



POLICY ADVISORY BODY REPORT
Holiday Inn, 1 Kings Cross Road, London
12 March 2008
MEETING 55

Those present:

Andrew Bennett	Elected Member
William Brocklehurst	Appointed Member – CBI
James Conaghan	Elected Member
Gordon Dick	Nominet Board
David Evans	Information Commissioner’s Office
Earl of Erroll	Appointed Member - apComms Group
Clive Feather	Elected Member
Subhi Hashwa	Elected Member
Mark Healey	Elected Member
Eric Ramage (Chair)	Appointed Member – ITMA
Jarrold Robinson	Elected Member
Michael Toth	Elected Member

From Nominet by invitation of the PAB:

Martin Boyle, Senior Policy Advisor
Leanne Kenny, Policy Executive
Emily Taylor, Director of Legal and Policy

1. Welcome and Apologies

No apologies were received. On behalf of the PAB the Chair welcomed Martin Boyle, Senior Policy Advisor at Nominet to his first meeting. Eric Ramage apologised for his absence at the January meeting.

2. Approval of the January PAB Meeting Report

The PAB approved the report.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Domain name re-registration (report from the PAB sub-committee)

The PAB sub-committee meeting took place on the 18 February 2008 and was chaired by Gordon Dick. The report was presented as a summary of the policy principles the PAB believe Nominet should look at.

Resolution

The PAB resolves to recommend the following policy principles with regards to domain name re-registration to Nominet.

Policy Principles

1. The system should be fair, and should not incentivise people to share resources/act in concert
2. There should be low barriers to entry for all registrars so they can truly compete for cancelled names
3. One party should not be able to unfairly disadvantage another
4. The system should aim to prevent excessive use of resources on tech/complaints systems at Nominet
5. An even distribution of registrants should be able to obtain cancelled domains
6. The ability to dropcatch should not prevent a registrar's ability to do other normal tasks
7. Should your ability to dropcatch depend on the number of names on your tag? The larger registrars are being disadvantaged because they need their access to do other things
8. Cost neutrality
9. Mechanism should be understandable to the average registrant
10. There should be disincentives for hammering Nominet's technical systems.

5. DRS outcome (presentation and discussion)

Emily Taylor gave a presentation summarising the changes to the current DRS system. A copy of this will be posted on the website.

It was confirmed that the new process will be launched at the same time as the online system, which is estimated at two months time.

A discussion followed whereby the practice of some DRS experts and law firms advertising their expertise in representing parties in the DRS was questioned. It was highlighted that many businesses advertise their expertise in a particular field. It was requested that the contract Nominet has with the DRS experts be made public. Nominet offered to share the provisions relating to the experts' obligations relating to impartiality and independence with the PAB providing this was on a confidential basis. The PAB were assured that Nominet attempts to recruit experts from a variety of fields, which include technical and academic backgrounds and not just lawyers. Inevitably when dealing with rights based decisions the majority of applicants come from the legal profession.

Nominet thanked the PAB for their contribution in shaping the changes to the DRS through their feedback prior to the consultations, their input into consultation 1 and as a sounding board during consultation 2 and through constructive dialogue and suggestions.

6. PAB performance

A sub-committee chaired by Eric Ramage is scheduled to take place directly following the PAB meeting.

7. PAB election (verbal)

Emily Taylor gave an update on the PAB election. There are eight candidates with the results being announced on the 17 March 2008. Voting has been very slow and lower than in previous years.

Eric Ramage confirmed he will re-stand to chair the PAB, and invited other candidates who would like to stand for PAB Chair to inform Emily Taylor.

8. PAB work programme (Executive paper)

Nominet thanked those PAB members who had suggested items for the work programme. The Chair reminded members that the PAB's role was to act as a bridge between Nominet and stakeholders and if any policy issues arise later in the year the Chair will have them added to the work programme.

9. Matters arising from nom-steer and pab-suggest

Nominet confirmed that it will cease sending out pro-forma invoices but that there will still be checks and balances in place to ensure the registrant has the opportunity to renew the domain name should they wish to.

10. Any other business

Nominet drew members' attention to the launch of the Best Practice Challenge 2008 and asked for their help in encouraging entrants.

The Chair thanked Subhi Hashwa for his contribution to the PAB over the last two years as this was his final meeting. He also offered his best wishes to other retiring members in the PAB election.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 May 2008 at 10.30 am at the Holiday Inn, 1 King's Cross Road, King's Cross.