Quarterly Report

.au DOMAIN ADMINISTRATION LTD

From the CEO

In my first quarterly stakeholder update as CEO of auDA, it's hard to think of a more extraordinary three months in our nation's and organisation's recent history.

In January, horrendously destructive bushfires ravaged many parts of Australia, leaving an indelible mark on the communities, the landscape, and our national psyche. auDA introduced a temporary Major Disaster Policy to support registrants in bushfire-affected regions, providing an additional two months to renew their eligible .au domain names, and two months to respond to any .au domain complaints. This temporary policy aimed to help organisations and individuals to focus on dealing with the immediate impacts of the bushfire disaster without needing to worry about managing their .au domain names.

auDA also announced a donation of $1 for every .au domain name created in February 2020 to the Foundation for Regional & Rural Renewal's (FRRR) Disaster Resilience and Recovery Fund. This fund provides funding for community-led projects in the 12-18 months after a disaster occurs and helps rural communities better prepare for future disaster events. Thanks to Australians, 41,712 .au names were created in February and auDA donated $41,712 to support the FRRR's important work.

Book-ending the quarter, the coronavirus pandemic emerged shortly after I officially commenced with auDA in March, and the government restrictions have seen the organisation move to full working from home arrangements. Thankfully auDA is well set-up to manage this transition, and there has been no impact to the DNS or our levels of service throughout this time. While it's too early to gauge any longer-term impact on domain creates and renewals as a result of the pandemic and restrictions, creates in March were up 6.8% on February, although down 1.4% on March 2019, and total domains under management are down 0.6% year on year. We are monitoring the situation closely, and considering how auDA may respond to any issues raised by the COVID-19 situation, from potential policy responses that may assist some registrants or ensure the continued integrity of the .au ccTLD, to the bigger question of what role auDA might play supporting businesses and organisations impacted by varying covid-19 restrictions.

Since being appointed in mid-November, the auDA Board has quickly settled into an operating rhythm, spending two days in January being inducted in all aspects of the auDA organisation, regular meetings in February and March, and establishing its committee structure. The Board has devoted significant time to understanding the various concerns raised throughout the series of consultations regarding direct registration at the second level of .au and the priority allocation process, controls to mitigate these concerns, and the key tasks and resources that might be required to successfully implement this policy. The Board also approved the publication of the updated Licensing Rules – with minimal changes post the most recent consultation period. The commencement dates of the new rules are yet to be set to enable the development of the required project plans, processes and communication materials to ensure their successful implementation.

It's almost two years since the Government review of auDA was published, and our quarterly review with the Department in January confirmed auDA's progress towards complying with the recommendations, with only four remaining to be completed (ongoing and on track). The Minister subsequently noted auDA's achievement of a number of significant milestones which see auDA well-placed to continue to provide a safe and secure .au domain that is supported by improved transparency and accountability.

Thank you for your warm welcome to auDA. I'm delighted to have joined this important organisation charged with the stewardship of a critical piece of the nations' digital infrastructure. The Board and I were looking forward to a number of member and stakeholder events around the country through the course of 2020, which are understandably now on hold. However, whether in person or online, I look forward to connecting and working with you to ensure the continued reliability, stability and security of the .au country code Top Level Domain.

Rosemary Sinclair AM
Chief Executive Officer

Policy

Temporary Major Disaster Policy

In January, auDA introduced a temporary Major Disaster Policy to support registrants in bushfire-affected regions.

The temporary policy came into effect on 22 January 2020 and gives bushfire-affected .au registrants:

- an extra two months to renew their eligible .au domain names, and
- two months to respond to .au domain complaints.

The policy aimed to help organisations and individuals to focus on dealing with the immediate impacts of the bushfire disaster without needing to worry about managing their .au domain names.

Due to the need for a quick implementation, auDA was not able to conduct the usual public consultation phase of the policy development process. However, auDA consulted with the then Department of Communications and the Arts, the registry operator and auDA-accredited registrars to ensure the policy is both feasible and effective.

The temporary policy, and FAQs can be viewed at: **auda.org.au/news/bushfires-major-disaster-policy/**

.au Licensing Rules

In February, the auDA Board approved the publication of the updated Licensing Rules – with minimal changes post the most recent consultation period. The commencement dates of the new rules are yet to be set to enable the development of the required project plans, processes and communication materials to ensure their successful implementation.

