

Implementation analysis of transfers task force recommendations

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1 Purpose and status of this document

This document is in response to the request for analyses of the implementability of the final report¹ of the ICANN GNSO (formerly DNSO) Transfers Task Force (the “task force”). This document represents the analysis of the author, and is intended to aid in the work of the committee studying the implementation of the recommendations (the “implementation committee”). It does not represent Afilias policy. It may be shared freely with other members of the implementation committee.

2 Assumptions

The terms of reference for the implementation committee restrict comments to questions of the implementability of the recommendations of the task force. The teleconference of the implementation committee² interprets the terms of reference such that the committee should produce objections and suggestions on how those objections may be answered.

3 Summary

For the most part, the recommendations provide a good and workable policy framework. With respect to recommendations about authenticating contacts and the proposed Transfer Undo function, I believe some additional consideration is required. These topics are discussed below.

¹<http://www.dnso.org/dnso/notes/20021212.NCTransferTF-gaining-and-losing-registrars.html>

²<http://www.dnso.org/dnso/notes/20030108.Transfer-Imp.teleconf.html>

4 Specific areas for discussion

1. Overall, the most important work of the implementation committee is to propose an implementation which is not only consistent with the recommendations, but which enjoys broad support among registrars. A policy which does not enjoy broad support among registrars will simply cause a new enforcement problem.
2. The task force recommendation number 16 requires that the identities of the Administrative Contact and Registrant are to be determined according to the Losing Registrar's Whois server. Recommendation 26(a) and the model dispute resolution process both indicate that the Registry should be involved in the dispute resolution. For the sake of consistency in the experience of registrants and transparency in the dispute resolution process, it might be better to require that, in the case of "thick" registries, the whois server in question be the Registry's public Whois. This is consistent with the transparency principle in the Supporting Arguments section of the task force recommendations, without relying on the principle that a Registrar's and Registry's Whois will necessarily be in agreement.
3. Recommendation 27 suggests a Transfer Undo function. This is technically feasible, but may entail further restrictions on the activity permissible on a domain name during the period when a transfer may be undone. Otherwise, it may be possible to "game" a system by a series of transfers intended to obscure the "correct" state of a domain. Without a definition in advance of what these additional restrictions would be, the Transfer Undo function cannot really be implemented.
4. As was suggested in the implementation committee conference call of 2003-01-08, there is an argument to be made in favour of a policy with respect to the implementation of auth info in EPP-based registries. It is unlikely, however, that a perfectly secure mechanism can be specified, and it is therefore probably better that the implementation committee not attempt to make positive policy suggestions. In other words, the implementation committee should not try to specify implementation details for the use of auth info. There are nevertheless some clear "don'ts" which have turned up in the experiences of early implementors of EPP drafts. Some recommendations about how auth info should *not* be used might be a useful contribution to the final report. This is consistent with the security principle of the task force recommendations.