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Retrieving information about Object Identifiers
using the WHOIS protocol
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Abstract

This document defines a method for retrieving information about Object Identifiers (OIDs) and their associated Registration Authorities (RAs) using the WHOIS protocol, in a way that is both human-readable and machine-readable.

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1 Introduction

An Object Identifier (OID) is an extensively used identification mechanism jointly developed by ITU-T and ISO/IEC for naming any type of object with a globally unambiguous name. OIDs provide a persistent identification of objects based on a hierarchical structure of Registration Authorities (RA), where each parent has an Object Identifier and allocates Object Identifiers to child nodes. More information about Object Identifiers can be found in Recommendation ITU-T X.660 (2011) | ISO/IEC 9834-1:2012 [X660].

There are a few methods of retrieving information about an OID, like:

(A) Searching through web repositories like <http://www.oid-info.com> or <http://www.alvestrand.no/objectid/>. This has the disadvantage that the information is usually not machine-readable without functionalities like an API.

(B) Retrieving information using the Object Identifier Resolution System (ORS) as defined in Recommendation ITU-T X.672 (2010) | ISO/IEC 29168-1:2011 [X672]. This has the disadvantage that Registration Authorities need to include specific DNS Resource Records to their domains, and additionally, all RAs of the superior OIDs must implement the ORS.

This document describes an additional method for retrieving information about OIDs, which is both human-readable and machine-readable.

Three of many possible use-case scenarios are:

(1) Many web-browsers and Operating Systems can handle ITU-T X.509 certificates [X509] and usually contain a viewer application that shows the contents of these certificates. Attributes which are unknown by the application are either only displayed by their OID, or hidden to avoid confusion to the user. With OID-WHOIS, the application could query the name of these unknown OIDs or even retrieve instructions on how the data described by this OID can be parsed and displayed.

(2) Applications that handle SNMP (Simple Network Management Protocol) [RFC1157] might need information about additional MIB files or their OIDs. OID-WHOIS could aid these applications in gathering the required information.

(3) In directory services like LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol) [RFC4511], applications could query the name of attributes that are described by an OID the application doesn't know.

1.1 Terminology

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [RFC 2119](#) [RFC2119].

In this document, "RA" is an abbreviation for "Registration Authority" and "OID" is an abbreviation for "Object Identifier".

2 Request

OID-WHOIS is based on the WHOIS protocol specified in [RFC 3912](#) [RFC3912].

During the request, the client sends a query beginning with "oid:", followed by an OID in dot-notation, as defined in [RFC 3061, section 2](#) [RFC3061], but with the following differences:

- (1) The OID MAY contain a leading dot.
- (2) To query the root of the OID tree, the OID MUST be either missing or consisting only of a single dot.

Examples of valid queries are:

```
oid:
oid:
oid:2.999
oid:.2.999
```

All OIDs MUST be interpreted as absolute OIDs. Relative OIDs (e.g. relative to the OID of the Registration Authority operating the WHOIS service) are not allowed.

The namespace identifier (i.e. "oid") MUST be written in lower-case.

Note: Existing WHOIS servers can add the functionalities described in this document in addition to their usual operation, i.e. they may accept queries beginning with "oid:" as well as other types of queries.

2.1 Authentication Tokens

Some organizations might not want to present their OID information (or part of it) to the public, e.g. for reasons like privacy or confidentiality. Therefore, at the end of the query, the client can append case-sensitive, non-empty alphanumeric authentication tokens to control the display of confidential information.

Each authentication token MUST be prepended by a dollar sign ("\$").

Examples of valid queries are:

```
oid:2.999$firstToken
oid:2.999$firstToken$secondToken
```

Please note that authentication tokens are only weak protection. For more information, see [section 8](#) "Security Considerations".

