WHOIS Implementation Review Team (IRT).² With this memo, GDD Staff requests that the GNSO Council consider this proposal. The following paragraphs outline the possible benefits of such a merger as well as the preliminary input received from stakeholders and Staff regarding the potential costs.

The initial rationale behind the proposal was grounded in the notion that contracted parties would benefit from a consolidated implementation, and ICANN Staff from a consolidated delivery. The synergies between the projects could be leveraged to reduce the overall marginal cost of implementation for all parties, based on the following factors:

- T/T implementation will primarily affect RDDS output.
- T/T implementation will require new EPP extensions (language tag and T/T tag) as may be the case with CL&D (depending on the final implementation proposal).
- The T/T Final Report recommends coordination with the rollout of RDAP, which is already coordinated with implementation of CL&D.
- The data model for the T/T implementation is relatively consistent with the RDAP model and a “harmonization exercise” between the two was recommended.³
- Instead of creating and managing a specific IRT for the T/T implementation, the expertise of the existing IRT could be leveraged.
- Ultimately, contracted parties would be tasked with implementing a single package of

¹ See the [GNSO Council Recommendations and Board Resolutions on the Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information project](#)

² See GDD’s [Policy Change Calendar Initiative](#)

³ Note the data model was provided in the [final report](#) of the Internationalized Registration Data Working Group. Board resolution 2016.03.10.07 directs those tasked with implementing T/T “to consider the IRD Working Group’s data model and requirements and incorporate them, where appropriate, to the extent that the IRD’s recommendations are consistent with, and facilitate the implementation of the new consensus policy on translation and transliteration.”



consensus policies rather than several discrete ones.

Staff has engaged in preliminary consultations with community and IRT members regarding the merits of this proposal. While feedback has not been unequivocally supportive, Staff has not encountered strong opposition to it; it can generally be characterized as ranging from indifferent to “cautiously supportive” (with some more strongly “cautious” of the proposal than others). At the time of drafting this memo, the IRT has been informed of this proposal and has engaged in some discussion about it, but has not been asked to provide final input on the issue until a wider community of stakeholders had been consulted. The concerns raised thus far by Staff, community, and IRT members regarding the costs of such a merger can be summarized as follows:

- A merge could delay the implementation timeline of the CL&D aspects of the Thick WHOIS implementation by more than the 6 months estimated by Staff.
- A merge could delay the “Transition from thin to thick of .COM, .NET and .JOBS” aspects of the Thick WHOIS implementation project, as implementation of the T/T recommendations would impact all registries and registrars, who would be tasked with the collection, storage, and communication of language tags.
- The existing Thick WHOIS IRT may not possess the expertise necessary to advise on the implementation of T/T, and as such may require bringing in additional expertise.
- Merging with the Thick WHOIS implementation could turn a relatively short project into a protracted one (although this was noted as less of a concern in the case of aligning with the roll-out of RDAP)

Ultimately, the question for all parties concerned is whether the potential benefits of such a merger outweigh the potential costs. Should the GNSO Council support the merge, GDD Staff will work with the Thick WHOIS IRT to determine a future course of action, draft an implementation plan, and recruit additional expertise as required.

GDD Staff thanks the GNSO Council for reviewing this proposal, considering its relative merits, and for providing a forum for further discussion among affected stakeholders.