

2020 usTLD Stakeholder Meetings Annual Report



January 2021



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Q1-2020 Stakeholder Meeting

March 19, 2020

I. Welcome

II. Roll call and approval of September 2019 minutes

- a. usTLD Stakeholder Council: Dustin Loup, Becky Burr, Tom Barrett, Bryan Britt, Doug Robinson, Alex Deacon, Stacy Cheney, Ray King, Bartlett Cleland, Sam Sokol, Laureen Kapin, William Bumpas, Karen Rose
- b. usTLD Administrator: Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Fernando Espana, Jasmine Begg, Kathy Nielsen
- c. Approval of December minutes: Dustin moves to approve, Tom seconds the motion. No one objects. December meeting minutes are approved as final.

III. Q1-2020 Marketing Update

- a. .US Veteran Startup of the Year - As part of the 8th Annual Startup of the Year Summit produced by Established, at least ten of the Top 100 Semifinalists will also compete for the .US Veteran Startup of the Year \$10K non-dilutive cash prize sponsored by .US.
- b. Rural Innovation – New partnership announced with The Rural Innovation Network rolling out new co-working hubs in rural locations across the U.S. Focus on bringing high-speed technology, education and learning opportunities to local communities.
- c. Small Business – Ongoing small business outreach on top performing platforms including Facebook, Instagram and Paid Search.
 - i. Sam asked how efforts are evolving given global pandemic situation. Team discussed revised messaging and showing support for SMB community.
- d. Content - Efforts to support SEO and website continue with six new articles added in Q1.
 - i. Featured third party partner promotion driving traffic to about.us blog.
 - ii. Dustin asked about relevancy for increased digital literacy content and resources at this time. Taking effort offline to consolidate available content for repurposing to .US community.
- e. Website update efforts
 - i. Revising stakeholder council section.
 - ii. Request for headshots and bio from council by end of March.

IV. Policy & Security Updates

- a. Security Subcommittee
 - i. Security – Dustin provides updates.
 - 1. Two meetings held so far
 - 2. Two tracks:
 - a. DNS Abuse – Moving forward with this as a topic of focus
 - b. Implementation and adoption of secure protocols – decided this is better handled by other operations
 - 3. Neustar provided reporting on abuse and Spamhaus numbers which looked very positive.
 - 4. Requested follow-up reporting to dive deeper in certain areas.
 - 5. Plan to resurface work and policy proposal to the Administrator around privacy/proxy registrations as possible further focus for sub-committee.

6. Request for members to complete doodle poll for sub-committee follow-up.
 - a. Lauren requested to be added to subcommittee team.

V. Closing

- a. Crystal surfaced upcoming VP replacement for Stakeholder Council.
- b. Karen Rose joined meeting late.
- c. Next meeting scheduled June 11, 2020 at 12:00pm ET

Q2-2020 Stakeholder Meeting

June 11, 2020

I. Welcome

II. Roll call and approval of March 2020 minutes

- a. usTLD Stakeholder Council: Dustin Loup, Becky Burr, Tom Barrett, Doug Robinson, Alex Deacon, Ray King, Bartlett Cleland, Sam Sokol, , Karen Rose, Doug Robinson, Michele Neylon
- b. Registry Services: Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Fernando Espana, Kathy Nielsen, Melissa Cohen
- c. Public Participation: 2 unidentified participants

III. **Approval of March minutes:** Dustin moves to approve, Tom seconds the motion. No one objects.

IV. FH2020 Marketing Update

- a. Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge – This is a first-ever activation from our long-standing partners at NASA’s Space Apps. .US participates in an annual Space Apps event every October, however in light of the global pandemic, the team at Space Apps rallied together with 4 different international space agencies to produce a “Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge” aimed at addressing issues stemming from the pandemic.
 - i. .US provided a FREE domain + website builder to attendees that was promoted via PPT slides throughout the event and dedicated email placement before, during and after the hackathon. Attendees were able to use the domain for launching their projects during the weekend or for personal use after the event.
- b. Startup Weekend - .US is now a part of the ongoing Startup Weekend hackathon community. Startup Weekend is an ongoing initiative with events happening every weekend in cities across the world. The goal of SUW is to support the startup, entrepreneur, and coding local communities worldwide while launching new companies.
 - i. All attendees are offered .US domains to support launching their startup or for use after the event to bring their project or idea online.
- c. .US Veteran Startup of the Year – Ongoing partnership launched beginning of 2020. Currently up to 40 Veteran-eligible competing for \$10K cash prize.
 - i. Deadline for submissions extended through July