2.2 Request ABNF Notation

To define the query string, the following Augmented BNF definitions will be used. They are based on the ABNF styles of [RFC 5234](#) [[RFC5234](#)].

```
query           = namespace ":" optional-oid *( "$" authtoken )
namespace       = %x6F %x69 %x64 ; "oid"
optional-oid    = [ "." ] [ oid ]
oid             = unsigned-number *( "." unsigned-number )
authtoken       = 1*( char-or-digit )
digit           = %x30-39 ; 0-9
nonzero-digit   = %x31-39 ; 1-9
uppercase-char  = %x41-5A ; A-Z
lowercase-char  = %x61-7A ; a-z
char-or-digit   = uppercase-char / lowercase-char / digit
unsigned-number = "0" / nonzero-digit *( digit )
```

3 Response

3.1 Format and Encoding

- (1) The response MUST be UTF-8 encoded (as defined in [RFC 3629](#) [[RFC3629](#)]), without Byte-Order-Mark (BOM).
- (2) The response contains multiple lines with field names and values, which MUST be separated by a double colon (":"). Whitespace characters after the double colon are allowed.
- (3) If possible, each line SHOULD be limited to 80 characters, including the field name, double colon, value, and whitespaces.
- (4) Field names and values MUST be treated case-sensitive.
- (5) If a value needs to be split into multiple lines, e.g. if the line would exceed the length limit, the same field name including double colon MUST be repeated at the beginning of the next line.
- (6) If an attribute has multiple values (e.g. multiple Unicode labels, alternative email-addresses, etc.), each value MUST be written in a new line with the same field name.
- (7) Lines with the same field name SHALL be kept together.
- (8) Comment lines MUST start with a percent sign ("%") at the beginning of a line, without prepending whitespaces. They MUST NOT be evaluated by machines (except for signature validation, as mentioned in [section 3.3](#) "Digital Signature").

3.2 Structure

A response consists of sections, which SHOULD be separated by at least one empty line and/or comment line.

This document specifies the following sections (which SHALL stay in this order):

- (1) Query-Section which contains the request and the result. This section MUST start with the field "query".
- (2) Object-Section which contains information about the OID. This section MUST start with the field "object".
- (3) RA-Section which contains information about the current Registration Authority. This section MUST start with the field "ra".

(4) Optional RA-Sections containing information about RAs which were previously in charge of managing the OID.

The WHOIS service MAY define additional sections after any of these sections, but the Query-Section MUST be the first section in the response.

3.2.1 Query-Section (Information about Query and Result)

This section MUST always be present and MUST start with the field "query". It MUST be the first section in the response.

Possible fields are:

(1) "query" MUST be present and contain the request of the client (beginning with the namespace identifier and double colon, i.e. "oid:"). Canonization or sanitation (like removing a leading dot) SHOULD NOT be applied at this step. Authentication tokens SHOULD be omitted, though.

(2) "result" MUST be present and SHALL be one of the following values:

"Found" means that the WHOIS service can verify that the requested OID exists. The following sections will contain information about this OID.

"Not found; superior object found" means that the WHOIS service cannot verify that the requested OID exists, or it denies that the OID exists (e.g. because it is confidential). However, the WHOIS service knows a superior OID which does exist. The following sections will contain information about that superior OID instead.

"Not found" means that the WHOIS service cannot verify that the requested OID exists, or it denies that the OID exists (e.g. because it is confidential). Additionally, the WHOIS service does not have information about any superior OID, or their existence is also denied.

"Service error" means that an internal error occurred, or that the system is in maintenance mode. The client should try again later.

(3) "distance" SHOULD be present if it is applicable in the requested namespace (it is always applicable for OIDs) and if the result is "Not found; superior object found". A distance of 1 means that the direct parent was found. A distance of 2 means that the grand-parent

was found, etc.

(4) "message" SHOULD be present if the result is "Service error". It contains a message explaining why the service is not available (e.g. displaying an error message). It MUST NOT be present if the result has a different value.

The WHOIS service SHOULD NOT add additional fields to this section.

