

Date: Thursday, 5 February 2026 12:13:52 PM

Dear AuDA Panel,

I have been very critical of AuDA and its two-faced approach to enforcement of rules for .com.au and .net.au for many years. The behaviour of the industry still continues to be very two-faced. For as long as I can remember, AuDA talks a big game regarding security, privacy and trust in the .AU domain space, but actions show this is nothing more than bluster.

Requiring an ABN for .net.au domains is not only outdated thinking, but the irony of refusing to renew domains that no longer have an active ABN - only to allow companies like drop.com.au to Hoover up any expired domain - and ignoring any/all of the rules to do so is peak AuDA behaviour. That rules are cast aside for the direct financial contributors to AuDA, and allowing them to continue to operate their shady practices to squat as many domains as possible is against the entire ethos that AuDA claims to uphold.

If there was any integrity left within AuDA, domain drop companies would be banned from operating in the .au domain space, and robust protections against this behaviour should be enforced - not just claimed to exist. I was recently involved with sorting out an issue with a .org.au domain that was suspended over the Christmas break period because apparently, the AuDA rules said the group was no longer eligible for the domain. This is for an organisation that has existed for longer than AuDA. The ABN requirement for more rules does nothing but enforce that more government paperwork, tax office time, accounting time is wasted applying for an ABN - with no intention to be used - other than to meet AuDA's arbitrary rules.

If no other statement holds true to AuDA, it surely must acknowledge that causing citizens to lodge more government paperwork and tax documentation purely to satisfy AuDA, that these rules are not fit for purpose. Anybody claiming that it is in the best interest of the individual are delusional.

There is no concept within AuDA of grandfathering in long-held domains - and as such, domains that have been in constant use for 25+ years still have to prove their worth on every renewal. How this can be considered in the best interests of the AU domain space is anyone's guess.

There are constant reminders in how AuDA operates and creates policy that doesn't seem to align with the ethos that led to the creation of AuDA. When .org.au domains were handled by a single group at a major Australian university, things were fairer and made more sense than the arbitrary rules enforced today and haphazardly touted as being enhancements in security and trust.

When AuDA acts like it claims it should under its own policies, refocusses on being helpful to Australians, and cleans up commercial level domain squatters from the industry, then it will have started to fulfil its initial goals from its foundation.

Sadly, we are a long way from that - but I would welcome any movements that bring it closer to being relevant in the modern world.

I am more than happy to revert with further information / input on any of the topics above if requested.

--

Steven Haigh

netwiz@crc.id.au

[https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcrc.id.au%2F&data=05%7C02%7Crulesreview25%40auda.org.au%7C02c1112c7d114e0a7ab408de6453a00f%7C81810bc45d6845f6ba4e3d6c9fb37e43%7C0%7C0%7C639058508320516270%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoitWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=n0Y9ANxJuyI8jDm8JcRjiXsluSnEjevU4B6ZcxailFM%3D&reserved=)

[url=https%3A%2F%2Fcrc.id.au%2F&data=05%7C02%7Crulesreview25%40auda.org.au%7C02c1112c7d114e0a7ab408de6453a00f%7C81810bc45d6845f6ba4e3d6c9fb37e43%7C0%7C0%7C639058508320516270%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoitWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=n0Y9ANxJuyI8jDm8JcRjiXsluSnEjevU4B6ZcxailFM%3D&reserved=](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcrc.id.au%2F&data=05%7C02%7Crulesreview25%40auda.org.au%7C02c1112c7d114e0a7ab408de6453a00f%7C81810bc45d6845f6ba4e3d6c9fb37e43%7C0%7C0%7C639058508320516270%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoitWFPbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=n0Y9ANxJuyI8jDm8JcRjiXsluSnEjevU4B6ZcxailFM%3D&reserved=)