.nz NEWSLETTER – April 2003

:: DNC Office ::

Summary of the .nz market

As at 14 April 2003, there were 34 authorised .nz registrars, with 27 of those connected to the production SRS. This number of authorised registrars has far exceeded expectations and, based on inquiries to the DNC office, it is likely that further applications will be received in the future.

Statistics as at 31 March 2003, showed an annual growth rate of 17%. This compares with an annual growth rate of 20% for the 1 April 2001 - 31 March 2002 year. The actual number growth in .nz domain names over both years was very similar however, with a gain of 17825 names to end March 2002, and 17899 names to end March 2003. During the course of this year, the DNC office will be looking at publishing more detailed statistics relating to the .nz domain name space.

Authorised Registrars – Use of Logo

Registrars and others in the .nz names market should note that only authorised .nz registrars are allowed to display the .nz Authorised Registrar logo (as shown). Resellers may not display the logo under any circumstances. Registrars are also asked to make sure that the logo links through to http://www.dnc.org.nz as an easy reference point for people looking for more information about .nz.

If anyone notices the logo being displayed by someone who is not an authorised registrar, please notify the DNC office - registrars@dnc.org.nz.

Registrars and Resellers

Registrars who have established a relationship with reseller organisations need to ensure that any terms and conditions those resellers impose on registrants comply with the .nz policies and procedures. Specifically, they need to reflect the minimum core terms and conditions. Registrars are entirely accountable for ensuring that resellers comply; and that accountability will be enforced if any complaints are brought to the attention of the DNC's office. Resellers are not to use the words "accredited," "authorised" or "registrar" when describing their role as resellers; this is to avoid any potential confusion with .nz Authorised Registrars.

Changes to registrant terms and conditions

Registrars who want to change their terms and conditions from those agreed at the time of their applications to become .nz Authorised Registrars need to consult the Office of the DNC before making any changes to the terms offered. This is not just a simple matter of courtesy, but is to avoid the situation where a registrar might inadvertently institute terms and conditions that are in breach of .nz policies and procedures. Changes can be checked by emailing them to registrars@dnc.org.nz; a rapid response can be expected.

Registrar Compliance

The DNC office will be regularly undertaking checks of registrar processes, documentation and websites to check compliance with .nz policies.

Checks undertaken to date have shown that, in general, registrars are doing a good job of making sure their business processes are compliant. Some issues have been found and these have been followed up with the registrars concerned. The most frequent issues were a) not ensuring that registrants positively accept the registrar's terms and conditions **before** transferring or registering a name, and b) making unauthorised changes to the .nz terms and conditions offered to registrants.

In nearly all cases, the responses of the registrars have been prompt and positive, with the changes specified by the DNC Office quickly undertaken. In the most serious case dealt with this month, a registrar was displaying totally incorrect terms and conditions. The lack of a response by the registrar, combined with the seriously non-compliant nature of the terms and conditions on the website, meant that the registrar was suspended from undertaking new registrations, or from transferring domain names, until the terms and conditions were changed to reflect those agreed to by the DNC.

.iwi Moderation

The moderator for the .iwi domain, Karaitiana Taiuru, has announced that FreeParking have been selected as the nominated authorised registrar for registering .iwi names. People wanting to register a .iwi.nz domain name can do so through www.register.iwi.nz or from www.freeparking.co.nz . The moderation policy for .iwi.nz can be read at http://www.dnc.org.nz/story/30043-35-1.html.

Registrar Advisory Group

Authorised registrars have now been advised who the nominees are for the five elected positions on the Registrar Advisory Group (terms of reference are enclosed, Appendix 1 of this Newsletter). A ballot will be conducted 2-9 May, and the results will be announced on 12 May. Domainz' representative (provided for while Domainz is under the Stabilising Registrar Contract) is Tim John.

Email out to registrants

The first email out to registrants directly billed by Domainz took place at the end of March. There was a response rate of just over 14%, with around 55% of respondents selecting to remain with Domainz as their registrar.

DNC Office

The DNC office is now fully staffed. Those in the office are:

Debbie Monahan, Domain Name Commissioner
Jordan Carter, Senior Support Analyst
Hannah Seeley, Support Analyst

The best way to contact the office is by email. Authorised registrars should use the email registrars@dnc.org.nz, and other general inquiries should be directed to info@dnc.org.nz.

Statistics

Figures as at 31 March 2003:

Note: these figures do not include names in the 'pendingrelease' status. They incorporate all active domain names in the .nz register.