- ii. Live virtual event announced for 11/9-10
 - d. Small Business marketing efforts
 - i. Pandemic Response: Updated assets in Q2 to reflect changing circumstances for small businesses. Messaging and efforts were revised to focus on resources and ways to support the small business community.
 - ii. Updated the online toolkit checklists and promoted across social networks.
 - iii. Re-worked valuable content and made available through PDF format to distribute through retailer channels.
 - e. Creatively .US – Launch of newest campaign went live beginning of June. Aimed at the creative audience –artists, graphic designers, photographers, painters and dancers, anyone that would use a domain and website for showcasing their work online. Building an online portfolio.
 - i. Platforms focus on Instagram only.
 - f. Content
 - i. Leaned heavily on content efforts in Q2 to develop resources to support the small business community.
 - ii. Overall Q2 website traffic up 10% from prior year and blog traffic drove a 10% higher conversion rate overall for U.S. traffic.
 - g. Comments from Stakeholders
 - i. Ray enquires about response to “Black Lives Matter” movement and any planned response from .US. Marketing team responds there is no formal planned response but that the team, company, and brand have historically and currently prioritized diversity and inclusion. Sam echoes sentiment on importance of inclusion.

V. Administrator Update

- a. Registry services adhering to strict governance model to maintain independent processes from registrar and registry operations.
- b. Tom asks about Bombora future plans. Crystal responds it will be carried over in the acquisition and confirms it’s not a commercial-facing registrar.
- c. Alex asks about impact for .US contract. Crystal responds that transparency and code of conduct meets all requirements by ICANN and .US contractual obligations. Legal name is not changing so there is no re-signing required. The Registry team is remaining intact.

VI. Policy Updates

- a. Security sub-committee
 - i. 2 Different review teams for policies governing .US security:
 1. Acceptable use policy – What’s in place and if there’s any opportunity to improve current policies
 2. .US Registry-based Service Plan – Recommendations sent to NTIA 2017 and how to reiterate support to help push through. Concerns around private information published publicly.
 - a. Michele offered to send survey produced on this topic with data on impressions from registrants.
 - b. Bartlett Cleland requested to join this committee.

- b. Trusted Notifier Program
 - i. Working with NTIA to create safe online environments. Launching piolet program to curb illegal online sales activity. In partnership with NTIA and FDA to flag websites that may be abusing polices to sell opioids online illegally.
 - ii. Launched Monday June 8, 2020 and will be reviewed after 120 days for effectiveness and opportunity to continue.
 - iii. Ray King asks if this is connected to legit script efforts. Crystal responds that this program does not involve Legit Script.
- c. Kids.us
 - i. Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002
 - 1. On December 4, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002 (Dot Kids Act).
 - 2. The Act requires that the administrator of the .US ccTLD establish a kids.us domain to serve as a haven for material that promotes positive experiences for children and families using the Internet, provide a safe online environment for children, and help to prevent children from being exposed to harmful material on the Internet.
 - 3. Public Law 107-317 / 41 U.S.C. 941
 - ii. Kids.us Suspension – 2012
 - 1. On June 27, 2012, the NTIA made the determination that the kids.us domain was not serving its intended purpose and suspended the domain until such time as NTIA determines that the domain can be operated as intended. For further information, including a copy of the amendment, please see www.Kids.us.
 - iii. Kids.us Suspension within SOW – 2014
 - 1. A Kids.us Education Advisory Committee was convened in 2014 to consider the suspension of the kids.us third-level namespace from the then current contract/SOW.
 - 2. The Education Advisory Committee met between June and October 2014. During these meetings, the committee considered questions, including:
 - 3. *Should the kids.us namespace be reinstated with its preexisting policy and operational framework?*
 - 4. *What were the experiences of other providers of online educational content, particularly those that sought to operate “walled gardens”?*
 - 5. *What changes in online trends and regulations could affect the kids.us namespace?*
 - 6. The committee ultimately recommended that existing policy framework, as well as the internet climate today, made kids.us unworkable and that the namespace should remain suspended and be suspended from the usTLD contract. (*Modification #4, Nov 2015*)
 - iv. Kids.us Rejuvenation – 2020