3.2.2 Object-Section (Information about the OID)

This section MUST be present if the result is "Found" or "Not found; superior object found". It MUST start with the field "object". It MUST NOT be present if the result is "Not found" or "Service error".

Possible fields are:

(1) "object" contains the OID in dot-notation, prepended by the namespace identifier and double colon ("oid:"). This field MUST be present.

(2) "status" MUST be present and SHALL be one of the following values:

"Information available" means that information about the OID is fully available.

"Information partially available" means that part of the information about the OID is not available. Possible reasons could be that part of the information is redacted due to confidentiality, or the WHOIS service does only know basic information, while the full information can be found somewhere else (e.g. at a referred WHOIS service). The field "attribute" MAY be used with the value "confidential".

"Information unavailable" means that the information about the OID is missing, redacted due to confidentiality, or otherwise unavailable. The field "attribute" MAY be used with the value "confidential".

(3) "name" (OPTIONAL) contains the name of the OID. It SHOULD be as short as possible.

(4) "description" (OPTIONAL) contains a short description of the OID. The description SHOULD only be a single sentence.

(5) "information" (OPTIONAL) contains additional information, e.g. Management Information Base (MIB) definitions.

(6) "url" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a URL (as defined in [RFC 3986](#) [[RFC3986](#)]) leading to more information about the OID.

(7) "asn1-notation" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains one or more possible notations in the ASN.1 syntax, as defined in Recommendation ITU-T X.680 (2015) | ISO/IEC 8824-1:2015, clause 32.3 [[X680](#)], e.g. {joint-iso-itu-t(2) example(999)}.

Note: A line-break, to break up lines which are too long, as defined in [section 3.1](#) ("Format and Encoding") SHOULD be used. This is no problem because multiple ASN.1 notations can be distinguished by their opening curly bracket and their closing curly bracket.

(8) "iri-notation" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains one or more possible notations in the OID-IRI syntax, as defined in Recommendation ITU-T X.680 (2015) | ISO/IEC 8824-1:2015, clause 34.3 [[X680](#)] (but without quotation marks), e.g. /Joint-ISO-ITU-T/Example.

Note: A line-break, to break up lines which are too long, as defined in [section 3.1](#) ("Format and Encoding") SHALL NOT be used, otherwise, it would be ambiguous if the line-break was used to shorten the line, or if the line-break indicates a new value in case multiple OID-IRI notations are supplied.

(9) "identifier" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains an alphanumeric identifier ("NameForm") as defined in Recommendation ITU-T X.680 (2015) | ISO/IEC 8824-1:2015, clause 12.3 [[X680](#)].

(10) "standardized-id" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains an alphanumeric identifier that has a standardized "NameForm", i.e. in ASN.1 notation, it can be written without its associated number. See more information in Recommendation ITU-T X.680 (2015) | ISO/IEC 8824-1:2015, clause 32.7 [[X680](#)].

(11) "unicode-label" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a Non-integer Unicode label, as defined in Recommendation ITU-T X.680 (2015) | ISO/IEC 8824-1:2015, clause 12.27 [[X680](#)].

(12) "long-arc" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a Non-integer Unicode label that can be used as the first identifier in an OID Internationalized Resource Identifier (OID-IRI), shortening it. More information can be found in Recommendation ITU-T X.660 (2011) | ISO/IEC 9834-1:2012, clause 3.5.8 [[X660](#)].

(13) "whois-service" (OPTIONAL) contains an IP-address or hostname of a system that offers a WHOIS service that can supply information

about the OID and/or its subordinate OIDs. If the result is "Found" (i.e. the OID is existing in the local database), then the information "whois-service" is only informational; its existence is most likely a hint that subordinate OIDs will be found at that WHOIS server. If the result is "Not found; superior object found", then the client SHOULD query the referred WHOIS server to receive more information about the OID. See more information in [section 4](#) "Referral".

(14) "attribute" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains attributes of the OID. An attribute MUST be one of the following values:

"confidential" means that information about the OID or part of it is confidential.

