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## **auDA Strategic Plan 2008-2010:**

### **Fostering a sustainable industry self-regulatory environment to meet the changing needs of the Australian public as the Internet evolves**

auDA is the administrator for the .au country code top level domain (ccTLD) and its associated second level domains. Aligned with the principal purposes detailed in auDA's constitution, auDA has responsibilities across six key areas:

- Enabling and enforcing regulatory compliance,
- Reviewing and developing relevant policy,
- Maximising security and technical stability of the .au name space,
- Educating .au name space stakeholders,
- Efficient administration of auDA activities, and
- Representing Australian Internet industry interests at national and international fora

From its foundation in 2000, auDA has successfully developed as an effective administrator of the .au ccTLD to the point where it is regarded as a leading example of a well managed ccTLD. Building on this strong foundation, the overarching objective for auDA over the next three years is to foster a sustainable industry self-regulatory environment to meet the changing needs of the Australian public as the Internet evolves.

## ***Key Influencing factors***

In preparing this strategy, the key events, factors and considerations likely to impact auDA over the planning period were canvassed and reviewed. A key element to the formulation of the strategy has been ensuring auDA is able to respond to these challenges.

### *Key external challenges*

- i. The continued increased use of and reliance upon the Internet by Australian businesses and consumers for increasingly important tasks in their lives
- ii. Ensuring stability and security of .au, its second levels and Australia's DNS in an environment of more frequent and more sophisticated attacks
- iii. Maintaining stability given expected increases in the use of the internet
- iv. The continued development of Internet technologies such as DNSSEC, filtering and ENUM.
- v. Managing the increase in demand for support for IPv6 addresses due to the global exhaustion of IPv4 address space
- vi. Development of relevant policy and monitoring of policy breach instances in an environment where commercial models in the domain name market place drive ever more sophisticated ways of testing policy boundaries and interpretation
- vii. Managing risks associated with industry business failure (such as the failure of a registrar or registry)
- viii. Possible changes in the size and nature of auDA's stakeholder groups

### *Key internal (organisational) challenges*

- i. Maintaining a structure that allows auDA to remain relevant to stakeholders in a changing industry environment
- ii. An ongoing obligation to review and renew auDA processes in order to operate efficiently and effectively
- iii. Maintaining effective communication with the industry, with registrants and with the Australian community about how the DNS is managed by auDA and how policy is set and reviewed
- iv. Maintaining sustainable staff levels that allow auDA to meet the needs of stakeholders

## ***Strategic Initiatives***

In striving to meet the overall objective of fostering a sustainable industry self-regulatory environment, the following strategic initiatives will be undertaken in the six key areas of auDA activity:

### **1. Enabling and enforcing regulatory compliance**

The overall objective is to ensure all participants in the .au Internet domain (the Registry, Registrars, Resellers and Registrants) are aware of the regulations underpinning the .au ccTLD and participate effectively and in accordance with those regulations. To support this objective auDA is to:

#### **a) Review complaint handling mechanisms**

At present, complaints about a Registrar or Registrant are arbitrated by auDA staff with 'appeals' handled by the CEO. To provide a robust complaints handling mechanism, it may be useful to have an additional appeals mechanism for those complaints who are unhappy with the decision of this initial process.

- Review complaint handling mechanisms with a view to determining whether a non-auDA staff review mechanism is appropriate – completion; Q4/08
- Design and implement a revised complaints handling mechanism if necessary – completion; assess at end of review

#### **b) Ensure sufficient widely held knowledge of the regulatory environment**

A key component of enabling regulatory compliance is ensuring that relevant individuals and organisations understand their regulatory requirements.

- Review the current level of understanding of regulatory environment – completion; Q4/08
- Produce educational materials if needed – completion; ongoing

## **2. Reviewing and developing relevant Policy**

auDA is responsible for developing and implementing policies for the .au domain. These include policies about:

1. domain name registration, renewal and transfers
2. registrar and reseller regulation
3. dispute resolution
4. new second level domains (2LDs).

auDA develops new policy with the assistance of various Panels and Committees. These comprise various industry and consumer representatives, and other stakeholders of the .au domain. To continue to develop effective policy, auDA will:

### **a) Conduct ongoing policy reviews in accordance with the policy review model**

All auDA policies will be reviewed in accordance with the policy review model which specifies fixed dates, time periods and review mechanism for the review of each policy. The reviews that will be undertaken during the life of this plan are set out in Appendix A