	Active names as at 1 March	Active names as at end 31 March	New registrations March	Renewals March	Change over month
.ac	683	690	13	73	7
.co	103847	105624	2966	16253	1777
.cri	29	29	0	0	0
.gen	763	772	19	108	9
.govt	639	658	17	78	19
.iwi	34	36	1	4	2
.maori	372	383	11	11	11
.mil	16	16	0	0	0
.net	7618	7753	238	1025	135
.org	6979	7062	173	1110	83
.school	1905	1929	23	312	24
TOTAL	122885	124952	3461	18974	2067

:: NZ REGISTRY SERVICES ::

Connections

9 registrars went on line during March giving a total of 28 registrars in production. This includes Domainz and the DNC Registrar. There are 29 registrars accessing the test environment. Applications from registrars wishing to operate a second registrar have been received. These applications are being treated the same as first time applicants and need to provide all the same details.

Scheduled Outages and Updates

There were no scheduled outages in March.

SRS Availability

The SRS production system availability:

	December	January	February	March
%	99.92	99.96	99.97	99.94

March period response time performance figures on the production environment were:

Avg Response time (in seconds)	February 2003	March 2003
Domain Details Query	0.488	0.183
Domain Update	0.388	0.340
Domain Create	0.227	0.339
GetMessage performance	1.313	2.814
GetMessage (volume)	26363	31586
Whois	0.162	0.165
Whois queries at back end including Registrar (volume)	646059	765200
Whois Server Queries (volume)	220455	215739

Unscheduled Outages

There was one unmanaged outage and one managed outage to the production environment during March.

Production SRS Outage Report
SRS was made unavailable on 25 March at 16:45 – 17:11 for a period of 26 minutes to allow an urgent modification to be installed.
Impact - High
Cause - a function in updates could affect the integrity of the SRS database. Action required. – SRS closed down, feature immediately withdrawn. A work around put in place and a long term solution being investigated.

Production SRS Outage Report
DNS Zone Push
The Zone push was scheduled to change to 6 pushes a day.   There was a technical problem that showed the file as being created but did not report that it had been successfully pushed. There were no scheduled zone pushes from 5am 31/3/03 – 9am 1/4/04. The issue was identified at 10:30am and a file pushed at 10:45am on the 1/4/03.

An email was sent to all Registrars (11:10am) advising them of the issue and that it had been corrected.

A review has been undertaken of both the SRS and the DNS ends of the Zone push process. From the review additional automated monitoring at the SRS end has been put in place. This includes monitoring the DNS primary server.

SRS Scheduled Maintenance

May 18 03:00 - 04:00

There will be a scheduled shut down of SRS to allow for maintenance and an upgrade to SRS on 18 May 03:00 - 04:00 NZ Standard time.

This upgrade of SRS will coincide with an upgrade of the RIK. As has previously been done a pre-release of the highlights of the changes in the RIK will be published and the updated RIK will be available on 28 April.

An additional SRS test environment containing the new release of SRS will be made available from 1 May 2003 to Authorised Registrars to allow for testing. The URL will be sent out on 1 May.

Any enquiries to support@nzrs.net.nz.

Any comments?

If you have any questions or concerns about the SRS, please don't hesitate to contact us. For registry or technical matters, contact Nick Griffin at support@nzrs.net.nz. For all other matters, contact Debbie Monahan at info@dnc.org.nz.

Please note

If you would like to be notified of future updates, please use the SUBSCRIBE function on the DNC site and select the category 'Newsletters'.

:: APPENDIX ONE – RAG TERMS OF REFERENCE ::

Rationale

A Registrar Advisory Group (RAG) is to be set up by InternetNZ as part of its obligations under the Shared Registry System (SRS). The RAG will be chaired by the Domain Name Commissioner (DNC) and will comprise the DNC, NZ Registry Services (NZRS) Manager and six registrar representatives. It is intended to represent the collective interests of the Registrar community, and provides a key advisory element in the ongoing monitoring of the market by the DNC. This group will meet as and when necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Registrar Advisory Group will:

1. provide input to the DNC and the NZRS Manager on matters affecting the .nz domain name space, including providing advice on their preferred priority work areas
2. act as one point of contact between the authorised registrars and the DNC and NZRS.
3. provide a forum for Registrars to bring forward issues affecting the .nz market and offer possible solutions
4. provide input to assist in resolving technical issues regarding the register, its interfaces and the .nz DNS, as well as in identifying and evaluating possible SRS enhancements and modifications.
5. be consulted as part of any .nz external policy review
6. provide input to the DNC communication strategy regarding .nz domains

The Registrar Advisory Group will meet at least three times per year, and is required to act in a positive, constructive manner.

The Registrar Advisory Group, and members, will not:

- make any decisions that bind either the DNC or NZRS given its advisory role.
- use the forum to present any personal agenda that doesn't have a wider benefit to the Registrar community or .nz environment.
- make public statements purporting to represent the .nz position on any matter.

Membership

The Registrar Advisory Group shall comprise:
- the DNC (Chair)
- the NZRS Registry Manager, and
- Six Registrar representatives, selected using the process set out.