1. Registry Services, LLC, under its current contract, has committed to engage the usTLD Stakeholder Council to again explore the potential for rejuvenation of the Kids.US space.
 2. The following timeline is proposed to ensure that the usTLD Stakeholder Council has the resources it needs to reach an informed position with respect to the Kids.US namespace:
 - a. Initial usTLD Stakeholder Council Engagement & Creation of Sub-Committee: June 11- July 15, 2020
 - b. Kids.US Subcommittee Reviews: July 15 – December 10, 2020
 - c. Implementation of Council Decision: December 10, 2020 – February 15, 2021
 - d. Kids.US Experts Panel: February – September 2021 (*if Council recommends*)
 - e. Final usTLD Stakeholder Council Action: September – December 2021
 3. Council participation request – kids.us sub-committee.
 - a. Tom Barrett interested in participating. Expressing concerns around original restrictions placed on the namespace. Beck confirms that yes, it would be the same governance laws.
 - b. Becky Burr confirms participation
 - c. Dustin Loup confirms participation
- VII. Upcoming IGF**
- a. Dustin provides link to register for event, highlights topics and discusses .US sponsorship.
- VIII. Closing**

Q3-2020 Stakeholder Meeting

September 17, 2020

- I. Welcome**
- II. Roll call and approval of June 2020 minutes**
 - usTLD Stakeholder Council: Dustin Loup, Tom Barrett, Ray King, Michele Neylon, Bryan Britt, Doug Robinson, Karen Rose, Alex Deacon, Sam Sokol, Vernita Harris, Stacy Cheney
 - Registry Services: Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Fernando Espana, Melissa Cohen
 - Dustin moves to approve meeting minutes
- III. Q3 Marketing Update**
 - About.us site relaunch
 - o Review new site updates and first 30 day metrics
 - Veteran Sponsorship
 - o Hosted Veteran pitch competition in July as lead sponsor. Confirmed date for live event and award ceremony November 16-18.
 - Startup Weekend

- Ongoing sponsorship with several Q3 events hosted weekly. .US domains offered to participants as part of Registry sponsorship.
- Made in the .US
 - July campaign in conjunction with registrar promos. Led to lift in sales and domain registrations.
- Creatively .US
 - Campaign extended into September due to positive response. Rotated in fresh created and launched dedicated landing page.
- Content
 - Two new blogs added to the website including .US use-case feature interview – BrewStat.us

IV. Administrator Update

- Participation in INCB panel – July 16,2020
 - Part of a panel of speakers along with representative of PIR. Part of ongoing initiative with FDA to stop sale of illegal opioids online.
 - Recap article posted to INCB.org website

V. Policy & Security Updates

- Security sub-committee
 - Dustin discussed draft document for privacy services plan. Reviewed existing privacy services plan to determine if any changes needed. Consensus around need for privacy and proxy services for the .US namespace.
 - Dustin asks for additional examples and case-studies for implications for privacy and security.
 - Ray comments on concerns on charging for privacy service as not a standard in the industry. Not having privacy results in a poor customer experience.
 - Tom comments on implementation details asking on process and how requests are handled
 - Dustin asks for any additional thoughts and feedback be sent out in the next few weeks.
- KIDS.US
 - Goal is to determine if KIDS.US should be rejuvenated or is suspension should be continued. Crystal provide background to committee members in kick-off meeting. Dustin will share out meeting minutes for the remaining members.
 - Dustin says committee needs to review further but doesn't currently see an opportunity for rejuvenation.
- Locality sub-committee
 - Bryan provides update on Locality tool. Bryan testing portal and overseeing rollout. Notes that initial review looks very valuable both for registrants and registrars. Allows access to WHOIS system. More updates coming soon.

