CONTINGENCY PLANNING:
PROVIDING REGISTRAR SERVICE
IN AN EMERGENCY

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Content

- Background
- Need for a Contingency Plan
- Panel Registrar Concept
- Registrar Consultation
- Proposed Framework
- SGNIC as Interim Registrar
Background

178,388 .sg domain names as at 1 Feb 2018

- .sg: 43.5%
- .com.sg: 53.5%
- .net.sg: 0.1%
- .org.sg: 1.6%
- .edu.sg: 0.7%
- .gov.sg: 0.3%
- .per.sg: 0.1%
Background

- Since 2002, SGNIC has been on a Registry-Registrar model
  - 10 local and 8 foreign registrars (as at Jan 2018)
  - Portfolio managed by each registrar ranges: 1,000+ to > 30,000+

- SGNIC observed that:
  - Many consolidations happening in the industry
  - Greater uncertainty these days (ccTLDs vs gTLDs)
  - Greater risk of smaller players being edged out of market
Need for a Contingency Plan (1/2)

- With the current landscape of increased risks, there is a need to undertake contingency plans in the event of a registrar exit.

- 2 types of registrar exits:
  - Planned – e.g. notice of 6 months given
  - Sudden – e.g. business folds in 1 day/week

- SGNIC is looking into a contingency plan in the event of an unplanned/sudden registrar exit.
Need for a Contingency Plan (2/2)

- When a registrar exits, the impact to registrants depends on:
  - Whether hosting (DNS, email or web) is provided by the registrar itself or by a 3rd party
  - Whether there are other value-added services bought from the registrar (e.g. brand monitoring, web design, security features (DNSSEC, Registry Lock), etc)

- Greatest impact to registrants are when all services are provided by the same registrar
Panel Registrar Concept (1/2)

- Policy decision to appoint panel of contingency registrars
  - Contingency registrar(s) to take over registrants if a registrar exits suddenly
  - Preference for registry to take on an oversight role as SGNIC will be potentially less exposed to liabilities
  - Easier for an existing registrar to take over registrants as it already has the necessary operational and technical set-up to provide registrar services
Panel Registrar Concept (2/2)

- SGNIC still retains the right to step in as the registrar of last resort
  - Clause incorporated into Registrar Accreditation Agreement signed by registrars
Registrar Consultation

- In Aug 2017, SGNIC consulted the registrars on the framework of panel registrars to gauge their interest in becoming one

- Also sought their views on:
  - Customer support
  - Terms of service and service level to new registrants
  - Provision of value-added service
  - Response time to activate and complete emergency plan when notified by SGNIC
Proposed Framework (1/3)

- Formally appointed via a contract with SGNIC
  - Over and above the Registrar Agreement
  - Duration of appointment = 3 years or the length of the remaining term of the registrars’ Registrar Agreement

- No funding from SGNIC for panel registrars
  - If activated, panel registrars would gain from additional customer acquisition
Proposed Framework (2/3)

- Exercise and test of emergency plan
  - Conduct a simulation exercise with panel registrars at least once a year to maintain the panel registrars’ preparedness

- SGNIC will require that a panel registrar take over registrants within 12 to 24 hours

- Splitting of registrants pool
  - SGNIC may allocate registrants among panel registrars, depending on their capacity
Proposed Framework (3/3)

- Special domain names (IDNs & DNSSEC names)
  - Some panel registrars may not support these services
  - SGNIC will apportion registrants to panel registrars who do support these services

- SGNIC will require that customer support and service quality must be maintained and that there will be zero transfer fees charged to the registrants
SGNIC as Interim Registrar

- SGNIC still retains the right to be the registrar of last resort
  - For cases where urgent assistance is needed by registrants before they get transferred to a panel registrar, SGNIC may need to step in to provide assistance to those registrants
  - E.g. urgent need to update nameservers, or renew names, etc

- Will undertake this interim role only for a short period of time till the panel registrar is appointed
THANK YOU

https://www.sgnic.sg
https://www.welove.sg