Draft Whois Information Status Policy

ICANN-accredited registrars and gTLD registry operators[1] are obligated pursuant to their respective agreements with ICANN to provide query-based access to certain registration data via web pages and at port 43. This Whois Information Status Policy additionally requires registrars and registry operators to include in their Whois output information to help Whois users better understand the status codes used by registry operators and registrars, as follows:

1. Registrars and registry operators who include domain name registration statuses in Whois output must:[2]
   a. only refer to the statuses by their respective EPP status codes;
   b. provide a link or URL next to each EPP status code that directs to an ICANN web page describing and defining EPP status codes. The URL for this page is [URL]. Although not mandatory, the URL should link to the HTML anchor for the respective EPP code on this page; and
   c. include in their Whois output the following message: "For more information on Whois status codes, please visit [URL]."

2. Registrars shall not remove the links and message described above when providing Whois data from its own or another registrar or registry's Whois service.

Notes: The purpose of the Whois Information Status Policy (WISP) is to clarify the meaning of EPP status messages in the Whois records. WISP was adopted by ICANN as a consensus policy on 6 May 2012 and takes effect on <effective date>. All ICANN-accredited registrars and gTLD registry operators must comply with the WISP with respect to registrations they sponsor in all top-level domains, which they are accredited for or administer.

Background: On 24 June 2009, the GNSO Council launched a Policy Development Process (PDP) in connection to the Inter-Registrar Transfer Policy (http://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions#200906 - resolution 20090624-2) and the PDP working group submitted its Final Report on 30 May 2011 with a set of recommendations (http://gnso.icann.org/issues/transfers/irtp-b-final-report-30may11-en.pdf), including Recommendation #8: to standardize and clarify Whois status messages regarding "Registrar Lock" status. On 22 June 2011, the GNSO Council resolved that prior to the consideration of approval of the recommendation regarding the standardizing and clarifying Whois status messages regarding Registrar Lock status, the GNSO Council would request

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[1] This policy refers to the "registry operator" as this term is defined in the New gTLD Registry Base Agreement, but as used in this policy, the term includes, and the policy applies to, all entities with whom ICANN holds a gTLD registry agreement, by whatever name.

[2] This requirement is not intended to require any registrar or registry to include domain name statuses in its Whois output if it is not already obligated to do so. But for those registrars and registries that do include a domain's status in Whois, the status must be in the form of the respective EPP code and conform to the other requirements of this policy.

ICANN staff to provide a proposal designed to ensure a technically feasible approach can be developed to meet this recommendation. In response to this request, ICANN Staff developed a proposal in consultation with the IRTP Part B working group, which was posted for public comment and subsequently adopted by the GNSO Council on 16 February 2012 (http://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions#20120216-1). Following another public comment forum on the recommendation and proposal (http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/irtp-b-rec8-21feb12-en.htm) the ICANN Board adopted these on 6 May 2012. (https://www.icann.org/en/groups/board/documents/resolutions-06may12-en.htm#1.5)