VI. Upcoming Efforts

- Town Hall
 - Review agenda and timeline. Request for Council support/promotion.
 - Meeting Date: 12 November 2020
- VOTE.US

- Q4 awareness campaign. Request for Council support/promotion
- VII. Closing**
- Next Stakeholder Council Meeting: 10 December 2020, 12noon ET

2020 Town Hall

November 12, 2020

I. State of the Domain

Lead by Crystal Peterson

- General overview of current stats for localities and DMs
- Space Launched in 2002
- Google.com is the top searched site. But zoom.us is the 14th (ranked by Alexa)
- Right around 3000 site that show up in the Alexa Top domains that are a .US
 - A third of them are in a locality space
- PRS (penetration rate system) - how much saturation of the market is the TLD making? How much is the domain being used? Specifically, how many number of pages indexed on Google?
- .US has a high penetration rate comparatively and that is exciting to see

II. Marketing Review

Lead by Kristin Johnson

- Produced some integrated and innovative content that really worked well and helped progress the growth of the .US brand
- Small businesses were hit hard but were finding ways to stay open online
 - People are envisioning their business as an online entity to stay relevant
 - We provided them tools such as: What to look for when getting a domain, how to brand their business, etc.
 - Shared a social media, resource hub, in March when a lot of people had to scramble to put together their own websites and online presence to stay relevant
 - We were able to share that out with our partner network
 - We saw a major difference in the online traffic on about.us
 - People were coming to the site, staying on the site longer
- First ever community launches in .US
 - Partnership for Startup Weekend
 - Intensive 54 hour, 3 day event in communities across the world
 - Over 15000 attendees
 - Attendees awarded a free scholarship for domain/website builder
 - NASA Space Apps
 - Proudly supported for several years

- The team at NASA rallied around putting together a Space apps event in May that would address issues related to Covid
- It was a global event and they were able to roll it out the most successful activation we have ever seen
- Attendees was awarded a free scholarship for domain/website builder
- Rural Innovation Network
 - This was rolled out in March 2020
 - Idea is to get training and technology into rural cities in the US
 - Provided swag to all the community members
 - Provided a digital mentorship to students who, otherwise, wouldn't have had this type of opportunity
- Campaign Updates
 - Independence Day Sale
 - This was rolled out in July 2020
 - This included organic native efforts, from retailers and partners
 - People posted and shared the message to get the .US brand out there. We had incredible results from the engagement team
 - They had the largest lift in social media followers that they have ever seen
 - Lots of likes, tweets, posts and shares
 - Creatively .US
 - Ran from June 2020 to September 2020
 - Audience: Dancers, photographers, dancers anyone who would want a website for a portfolio for new business
 - What we found, historically from doing these niche micro-audience campaigns:
 - We were able to give them that personalized and customized engagement and they get fantastic engagement from the users
 - Very successful
 - Veterans
 - .US Veteran Startup of the Year
 - Very first ever event
 - .US is the exclusive sponsor
 - We will give a \$10k non-dilutive cash prize sponsored by Crystal Peterson
 - Est.us/summit2020
 - One of three events for entrepreneurship in 2020 by Forbes article
 - Website Relaunch
 - We have been doing extensive research to launch a new website for about.us
 - Some Improvements:
 - Brand new checkout process for our customer
 - Much easier time to register a domain name
 - Comprehensive resource hub for small businesses

III. Administrator Updates

Lead by Crystal Peterson

- Participation in International Narcotics Control Board Panel - combatting the same of opioids and other dangerous drugs/substances
- Participation in Pilot Process (launched June 2020)