"draft" means that the allocation of the OID is not yet official and the information is subject to change without notice. This includes deletion and relocation.

"frozen" means that no more child OIDs can be created under this OID, e.g. because the RA has stopped operating, but the existing child OIDs stay valid.

"leaf" means that no child OIDs can be allocated under this OID. The field "subordinate" SHALL therefore not be present.

"no-identifiers" means that the RA is not allocating alphanumeric identifiers.

"no-unicode-labels" means that the RA is not allocating Non-integer Unicode labels.

"retired" means that the OID is withdrawn, revoked, retired, expired, etc. Please consult Recommendation ITU-T X.660 (2011) | ISO/IEC 9834-1:2012 [[X660](#)] for more information about such cases.

(15) "parent" (OPTIONAL) contains the OID of the nearest known parent OID, prepended by namespace identifier and double colon, i.e. "oid:". It MAY be followed by additional human-readable information, e.g. a description or a list of ASN.1 identifiers. There SHALL be at least 1 whitespace in between.

(16) "subordinate" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a list of subordinate OIDs, prepended by namespace identifier and double colon, i.e. "oid:". It MAY be followed by additional human-readable information, e.g. a description or a list of ASN.1 identifiers. There SHALL be at least 1 whitespace in between.

(17) "created" (OPTIONAL) contains the date and time (as specified in [section 3.4 "Date/Time Format"](#)) when the OID was first allocated by the RA of the superior OID.

(18) "updated" (OPTIONAL) contains the date and time (as specified in [section 3.4 "Date/Time Format"](#)) when the OID information was last updated.

Additional fields can be defined by the WHOIS service. The field names SHALL only consist of the lower-case letters "a..z", hyphens ("-") and numbers, and SHOULD be written in the English language. The field name MUST NOT begin or end with a hyphen and a hyphen MUST NOT be followed by another hyphen.

3.2.3 RA-Section (Information about the Current RA)

This section MUST NOT be present if the result is "Not found" or "Service error", otherwise it MAY be present. If it is present, it MUST start with the field "ra".

Possible fields are:

(1) "ra" contains a general name of the RA, like the name of a person, the name of a group, or the name of an organization. This field MUST be present.

(2) "ra-status" MUST be present and SHALL be one of the following values:

"Information available" means that information about this RA is fully available.

"Information partially available" means that part of the information is not available. A possible reason could be that part of the information is redacted due to confidentiality. The field "attribute" MAY be used with the value "confidential".

"Information unavailable" means that the data is missing (if the WHOIS service does only know the name of the RA and nothing else), redacted due to confidentiality or otherwise unavailable. The field "attribute" MAY be used with the value "confidential".

(3) "ra-contact-name" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains the name of a person responsible for the allocation of subordinate OIDs, in case "ra" is a group or organization.

(4) "ra-address" (OPTIONAL) contains the physical location of the RA. While a fully qualified postal address is recommended, the field can

also just contain a rough location like city and country name, state and country name, or just the country name, etc. The name of the country SHOULD always be present.

(5) "ra-phone" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a landline phone number of the Registration Authority. It SHOULD be written in the international number format specified in Recommendation ITU-T E.164 (2010) [E164], e.g. +1 206 555 0100.

(6) "ra-mobile" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a mobile phone number of the Registration Authority. It SHOULD be written in the international number format specified in Recommendation ITU-T E.164 (2010) [E164], e.g. +1 206 555 0100.

(7) "ra-fax" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a fax number of the Registration Authority. It SHOULD be written in the international number format specified in Recommendation ITU-T E.164 (2010) [E164], e.g. +1 206 555 0100.

(8) "ra-email" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains an email address of the Registration Authority.

(9) "ra-url" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains a URL (as defined in RFC 3986 [RFC3986]) leading to more information about the RA (usually the website of the RA).

(10) "ra-attribute" (OPTIONAL, multiple values allowed) contains attributes of the RA. An attribute MUST be one of the following values:

"confidential" means that the information about the RA or part of it is confidential.

