Appendix B: OVERVIEW OF THE WHOIS USER AND REGISTRANT SURVEYS AND KEY FINDINGS

Methodology

Nominet sampled .uk WHOIS users to build quantitative and qualitative understanding of the range of users, their query purposes and their expectations of the type of contact data that should be published in the .uk WHOIS. This enabled Nominet to assess the potential impact any changes to the .uk WHOIS may have on users.

Nominet also undertook a survey of .uk Registrants to build quantitative and qualitative understanding of the type and quantity of contact data that is currently disclosed on the .uk WHOIS by a range of .uk Registrants. The results of this survey was intended to provide Nominet with a better understanding of Registrant’s expectations of what data they would prefer to disclose in addition to their views on the type of information they expect to be disclosed by others in the .uk WHOIS. The latter point enabled a comparison of expectations between users and registrants.

Both surveys were hosted by Nominet, using questionnaires developed in conjunction with Moorcroft Market Research.

The surveys were live between 21 August 2014 and 29 September 2014. WHOIS users were invited to complete a survey once their query result was returned with 586 users submitting a response. The Registrant survey was accessible through a link on the Nominet Website and through a pop up banner presented in Online Services. 272 registrants completed the survey.

A summary of the results from both surveys is set out in Appendix C.

WHOIS user response analysis

Moorcroft Market Research analysed the survey results, measuring the frequency of use, the reasons for the query and to ascertain the level of satisfaction the user experienced in relation to the information provided.

The survey results indicated that:

- The majority of respondents had used the .uk WHOIS before, with 61% of respondents using the .uk WHOIS at least twice a month.
- The most frequent reason for querying the .uk WHOIS was to check the details of the respondent’s own domain name (28%).
- 87% of .uk WHOIS users found everything they were expecting.
- Users who did not find all the information they were expecting (13%) were most likely to also want a contact email address.
A large proportion of the respondents were frequent users and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the information returned. Following analysis of all the results we have concluded that there is little mandate, either from users or registrants, to radically change or modify the nature and quantity of content published on the .uk WHOIS.

**Registrant survey response analysis**

Moorcroft Market Research analysed the survey results to assess registrant’s awareness of the .uk WHOIS and expectations of contact data disclosure.

Analysis of the survey responses indicated that:

- Registrants appear to have a good awareness of the .uk WHOIS (96%).
- They also have good awareness of their disclosure status i.e. whether they have opted out or used other contact details (6% did not know whether they had chosen to disclose their details).
- Individuals were more reticent to disclose their details than businesses – 34% compared with 57% of UK companies.
- Overall slightly under half of those completing the surveys believed that all domain name holders should disclose their details on the .uk WHOIS.
- Most registrants who responded use their domain name for a website where they publish information about their organisation or provide information connected to selling products.
- 31% of registrants responding to the survey disclose the same contact information on their website and the .uk WHOIS.
- 46% of registrants who have chosen not to disclose their contact details stated a desire for privacy as the main reason.

**Comparison of expectations between .uk WHOIS users and registrants**

Key information users expected to find included:

- Person and/or organisation responsible for the domain (85% users, 66% registrants)
- Registration and/or expiry dates (73% users, 56% registrants)
- Registrar details (62% users, 47% registrants)
- Technical details (53% users, 42% registrants)

- Both users and registrants rank their desired content on the .uk WHOIS in the same order, although .uk WHOIS users are more likely to want find out about each aspect of a domain name.
- Phone number and postal address were the two elements users and registrants were least likely to want to share or expect to see disclosed on the .uk WHOIS.
- There is strong alignment of expectations of type of information sought by users and that disclosed by registrants.
- Half of users and 39% of registrants think that everyone who registers a domain name should disclose their contact details on the .uk WHOIS.
- 85% of WHOIS users compared with 80% of registrants responded that all types of businesses should have their details disclosed in the .uk WHOIS.