### **b) Review the Advisory Panel process**

A critical function in the development and refinement of policy is the input, recommendations and decisions obtained through a variety of advisory panels. It is important that the advisory panel process works efficiently and effectively and that the panels are as widely representative as possible.. auDA will conduct a review of the Advisory Panel process to determine if there are changes that might be made to improve efficiency and effectiveness – completion; Q2/09

### **3. Maximising security and technical stability of the .au name space**

The stability and security of the .au name space is important to all stakeholders. Given the increased frequency and sophistication of attacks that can be expected during the life of this plan, investing in and planning for security must be a high priority. The following are the strategic initiatives that will be undertaken to enhance stability and security:

#### **a) Establish Security and Stability Technical Contingency Funding**

In recognition of the likelihood of a need to respond to one or more security issues during the planning period a contingency fund is required to ensure any required response can be provided immediately. An interim fund is already in place. The amount required for the fund will be established following advice from the Security and Stability Advisory Committee – completion; Q2/08

#### **b) Develop a Future Technology Identification Strategy**

auDA will develop a strategy for continually scanning the environment to identify and evaluate relevant future technologies such as DNSSEC and if appropriate, implementing such technologies – completion; Q1/09

#### **c) Review Technical Provision Adequacy**

auDA will conduct a review of the adequacy of the existing technology refresh budget to ensure that it is in line with the costs of maintaining compatibility with changing and emerging technologies – completion; Q2/09

#### **d) Australian Security and Stability threat assessment**

Working with the Security and Stability Advisory Committee and other key stakeholders, auDA will conduct a threat assessment for the .au name space. The issues identified in this threat assessment will form the basis of further security activity and planning – completion; Q4/08

#### **e) Rollout of secondary server security plan**

One important security measure is the establishment and maintenance of auDA's .au secondary server plan. This is currently being implemented and will continue during the life of this plan – completion; ongoing

#### **f) Work with other ccTLDs to find cooperative ways of enhancing security**

All ccTLD operators face similar security issues. auDA will work with other ccTLD operators to share intelligence and investigate ways of pooling resources to support each other in the event of an attack – completion; ongoing

**g) Review Registrar Contingency Action Plan**

In the event of the failure of a .au registrar, auDA is required to protect registrants by taking over the running of the registrar function of the registrar. The formal procedures and any necessary arrangements (such as agreements with 'stand-in' registrars) required to enable auDA to fulfil its requirement to be able to perform the role of a failed or de-accredited registrar must be defined. auDA will assess the current situation and plan; develop an updated plan; and consider any policy changes that might be necessary – completion; Q2/09

**h) Review Registry Contingency Action Plan**

auDA needs to have a plan in place to deal with the failure of the .au registry and/or a second level registry. The formal procedures and any necessary arrangements (such as alternate provider agreements) required to enable auDA to fulfil its requirement to be able to perform the role of registry provider must be defined. auDA will assess the current Registry procedures and plan and prepare an updated Registry contingency plan – completion; Q1/09

#### **4. Educating .au name space stakeholders**

Raising awareness of auDA's role within the .au DNS is critical to sustaining the value of auDA as the Australian domain name administrator. Programmes targeted in general and specifically at the following groups are to be developed and implemented:

- Registrants
- Prospective registrants
- Resellers
- State Government consumer affairs representatives
- Law enforcement agencies
- Influencers and professional advisors (Lawyers, Accountants, etc.)
- Major operators (eg Registry and registrars) on security issues
- Registrars on regulatory issues

Key activities over the life of the plan will be:

- a) Development and distribution of an email for first time registrants to improve their awareness of auDA and domain name issues – completion; Q3/08**
- b) Production of a DVD of providing information and guidelines for small businesses – completion; Q3/08**
- c) Broadening of distribution of brochures through a promotion and distribution campaign – completion; ongoing**
- d) Liaising with stakeholder groups such as ISOC-AU to help leverage the auDA educational effort – completion; ongoing**
- e) Targeting of key consumer affairs and law enforcement stakeholders for one-on-one education opportunities – completion; ongoing**

Having established a reasonable level of awareness through work done so far, the desired result is a steady increase in awareness amongst domain name registrants over the life of the plan.