The new Licensing Rules can be viewed at: **auda.org.au/policies/index-of-published-policies/2019/auda-licensing-rules/**

Second level .au domains

The Board has devoted significant time this quarter to understanding the various concerns raised throughout the series of consultations over the past five years regarding direct registration at the second level of .au, and the priority allocation process. The Board is also considering the controls that auDA can implement to mitigate these concerns, and the key tasks and resources that might be required to successfully implement this policy.

Membership

At the end of Q1, auDA's associate membership base reached over 2,100 members with monthly growth being consistent across the three months.
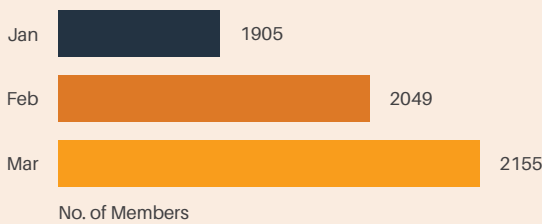
A more regular rhythm of communications has been introduced with monthly member updates emailed to all members including news from the Board and organisation and other items of interest. Both February and March editions were well-received by members.

The third round of free one-year LinkedIn Learning subscriptions was implemented in the quarter, with the high intake indicating associate members are seeing value in this membership benefit.
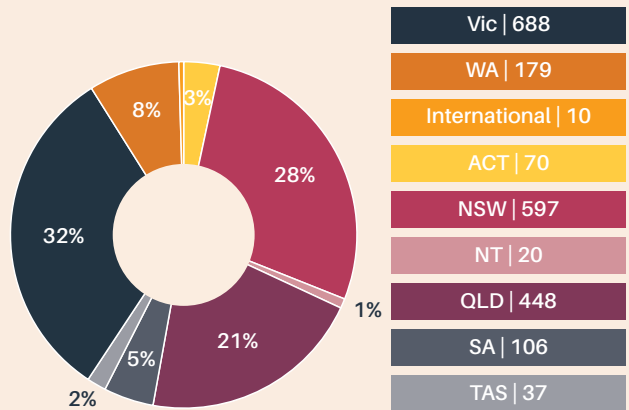
Despite the coronavirus pandemic, auDA remains focused on improving its member offering and measures to engage, broaden and diversify its membership base. We are currently reviewing the membership program and in the process of developing a plan to provide more value and engagement for our Associate members.

Not yet a member? Eligible individuals or organisations are encouraged to join and be part of ensuring the .au name space continues to be safe, fair, and secure for all Australian internet users. Membership is free and only takes a minute to apply via joinauda.org.au
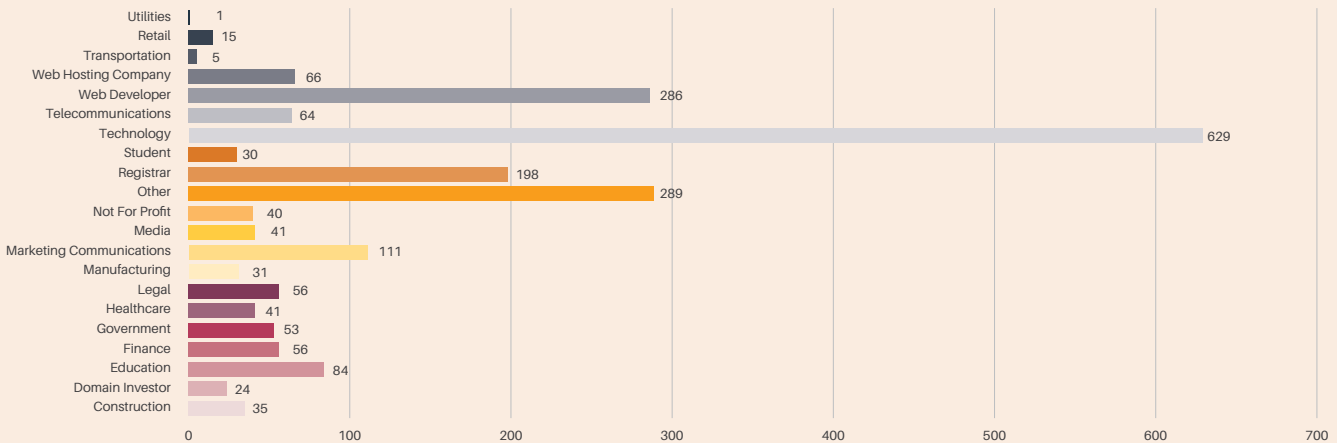
Asssociate membership growth

