3rd May 2021

Following reports received by ICTA whereby those using the website www.whatismyip.com where redirected to a Netsweeper server located in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Netsweeper wishes to bring the following clarifications :

1) Netsweeper was commissioned by ICTA Mauritius in November 2020 (through an open tender process in early 2020) to provide a Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) filtering solution to replace a pre-existing system that had been in place since 2012 and was end-of-life. This system is designed to filter _only CSA traffic_ based on internationally recognized lists provided and managed by IWF (Internet Watch Foundation). Neither ICTA or Netsweeper has any form of control or visibility of these lists.

2) The solution that was proposed and deployed is a network-based filter that specifically filters traffic to / from IP addresses known to host CSA material. This enables the Netsweeper solution to block attempted access to CSA material, therefore contributing to the fight against this serious crime.

3) It is important to note that because CSA material can be hosted at IP addresses that host other non-CSA content, it is therefore possible that traffic to a non-CSA website may, on rare occasions, travel through the Netsweeper platform. If or when this occurs (albeit highly unlikely), it can cause an end user's IP address to incorrectly appear to be from an unexpected location. In this specific instance, it was The Netherlands where Netsweeper's CSA filtering servers used by Mauritius are located. For this non-CSA content, no blocking occurs whatsoever.

4) With specific reference to the recent issue with www.whatismyip.com, this domain happened to share the same IP address as another site that had been recently published on the IWF list (which is managed independently of Netsweeper and ICTA). Because these two domains shared the same IP address, traffic to www.whatismyip.com was directed through the Netsweeper CSA filtering solution, although none of this traffic was blocked.

5) The IWF list was updated with the new entry at 9:10 EST on 3rd May 2021 and was automatically pushed out to all technology vendors (including Netsweeper) and their customers using this list shortly thereafter. Once the incident was reported to Netsweeper, we immediately created a RAS exception rule (for the CSA filtering system in Mauritius only) for the site in question that is hosted on the same server as www.whatismyip.com which resolved the issue within a few hours after the incident was first reported.

We trust that the above response will adequately address the concerns raised by Mauritian citizens in this regard. Should there be any further matters that require additional clarification, kindly contact ICTA and we will respond accordingly where necessary.

Sincerely,

Netsweeper Management