IV. Stakeholder Council Updates

Lead by Dustin Loup

- Announce Alex Deacon as new Vice Chair
- Security Subcommittee:
 - o To review and analyze .US policies
 - o In that work we split off into two work tracks
 - Policy of use of the domains: acceptable use policy and etc (determine if there are any recommendations or changes)
 - Privacy services policy: currently there is a prohibition to allow privacy and proxy services for .US domains (determine if there are any recommendations or changes)
 - o We produced and submitted a request to the DoC - waiting on approval before we proceed with submission steps (required to post for public comment)
- Kids.us sub-committee:
 - o DoC had suspended the space because it wasn't being used as intended
 - o We had brought this up to stakeholder council to review next steps
 - o They convened the first time back in September 2020 and were in the process of drafting up a report and review on their recommendations
 - o There will be a public comment opportunity
 - o They are submitting the kids.us and security sub-committee change requests for approval at the same time
- usTLD Locality sub-committee:
 - o It is a management tool for DMs and locality registrants to be able to manage their names
 - o This is special project, it has been convening for a little while
 - o We are on track to launch this in Q4 of this year
 - o We got the thoughts of the DMs

V. Continued Participation

Lead by Crystal Peterson

- IGF opportunity
- .US newsletter and social handles

VI. Q & A

Lead by Crystal Peterson

Q: Will .Us be keeping clear of discounting as a tool?

A: No, that is something that we do utilize but we do utilize it in a fair and strategic manner to help grow the namespace in a healthy way. Does it mean we will do severe deep discounting which invites bad actors and spammers? No, we will not do that.

Q: Is there a conflict with .us registry team being run by the world's largest registrar?

A: We have several pillars in place to make sure that we are not within vertical integration. We are not governed by ICANN but we are an active member there and heed their suggestions.

We have separate books and will not value our GoDaddy registrar over other registrars. It is part of our governance model and also part of our registry code of conduct as the .US TLD. We do not feel there is any conflict of interest.

Q: Any superbowl plans for .US in the future?

A: We can't say that is in the roadmap for .US right now. We can't speak for the registrar but right now we won't be planning that.

Q4-2020 Stakeholder Meeting

December 10, 2020

I. Welcome

II. Roll call and approval of September 2020 minutes

- usTLD Stakeholder Council: Dustin Loup, Bryan Britt, Alex Deacon, Becky Burr, Doug Robinson, Karen Rose, Tom Barrett, Michele Neylon, Stacy Cheney, Susan Chalmers, Bartlett Cleland, Lauren Kapin
- Registry Services: Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Fernando Espana, Melissa Cohen
- Dustin moves to approve meeting minutes

III. Q4 Marketing Update

- Veterans Efforts
 - o .US Veteran Startup of the Year:
 - Exclusive sponsorship for .US Veteran Startup category
 - Dedicated domain offer promoted to startup and Veteran community
 - Two video sizzle reels developed and promoted
 - Ongoing PR
 - o Annual event: est.us/Summit2020
 - November - Winning Veteran startup received \$10K non-dilutive cash prize

- 82 – Veteran Startup Applications (20% of all applicants)
- Startup Weekend
 - Lead partner of Startup Weekend, providing domain names to startup founders at thousands of hackathon events around the world.
 - Ongoing focus to support entrepreneurial communities amidst the challenges of the pandemic
 - 2020 highlights include just under 300 total events throughout the year with reach in more than 100 U.S. cities. .US domains were offered to all 20K+ attendees and our Techstars community supported Veteran efforts by cross-posting and sharing the Veteran entrepreneur article written for .US.
- Influencers
 - Outreach to YouTube influencers focused on supporting small businesses, freelancers and entrepreneurs. Domain offer exclusive to influencer to build and promote project to audience of followers.
 - 12 Total Influencers: Tech experts, freelancers and entrepreneurial coaches.
 - Ongoing referral traffic and ambassador connections.
- Content
 - Four new articles posted in Q4:
 - 7 Easy Gift Ideas that Support U.S. Small Businesses
 - Local Marketing Ideas: 3 Proven Tactics Small Businesses Must Follow Amid Covid-19
 - Upcoming 2020 .US Town Hall Live Webcast
 - Newly Launched Vote.US Website Empowers Americans to Vote with Confidence
 - Organic traffic up 3% YoY (with mid-year site redesign)
- 2021 Highlights
 - The year of small businesses.
 - Focus on “Made in the .US” campaign theme
 - Supporting resources, content and expanded mediums to connect with SMBs
 - Optimize assets and leverage partner networks for brand amplification.
 - The year of small businesses.
 - Focus on “Made in the .US” campaign theme
 - Supporting resources, content and expanded mediums to connect with SMBs
 - Optimize assets and leverage partner networks for brand amplification.