Month	No. of Members
Jan	1905
Feb	2049
Mar	2155

No. of Members

Membership by state

State	Members	Percentage
Vic	688	32%
WA	179	8%
International	10	
ACT	70	3%
NSW	597	28%
NT	20	1%
QLD	448	21%
SA	106	5%
TAS	37	2%

Membership by industry

Industry	Members
Utilities	1
Retail	15
Transportation	5
Web Hosting Company	66
Web Developer	286
Telecommunications	64
Technology	629
Student	30
Registrar	198
Other	289
Not For Profit	40
Media	41
Marketing Communications	111
Manufacturing	31
Legal	56
Healthcare	41
Government	53
Finance	56
Education	84
Domain Investor	24
Construction	35

Security

DNSSEC

- Removed 2019 Key Signing Key (KSK) Delegation Signer (DS) record to the root zone
- Performed a ZSK rollover, the first for 2020, without incident. This is a business as usual process.

Road to ISO 27001 certification

auDA completed its annual external vulnerability testing exercise. The areas for improvement mostly related to the auDA website which is in the process of being replaced.

auDA appointed SAI Global to perform an external audit of auDA's ISO 27001 processes. Stage 1 of that audit was completed in March 2020. The auditor reported that auDA's information security management system (ISMS) has many strengths and almost all the examined 'ISO 27001:2013 Information Security Management System' requirements are in place. auDA is proceeding to the Stage 2 audit, which will be complete in May 2020

Rollout of standard operating environment (SOE) laptops

auDA rolled out new standard operating environment (SOE) laptop builds, which are all using the Microsoft Azure Active Directory (AAD) configured to comply with auDA's ISO 27001 ISMS. The old on-premise Active Directory servers and DHCP servers are being decommissioned.

1Password cloud-based password manager

Staff were migrated to a new cloud-based password manager called 1Password, to allow decommissioning of the on-premise password manager.

Remote working

Staff are working from home with centrally-managed Windows laptops with a standard operating environment, and centrally-managed Apple iPhones. auDA is using Microsoft Intune to manage all these devices. The roll-out of these services facilitated the staff move to a predominantly working from home mode at the beginning of March 2020. Staff use Microsoft Teams for desktop audio and video conferencing.

Website outage – auDA.org.au – 4 March 2020

Some pages on the auDA website experienced an outage for 90 mins on 4 March 2020. This was caused by a hardware failure in the Internet service provider's equipment in the Melbourne data centre. DNS services were unaffected. Most of the website pages continued to be served via the Cloudflare Content Delivery Network. As a result, auDA migrated its website to a Microsoft Azure cloud hosting environment for better network connectivity.

Operations

Q1 2020 volumes

	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020
Total new domains created	38,978	41,712	44,776
Total domains under management	3,172,057	3,174,755	3,169,412

Total registrations by namespace

	Mar-19	Mar-20	YoY%
.com.au	2,831,796	2,829,881	-0.1%
.net.au	246,069	228,144	-7.3%
.org.au	72,293	73,292	1.4%
.asn.au	3,264	3,238	-0.8%
.id.au	12,368	12,272	-0.8%

Distribution of domain name licence periods – creates and renewals

	Jan-Mar 2020
1 year	241,416
2 years	240,585
3 years	8,601
4 years	912
5 years	29,342

Afilias service level performance

Service Level Name	Expected	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20
Overall DNS Availability	100%	100%	100%	100%
DNS availability per Anycast node				
q.au	99.9%	100%	100%	100%
r.au	99.9%	100%	100%	100%
s.au	99.9%	100%	100%	100%
t.au	99.9%	100%	100%	100%
DNS update delay time - % of updates within 5 mins	96%	99.94%	99.99%	99.95%
Cross network name server round trip time	300ms	58ms	62ms	65ms
DNS Round Trip Time (RTT) - % processed within 250 ms	95%	99.84%	99.92%	99.87%
WHOIS service availability	100%	100%	100%	100%
WHOIS update delay time - % of updates within 5 mins	96%	100%	100%	100%
WHOIS Round Trip Time (RTT) - % processed within 1 second	95%	100%	100%	100%
EPP service availability	100%	100%	100%	100%
EPP Round Trip Time- % of queries processed within 500ms	95%	100%	100%	99.97%
EPP Round Trip Time - % of changes processed within 1 sec	95%	100%	100%	100%

