InternetNZ responds to Telecom Op Sep plan

InternetNZ responded to Telecom's draft operational separation plan in late November, filing a detailed submission that exposes serious deficiencies in Telecom's proposed approach.

InternetNZ Executive Director Keith Davidson says Telecom's draft plan has the potential to severely compromise the intent and viability of a robust operational separation because it fails to live up to requirements prescribed in the Government's Operational Separation determination.

The determination calls for robust Chinese walls, transparency and behavioural changes regarding the operation of Telecom's network access, wholesale and retail divisions. Telecom's draft plan however dilutes a wide range of provisions designed to bring about the desired behavioural changes set out in the determination.

Davidson describes Telecom's draft undertakings as "death by a thousand cuts", saying they lack detail and subtly dilute specific requirements of the Government's determination in numerous ways.

"This is a matter of great concern to the industry. The combination of the multiple departures from the Minister's requirements have such a damaging effect that they make the operational separation quite weak. We call on the Government to review and seek major changes and additions to Telecom's plan," says Davidson.

Perhaps the biggest concern for InternetNZ is reserved for those sections of the plan that will govern the rollout of future NGN services, including fibre rollout.

Goodbye to Isabel

InternetNZ Office and Accounts Administrator Isabel Carberry leaves the organisation this month after three and half years' service.

She leaves to undertake a correspondence course in accounting and full-time work as an accounting technician at Finman Services on the Kapiti Coast.

Isabel has been an invaluable member of the InternetNZ team and we wish her all the best in her new role.

There have been two appointments in the past month. Sandra Glasgow has been appointed accounting technician and Laura Turnbull has been appointed receptionist.

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Member consultations

The 2008 Member Consultation event dates are set for the evenings of January 22 in Dunedin, January 29 in Auckland and January 30 in Wellington. Further details will be provided through the members list, including venues and times.

These events are the best opportunity for member input into InternetNZ's business. Attendance is most welcome and the relevant date should be marked in diaries now.

Members will be asked to consider the annual budget and business plan, and in preparation are invited to refer to the Society's strategic plan at: http://www.internetnz.net.nz/pubs/plans/2007/2007-07-27-strategicplan.

Key aspects of the consultation will be the finalising of the new structure of the society and providing members with their opportunity to shape the future of the Society.

The Domain Name Commission will be attending the event, presenting issues under current discussion on .nz policies.

IGF meets in Brazil

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) held its second meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in mid November.

Over 1000 participants, including InternetNZ Executive Director Keith Davidson, gathered for seven meeting sessions.

The session on Critical Internet Resources covered a wide range of topics related to the Internet's physical infrastructure, including a discussion on domain name and IP addressing.

The "Access" session, chaired by Brazil's Minister of Communications, focused on people's access to the Internet, particularly in the developing world. It was noted that, while there are around one billion Internet users worldwide, the focus should shift towards the next billion users.

The "Diversity" session resulted in a proposal to create a group to work on a Global Compact on Languages. The aim of the group would be to find a way to release copyright materials for localised language use, and in forms necessary to reach the disabled.

Additionally, there was some discussion of the urgency to provide for content in diverse languages and formats.

During the "Security" session it was recognised by many that Internet security is a critical issue that changes from country to country. Resilient and secure networks were mentioned as key elements in the security debate, as was the legal sphere.

The meeting also featured panel sessions on "Emerging Issues", "Openness", and a session titled "Taking Stock and the Way Forward". Full transcripts of all sessions are available on the IGF website at www.intgovforum.org

The IGF will hold its third meeting in December 2008 in New Delhi, India.

"The determination states that Telecom must include its detailed commercial policy and plans on access to Fibre-to-the-Premises yet Telecom's draft plan contains very little such information."

Other areas in which Telecom's plan falls short are those relating to governance and the ability of the proposed Independent Oversight Board to carry out its role effectively.

In another example, the determination forbids wholesale unit employees from having short term incentives for performance unrelated to wholesale; yet in Telecom's draft undertaking up to 80 percent of the wholesale manager's incentive can reflect the performance of Telecom as a Group.