IV. Policy & Security Updates

- Security sub-committee
 - Dustin reviews Privacy Service Plan and looks to Stakeholder Council for approval to move to public comment period.
 - Dustin moves to approve
 - Alex confirms what content will be sent to public and asks about unanswered FAQs.
 - Dustin explains these are brainstorming questions only to pose possible public commentary and not part of the published public document. Tom says the FAQs are meant to highlight how the implementation may work.

- Alex asks if they should review or comment on the pre-existing Registry Services proposal. Dustin and Crystal clarify that the PDF plan has already been presented and only looking for feedback on the review by the security sub-committee.
- **Dustin:** That is still in the process of consideration. It has already been submitted and has gone through public comment back when it was originally drafted and submitted. There may be input on what is that plan but what we want from the public comment is comment on the added rationale and support from a security and safety perspective that is highlighted in this review instead of recommendations or inviting opportunities on a proposal that has already been submitted and is in the process of being considered.
- **Crystal:** Yes, actual plan itself had already been drafted and submitted to the DoC. Within the last round of response, within our current contract, that plan has been presented so what we are looking for is to the council to leave comment on the review on the security statement on the security around .US and the privacy services plan is one of the pieces that came up for review.
- **Dustin:** Any additional comments or questions before we move to push to public comment?
- **Dustin:** I would like to move that we approve this for public comment and ask for support.
- Dustin moves to approve
 - Tom Barrett seconds
 - Bryan Britt seconds
 - No objections
- *One approved and moved to push this through.*
- *No objections.*
- **Dustin:** This has been approved. We will work with Registry Services to draft the public comment language that Alex drilled down on the language in the google docs before we release for public comment. Alex supports moving plan forward to public comment.
- Approve to move to public comment
- KIDS.US update – Dustin provides historical overview including intention and complications of namespace. Question of whether to reinstate the space, without any changes to the policies. Committee to evaluate if it was a workable plan to reinstate and committee deemed that the implementation framework remained unworkable. Committee is drafting report to put out for public comment.
 - Michele Neylon clarifies that the laws governing the namespace would require U.S. statutes by congress. Crystal and Becky Burr both confirm this is the case.
 - Crystal explains that the space must be reviewed every time the contract is renewed.
 - Alex, “Sounds like we should continue with the suspension - based on previous decisions/debate/logic.”
 - **Tom:** I think that the sub-committee is recommending it isn't workable under current law. We should let them know. The fact that we can't have links outside

of the .US zone or links to any URL that hasn't been through a content vetting process. That is the unworkable part. Unless that content has changed, that is the unworkable part.

- Dustin moves to keep namespace in suspension and opens floor for objections. No objections from Council voiced.

- Locality Tool
 - Crystal announces tool will be released at end of December as MVP (minimum viable product).
 - Bryan Britt has been testing tool for about a month and very pleased with functionality and opportunity is presents.

V. 2021 Meeting Schedule

- Q1 March 18, 2021 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time
- Q2 June 10, 2021 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time
- Q3 September 16, 2021 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time
- TOWN HALL November 4, 2021 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time
- Q4 December 16, 2021 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

- Dustin moves motion to approve meeting schedule. It's seconded by Council member.

VI. Closing

- Next Stakeholder Council Meeting: 18 March 2021, 12noon ET

Summary of usTLD Sub-Committee Meetings

Summary of usTLD Security Subcommittee Meeting #2

January 17, 2020

Attendees:

- William Bumpas,
- Becky Burr,
- Bartlett Cleland,
- Alex Deacon,
- Ray King,
- Michele Neylon,
- Dustin Loup,
- Crystal Peterson,
- Doug Robinson,
- Sam Sokol

Apologies Karen Rose, Tom Barrett

Background

The first Security Subcommittee had previously focused primarily on establishing the scope of the Security Subcommittee's work. In this discussion, the focus fit into two buckets: 1) DNS Abuse and 2) DNS Security.

