

October 13, 2003

Dr. Stephen Crocker
Chair, Security and Stability Advisory Committee
The International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
Marina del Rey, California
USA

Dear Dr. Crocker,

Due to recent events concerning changes to the DNS operations for .com and .net and the reaction of the community leading to the release of certain workarounds for a specific DNS server package, .name users are experiencing difficulties with the second level email forwarding service for .name.

These issues have resulted from the hastily introduced patch to the BIND software, including the so-called "root-delegation-only" feature. Certain ISPs have implemented this patch, and the incorrect use of this software will impact .name second level email users.

A recent misconception about the cause of this issue, is that the .name TLD returns a "wildcard" or "star-record" response. This is not the case. The .name gTLD works by returning non-delegation resource records for the second level, for example MX records for all shared second level names (as contemplated by the .name ICANN contract ¹) These valid and vital resource records could now be replaced with an NXDOMAIN response.

Anyone who configures the .name zone as *delegation-only*, or fails to exclude .name from their *root-delegation-only* configuration, is currently blocking email to any address of the type `firstname@lastname.name`. This includes ALL people who have registered their .name email-forwarding address.

To be clear, only users of the .name second level email forwarding service are affected by this issue. Domain name service for third level .name addresses is not affected.

Global Name Registry is disappointed to see .name customers being caught up in the crossfire between other parties on the Internet and what has perhaps been an emotional rollout of a technical countermeasure to the .com and .net zone change.

Even if this issue currently affects only a relatively small number of .name users, we take this loss of service for our users very seriously. Accordingly, the Global Name Registry respectfully asks the relevant parties for the following actions to be taken on this matter:

¹ <http://www.icann.org/tlds/agreements/name/registry-agmt-appc-1-8aug03.htm#d>

- a) Global Name registry would like to ask the Security and Stability Advisory Committee as a **matter of urgency** to issue an advisory warning about the destabilizing effect the current BIND patch has on the Internet. ISPs and other DNS server operators should be warned to remove all use of the *root-delegation-only* functionality of the current BIND patch, and use the *delegation-only* functionality on a per TLD basis only if it is strictly needed.
- b) Global Name Registry appreciates the value of the ISC in bringing to the Internet Community its BIND DNS server software. However, we respectfully ask the ISC to withdraw the *root-delegation-only* support in its current patch as this feature currently affects the stability of a number of TLDs, including .name.

If the *root-delegation-only* functionality is not removed from the BIND software, DNS operators will have to exclude from the configuration an unknown number of current and future TLDs that *may* return non-delegation resource records from their authoritative zones. We believe that placing such a requirement on DNS operators is an onerous burden that will not work in practice, and may lead to further instabilities of the Internet.

- c) Global Name Registry would like to ask all ISPs and other DNS server operators to discontinue the use of the *root-delegation-only* functionality. If a DNS server operator deems it strictly necessary to filter resource records from a TLDs authoritative DNS servers, then the *delegation-only* functionality should be used. For ISPs or other DNS server operators wanting to get more information on this issue as it specifically relates to .name, please contact The Global Name Registry on the email address delegation-only@gnr.com.

The Global Name Registry would like to thank all the relevant parties in advance for an expedient response to this stability threat to .name and other TLDs, and would urge the Internet community to take this experience into account if implementing similar changes to the Internet in the future.

Sincerely

Geir Rasmussen, CEO GNR Limited

CC: Tina Dam, Chief gTLD Registry Liaison, ICANN