InternetNZ urges the Government to consider the formation of an industry forum similar to NGN UK that provides a mechanism for industry to develop joint technical and commercial arrangements for NGN development; and provide an early warning system that would identify emerging NGN policy issues.

InternetNZ's submission, including a detailed Appendix, is available on the InternetNZ website: www.internetnz.net.nz/issues/submissions/2007

Cyberlaw fellow departs

InternetNZ's second Cyberlaw Fellow Philip Greene has returned to Washington. Greene held the position at Victoria University for the past year, producing two academic papers, teaching, and running a number of seminars including the recent Domain Name roundtable discussion.

Greene's first paper was "Legal Foundations of the Internet; Technical Management and Coordination, and the Standards and Protocol Setting Processes; Identity and Description of Key Entities in Internet Governance." This paper was presented to Members of Parliament at the Parliamentary Internet Caucus in November.

The Working Paper from the first Cyberlaw Fellow Judit Bayer "Liability of Internet Service Providers for Third Party Content" has now been published and will be distributed to members.

Aussie IPv6 Summit

InternetNZ staffer Richard Wood attended the IPv6 Summit in Canberra Australia from 19-21 November, along with Dave Baker from NZRS. The focus this year was on implementation of IPv6 and there were 20-odd presenters from around the world.

Presentations included country learnings from Japan and Korea, usage in Australia's Advanced Network AARNet, smart homes, and applicability to mesh and ad-hoc networks just to name a few, but perhaps the most interesting was the presentations and discussions around transition to IPv6 from IPv4.

APNIC's Geoff Huston provided perhaps the biggest challenge to the group, dramatically highlighting the lack of preparedness for exhaustion of IPv4 address pools and branding IPv6 as a business failure that will probably require regulation to resolve. He discussed further use of NATs and expanded on dual stack transition to IPv6, expounding the need to make IPv4 last longer.

Copyright second reading

The Copyright (New Technologies and Performers' Rights) Amendment Bill is part way through its second reading, and is somewhat down the Parliamentary Order Paper.

In the meantime a study commissioned by Industry Canada entitled "The Impact of Music Downloads and P2P File-Sharing on the Purchase of Music: A Study for Industry Canada" has found that those who download music using peer-to-peer technology actually buy more CDs, countering music industry claims that downloading is damaging CD sales.

Roundtable Discussion – Domain Name Disputes

Victoria University's School of Law recently hosted a seminar titled "Internet Domain Name Disputes: A Roundtable Discussion".

The 90-minute event, hosted by the DNC and InternetNZ, was chaired by Philip Greene, InternetNZ's Senior Research Fellow in Cyberlaw.

Greene was joined by Debbie Monahan, the .nz Domain Name Commissioner, and Sir Ian Barker, a world renowned domain name dispute expert, and a .nz and WIPO UDRP domain name arbitration panelist.

Monahan discussed the domain name dispute and mediation process, citing statistics on the success rate and case numbers since the .NZ Domain Name Dispute was implemented in June 2006.

Greene gave an overview of domain name litigation, from the "early days" (mid 1990s), through the original domain name dispute policy administered by Network Solutions, Inc., the advent of the WIPO UDRP, and the .au dispute policy, and then offered a comparison of those policies with .nz's.

Barker offered a compare/contrast discussion of the various policies, and notable aspects of those decisions on which he has served as an expert panelist. As an expert arbiter for several domain name policies (UDRP, .nz, Hong Kong, and Kuala Lumpur), he offered fascinating insights into these regimes.

Sir Ian Barker, Debbie Monahan and Philip Greene

Digital Future Summit

The Digital Future Summit took place in Auckland in late November, attracting over 500 delegates from across New Zealand's public service, business and community sectors.

The Summit provided the forum for a conversation about the current state of the digital world and the direction for New Zealand's digital future.

InternetNZ was well represented at the Summit, with Executive Director Keith Davidson, President Peter Macaulay, Public Policy Chair David Farrar and Treasurer Michael Wallmannsberger among those attending.

