WHOIS Privacy (prop-162-v002)
Enhance Privacy of WHOIS by Restricting Contact Information

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Problem Summary

- Over 400 organisations have bulk access to APNIC WHOIS data

- Third parties republish contact details online

- Information easily harvested through screen scraping

- Evidence of misuse by organisations not involved in legitimate networking

Objective of Policy Change

- Prevent unnecessary distribution and retention of APNIC member contact information

- Ensure APNIC remains the sole provider of contact details

- Maintain legitimate access for authorised users

Situation in Other Regions

- Many ccTLDs (e.g., Australia, Germany) have implemented WHOIS privacy for domains

- Proposal states "No evidence that other RIRs restrict access to WHOIS contact details"

- *Updated information discussed on list: RIPE restricts Contact Information*

- *Seeking comment from JPNIC on their NIR WHOIS*

Proposed Policy Solution

- Remove contact fields (address, phone, fax, email, notify) from public WHOIS

- Restrict access to MyAPNIC and authenticated API users

- Ensure bulk WHOIS consumers remove stored contact data

- Publish a list of authenticated API users and access statistics

Advantages / Disadvantages

- Enhances privacy and data sovereignty

- Reduces nuisance contacts

- Disadvantages: None – legitimate access remains via APNIC-controlled WHOIS

Impact on Resource Holders

- No impact on resource holders

- Essential contact data remains available via authenticated APNIC services

References

- https://www.apnic.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/prop-162-v002.txt

- https://www.domainregistration.com.au/infocentre/info-private-registration.php

- https://www.denic.de/en/whats-new/press-releases/article/extensive-innovations-planned-for-denic-whois-domain-query-proactive-approach-for-data-economy-and/