

## **Policy Advisory Body: Meeting report**

**This report will be tabled for approval at Meeting 68**

### **Sixty-seventh meeting of the Policy Advisory Body**

**Victoria Park Plaza, 239 Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1V 1EQ  
10<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

Those present:

Gordon Dick	Nominet Non Executive Director & Board Representative
Lord Erroll	Appointed Member - apComms
Dave Evans	Appointed Member – Information Commissioners Office
Mark Healey	Elected Member
Eric Ramage (Chair)	Appointed Member - ITMA
Stephen Rhodes	Appointed Member – BIS
Rob Taylor	Elected Member
Tom Wills-Sandford	Appointed Member - Intellect

By invitation of the PAB:

Leanne Kenny, Policy Executive, Nominet

#### **1) Welcome and apologies**

Apologies were received from James Conaghan, Sara Draper, Marie-Claude Hemming, Nora Nanayakkara and Michael Toth.

#### **2) Declaration of Interests**

Any declarations of interest are reported against the relevant agenda item.

#### **3) Approval of the November and January meeting reports**

The November and January meeting reports were approved.

#### **4) Matters arising**

The secretariat confirmed that work was ongoing on the issue of reverse domain name tasting. A report will be brought back to the May meeting.

A PAB member had previously requested that the declaration of interests form be reviewed. It was agreed that this should wait until after the conclusion of the reform of the policy advisory process and they would be happy to participate in revising the form when it became necessary.

#### **5) Board Response to PAB resolutions**

The Board response to PAB resolutions for November and January were noted.

At this point a PAB member requested an update on the outcomes of the recent EGM. Gordon Dick went through the resolutions and the results and clarified the new board composition.

## **6) Policy issues:**

### **a) .ltd.uk/.plc.uk rules**

Following previous consideration by the PAB on the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk registration rules and their recommendations<sup>1</sup> on this issue, the secretariat has met with and been in correspondence with representatives from the Department for Business and Companies House. The PAB were asked to consider the paper prepared by the secretariat on how the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk registration rules could relate to the current naming rules in use for company names.

One member questioned whether it was more appropriate for the rules of registration for .ltd.uk and .plc.uk domain names to be changed or for the Companies House rules to be changed. It was suggested that Companies House should look into ensuring their rules accommodate a 'digital Britain'. The secretariat clarified that the paper suggested how the registration rules can usefully work with the rules set out in the 'Company and Business Names (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009'. One PAB member highlighted that symbols which might be considered contentious are now clearly defined in Companies House rules. Another stated that what is important is to reduce the likelihood for confusion in the public's mind because such confusion increases the risk of phishing and fraud.

With the exception of the Chair, the PAB were in general agreement that the revised rules should be applied retrospectively. Some PAB members suggested that this could best be done by the rules being applied on renewal of a .ltd.uk or .plc.uk domain name, and noted that at the latest on renewal, companies that have altered their name should equally have to alter their .ltd.uk/.plc.uk domain name.

The PAB agreed the recommendations set out in Annex A. The Chair and Rob Taylor did not agree with resolution 1b, because they felt it was not appropriate to make such a recommendation now. They felt that this is an issue that should be addressed at such time that IDNs were implemented, so that consistent rules can be applied both to implementation of IDN and registration of .ltd.uk and .plc.uk domain names. It was noted that IDN policy had already been proposed by the PAB and thus it was only a matter of implementation. It was also noted that alterations to the rules go through a consultation process prior to being implemented and thus if the rules could be amended to cater for both changes in one go it would be more user friendly.

### **b) .uk brand**

#### **i. Impact assessments**

The secretariat introduced the paper on impact assessments. PAB members in general agreed that some form of impact assessment can be helpful in the policy process. However most felt that the example from the Government's Better Regulation Executive Impact Assessment guide was heavy handed and not necessarily appropriate for use in the proposed policy process which should be more focussed on enabling input. One PAB member suggested that issue groups could be given guiding principles of what should be taken into consideration when making a recommendation. Another suggested that the secretariat could draft a simplified template for issue groups to use to demonstrate that all consequences of a recommendation had been considered.

## **7) PAB internals:**

### **a) Report back on the consultation on the reform of the policy advisory process**

The secretariat confirmed that the consultation on the reform of the policy advisory process was launched on 3 March and 15 responses had been received to date. The PAB were asked to help in encouraging stakeholders to respond.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nominet.org.uk/digitalAssets/34391\\_Board\\_response\\_to\\_PAB\\_resolutions\\_at57.pdf](http://www.nominet.org.uk/digitalAssets/34391_Board_response_to_PAB_resolutions_at57.pdf)

Gordon Dick explained that a report would be taken to the board for their consideration following the close of the consultation. A report back will be tabled for the May PAB meeting.

**b) PAB Performance Review (deferred from January)**

The PAB approved the paper.

**8) PAB work programme including:**

**a) Preparation for the new policy advisory structure**

There was a short discussion regarding this item, however PAB members felt it would be more appropriate to discuss this issue following the close of the consultation. It was suggested that the secretariat could draft a paper for discussion at the May meeting.

**b) New Items for the Work Programme**

There were no new items for the work programme.

**9) Matters arising from Nominet Forum and pab-suggest**

There were no matters arising.

**10) AOB**

**a) Policy of charging for registrant changes (stakeholder request for review)**

Eric Ramage declared an interest in this item.

This item related to an email which had been sent to the elected PAB members requesting the PAB to consider the policy of charging for registrant changes. The PAB were undecided as to whether this was a policy issue or not. One PAB member pointed out that advice from the PAB in the past was that only Nominet should be allowed to make changes to the registrant of a domain name in order to protect against potentially rogue registrars.

Gordon Dick offered to respond to the stakeholder on the points he had raised. The PAB agreed this was the best course of action.

**b) The Nominet Internet Awards**

The secretariat updated the PAB on the Nominet Internet Awards (formerly the Best Practice Challenge).

**11) Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held at the Victoria Park Plaza, 239 Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1V 1EQ on the 12 May.

## Outcomes of the meeting

### 1. .ltd.uk and .plc.uk registration rules

- a) The PAB resolved to recommend that the .ltd.uk and .plc.uk rules should be aligned with the Company and Business Names (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009 (and subsequent amendments to the regulations).
- b) The PAB resolved to recommend that where a company name contains a sign or symbol not used in the DNS and included in Schedule 3 paragraph 3(2) the character should always be spelt out in the way that the regulations identify as being “the same as” unless IDN character set implementation allows for its use and the rules for the character set match.
- c) The PAB resolved to recommend that the revised rules be applied retrospectively and further resolved to recommend that the Nominet Executive decide how to implement this.