"retired" means that the RA is defunct. If this attribute is set to the current RA, then the OID MUST have the attribute "frozen" (until the responsibility is transferred to a non-defunct RA, or until the current RA becomes active again).

(11) "ra-created" (OPTIONAL) contains the date and time (as specified in section 3.4 "Date/Time Format") when the RA was created/registered in the database.

(12) "ra-updated" (OPTIONAL) contains the date and time (as specified in section 3.4 "Date/Time Format") when the RA information was last modified.

Additional fields can be defined by the WHOIS service, but they MUST begin with "ra-". The field names SHALL only consist of the lower-case letters "a..z", hyphens ("-") and numbers, and SHOULD be written in the English language. The field name MUST NOT begin or end with a hyphen and a hyphen MUST NOT be followed by another hyphen.

3.2.4 Sections for Previous Registration Authorities

To optionally display information about RAs which were previously in charge of managing the OID, a new section per RA can be added with the following field name prefixes:

"ra-" is the prefix of the current Registration Authority.

"ra1-" is the prefix of the first RA. It is the very first person or company to whom the OID was allocated by the RA of the superior OID. "ra2-" is the prefix of the second RA, after the responsibility has been transferred. etc.

The definition of these sections is identical to the definition of the RA-Section (described in [section 3.2.3 "RA-Section"](#)), just with a different prefix.

The history does not need to be complete, e.g. it is no problem to only serve information about the first and the current RA, or only serve information about the current RA.

3.3 Digital Signature

If integrity/authenticity is required, the whole response can be signed, e.g. by using S/MIME, RSA, or PGP. This document does not describe a mechanism for detecting which signature method was used. The creation and verification of the signature are therefore implementation-specific and no interoperability regarding signature creation and validation is given at this time.

Depending on the signature method being used, various things need to be appended and/or prepended to the response. These additional lines MUST be prepended by a percent sign ("%") to avoid that an application confuses these additional lines (e.g. lines belonging to a PGP header, as defined in [RFC 4880 \[RFC4880\]](#)) with parts of the actual WHOIS response.

3.4 Date/Time Format

Date/Time references SHALL be formatted as described in [section 3.4.1](#).

If parts of the date/time reference are uncertain, then they SHOULD be omitted until the date/time reference has the highest correctness.

Examples of valid date/time references can be found in [section 3.4.2](#).

3.4.1 Date/Time Format ABNF Notation

To define the format of a Date/Time reference, the following Augmented BNF definitions will be used. They are based on the ABNF styles of [RFC 5234](#) [RFC5234].

```
date-time = year [ "-" month [ "-" day [ " " time ] ] ]
year      = 4*4DIGIT
month     = ( "0" %x31-39 ) /
           ( "1" %x30-32 )      ; 01-12
day       = ( "0" %x31-39 ) /
           ( "1" %x30-39 ) /
           ( "2" %x30-39 ) /
           ( "3" %x30-31 ) /    ; 01-31
time      = hour ":" minute [ ":" second ] [ " " timezone ]
hour      = ( "0" %x30-39 ) /
           ( "1" %x30-39 ) /
           ( "2" %x30-33 )      ; 00-23
minute    = %x30-35 DIGIT      ; 00-59
second    = %x30-35 DIGIT      ; 00-59
timezone  = ( "+" / "-" ) hour minute
```

3.4.2 Date/Time Format Examples

Examples of valid date/time references are:

```
2020-06-29 18:32:00 +0200
2020-06-29 18:32:00
2020-06-29 18:32 +0200
2020-06-29 18:32
2020-06-29
2020-06
2020
```

4 Referral

By using the field "whois-service", the WHOIS service can instruct the client to query another WHOIS service that might have more information about the requested OID.

If Registration Authorities maintain up-to-date WHOIS service references of their OID delegations, it is possible to automatically retrieve information about any OID.

