A *Brief* Summary of the
WHOIS Review Team Final Report

The job of the Whois Review Team (in a nutshell):
The WHOIS Review Team's scope, guided by the Affirmation of Commitments was to review the extent to which ICANN's WHOIS policy and its implementation are effective, meet the legitimate needs of law enforcement and promote consumer trust.

Buzz words in WHOIS discussions:
Accuracy, privacy, anonymity, cost, policing, and SPAM

Recommendation 1: Strategic priority
- There are no income streams associated with providing WHOIS, as a result, it is not a priority for many of ICANN's contracted parties, however, high priority for many users who are outside the ICANN inner circle (eg law enforcement)
- ICANN board should create a committee to implement the Review teams recommendations, fulfil data accuracy requirements over time, follow up on reports (eg NORC report on data accuracy), reporting on progress of policy development etc.

Recommendation 2: Single WHOIS Policy
- ICANN's WHOIS policy is poorly defined and decentralized. The Board should oversee creation of a single WHOIS policy document.

Recommendation 3 – Outreach
- ICANN should ensure that WHOIS policy issues are accompanied by cross-community outreach (eg law enforcement community, Data Protection Commissioners, and the privacy community).
- The report also states there are issues in consumer trust which need to be resolved through for example awareness raising of the service and making it more user-friendly.

Recommendation 4: Compliance
- ICANN should act to ensure that its compliance function is managed in accordance with best practice principles; transparency regarding the resourcing and structure of its compliance function, clear and appropriate lines of reporting and accountability.

Recommendations 5-9: Data Accuracy
- Ensure requirements for accurate WHOIS data are widely communicated
- Produce an accuracy report focused on reductions in WHOIS registrations that fall into the accuracy groups Substantial Failure and Full Failure.
- Ensure clear, unambiguous and enforceable chain of contractual agreements with registries, registrars, and registrants to require the provision and maintenance of accurate WHOIS data. As part of these agreements, ICANN should ensure that clear, enforceable and graduated sanctions apply for those that do not comply

Recommendation 10: Data Access -- Privacy and Proxy Services
- With respect to issues on proxy registrations, the Team recommends to initiate processes to regulate and oversee privacy/proxy service providers (in consultation with interested stakeholders)
- The Review Team considers that one possible approach to achieving this would be to establish an accreditation system for all proxy/privacy service providers. As part of this process, ICANN should consider the merits of establishing a distinction between privacy and proxy services *(see note below).* The goal should be to provide enforceable requirements for operation of these services consistent with national laws (eg privacy, data protection, law enforcement etc..) - *see page 14 and 15 of final report for more detail*
- **A Suggestion from the team:** use a mix of incentives and graduated sanctions to encourage proxy/privacy service providers to become accredited *(see page 15 for more detail on this)*

*A note on the "**Distinction between privacy and proxy services**": Generally in a privacy registration the Registrant's name is on the public record however only contactable via a third party (the privacy service provider) whereas a proxy registration the Registrant name on record is the Proxy service provider (who in turn assumes rights/responsibilities (and liability) for the domain name and its use)*

Recommendation 11: Data Access – Common Interface
- The team recommends overhauling the Internic service to make it more user friendly.

Recommendations 12-14: Internationalized Domain Names
- ICANN should task a working group to determine appropriate IDN (Internationalised Domain Name) registration data requirements and evaluate available solutions (including solutions being implemented by ccTLDs). At a minimum, the data requirements should apply to all new gTLDs, and the group should consider ways to encourage consistency across the gTLD and (on a voluntary basis) ccTLD space

Recommendation 15: Detailed and Comprehensive Plan
- ICANN should provide a detailed and comprehensive plan within 3 months outlining how to move forward with these recommendations

Recommendation 16: Annual Status Reports
- Annual written status reports on its progress towards implementing the recommendations

Further Reading:
WHOIS Review Team Final report
CENTR Issue Paper: What is WHOIS