Project Overview for the Registrar and Registry Contractual Compliance Audit Services RFI

27 September 2019

Request for Information

1 Introduction

1.1 About this Document and the Vendor Selection Process

This document provides background and pertinent information regarding the requirements for a future ICANN Compliance audit vendor. Indications of interest should be sent via email to Compliance.Audit.Services-RFI@icann.org.

ICANN will review the initial indications of interest via this Request for Information (RFI) process and will issue a subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) with necessary details to selected bidders. Additional information regarding this two-stage selection process is outlined in the Project Overview section below.

1.2 Overview of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)

ICANN's mission is to ensure a stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems. Specifically, ICANN coordinates the allocation and assignment of names in the root zone of the Domain Name System (DNS); coordinates the development and implementation of policies concerning the registration of second-level domain names in the generic top-level domains (gTLDs); facilitates the coordination of the operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system; coordinates the allocation and assignment at the top-most level of Internet Protocol numbers and Autonomous System numbers; collaborates with other bodies as appropriate to provide registries needed for the functioning of the Internet as specified by Internet protocol standards development organizations.

The Global Domains Division (GDD) is the unit of ICANN that engages with the Internet community to implement ICANN policies through contracts and services, and delivers IANA functions.

The purpose of GDD is to serve the global public interest, the registrants and end users of the Internet by ensuring a secure and stable DNS, while promoting trust, choice, and competition in the trusted domain name service industry.

ICANN has contractual agreements with over 1,200 registry operators of gTLDs. In addition, ICANN accredits domain name registrars, who facilitate the registration of Internet domain names for individuals and organizations (i.e., registrants). Currently, there are approximately 2,500 ICANN-accredited registrars.

See www.icann.org for more information.

2 Scope

2.1 Project Objective

ICANN will evaluate vendor(s) for the provision of the audit services specified in Section 4 of this RFI. This RFI will be conducted with the objective of maximizing the benefit to ICANN, while offering vendors a fair and equitable opportunity to participate. Elements such as cost of services and experience will be considered in the selection of a vendor.

ICANN currently has a vendor who performs the contractual compliance audits in conjunction with ICANN. As part of our due diligence and to ensure continuous improvement, ICANN is soliciting information from vendors qualified to provide audit services for ICANN's Contractual Compliance department. The intent is to identify a qualified audit vendor that will be responsible for performing audits of registries and registrars to verify their compliance with obligations under agreements with ICANN.

This sourcing event (RFI) is the first part of a two-stage sourcing process, used to fully evaluate proposals for this initiative. This RFI event, will be followed by a separate RFP, using the same sourcing tool. The RFI is open/public - anyone may provide a response (to provide a response, refer to section 1.1). The goal of the RFI is to identify a few competent providers who will be selected to progress to the second stage of the evaluation (the RFP stage). The RFP will be a closed, invitation-only process. Evaluations from bids received during the RFP will ideally result in the selection of a single provider for the initiative outlined.

Note that participation in this RFI does not automatically ensure selection for the RFP stage. Providers who qualify for the RFP will be notified separately and invited to join the RFP before the RFP is published.

2.2 Background

One of ICANN's Contractual Compliance department's strategic activities is an audit of registrars' and registries' compliance with their contractual agreements with ICANN.

The Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA) and Registry Agreement (RA) are the basis upon which ICANN determines whether its contracted parties are in compliance with their contracts. Currently, certain provisions from these agreements are included in the scope of an audit (see Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this document).