Example: OID 2.999 is owned by Registration Authority "A", operating a WHOIS service at "a.example.com".

Registration Authority "A" allocated OID 2.999.1000 to Registration Authority "B" who is operating a WHOIS service at "b.example.com".

The client asks a.example.com for information about OID 2.999.1000.1 and should receive the following reply:

```
query:          oid:2.999.1000.1
result:         Not found; superior object found
distance:       1

object:         oid:2.999.1000
status:         Information available
name:           Company "B"
whois-service: b.example.com

ra:             "B"
ra-status:      Information unavailable
```

The client is now aware that "a.example.com" only knows OID 2.999.1000, and that there is a reference to another WHOIS service located at "b.example.com". So, the client should then accordingly query "b.example.com", asking for information about OID 2.999.1000.1:

```
query:          oid:2.999.1000.1
result:         Found

object:         oid:2.999.1000.1
status:         Information available
name:           Example OID 1

ra:             "B"
ra-status:      Information unavailable
```

5 Full Example

5.1 Request

```
oid:2.999
```

5.2 Response

```

query:          oid:2.999
result:         Found

object:         oid:2.999
status:         Information available
name:           Example
description:    This OID can be used by anyone, for the purposes of
description:    documenting examples of Object Identifiers.
asn1-notation:  {joint-iso-itu-t(2) example(999)}
iri-notation:   /Example
identifier:     example
unicode-label:  Beispiel
unicode-label:  Ejemplo
unicode-label:  Example
unicode-label:  Exemple
unicode-label:  (Korean characters are omitted in this example)
unicode-label:  (Arabic characters are omitted in this example)
unicode-label:  (Japanese characters are omitted in this example)
unicode-label:  (Chinese characters are omitted in this example)
unicode-label:  (Russian characters are omitted in this example)
long-arc:       Beispiel
long-arc:       Ejemplo
long-arc:       Example
long-arc:       Exemple
long-arc:       (Korean characters are omitted in this example)
long-arc:       (Arabic characters are omitted in this example)
long-arc:       (Japanese characters are omitted in this example)
long-arc:       (Chinese characters are omitted in this example)
long-arc:       (Russian characters are omitted in this example)
parent:         oid:2 (joint-iso-itu-t)
created:        2011-06
updated:        2011-09

ra:             ITU-T SG 17 & ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 6
ra-status:      Information unavailable
% -----BEGIN RSA SIGNATURE-----
% DwnqRtx/ONtPh4onXnrZPl9jF+G50RMLZkSwuClaoH2t/yK8CnYJrmzkzA5+gkfWkoQ
% cq+J8J9cwnwXvBfpVHh+7lyNOVW1N016TYFcBt8MVxb6K2KhkKclqeA6wz0kSUuE4qR
% ZohzrZBcCP7aLIpcaoVi6QACAt6J0vOvYBaf0=
% -----END RSA SIGNATURE-----

```


6 Alternative Namespaces

This document describes the retrieval of information about OIDs using the WHOIS protocol. In addition to the OID namespace, the methods described in this document can also be applied to other namespaces like "uuid", "isbn", "gtin" etc.

Following things need to be considered if alternative namespaces are implemented:

- (1) The request MUST be UTF-8 encoded (as defined in [RFC 3629](#) [[RFC3629](#)]), without Byte-Order-Mark (BOM).
- (2) The namespace SHALL be a namespace identifier (NID) as defined in [RFC 8141](#) [[RFC8141](#)].
- (3) The namespace identifier SHALL be written in lower-case (this is already defined in [section 2](#) "Request").
- (4) If available, a formal URN namespace identifier (as defined in [RFC 8141, section 5.1](#) [[RFC8141](#)]) SHOULD be used, e.g. "uuid" should be used instead of "guid".
- (5) If things like "Owner", "Creator", "Manager", "Administrator", etc., are relevant to the identifiers in the namespace, then the RA-section as described in [section 3.2.3](#) SHALL be used, even though the word "Registration Authority" might not be appropriate in the terminology of the namespace.
- (6) The namespace specific identifier MUST NOT contain dollar signs ("\$"), because [section 2.1](#) "Authentication Tokens" defines them as a separator for authentication tokens.
- (7) The namespace specific identifier MUST be treated case-sensitive if the namespace distinguishes between lower-case and upper-case.
- (8) Fields which can only be used in the OID namespace (e.g. "unicode-label") MUST NOT be used for other namespaces.

