

Consultation on auDA's purpose

Submission type	Email submission
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From	Bryan Chetcuti
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on auDA's proposed revised purpose statement.

I am making this submission in a personal capacity. I work across public-interest digital systems, digital trust, and governance, with a particular focus on how trust-relevant signals manifest in the .au namespace.

The proposed purpose statement is more accessible and more memorable than the current wording. In that respect, it is a positive step. However, I do not think it clearly or simply articulates what auDA actually does.

The strength of the current purpose statement is that it makes auDA's role concrete. It points to the secure and reliable operation of .au and the internet's naming system, and to auDA's role in championing an open, free, secure and interoperable internet for the benefit of all Australians. The proposed statement is easier to read, but becomes so broad that it risks obscuring auDA's distinctive function.

In particular, the proposed wording underplays three important aspects of auDA's role:

- **Stewardship of .au and the naming system**
auDA is not a general internet advocacy body. Its public role is grounded in stewardship, coordination and governance of .au and related naming system responsibilities. That stewardship function should remain visible in the purpose statement.
- **Trust as an operational outcome**
Trust and confidence are important ends, but they do not arise in isolation. They are produced through reliable infrastructure, sound governance, accountable policy, and the integrity of the namespace. A purpose statement should retain some connection between those outcomes and the functions and systems that create them.



- Public-benefit clarity

The phrase “for the benefit of all Australians” in the current wording is longer, but it expresses an important public-interest mandate. The revised statement would be stronger if it preserved that civic orientation more explicitly.

For those reasons, I would answer the consultation questions as follows:

- Does the revised purpose statement use accessible and memorable language?
Yes. It is simpler and more memorable than the current wording.

- Does it clearly and simply articulate what auDA does, for whom and to what end?

Only partly. It identifies Australians as the beneficiary and points to trust and confidence as the intended outcomes, but it does not clearly explain what auDA does. In particular, it omits stewardship of .au and the naming system.

- Is it a clear improvement on the previous purpose statement?

Not in full. It is an improvement in readability, but a reduction in specificity. On balance, I do not think it is yet a clear improvement.

My recommendation would be to retain the intent to simplify, but revise the wording again so that auDA’s stewardship role and public-interest mandate remain visible.

For example, a stronger formulation might be:

“Safeguarding .au so Australians can engage online with trust and confidence.”

Thank you for considering this submission.

Regards

Bryan