.au top-level DNS performance

| Measure Name	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20
Overall DNS Availability	100%	100%	100%
DNS availability per Anycast node			
a.au (auDA)	99.99%	99.99%	99.99%
c.au (Cloudflare)	100%	100%	100%
d.au (Cloudflare)	100%	100%	100%
m.au (Neustar)	100%	100%	100%
n.au (Neustar)	100%	100%	100%
q.au (Afilias)	100%	100%	100%
r.au (Afilias)	100%	100%	100%
s.au (Afilias)	100%	100%	100%
t.au (Afilias)	100%	100%	100%
DNS Round Trip Time (RTT) % processed within 250 ms	100%	100%	99.99%

Finance

The administration of the .au ccTLD is resource intensive. Outlays include technical operations, compliance, policy development, stakeholder engagement and membership activities.
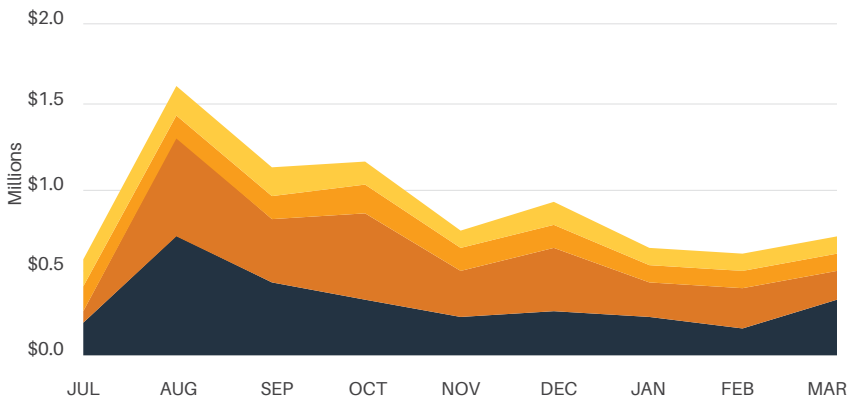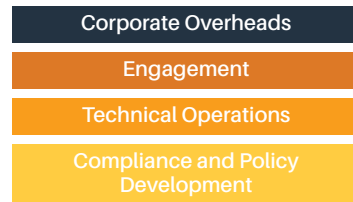
auDA aims to run as efficiently as possible and be transparent about the costs of administering the .au ccTLD.

