

## **Matters arising from nom-steer and pab-suggest**

### **Ben Laurie – Voting information**

I would like to discuss at the next PAB meeting the question of whether individual votes should be published in the PAB minutes.

### **Hazel Pegg – Voting rights**

I'd like to resurrect the issue as to whether or not CoM appointees to the PAB should have voting rights.

### **James Conaghan – remuneration for PAB members**

I fully appreciate the sacrifice in time, energy and profit that all PAB members make. Whilst they are away from their respective businesses discussing things on OUR behalf, they ain't making money. Personally, I believe that they should be paid for the time they devote to the interests of the different stakeholders including us Members and I would like to see this on the Agenda of the next PAB meeting. I'd even like to see it backdated so that all those who gave of their time can be rewarded for bringing us this far.

### **Gordon Hudson – Tag holders making changes to the registrant field**

#### **Proposal:**

That tag holders should be allowed to make changes to the registrant field on a .uk domain name on behalf of the registrant.

#### **Reasons why a change is needed:**

1. The current method of changing registrant takes a long time to complete and costs money. Most registrants are not happy with this arrangement.
2. Because the current method of making changes to the registrant field is so off putting it means that there are a large number of .uk domains whose records do not reflect who is actually using the domain name. This puts the registrant in breach of Nominet terms and conditions 2.3:

-- quote --

2.3. You must inform us promptly of any change in your registered details, and those of your Agent if applicable. It will be your responsibility to maintain and update any details you submit to us and to ensure that your details are up to date, and accurate. In particular, it is your responsibility directly or by your Agent to ensure that we have your full and correct postal address.

-- unquote --

3. The current system puts .uk at a disadvantage over other TLD's which do allow easier registrant changes. I know of several customers who register in other TLD's because they know the registrant will need changed at some point in the future. For example, a customer who builds web sites with good domain names and then sells them to people in a particular profession. If he chose to register in .uk it would be too complicated to straighten out the ownership issue so he uses .com and .biz.

### **Rationale for allowing tag holders to make changes to the registrant field:**

1. If we examine the way that .com registrars work in a reseller structure it is very similar to the way Nominet works with tag holders. The registrant of the .com domain pays the reseller but their registration contract is with the registrar of record. They also have a financial contract with the reseller, but this is of lesser importance when it comes to the registration record itself. The registrar has a contract with the reseller which gives them permission to make changes to registration records including the organisation/registrant field. If the reseller does this without the registrant's permission then the registrant can complain to the registrar and the reseller would probably find their contract terminated.

2. At a time when we are discussing Nominet contracting out some administrative work to other companies (retagging and change of registrant) there is no reason why a tag holder could not tender for that work, so there is no reason per se why a Nominet member is absolutely unfit to carry out changes to domain registration records. The relationship between a tag holder and a registrant is similar to a reseller and a registrant in the .com model and there is no reason why administrative changes can not be subcontracted to the tag holder.

3. Tag holders are allowed to make changes which prevent domain names from functioning (detagging and removing name server records) so there is no valid argument that tag holders should not be allowed to interfere with a domain name.

4. Therefore I propose that the current contracts be changed to allow tag holders to change the registrant field. Tag holders would have a responsibility to ensure that the change was correct and could be disciplined if it was not.

I cannot see anything in the current terms and conditions which precludes a tag holder from changing the registrant field if the registrant has requested the change:

<http://www.nominet.org.uk/nominet-terms.html>

In the event that the contracts cannot be changed retrospectively, we should permit tag holders to make changes to domains registered from the date the new contract came into force.

## **Addressing the security issues:**

### **What is there to stop a mischievous tag holder changing a registrant for malicious reasons?**

At present there is nothing to prevent a disgruntled Nominet employee with access to the database changing 10,000 registrant fields. It doesn't happen because

- a) the staff are trusted and monitored.
- b) the staff know they would get the sack if they did it.
- c) there are provisions for reversing such changes if they are found to be unauthorised.

The same could be applied to tag holders. It is with .com and it works. The registrant would complain to Nominet (who have records of all the changes) who would ask the tag holder for evidence the registrant authorised it and if they couldn't then they would be in serious trouble.

### **Comments:**

In defence of this proposal I would say that in several years of registering a large number of .com domains we have only had one case of a wrong change to a registrant field being made and this was corrected within three hours.

In that case it was an ex employee of the registrant who had the password and still had access to the email authorisation address. This was a case of poor security by the registrant rather than poor security at our end and the same sort of thing could happen with a paper based system.

Making this change to the system would speed up registrant changes, reduce the workload on Nominet and make registrants happier.