Home | Policies | Panels and Committees | SMWG Teleconference - 14 April 2011

SMWG Teleconference - 14 April 2011

Present: Lujia Chen, Brett Fenton, Rod Keys, Jo Lim, George Pongas, Ned O'Meara, Peter Stevenson, Chris Wright

Apologies: Michael Sojevic

Actions

- JL to draft minutes and revise issues paper

Discussion

1. 4 April minutes

The minutes were confirmed, and will be published on the auDA website.

2. Draft issues paper

The Working Group discussed the revised draft issues paper.

Consumer issues

1. Registrant transfer process and fees

Working Group members discussed what a minimum standard for registrant transfer processes might comprise. It was thought that an online process would be preferred by consumers, because it is usually quicker and cheaper and perceived as being more secure than a manual process.

It was agreed that auDA cannot mandate a particular technology, but can set minimum requirements, eg. verification of registrant ID and confirmation from the current registrant contact. It was thought that the process currently mandated under the Transfers (Change of Registrar of Record) Policy might be appropriate, and would have the additional benefit of creating consistency of process across the industry for both registrar and registrant transfers.

Back to top

2. Six month prohibition on transfers

GP provided the Working Group with registry statistics to show the number of registrants transfers processed within the first six months versus transfers at later periods (see attached).

Working Group members noted that the statistics do not support the view that many registrants are waiting until the 6 month block expires before transferring their domain name. This would suggest that the incidence of registration for the sole purpose of resale is not high, and therefore the 6 month block is an unnecessary safeguard and should be removed.

An alternative interpretation of the statistics is that the 6 month block is not causing any problems, and therefore there is no reason to remove it. The comparatively high number of transfers within 6 months suggests that registrants who have a legitimate reason to transfer their domain name are able to do so. JL advised that the most common reason for transfer within 6 months is a related entity transfer.

Working Group members noted that a relevant consideration is the administrative overhead caused by the 6 month block, for auDA, industry and consumers alike.

The Working Group affirmed its original decision not to put forward any suggestions or proposals at this stage, but wait for public feedback.

3. Drop catching services

The Working Group discussed the proposal that there should be a formal accreditation process for registrars that want to provide drop catching services.

It was agreed that mandatory accreditation would be difficult to enforce, given the ability of registrars to participate in the drop on a one-off or ad hoc basis. Therefore, any accreditation process would have to be voluntary.

It was acknowledged that accreditation would not be for technical reasons, as all registrars are required to comply with the Registry Usage Policy in any case. It was thought that registrars would volunteer to be accredited for marketing reasons, ie. official recognition by auDA and referrals from auDA's website. From auDA's perspective, it was felt that being able to clearly identify registrars who are accredited drop catching providers would assist in the provision of useful information to consumers.

4. Auction listings

The Working Group agreed that providers should bear responsibility for ensuring that domain name auction and sale listings are accurate. It was suggested that providers should be required to include a disclaimer notice to the effect that prospective buyers should conduct their own due diligence. However, Working Group members noted that there is a limit to auDA's jurisdiction, and it would not be possible to enforce any such requirements on providers outside the .au industry (eg. Sedo, eBay).

Industry issues

1. Registry operations

GP and CW advised that AusRegistry is limited in the information is can provide the Working Group about registry operations, due to security, intellectual property and competition reasons.

AusRegistry's position is that registrars are permitted to do anything they want in terms of using their access to the registry, provided they comply with the Registry Usage Policy.

AusRegistry is satisfied that current drop activity is manageable within the Registry Usage Policy. Changing the drop to a fixed time significantly improved the registry's ability to handle the load, by limiting the impact to a defined window.

However if an extra 3-4 registrars started to provide drop catching services then further action would need to be taken to minimise the impact on the registry. CW clarified that the impact would not be on the registry per se, but on AusRegistry's SLAs. In order to meet SLAs, AusRegistry might be forced to impose other restrictions (eg. rate limits) which would affect all registrars, not just those who participate in the drop.

The Working Group noted that additional activity can also affect the time taken for the drop to process. Where there is no load on the registry, the drop takes 30-60 seconds. The more load on the registry, the longer the drop time; in recent instances, the drop has taken more than 15 minutes. Whilst this is not a concern for the registry, it may cause problems for registrars (although it was noted that no complaints have been received from registrars to date).

2. Registrar connection sharing

Working Group members discussed the feasability and desirability of imposing limits on the number of EPP connections across a registrar group. CW advised that the registry is able to impose bandwidth limitations on registrars, which would have a similar impact on the competitive advantage of owning multiple registrars.

It was suggested that auDA could publish a policy which specifically prohibits connection sharing between unrelated registrars, to address security and privacy concerns.

3. Registrar competition

Working Group members noted that registrars are able to test their drop catching software in the OTE, but they can only test for competitive success in production, ie. there is no way to simulate the drop in OTE.

Working Group members noted that whilst an accreditation process for drop catching would not place any additional technical requirements on registrars, it would at least provide an opportunity for formal notification/reiteration of the Registry Usage Policy.

It was suggested that the term "accreditation" implies a more complex or onerous process than is intended by the Working Group. Alternative terms will be considered (eg. approval, endorsement, authorisation).

About auDA

Our Organisation
Our Services
Membership
Community Programs
Careers @ auDA
Constitutional Reform FAQ
Quarterly Stakeholder
Reports

Help Centre

Domain Name Registrants
Website Beginners
For Registrars & Resellers
Complaints & Disputes
Registrant Transfers

Policies

Policy Reviews
Panels and Committees
auDRP
Privacy Policy
Reserved List policy:
Notice and FAQ
In Development: Second
Level .au Domains
Major Disaster Policy FAQ

Industry Information

.au Domains
Registry
Registrars
Resellers
Co-marketing and
Innovation fund

Public Comment

Recently closed
consultation

Membership

News   3

Contact auDA   5

WHOIS Lookup

| % | $ | 1 | 2 |