

Nominet's board of directors met on 17 November 2004.

This was a short meeting, and in addition to the monthly accounts and performance reports, the following main items were addressed at the meeting.

### **Policy Advisory Board Papers**

The Board approved the following papers for presentation to the December 2004 PAB meeting:

1. *.me.uk* Rules (final version for information)
2. A paper on data restructuring, a major current internal IT project
3. Executive response to the paper "Permitting the withdrawal of positive renewals"
4. Proposal from the executive team for a WHOIS for tags.

### **Vote of thanks to the chairman**

It was Willie Black's final board meeting as Executive Chair of the company. The board gave a unanimous vote of thanks to Willie for his work on behalf of Nominet, and his contribution to the company's growth and success over the past 8 years. Everyone wished him the best of luck in his future endeavours.

### **Operational Statistics**

There were 2,720 active members and 3600 active tags as at 1 November 2004. During October, 17 new members were added and 94 members resigned. The number of new registrations in October was 97,236 and 69,063 renewals were invoiced.

Dr Willie Black  
Chairman

### Personal Postscript

As this will be the last communiqué from me to the Nominet membership, I would like to take the opportunity to express my thanks to all of you who have supported me and Nominet, many of you from before day 1. I've come to know many of you as good friends and colleagues, even when you were aggressively and very rightly demanding better service from Nominet. I believe that I leave Nominet with a strong and respected management team, good financial reserves and an excellent political reputation. I wish you all great success in your respective businesses and I'm sure we'll bump into each other in Internet circles again sometime in the future.

Whilst sorting out all of my old files, I came across my very first bulletin (as it was called then) to the members in the difficult days of August 1996 when we had a real problem coping with the transition from free registrations via a set of volunteers to a professional and funded service. I append it for its historical interest. You might like to think of what has changed over the years!  
Enjoy☺

To: All Steering Committee Members  
From: Dr W Black  
Date: 19 August 1996, 1930

Subject: Status Update on Registrations

Now that Nominet is up and running, one of our priorities is to keep members up to date with developments on a regular basis. This status update is the first of a weekly series: you can expect to find an update here, however brief, by the end of each Monday, until further notice.

I'm sure you're aware that we have been facing problems in delegating names in the .uk spaces over the last three weeks. I can only apologise for this. However, I am pleased to report that virtually all the backlog of July requests has been cleared and good progress is being made with August.

This is the scale of the problem: in June the average number of requests was around 300 per week. We planned for an increase in this number as the end of the "free" period approached. However, in the last week of July alone, we received a total of 4646 requests. This was more than 15 times greater than the average June rate. Of these, 4083 were for unique domains (the rest were duplicate requests). The analysis is as follows:

- 425 already taken and were rejected
- 553 received some objections, but less than 5 and were approved
- 1039 received at least five objections and were rejected
- 17 were withdrawn by their submitters before processing
- 1956 were delegated with no objections
- 93 were for domains outside our scope (or even .uk!)

The majority of the 4083 requests needed some manual intervention, even if only five minutes. Some required considerably more effort, but even at an average of five minutes each, this is over 300 hours, or two full weeks! This has only been achieved by three or four staff working into the early hours on a regular basis.

With respect to the requests from 1 August onwards, we had received about 1500 by last Friday. About 350 had no problems and were delegated over the weekend. The remainder, unfortunately, had faults: either missing mandatory fields or spurious obsolete fields. In addition an error caused a batch of spurious "invalid PGP key" messages to be returned. These should be ignored. As at 1800 on Monday August 19th 739 requests are still being held, but some 300 are just about to be delegated.

I have asked PSI to delegate those domains which have enough information to do so safely: for example if they have a correct IPStag and follow the namespace rules. In all cases I have requested that they be reserved as names in the database (although they will not appear on the servers). This is to ensure that nobody who requested a given domain will lose it due to a later request for the same name.

The domains which have been delegated without server information appear in the WHOIS database but are not being copied into the running DNS servers. ISPs who have submitted these requests can easily update the entries by sending a PGP key signed update request to the automaton.

PSI will update the WHOIS server tomorrow morning to give information on the "held" domains so that submitters can see the status. PSI will respond to requests for assistance in clearing these as soon as possible.

The automaton began processing new requests on the evening of Friday 16th August and is reported to be running correctly.

At around 1800 today (Monday 19th) the automaton had processed 120 delegations which had arrived today.

Our other immediate priorities are to ensure that the backlog is cleared, that the new automaton is operating correctly and that the Members are clear on the procedures to be followed.

In summary, an enormous number of new name requests have been dealt with in the most efficient way possible, but the sheer volume of these has inevitably meant that the process has taken time.