The Subcommittee determined that it needed more information to proceed and requested data from Neustar on DNS Abuse in the .US space., the use of the .US TLD by governments bodies, and DNSSEC deployment in .US space. Due to the sensitive nature of the information surrounding abuse, there were limits to the specificity of the information that they are able to provide, but they produced a report providing an overview of the steps taken to mitigate different forms of DNS Abuse and other types of illegal content, along with data points related to CSAM and Spam.

Meeting Outcomes

During the second meeting, the Subcommittee followed up on the initial meeting's discussion on scope, beginning with a review and discussion of the report provided by Neustar.

Based on the information and data in the report, the Subcommittee agreed that in the context of DNS abuse, the security trends in the .US space were positive. Additionally, there were no major issues with the way that Neustar was managing or navigating the security considerations outlined in the report. It was almost mentioned that Neustar had signed on to the 'Framework to Address Abuse', which was also considered by the Subcommittee to be a positive action. As a result of these factors, the Subcommittee did not believe that the policies surrounding DNS Abuse required an in-depth review by the Security Subcommittee.

In lieu of full review and report, it was suggested that the Subcommittee could focus on a review of the current Acceptable Use Policy and other relevant registration policies. With this proposal, the Subcommittee would determine if it believes there is a need to update any policies and if determined yes, would produce a set of proposed modifications.

With respect to the DNS Security track, the discussion had previously centered around the implementation of secure protocols by registrants at the second level and in the locality space, including SSL/TLS, DNSSEC and DMARC. There weren't any major developments on this track, but the Subcommittee actively questioned whether this is something that should be discussed at the registry level.

The initial plan of the Subcommittee meeting on a monthly basis was determined to not be necessary and shifted to an as needed schedule based on the interim work.

Summary of usTLD Security Subcommittee Meeting

April 14 , 2020

Attendees

- Ray King
- Sam Sokol
- Karen Rose
- Crystal Peterson
- Dustin Loup
- Becky Burr
- Lauren Kapin
- Doug Robinson
- Tom Barrett

Apologies Alex Deacon

Outcomes

At the usTLD Security Subcommittee’s third meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the progress to date and agreed to proceed with two official tracks, which can be carried out simultaneously. Each track will benefit from being aware of the other’s progress, but they are not dependent on each other.

Domain Abuse and .US Policies - The work team for this track will review the current policies for .US including, but not limited to, the Acceptable Use Policy. This review will assess whether the current policies are adequate for the continued security and safety of the .US space, including registrants, end users, and the Internet as a whole.

Work Team: Tom Barrett, Becky Burr, Ray King, Dustin Loup

Statement of Support for the .US Registry Based Privacy Service Plan - The work team for this track will review the plan to allow privacy services for registrants of .US which was previously approved by the usTLD Stakeholder Council and has been submitted to the NTIA for consideration. Based on that review, the team will draft a statement of support for the plan from a security-centric perspective.

Work Team: Tom Barrett, Bartlett Cleland, Alex Deacon, Ray King, Karen Rose, Dustin Loup

During the call, we did not delve deeply into particular aspects of either work track, but during the discussion on the “Domain Abuse and .US Policies” track, it was suggested that we consider the issue of “facially false” domains. There were concerns about the implementation of any solution to address this and there was no outcome regarding this particular discussion.

However, it will be included in the considerations of the related work.

Additionally, we previously had discussed whether the subcommittee should focus on deployment of security protocols such as DNSSEC, SSL, DMARC, etc. After consideration, there was agreement that these issues are best handled by actors other than the registry. However, based on the interest in

supporting deployment Tom Barrett and Dustin Loup will work on creating resources on these technologies to be included on the about.us website, pending approval of the secretariat.

Summary of usTLD Security Subcommittee Privacy Track Meeting #1

June 30, 2020

Attendees

- Tom Barrett
- Alex Deacon
- Ray King
- Dustin Loup
- Crystal Peterson
- Karen Rose

Background

At the third meeting of the usTLD Security Subcommittee, there was a decision to split the work into two tracks: 1) Domain Abuse and .US Policies and 2) Statement of Support for the .US Registry Based Privacy Service Plan. The Subcommittee members that joined the Track #2 were Tom Barrett, Alex Deacon, Ray King, Karen Rose, Dustin Loup. Prior to the first meeting of this work track team, a draft statement was circulated with links to the Privacy Service Plan for review and comment prior to the meeting.