Operating cost monthly %
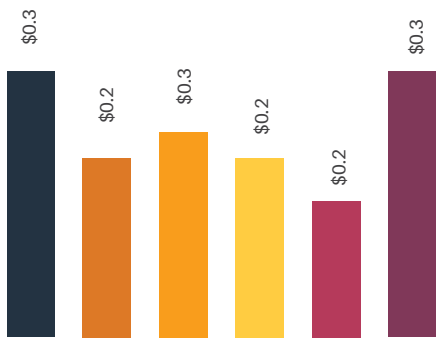

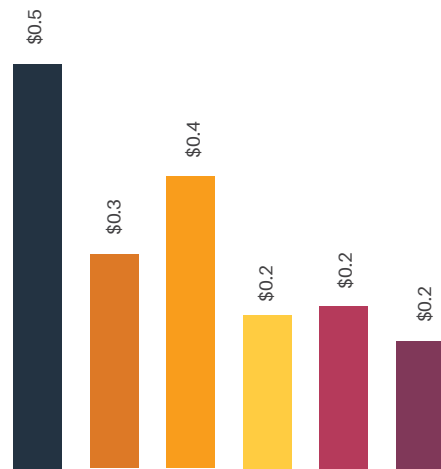## YTD operating cost breakdown
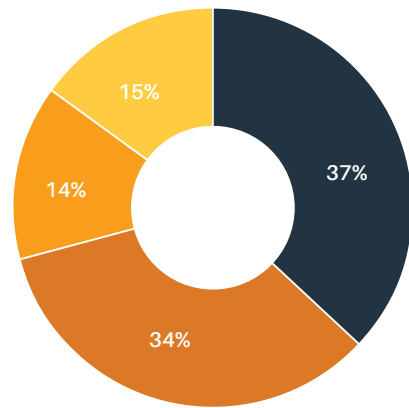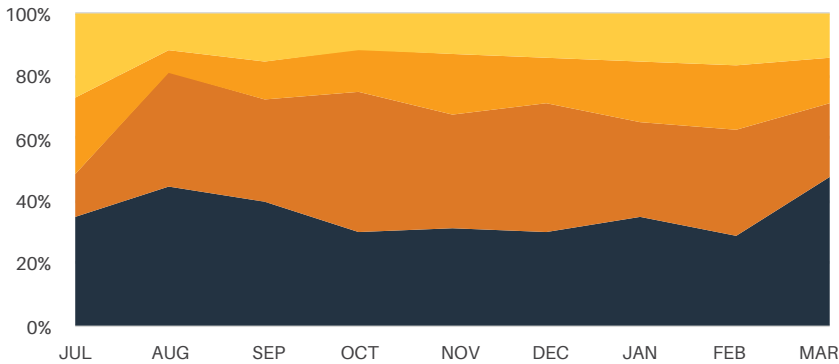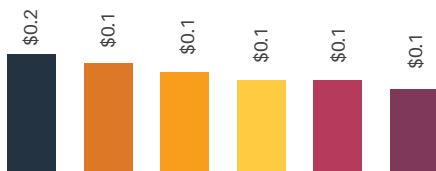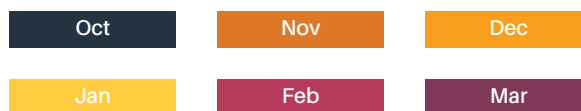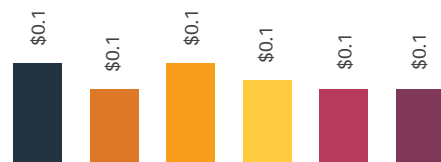

Operating cost monthly $'m

- Corporate Overheads
- Engagement
- Technical Operations
- Compliance and Policy Development

