

2025 .au Licensing Rules Review – Issues Discovery Paper

Introduction

In 2025, auDA will commence a review of the [.au Domain Administration Rules: Licensing \(.au Licensing Rules\)](#), led by an independent Policy Advisory Panel.

The .au Licensing Rules set out auDA's rules and conditions for registering, holding, renewing and transferring .au domain name licences. Regularly reviewing the .au Licensing Rules through multi-stakeholder processes is critical to ensure the rules remain effective, relevant and fair.

This Issues Discovery Paper sets out an initial consultation by auDA to seek input from members of the public on issues they believe should be included in a review of the .au Licensing Rules (the review).

The .au Licensing Rules review will also include a review of the .au Domain Administration Rules: .au Direct Priority Implementation (.au Direct Rules). The .au Direct Rules deal with contested .au direct domain names.

Feedback received from the public in response to the Issues Discovery Paper will help us ensure that the **Terms of Reference** for the **Policy Advisory Panel** encompass the key areas for potential improvement of the .au Licensing Rules.

About auDA

.au Domain Administration (auDA) is an Australian not-for-profit community-based organisation endorsed by the Australian Government to manage the .au domain for the benefit of all Australians. Our Terms of Endorsement from the Australian Government set out auDA's Core Functions and the Core Principles.

Our first Core Function is to ensure the stable, secure and reliable operation of the .au domain as part of Australia's suite of critical infrastructure.

Our second Core Function is to administer a licensing regime for .au domain names based in multi-stakeholder processes that are transparent, responsive, accountable, accessible and efficient. auDA does this by developing policies for the .au domain with a multi stakeholder approach to provide the greatest benefit for the Australian community.

The Core Principles include the requirement for auDA to support trust and confidence in .au, and to maintain policies that improve the utility of the .au for all Australians and

promote competition, fair trading and consumer protection to facilitate equitable access to the market.

Why are we reviewing the .au Licensing Rules?

The current version of the .au Licensing Rules commenced on 12 April 2021. They were developed following an extensive multi-stakeholder decision making process by an independent Policy Advisory Panel.

auDA has made some minor legal, technical and administrative amendments to the .au Licensing Rules since they commenced. auDA sought feedback via public consultation to each change. The 2025 review will be the first major review of the .au Licensing Rules since they commenced in 2021.

auDA is committed to reviewing its policies and rules periodically to ensure that they remain relevant and effective over time.

The review process

1. Following the Issues Discovery process, the Terms of Reference for the Policy Advisory Panel will be developed.
2. auDA will appoint the Chair of the Policy Advisory Panel who will provide guidance to auDA on the appointment of members to the Policy Advisory Panel.
3. A discussion paper will be developed to set out the issues in the .au Licensing Rules that have been identified for review.
4. The Policy Advisory Panel will undertake extensive multi stakeholder consultation.
5. The Policy Advisory Panel will draft a report to the auDA Board setting out its recommendations for amendments to the .au Licensing Rules.
6. Stakeholders are given an opportunity to review the draft report before it is provided to the auDA Board.
7. The auDA Board will review the recommendations and direct auDA to make the relevant amendments to the .au Licensing Rules.

It is envisaged that the review will take place over the course of 2025, with any amendments to the .au Licensing Rules being published in early 2026.

Providing your feedback

auDA is seeking feedback from the public on issues they believe should be considered in the review of the .au Licensing Rules.

To provide your feedback on the .au Licensing Rules, please email us at policy@auda.org.au by 5pm on 13 March 2025.

In your feedback please:

- Explain the issues you are raising
- Explain any proposed change or changes that you believe would address this issue
- If possible, tell us which section or sections of the .au Licensing Rules are related to this issue

Feedback received in response to the Issues Discovery process will be reviewed and will inform the development of the Terms of Reference for the Policy Advisory Panel. We will also have reference to issues that we have identified from complaints and enquiries we have received, feedback from stakeholders, submissions to previous reviews and data and information we have collected.

Insights from the Issues Discovery consultation will be made available to the Policy Advisory Panel for their consideration during the review process.