6.1 Example: UUID Namespace

The following example shows the retrieval of information about Universally Unique Identifiers (e.g. UUIDs used by the Microsoft Common Object Model, also known as GUIDs). The UUID namespace has no hierarchical structure, which means that the WHOIS service can only respond with the result "Found", "Not found" or "Service error" and the fields "parent" and "subordinate" cannot be used.

Request:

```
uuid:b4bfcc3a-db2c-424c-b029-7fe99a87c641
```

Response:

```
query:          uuid:b4bfcc3a-db2c-424c-b029-7fe99a87c641
result:         Found

object:         uuid:b4bfcc3a-db2c-424c-b029-7fe99a87c641
status:         Information available
name:           Desktop
information:    GUID can be used in file dialogs as "Custom Place".

ra:             Microsoft Corp.
ra-status:      Information unavailable
```

More information about UUIDs can be found in Recommendation ITU-T X.667 (2012) | ISO/IEC 9834-8:2014 [X667].

More information about the Microsoft Common Object Model (COM) can be found at Microsoft Docs <<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/win32/com/component-object-model--com--portal>>.

7 Internationalization Considerations

The original WHOIS protocol as defined in RFC 3912 [RFC3912] does not define any character set and there is no mechanism for indicating which character set is in use.

To enhance interoperability, this document specifies that the request and response MUST be UTF-8 encoded (as defined in RFC 3629 [RFC3629]), without Byte-Order-Mark (BOM).

The WHOIS service can define additional field names, but they SHOULD be written in the English language so that there is consistency with the field names defined in this document.

8 Security Considerations

(1) The knowledge of existence or information about some OIDs could be considered confidential. In this case, the WHOIS service can either deny the existence of the requested OID (by setting the result to "Not found") or redact information in the Object-Section, as defined in [section 3.2.2](#) "Object-Section".

(2) Registration Authorities might demand that their data is kept confidential, or at least be partially redacted to increase privacy or as measurement against spam. In this case, the WHOIS service can redact information in the RA-Section, as defined in [section 3.2.3](#) "RA-Section".

(3) The WHOIS service can decide if confidential material is omitted or shown, based on authentication mechanisms like white-listing client IP addresses or by using authentication tokens supplied by the client, as defined in [section 2.1](#) "Authentication Tokens".

(4) The usage of authentication tokens is not recommended if the traffic between client and server is transmitted through an untrusted network, because the WHOIS protocol is not encrypted.

(5) Authentication tokens must have a sufficient length and complexity to avoid successful brute force attacks, or the WHOIS service must limit the number of requests per time.

(6) The WHOIS protocol itself has no mechanism for verifying the integrity of data received. Due to this fact, the information should not be trusted if it is transmitted through an untrusted network. If integrity/authenticity is required, the WHOIS response can be signed, as described in [section 3.3](#) "Digital Signature". However, this document does not describe a mechanism for detecting which signature method was used. Therefore, no interoperability of signature creation/validation is given at this time.

9 IANA Considerations

(1) IANA is operating a WHOIS service at whois.iana.org. This WHOIS service could be extended by allowing requests starting with "oid:", to serve information about OIDs owned or delegated by IANA, for example, it could output information about Private Enterprise Numbers (PEN) located at OID 1.3.6.1.4.1.

(2) Owners of Private Enterprise Numbers could store the addresses of their WHOIS servers in the IANA PEN database so that these addresses can be included in the WHOIS output of IANA. This would enable the referral functionality described in [section 4](#) "Referral".

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