Operating cost monthly $'m

Corporate overheads

Engagement

Technical operations

Compliance and policy development
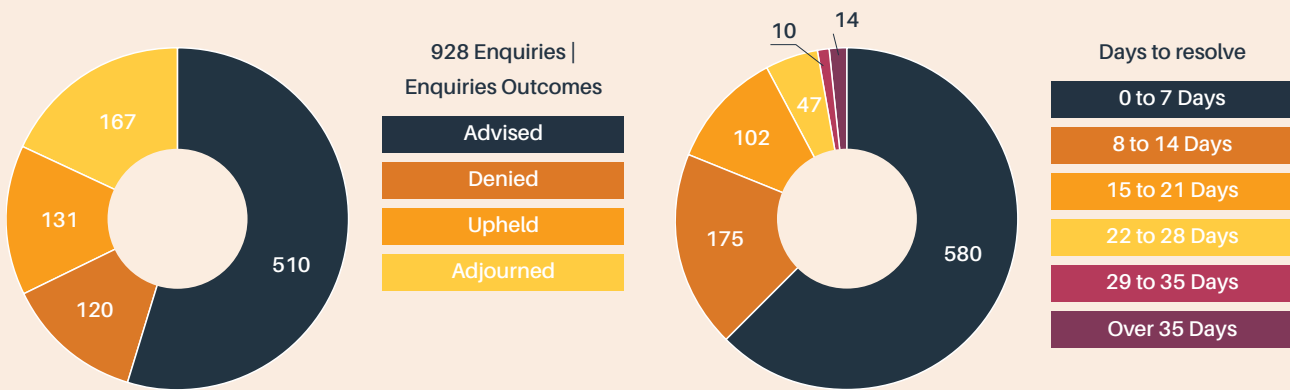

Oct   Nov   Dec

Jan   Feb   Mar
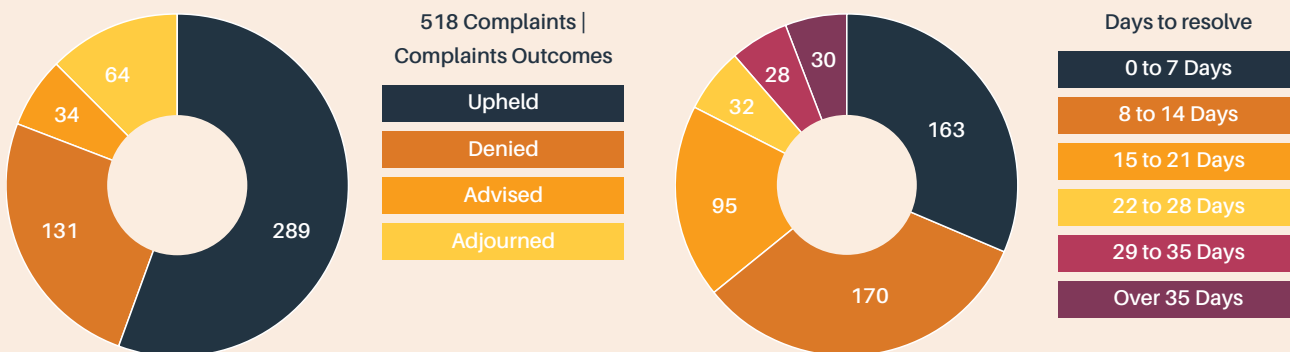
Compliance update

Compliance is a major part of auDA's role as the administrator of the .au ccTLD and is key to ensuring that .au remains a safe, secure and highly-trusted domain.

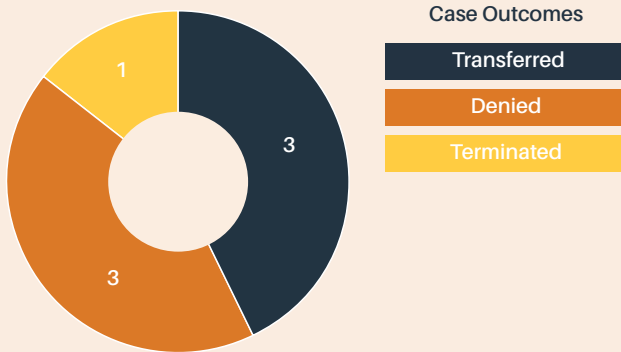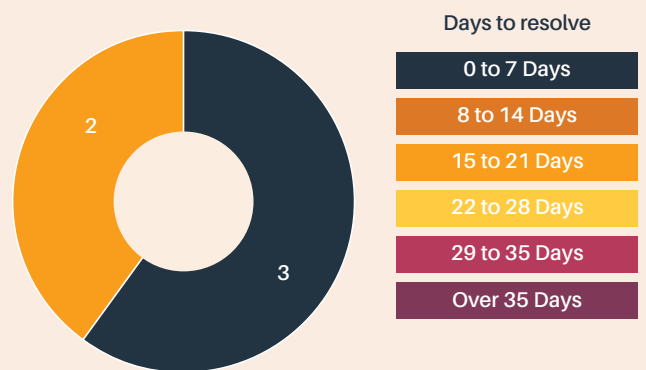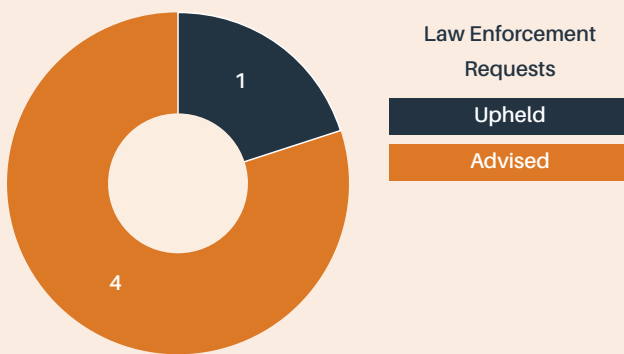This information includes the number, type and time to resolve domain-related complaints.

