

MEETING 18 - 6 FEBRUARY 2002

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD REPORT
PORTMAN SQUARE, LONDON, W1
6 FEBRUARY 2002

Those present:

- Jeremy Beale Appointed Member
- Adam Beaumont Elected Member
- Denesh Bhabuta Elected Member
- Mike Blanche Elected Member (Acting Chair)
- Alex Bligh Appointed Member - Council of Management
- Gordon Dick Elected Member
- Michael Duggan Appointed Member
- Steve Dyer Appointed Member - Council of Management
- Clive Feather Elected Member
- Peter Gradwell Elected Member
- Eric Ramage Appointed Member
- Sue White Appointed Member

From Nominet by invitation of the PAB: Lesley Cowley, Felicity Hoad, Fay Howard, Emily Taylor.

1. Welcome and apologies

Mike Blanche, acting chair, welcomed the two new members of the PAB. They are Michael Duggan of the DTI, and Jeremy Beale of the CBI. Apologies were received from Richard Almeida and Roy Bisson.

2. Code of Practice

Fay Howard reported on the development of the Code Of Practice. Her findings, which had been presented to the Council of Management, were that there would not be sufficient funding for a Code of Practice organisation for Domain Name registrations services alone. She had concluded that a more coordinated approach was required to Internet self-regulation and she was looking at approaching the administrators of a number of different codes, to see whether they could incorporate their work into one umbrella code for all Internet services.

Michael Duggan said that the DTI would encourage an Industry-wide initiative and would try to help set-up a meeting between the relevant parties.

Fay reported that the Council of Management had endorsed the PAB recommendation that better enforcement of the Nominet Tag Holder Agreement would help to improve standards.

The PAB agreed that the outcome of the consultation, and the above recommendations, should be communicated to the membership.

3. Enforcement of the Tag Holder Agreement

Fay Howard presented a paper that had been co-authored with Nominet looking at measures that could be taken to improve the enforcement of the existing Tag Holder Agreement (THA).

She outlined proactive measures that could be undertaken such as ensuring Tag Holders display Nominet's Terms and Conditions, ensuring resellers meet the conditions outlined in the THA, and the provision of accurate Registrant information. She also outlined some other reactive measures that could be put in place.

The PAB discussed how there should be some leverage between enforcement and persuasion, and that an educational campaign would be beneficial. It was suggested that suspension of credit limit could be an extra sanction to be added before Tag suspension.

The PAB were broadly supportive of the principles outlined in the paper and the recommended sanctions for non-compliance.

4. Feedback from me.uk launch

Lesley Cowley gave a resume of the events leading up to and immediately after the launch of me.uk. She explained that the glitch in the early phase of the launch had affected a small number of domain names, and that Nominet had contacted all the Tag Holders and Registrants that had been affected.

The PAB suggested that a general evaluation of the number and types of Registrants in me.uk would be useful to know once the start-up period had ended.

5. "DRS Lite"

The PAB debated the possibility of having an alternative Dispute Resolution Service (DRS) for me.uk Domain Names, a topic that had been raised on NOM-STEER.

Emily Taylor explained that the existing DRS, which had been revised in September 2001 following extensive public consultation, had been designed to cover personal names. She noted that there were currently two me.uk domain names cases going through the DRS. She advised that the PAB should wait and see the take-up of registrations in me.uk, the percentage of registrations leading to disputes, and the character of such disputes before making a decision on an alternative procedure.

It was agreed that it is primarily the cost of the service that would mark the difference between the existing DRS and a "lite" version.

The PAB requested that the Executive keep a watching brief on the issue, and report back after the early cases had been tested. The PAB also suggested it would be a good idea for Nominet to publicise the fact that many DRS cases were being resolved at the mediation stage.

6. Communications

Felicity Hoad presented a paper giving some background on the current communications strategy, as well as ideas for improving communications between the PAB and membership. She highlighted that improving the current Nominet website was a key objective for 2002.

A debate followed about whether Nominet should increase communications with other stakeholders. The PAB welcomed the ideas for more communications with the membership and other stakeholders, but did not recommend any change to how the current balance of communications money was spent. They strongly endorsed the need for more PAB papers, PAB profiles and contact information to appear on the general pages of the website. The PAB also agreed that PAB minutes should be clear, with definite action points.

7. Schools request from DfES

The PAB discussed a proposal from Becta to allow Local Education Authorities within England to choose their own 4LD within .sch.uk.

The PAB requested that a meeting should take place between all stakeholders (from England, Wales and Scotland) to agree a common policy for schools domains. The PAB would be happy to consider their joint proposal at a future meeting.

8. Tag Changes

Emily Taylor reported that Nominet was seeking legal advice on Nominet's Tag Holder procedure as a whole, and in particular whether the current procedure used in Tag changes could be applied to the transfer and cancellation of domain names. An update would be given at the next meeting.

9. Updated WHOIS

Nominet updated the PAB on the status of the expanded WHOIS reply message. A copy of the draft new message was circulated for comment.

The PAB requested that Nominet investigate XML options for the WHOIS look-up.

10. Status of Mailing Lists

Lesley Cowley reported on the status of the mailing lists. She confirmed that the NOM-STEER and NOM-ANNOUNCE lists now contained over 3,000

records; the project was almost complete and that the internal MATADOR database would shortly be authoritative for both lists.

11. Timing of Meetings

The PAB debated the timing of PAB meetings. It was agreed that:

- i. The meetings would be held in the mornings
- ii. The chair of any sub-committees should decide on the timing of those meetings
- iii. The Executive will assist with the provision of meeting rooms.

12. Rules

The PAB debated the revisions to the Rules for the .uk TLD and sub domains that had been prepared by the sub committee. They agreed the contents of the revised Rules, and requested Clive Feather to amend and circulate a final version.

Once circulated, the Rules would become an approved PAB policy document and would be referred to Nominet's lawyers for legal drafting before being put to the Council of Management for approval.

The PAB requested that the Executive confirm the procedure for approving the Rules.

13. Date of Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 10.00 hours on April 3 2002.