- All registrar and registry agreements are located here:

  https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/registrars/registrars-en (RAA)

  https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/registries/registries-agreements-en (RA)

- Additional information pertaining to the Audit Program can be located here:

  https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/audits-2012-02-25-en (Audit Program)

3   High-Level Selection Criteria

3.1 Selection Criteria

The decision to select a participant for the next RFP phase will be based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

1) Registrar or registry affiliation and knowledge
2) Experience conducting compliance audits
3) Experience auditing domain name system (DNS) environments
4) Familiarity with the operations of registrars and registries
5) Project management
6) IT/software capabilities; ability to manipulate/query/analyze large data files
7) Language translation capabilities

4　Service Requirements

Potential vendors should be able to provide a test service to verify compliance with the following provisions in the agreements with registrars/registries:

4.1　　Registrar Audit

RAA Provision	Test Area
2.2	Registrar use of ICANN name, website and trademarks
3.3.1 to 3.3.5	Registration Data – Availability and corresponding data elements
3.4.1 to 3.4.2	Retention of registration data
3.7.5.3 to 3.7.5.6	EDDP – Domain name renewal, provision of applicable information to registrants
3.7.7	Self-registered domains
3.7.7.1 to 3.7.7.12	Registered name holders registration agreement compliance
3.7.8	Business dealings, including with registered name holders
3.7.10	Registrar provision of link to registrants' benefits and responsibilities specifications
3.7.11	Complaints and dispute resolution process description
3.8	Domain name dispute resolution

3.12	Reseller agreement (mandatory provisions)
3.12.4	Reseller compliance with ICANN Privacy and Proxy Service Provider Accreditation Program (once in effect)
3.12.5	Reseller provision of link to ICANN registrant educational information
3.12.7	Reseller provision of link to Registrants' Benefits and Responsibilities specifications
3.13	Registrar training
3.14	Registrar compliance with ICANN Privacy and Proxy Service Provider Accreditation Program (once in effect)
3.15	Registrar self-assessment certificate
3.16	Registrar provision of link to Registrant Educational Materials
3.17	Registrar contact details on registrar's website
3.18	Registrar provision of abuse contact and process information on its website, illegal activity report monitoring
3.19	Additional technical specifications (DNSSEC, IPv6, IDN)
3.20	Notice of bankruptcy, convictions and security breaches
4.1	Expired Registration Recovery Policy (ERRP)
4.1	Transfer Policy
4.1	WHOIS Data Reminder Policy (WDRP)

4.1	Restored Names Accuracy Policy (RNAP)
7.6	Update contact information on file with ICANN
3.21	Obligations of registrars affiliated with registry operators

4.2 Registry Audit

RA Provision	Test Area
Article 1.3	Representations and warranties
Article 2.2	Compliance with consensus policies and temporary policies
Article 2.3	Data Escrow Requirements; Specification 2
Article 2.4	Format and Content for Registry Operator Monthly Reporting; Specification 3
Article 2.5	Registration Data Publication Services; Specification 4
Article 2.6	Schedule of Reserved Names; Specification 5
Article 2.7	Registry Interoperability and Continuity Specifications; Specification 6
Article 2.7	IPv6; Specification 6
Article 2.8	Protection of Legal Rights of Third Parties; Specification 7
Article 2.8	Protection of Legal Rights of Third Parties - (TMCH) Sunrise Period; Specification 7

Article 2.8	Protection of Legal Rights of Third Parties - (TMCH) Claims Period; Specification 7
Article 2.14	Registry Operator Code of Conduct; Specification 9 Parts 1 - A, B, D
Article 2.17	Additional Public Interest Commitments; Specification 11
Article 2.19	Community- Based TLDs Obligations of Registry Operator to TLD Community; Specification 12
Article 5.1; Specification 13	.BRAND TLD provisions; 5.1 (ii)
Category 1 Safeguards	Category 1 Safeguards

5 Project Timeline

The following dates have been established as milestones for this RFP. ICANN reserves the right to modify or change this timeline at any time as necessary.

Activity	Estimated Dates
RFI published	27 September 2019
Participants to indicate interest in responding to RFI	13 October 2019 by 23:59 UTC
Participants submit any questions to ICANN	13 October 2019 by 23:59 UTC
ICANN responds to participant questions	18 October 2019
Participant responses due by	24 October 2019 by 23:59 UTC
Evaluation of RFI responses and issuance of RFP	November 2019