Enquiries

167
131
120
510

928 Enquiries | Enquiries Outcomes

- Advised
- Denied
- Upheld
- Adjourned

10
14
47
102
175
580

Days to resolve

- 0 to 7 Days
- 8 to 14 Days
- 15 to 21 Days
- 22 to 28 Days
- 29 to 35 Days
- Over 35 Days

Complaints

64
34
131
289

518 Complaints | Complaints Outcomes

- Upheld
- Denied
- Advised
- Adjourned

28
30
32
95
163
170

Days to resolve

- 0 to 7 Days
- 8 to 14 Days
- 15 to 21 Days
- 22 to 28 Days
- 29 to 35 Days
- Over 35 Days

auDRP cases

Case Outcomes

Transferred	3
Denied	3
Terminated	1

Enforcement

Law Enforcement Requests

Upheld	1
Advised	4

Days to resolve

0 to 7 Days	3
8 to 14 Days	
15 to 21 Days	2
22 to 28 Days	
29 to 35 Days	
Over 35 Days	

Applications to Registrant Review Panel

Applications

Upheld	0

Days to resolve

0
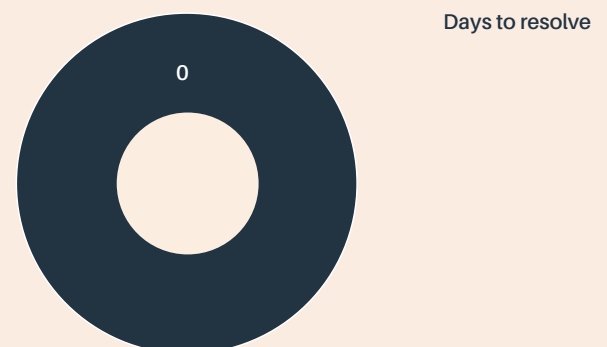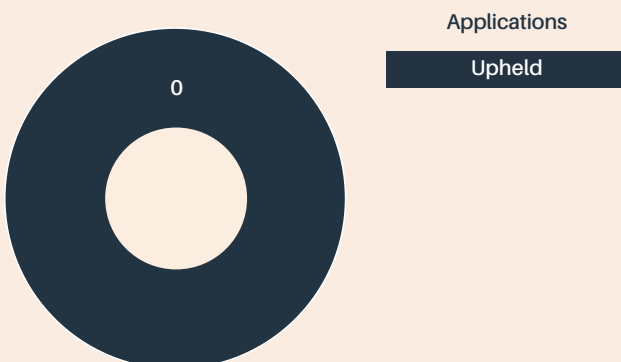
International engagement

APTLD

auDA hosted the 77th members meeting and AGM of the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association (APTLD) in Melbourne in February. This meeting was the largest APTLD gathering thus far, attracting more than 130 representatives from ccTLDs and the domain name industry around the region, despite earlier concerns over air quality due to the bushfires, and the emerging global coronavirus outbreak.

Two days' training preceded the conference, helping attendees build their capability in government relations, risk management and cybersecurity. The conference included 13 sessions and more than 50 panellists and presenters, addressing administrative, policy, technical, security and Internet governance.

auDA provided significant logistical, IT and administrative in the lead up to and throughout the conference, particularly as key APTLD personnel were unable to attend due to health or travel restrictions. Several auDA staff attended the conference and dinner and contributed as speakers and panellists throughout the two days.

During the week, auDA also held side meetings including a meeting with the ICANN CTO to discuss cyber-security, a joint auDA / Internet NZ meeting to share information on current activities, and a meeting with the ccTLD operators for Timor Leste and Indonesia to discuss policy support for Timor Leste.

The APTLD77 Communique is at: **https://www.aptld.org/announ/202002/announ_244. html**

ICANN67

Three senior auDA staff were scheduled to attend ICANN67 in Cancun in March, which was eventually changed to an online virtual community forum in light of the coronavirus pandemic. This is the first time ICANN has held a public meeting solely by remote participation, and hence the content was reduced. Priority was given to cross-community workstreams, with non-essential meetings postponed or held outside the community forum.

Key topics of interest included the pending acquisition of the .org Registry Operator, DNS abuse and how Registry Operators respond, new gTLD Subsequent Procedures, and cybersecurity and geopolitics in a multi-stakeholder environment.

Despite the time zone challenges, auDA staff participated remotely in a range of sessions across the week.

COVID-19

Since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, auDA has liaised closely with other ccTLDs and registries around the world to identify and understand any impacts being seen as a result of the pandemic and restrictions, and any resultant responses being implemented. This has continually informed the organisation's monitoring and consideration of the issue.