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# New2LDsAP Meeting - 23 March 2010

Present: Jo Lim, Andrew Lonsdale, Kim Lowton, Graham McDonald, George Pongas, Holly Raiche, Derek Whitehead

Teleconference: David Cake (from 5.15pm), Sally Foreman, Kim Heitman (from 5.15pm), Tristan Kathage (observer), Peter Nettlefold (observer)

#### Actions:

- DW and JL to redraft discussion paper as agreed, and circulate to Panel for approval on the mail list.
- JL to email conf.au proposals to the mail list.
- JL to finalise notification and distribution mechanisms for public consultation.

#### Discussion:

##### 1. Review of draft Discussion Paper

The Panel considered the draft Discussion Paper and agreed the following general amendments:

- clarify the purpose and aims of the paper upfront
- clarify and expand the issues for comment (in the red text boxes)
- restate the 4 new 2LD selection criteria as per the Call for Proposals
- include the Panel's preliminary evaluation of new 2LD proposals against the selection criteria.

A number of specific amendments to the text were also agreed, to be included in the next draft of the Paper. [Back to top](#)

[blog.au](#)

Preliminary evaluation against the selection criteria:

1. "The 2LD should serve the needs of users, or a community of users, that are not well served by the existing

2LDs.” The Panel’s view that the needs of bloggers are already accommodated because there is no restriction of people setting up blogs within any of the existing 2LDs.

2. “There must be clear support for the 2LD, in particular among the users it is intended to serve, and in general terms from the wider community.” The Panel noted that the proposal does not include any evidence of user support, and the proponent declined the Panel’s invitation to provide further information to address this criterion.

3. “The 2LD should contribute to the broad utility of the Australian DNS and be generally relevant to users.” Given the lack of evidence of user support (see 2 above), the Panel does not have sufficient information to judge the proposal against this criterion at this time. It was noted that the creation of a blog.au 2LD would not of itself improve the ability of users to blog in a technical sense, although it may enhance the ability of users to brand their blog.

4. “The 2LD must be consistent with the existing .au 2LD hierarchy and otherwise compliant with auDA policies.” The Panel noted that the name “blog” is format specific, which is at odds with the more generic names of the existing 2LDs. The proposed policy rules would require auDA to enforce a specific type of web content, which is also in contrast to the policy rules for existing commercial 2LDs.

event.au

Preliminary evaluation against the selection criteria:

1. “The 2LD should serve the needs of users, or a community of users, that are not well served by the existing 2LDs.” The Panel’s view is that the needs of users are already accommodated because people are able to register domain names for events within com.au/net.au and asn.au/org.au.

2. “There must be clear support for the 2LD, in particular among the users it is intended to serve, and in general terms from the wider community.” The Panel noted that the proposal does not include any evidence of user support, and the proponent did not respond to the Panel’s invitation to provide further information to address this criterion.

3. “The 2LD should contribute to the broad utility of the Australian DNS and be generally relevant to users.” Given the lack of evidence of user support (see 2 above), the Panel does not have sufficient information to judge the proposal against this criterion at this time.

4. “The 2LD must be consistent with the existing .au 2LD hierarchy and otherwise compliant with auDA policies.” The Panel agreed that the proposal meets this criterion; the name “event” is generic, and the proposed policy rules would be consistent with policy rules for existing commercial 2LDs.

conf.au

The Panel agreed that the real issue to be considered with respect to conf.au, is whether or not there is a need for an events-related 2LD.

If there is to be an events-related 2LD, then the Panel agreed that it should be called “event” rather than “conf”. If a case cannot be made out for the creation of event.au, then it follows logically that there is also no case for the reactivation of conf.au.

Either way, the Panel’s view is that conf.au should be closed down.

info.au

The Panel noted input on the mail list from Kim Lowton and Andrew Lonsdale regarding the possible uses and expected outcomes if info.au was to be reactivated. There was general discussion about the utility of info.au, including what the name “info” might mean to users, and the difficulty in gauging public demand or support.

The Panel confirmed its earlier view that the auDA staff proposals to reactivate info.au (for “major information resources” or as a premium commercial space) are not desirable.

Some Panel members felt that the AusRegistry proposal does highlight a perceived gap in the market. The proposal focuses on individuals or informal groups who are not eligible to register domain names in the other 2LDs, however it was felt that this could be expanded to include people who are eligible but who do not want the “commercial” or “non-profit” association implied by com.au/net.au or asn.au/org.au domain names. On the other hand, concerns were expressed about info.au being used as an “open slather” domain space, thus undermining the integrity of the .au policy framework.

The Panel agreed to seek public comments on the AusRegistry proposal.

## 2. Public consultation mechanisms

The Panel identified a number of notification and distribution mechanisms for the Discussion Paper:

- auDA mailing lists (members, industry, community, general public – approx 12,000 recipients)
- media release issued by auDA
- advertisements in major national newspapers
- Panel members’ constituency groups (eg. ISOC-AU, EFA)
- social networking (eg. Facebook groups, Twitter, industry forums, blogs)
- university IT faculties
- Professional Conference Organisers Association (PCOA), state tourism agencies (specifically in relation to event.au, with appropriate cover letter).

The Panel also supported linking the Discussion Paper to a simple online survey form. People would still be able to make written submissions in the usual way, but it was felt that an online survey might help to encourage responses from people who do not have the time or inclination to make a written submission.

## 3. Next meeting

The April meeting was cancelled to allow sufficient time for public consultation. The next Panel meeting will be on Tuesday 18 May 2010, at 3.30-5.30pm.

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