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Key Turning Point in Asia Pacific IPv4 Exhaustion

IPv4 "Final Stage" Begins Today

Brisbane, Australia – ***6:00 (UTC+10) Friday, 15 April 2011***

APNIC activates Final /8 Policy

Today the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) reached the last block of Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) addresses in its available pool, activating a major change in regional delegation policy.

This event is a key turning point in IPv4 exhaustion for the Asia Pacific, as the remaining IPv4 space will be 'rationed' to network operators to be used as essential connectivity with next-generation IPv6 addresses. All new and existing APNIC Members who meet the current allocation criteria will be entitled to a maximum delegation of a /22 (1,024 addresses) of IPv4 space.

APNIC Director General Paul Wilson explained the Asia Pacific region is the first to reach the point of being unable to meet IPv4 demand. This is due to the unprecedented fixed and mobile network growth the region is experiencing.

"Considering the ongoing demand for IP addresses, this date effectively represents IPv4 exhaustion for many of the current operators in the Asia Pacific region," Mr Wilson said. "From this day onwards, IPv6 is mandatory for building new Internet networks and services."

APNIC's IPv4 Exhaustion Plan

With no way to accurately predict IPv4 demand and the exhaustion date, APNIC instead published daily updates on the status of the IPv4 pool to keep the community fully informed. The implementation of a three-phase management plan would also guarantee absolute fairness in the final stages of IPv4 exhaustion.

For more information about IPv4 Exhaustion in the Asia Pacific, refer to http://www.apnic.net/IPv4-exhaustion

Phase One led up to the exhaustion of the IANA global IPv4 pool, which occurred on 4 February 2011. During that time, no changes in allocation policy or procedure were made and allocations were processed as usual, according to demonstrated need.

While Phase Two did not introduce any new policies, APNIC Member Services amended their evaluation and allocation procedures to ensure all requests were dealt with in strict order of receipt and to ensure fair processing.

Phase Three: Final /8 Policy Enacted in the Asia Pacific

Phase Three involves a policy change that restricts the amount of IPv4 address space available to each applicant. Agreed on by the Asia Pacific Internet community,

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the Final /8 Policy conserves the remaining IPv4 address blocks to support the region's transition to IPv6. Without that block of IPv4 space, new network operators would find it difficult, or impossible, to connect to the Internet, even with large IPv6 address allocations available from APNIC.

Mr Wilson said the intention is to provide both new and existing Members with a single allocation from the Final /8. As the APNIC region is home to many developing economies, this policy will conserve adequate space for new entrants to the regional and global market.

"Economic activity in the Asia Pacific continues to gain momentum. The high rate of new entrants to the Internet industry is still increasing, and under this policy these newcomers will always have access to enough IPv4 address space to begin operations in today's market," Mr Wilson said.

A second benefit of the Final /8 Policy is that it provides additional IPv4 address space to facilitate the transition to IPv6. Networks will need to support both IPv6 and IPv4 for many years to ensure their customers do not experience service disruptions.

APNIC's Role in Regional IPv4 Exhaustion

During the past few years leading up to this point, APNIC has been actively involved in the promotion of regional IPv6 deployment, supported by extensive Liaison and Training programs.

APNIC Director General Paul Wilson said IPv6 deployment requires involvement from the broader stakeholder community, including government, commercial, and civil society representatives across the region.

"It's important for every stakeholder group to be involved in regional IPv6 deployment, because there are many different aspects to the project," Mr Wilson said.

In recent years, APNIC has developed a comprehensive program to support IPv6 activities throughout the region, including capacity building, infrastructure support, and especially, spreading awareness.

APNIC Senior IPv6 Program Specialist Miwa Fujii has attended several regional forums to speak to non-technical stakeholders about IPv6 deployment, including the past three APEC TEL meetings.

"We have been very successful working with high-level ministerial representatives in these forums, and they recognize the necessity of IPv6 deployment as a requisite to other regional goals, such as universal broadband access. We see the evidence of this in the fact that a majority of governments in the Asia Pacific region have IPv6 initiatives supporting their local technical communities," Ms Fujii said.

For more information about APNIC's IPv6 program, refer to http://www.apnic.net/IPv6

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IPv6 Deployment the only Solution to IPv4 Exhaustion

The limited number of addresses each operator is now able to access under the APNIC Final /8 Policy will not be sufficient to maintain the current regional development rates with IPv4 alone.

“The Asia Pacific region must quickly become the leader in IPv6 deployment so that it can maintain strong Internet growth rates in large maturing economies such as India and China. Smaller economies, such as some Pacific Island nations, are already showing high rates of IPv6 delegations.”

“We are well on the way to being the first ‘IPv6-enabled region’, but we have to keep the momentum strong. ISPs in the Asia Pacific must begin transition plans if they have not already done so,” Mr Wilson said.

“IPv4 exhaustion has been identified as a key turning point for a long time, and it should come as no surprise. Any organization that wishes to remain viable must push forward with their IPv6 deployment.”

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Notes to Editors

Interview Opportunities

The following APNIC spokespeople are available for interview.
Paul Wilson, Director General
(http://www.apnic.net/events/apnic-speakers/paul-wilson)
Miwa Fujii, Senior IPv6 Specialist
(http://www.apnic.net/events/apnic-speakers/miwa-fujii)
Geoff Huston, Chief Scientist of APNIC
(http://www.apnic.net/events/apnic-speakers/geoff-huston)

Press Resources

Several press resources are available at www.apnic.net/press including, background documents, past releases, and statistics on IP address usage in individual economies.

APNIC can also refer you to local organizations and contacts in your economy that can also give additional local commentary.

For more information on APNIC:
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Biographies and high res photos are available on request.