

Registrars' Association
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Foundation for Internet Domain Registration in the Netherlands
F.a.o. Mr R Meijer
PO Box 5022
6802EA Arnhem

Our ref.: 20110729.01
Subject: July 2011 / Webreus

Gouda, 29 July 2011,

Dear Mr Meijer,

Last week, SIDN found itself confronted with a situation where one of its 25 biggest registrars (Webreus) was apparently in default of its obligations to its registrants. Our understanding is that the principal problem was Webreus's failure to inform and communicate with interested parties. This led to SIDN receiving numerous calls from registrants anxious to know how they could bring their domains back on line as quickly as possible. SIDN's MT responded by approaching the Registrars' Association for advice, while also issuing a public ultimatum to Webreus.

Because the RA's board is made up of people who are also Webreus's business competitors, it was not possible for the RA to quickly formulate an impartial formal response to SIDN's request for advice. Nevertheless, we are of the opinion that issuing an ultimatum, particularly a public ultimatum, was not an appropriate course of action.

While the ultimatum may have led to the resumption of communication between Webreus and SIDN, the RA believes that, in principle, SIDN's action constitutes direct public interference by a supplier in the business affairs of one of its clients (i.e. registrars). SIDN's intervention was quickly followed by public speculation regarding Webreus's financial circumstances. Even if Webreus's circumstances could potentially compromise its ability to provide contractual services, it is highly undesirable for an outside party to fuel public disquiet.

The RA proposes that discussions should take place in the near future between a small number of RA board members and relevant SIDN staff/MT members, with a view to agreeing general guidelines and procedures to be followed in the event of a registrar failing to fulfil its obligations towards its registrants. The RA does not wish to give advice regarding specific cases, but considers it generally inappropriate for SIDN to publicise any problems that a registrar may be having, if that registrar has not failed in its obligations to SIDN.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

Vince van Domburg
Secretary to the Registrars' Association

