

Project Plan

Policy Advisory Panel 2025 – review of the .au Licensing Rules

Background

.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. One of auDA's core functions under the Terms of Endorsement is to administer a licensing regime for .au domain names based in multi-stakeholder processes which is transparent, responsive, accountable, accessible and efficient.

The .au Domain Administration Rules: Licensing (.au Licensing Rules) set out the rules to licence .au domain names as part of the overall licensing regime, the .au Licensing Framework.

The auDA Board has appointed an external Policy Advisory Panel to undertake a multi-stakeholder review of the .au Licensing Rules to ensure these rules reflect community expectations and remain relevant and effective over time.

One of the deliverables of the Policy Advisory Panel is a Project Plan which sets out a high level view of the project, including the timelines and the deliverables.

The Terms of Endorsement require auDA to support fair and transparent multi-stakeholder engagement processes and take into consideration a full range of stakeholder views, when reviewing or developing policies related to auDA's core functions.

Information about the review, including the review terms and conditions, can be found on the dedicated webpage: <https://www.auda.org.au/public-impact/have-your-say/policy-panels/au-licensing-rules-review-2025/>.

Project overview

The Policy Advisory Panel will review the .au Licensing Rules to ensure they remain fit for purpose, reflect community expectations, and support auDA's policy objectives. The review will be conducted in stages from September 2025 to June 2026, with clear deliverables

	aligned to stakeholder engagement, drafting, consultation, and final reporting. Deliverables of the Policy Advisory Panel include: • This project plan • An engagement plan • Regular updates to the auDA Board • Demonstrated wide engagement and consultation on the issues • A draft report for public consultation • A final report to the auDA Board with recommendations.
Timeline and key deliverables	The time line is indicative only, and contingent on the issues raised and the requirement to undertake a thorough multi stakeholder engagement process. September/October 2025 – Planning • Deliverable: Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Project Plan • Activities: ○ Identify key stakeholder groups (registrars, registrants, government, industry, consumer groups, and the general public). ○ Map engagement methods (surveys, roundtables, written submissions, webinars). ○ Develop communication materials and schedule. ○ Develop and publish project plan and engagement plan. September – November 2025 – Stakeholder Engagement • Deliverable: Completion of engagement with stakeholders and the public. • Activities: ○ Conduct structured engagement activities (consultations, meetings, submissions). ○ Record and analyse stakeholder input. ○ Identify common themes, issues, and emerging recommendations. December 2025 – Drafting • Deliverable: Draft Report • Activities: ○ Panel consolidates stakeholder feedback.

	○ Assess and document policy options, risks, and benefits. ○ Prepare a draft report with preliminary recommendations.
	February 2026 – Public Consultation • Deliverable: Consultation on Draft Report • Activities: ○ Publish draft report for public review. ○ Collect feedback via submissions, forums, and targeted engagement. ○ Analyse consultation feedback to refine recommendations.
	April – June 2026 – Finalisation • Deliverable: Final Report to auDA Board • Activities: ○ Integrate public consultation outcomes into final recommendations. ○ Draft and endorse final report. ○ Present to the auDA Board for decision.
Panel meetings	The Panel will meet on a monthly basis, in addition to engagement and consultation activity. See the Panel Engagement Plan for an overview of the Panel’s approach to multistakeholder engagement. The agendas and minutes of the Panel meetings will be published on the Panel webpage. Panel members undertaking consultation and engagement activities will report on those activities in the Panel meetings, and a summary of stakeholder input will be included in the Panel meeting minutes.
Supporting documents	• Terms of Reference of the .au Licensing Rules Review 2025 • .au Licensing Rules • auDA corporate policy Process for the Development and Review of auDA Published Policies, which sets out the process under which the review will be undertaken • auDA Terms of Endorsement from the Australian Government • NETmundial+10 Multistakeholder Statement (including São Paulo Guidelines)

	• auDA Engagement Charter 1. Stakeholder Engagement Plan available on the Panel webpage: https://www.auda.org.au/public-impact/have-your-say/policy-panels/au-licensing-rules-review-2025/
Risks and Mitigations	1. Low engagement → Mitigate with targeted outreach and multiple feedback channels. 2. Timing slippage → Set clear milestones and check-ins each month. 3. Stakeholder disagreement → Transparent process and clear rationale for recommendations.