## **5. Efficient administration of auDA activities**

Like any other responsible enterprise, auDA needs to constantly review its structure, processes and procedures to make sure that they are efficient and effective in the context of its broader policy objectives. The key initiatives will be:

### **a) Review of membership and Board structures**

In the first instance, this will involve working with the membership to determine whether a review of membership and Board structures is appropriate. Depending on the outcomes of that work, a review will be scoped and implemented – completion; Q2/09

### **b) Knowledge Base Development and Succession Plan**

A repository of relevant historical and current organisational information along with descriptions of activities undertaken by auDA is being developed. This will form the ongoing basis for the auDA “organisational memory” and begin the process of associating auDA’s functions and behaviours away from the personalities and onto the organisation itself thus providing the foundation for a succession plan and associated documentation. An external consultant will be engaged to conduct interviews and document key processes and essential operational information – completed

### **c) Review of processes to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and good governance**

auDA will conduct a review of key operational and financial processes to ensure that auDA continues to run as efficiently and effectively as possible and meets best practice standards of governance for an organisation of its type – completion; Q4/09

### **d) Continue to monitor staff levels to deliver agreed levels of service**

auDA will continually monitor staffing levels to ensure that the correct level of staffing is available for the volume of work that is required – completion; ongoing

### **e) Work towards a balanced budget and agreed levels of contingency funding**

auDA currently has significant reserves set aside as contingency funds consisting of a basic contingency fund, a legal contingency fund and a security and stability contingency fund. auDA will implement a balanced budget that meets operating requirements and maintains the agreed contingency funds – completion; ongoing



## **6. Representing .au and Australian domain name system interests at national and international fora**

auDA has an important role to play in understanding national domain name system issues and representing those interests in appropriate fora. Furthermore, auDA is part of the global Internet community and the global ccTLD community in particular. auDA needs to represent the Australian domain name system at national fora and also at appropriate global fora. Where appropriate, auDA will report on representational activity and share learning with stakeholders. During the life of this plan, auDA will establish new representation activities and continue with current representation activities, including:

- APTLD
- ccNSO
- ICANN
- ISOC-AU
- UN IGF
- NICTIA
- IPv6 summit
- and other meetings as necessary from time to time.



THE AUSTRALIAN DOMAIN NAME ADMINISTRATOR

## APPENDIX A

### auDA POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE 2008-2009

Policy	Last Reviewed	Review Required?	Review Method	Review Date (Target)
Transfers (Change of Registrant) Policy (2004-03)	2007 Panel	Following 2007 Names Policy Panel review, revised policies to be implemented during 2008.		
Domain Name Eligibility and Allocation Policy Rules for the Open 2LDs (2005-01)	2007 Panel			
Guidelines for Accredited Registrars on the Interpretation of Policy Rules for Open 2LDs (2005-02)	2007 Panel			
Registrant Warranties Policy (2005-03)	2007 Panel			
Clarification of Domain Name Licence – Prohibition on Sale of Domain Name (2005-05)	2007 Panel			
Clarification of Close and Substantial Connection Rule – Domain Monetisation (2006-03)	2007 Panel			
Clarification of Domain Name Licence – Prohibition on Misspellings (2006-05)	2007 Panel			
Industry competition model - including:  Registrar Accreditation Application Form (2003-02) Transfers (Change of Registrar of Record) Policy (2003-03)	2001 (partial review 2004)  2003 2003	Yes	Advisory Panel	2008 – commencing April
Registrant Contact Information Policy (2002-14)	Never	Yes	Public consultation	2008
Domain Name Password Policy (2002-29)	2002	Yes	Public consultation	2008

Complaints (Registrant Eligibility) Policy (2004-01)	2004	Yes	Staff review	2008
Application of auDA Published Policies to the edu.au 2LD (2004-02)	2004	Yes	Consultation with AICTEC	2008
.au Domain Name Suppliers' Code of Practice (2004-04)	2004	Yes	Code committee	? <sup>1</sup>
WHOIS Policy (2006-06)	2005	Yes	Public consultation	2009
Domain Renewal, Expiry and Deletion Policy (2006-07)	2006	Yes	Public consultation	2009
Complaints Policy (2007-03)	2007	No		
.au Dispute Resolution Policy (2008-01)	2007	No		
Approval Process for auDRP Providers (2008-02)	2007	No		
auDRP – Clarification of Registrar Obligations (2003-01)	2007	No		
Policy Rules and Guidelines for Community Geographic Domain Names (CGDNs) (2006-04)	2007	No		
Reserved List Policy (2008-03)	2008	No		
Privacy Policy (2002-10)	Never	No		

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<sup>1</sup> To be determined by Code committee.