A swathe of high-profile ICT industry figures gave presentations, including Trade Me Founder Sam Morgan, newly-appointed Telecom CEO Paul Reynolds and TelstraClear CEO Allan Freeth.

A number of Cabinet Ministers also presented, including Minister for Communications David Cunliffe, Deputy Prime Minister Michael Cullen, and Minister for Broadcasting Trevor Mallard, who spoke on New Zealand's broadcasting strategy.

Internationalised Domain Names (IDN) in .nz - Consultation

Currently, domain names in the .nz space only allow the 26 basic English (Latin) alphabet characters a-z, digits and the "-" hyphen.

The Mâori alphabet has an additional five characters, the macronised vowels â, ç, î, ô, and ű, which are currently not allowed in .nz domain names.

Some countries are beginning to implement Internationalised Doman Names (IDNs). IDNs allow the use of virtually any internationally recognised characters. This enables the registration of domain names in languages that use non-English characters, such as Te Reo Mâori.

A working group (WG) has been established by the InternetNZ committee responsible for the .nz domain space, the .nz Oversight Committee, to consider the implementation of IDNs into the .nz domain name space.

The initial focus of the IDN implementation will be on the five macronised vowels required to correctly spell Mâori words in domain names. It does not affect web content, which may already use any script.

For more information on IDNs a list of resources can be viewed www.dnc.org.nz/idn-links

For this initial consultation the WG is seeking comments on the following:

1)   What issues do you think are associated with implementing IDNs? What is their impact, and how do you think they should be prioritised?

2)   What other matters do you think the WG should consider.

Submissions can be sent by email to policies@dnc.org.nz, by fax to (04) 495 2115, or by mail to P O Box 11881, Wellington.

As submissions are received they will be published at www.dnc.org.nz/idn-consult. Submissions should be received by Wednesday 19th December.

NZ inches up OECD broadband table

New Zealand has climbed one rung in the latest OECD broadband table, but the country is still playing catch-up with most of the rest of developed world.

The statistics for the half year to June 2007 show New Zealand now ranks 20th of 30 OECD countries, with 683,500 broadband subscribers (16.5 broadband subscribers per 100 people).

That figure is encouraging and a sign that New Zealand's broadband position is heading in the right direction relative to other OECD nations.

New Zealand has made some gains. We are the 9th fastest growing OECD country in terms of broadband penetration, with a net increase of 4.94 subscribers per 100 inhabitants.

However, New Zealand is still playing catch-up and must dramatically increase its broadband uptake to achieve the Government's Digital Strategy goal of being in the top half of the OECD by 2010.

Recent regulatory reforms have been positive and will play an important role in driving up penetration rates. However, moving up the OECD rankings will also require sustained investment in more sophisticated broadband technologies, including deployment of high speed fibre.

Fibre represents eight per cent of all broadband connections in the OECD. This is the race of the future yet New Zealand is yet to even get to the starting gate, while others are already a third of the way around the course.

KAREN experience for ITPs and wânanga

REANNZ is accelerating the reach of KAREN (Kiwi Advanced Research and Education Network) by offering free network membership to institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) and wânanga for the 2008 calendar year.

The KAREN Experience Programme will expose ITPs and wânanga to the benefits of the KAREN advanced network, allowing them to develop new approaches to teaching and learning through supporting access to online collaborative tools, rich media content and data repositories.

ITPs and wânanga can also take advantage of KAREN to streamline their IT operations through managed internet access, data storage, voice over IP, and access to shared services.

"This programme will allow the ITP and wânanga sectors to realise the important role KAREN has in helping them achieve their plans in a rapidly evolving tertiary education system," says Donald Clark, Chief Executive, REANNZ.

Office Closed for Christmas

The InternetNZ office will be closed from the close of business Friday 21 December, reopening Monday 7 January.

We'd like to thank everyone who has assisted us and the Society towards its goals during 2007 and wish you a relaxing holiday season.

We look forward to an exciting New Year across the full range of activities of the organisation. Anticipated areas of interest in the first quarter include Telecom operational separation, copyright, peering and Next Generation Networks.