Outcomes

During the meeting, the discussion focused on the draft statement in support of the Privacy Service Plan. To kick off the conversation, there was an overview of the plan and the current state of the proposal, which is still in the review process.

After the overview, the team reached consensus support for the Privacy Service Plan and shifted its focus to the draft statement of support. With the agreement by the members of the team on the merits of the Privacy Service Plan, the discussion on the draft statement largely revolved around structural changes and modifications that improved the clarity and impact of the statement. Comments and tracked revisions can be viewed [here](#)

There was extended conversation around two elements of the statement that sought to provide stronger support than was in the proposal.

The first was related to the carve out section (Pg. 9, Carve Outs Section) of the proposal, which reads:

The Council discussed, but did not come to a conclusion on, whether the .US PSP should include a carve out for commercial entities. The Council noted in its discussion the difficulty presented in

identifying and applying such a carve out. Neustar recommends that to reduce confusion in the application and enforcement of the policy, to protect legitimate concerns of home-based businesses, and to maintain a low cost of administration, the privacy service should be made available to all domain holders regardless of commercial status.

The members of this work track team reached a consensus agreement with Neustar's recommendation and agreed to include this support in the statement, subject to consideration and approval of the entire Stakeholder Council.

The second element was related to consensus exceptions in described in Pg. 2, Para 3 of the Privacy Service Plan:

The Council formed a subcommittee to address the implementation of privacy and proxy services. Council member, with the exception of representatives from law enforcement agencies, supported the implementation of privacy and proxy services. Law enforcement agency representatives argued that .US should remain a namespace where all information about a registrant remains available and publically accessible in order to efficiently conduct WHOIS queries for investigative purposes, without notification to potential targets of an investigation. Law enforcement also expressed concerns that bad actors would be more likely to obtain .US domain names if they knew they could keep their contact information private. Law enforcement cited to the 2013 report A Study of Whois Privacy and Proxy Service Abuse by Richard Clayton and Tony Mansfield which found that maliciously registered domains "generally have a higher usage of privacy and proxy services than is the case for lawful and harmless activities. (WHOIS Study) Despite law enforcement concerns, the other members of the subcommittee, and subsequently the Council, agreed that Neustar should develop a plan for consideration by the Council that would provide registrants with the protection they demand ensuring to also address the concerns of law enforcement. It is in this context that Neustar is presenting this .US Registry based Privacy Services Plan (the "PSP") for the .US Stakeholder Council.

With respect to this passage, the discussion reached the conclusion that we believe the solutions described in the plan are effective in addressing the concerns of law enforcement by providing an authoritative, accurate, real-time private WHOIS database that is quickly and easily accessible in response to lawful requests.

In addition to addressing these elements in the statement, there was support for drafting additional language that describes how the plan is aligned with the original goals for management and coordination of the domain. Karen Rose volunteered to draft this language prior to the next meeting of the team.

In all of this discussion, one important point was clarified by the team. Nothing in the statement is intended to reopen or revisit the Privacy Service Plan, only strengthen the support.

2020 usTLD Stakeholder Meetings Annual Report

Summary of usTLD Security Subcommittee Privacy Track Meeting #2 August 11, 2020

Attendees

- Tom Barrett
- Ray King
- Dustin Loup

Apologies

- Alex Deacon
- Crystal Peterson
- Karen Rose

Meeting Outcomes

Following the first meeting of the team working on the privacy track, a small group convened again to review the revised draft. This was largely a working meeting focused on tightening up the language and minor edits that did not affect the meaning of the language.

In addition to the real-time editing, there was a discussion around the specifics of the implementation of the Privacy Service Plan, including elements such as pricing, structure of WHOIS entries, and access model for law enforcement. The outcomes of this discussion were submitted in the form of a set of FAQs that identify issues that are likely to arise if the plan proceeds and the group recommends are explored proactively.