Q1 2023

Quarterly Report

.auDA

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Contents

From the CEO

Rosemary Sinclair AM
auDA Chief Executive Officer

This quarter marked one year since the launch of Australia's newest domain namespace, .au direct. Its introduction in March 2022 was the culmination of a multi-year project for auDA and Australia's domain name industry, and a significant innovation for Australian internet users, offering greater choice of short, memorable, Australian domain names.

We were pleased to see users respond positively, with more than 740,000 .au direct registrations by the end of Q1, supporting Australians to create a new, distinct online identity.

The popularity of .au direct has also bolstered growth in overall .au domain name registrations. According to the latest *Verisign Domain Name Brief* (released in March 2023), .au is now the seventh largest country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) and 10th largest Top Level Domain (TLD), making it one of the most popular domains globally.

In March, in support of our role to deliver a stable, secure and reliable .au, we attended the Department of Home Affairs' inaugural Cyber and Infrastructure Security (CIS) Conference in Sydney. There, alongside other Australian critical infrastructure providers, we heard from cyber security experts and participated in business resilience exercises. To deepen our cyber security expertise, we also attended the Australian Information Security Association (AISA) Australian Cyber Conference (CyberCon) in Canberra. Both conferences were a great opportunity for auDA to continue to contribute to a more resilient Australia.

Over the quarter, our Compliance Team maintained high levels of compliance with the .au Licencing Rules and continued to drive down DNS abuse in .au. The team also offered summer internships to four university students. The opportunity provided them practical experience and expanded their understanding of the domain name sector.

Internet policy and governance were also an area of focus in Q1. Representatives from auDA attended and participated in the 76th meeting of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN76) and the 83rd meeting of the Asia Pacific Top Level Domains Association (APTLD83). auDA joined sessions on reducing DNS abuse, improving multi-stakeholder internet governance processes, the digital divide, the impact of developing technologies and more.

auDA CEO Rosemary Sinclair AM presents at the Tech Policy Futures event

An auDA delegation attends the ICANN76 forum

The auDA team attends the auDA 2023-24 planning retreat

Our work advocating for multi-stakeholder internet governance over Q1 included bringing members of the Australian internet community together. In February, we hosted a roundtable to explore how Australia can build momentum locally to contribute to global action to sustain the multi-stakeholder model of internet governance. We also sponsored the ANU Tech Policy Design Centre's Tech Policy Futures event at Parliament House in Canberra, where tech and digital experts shared insights on the future of digital policies and governance.

In addition, over the quarter we also hosted a series of .au member events that took us from Melbourne with RMIT's Technology Coalition, to four stops across regional and metropolitan Queensland and to Ballarat in regional Victoria. We are always delighted to meet with and hear from current and prospective members and these events were no exception.

Another Q1 highlight was the announcement of the successful recipients of the auDA Foundation 2022 Grant Round.

Each of the 15 recipients have received $40,000 for their proposed education, research or community project that will enhance the utility of the internet for the benefit of Australians.

Once again, I extend my congratulations to the recipients and look forward to seeing the impact their projects make.

The first quarter of the year was also a time for annual planning. auDA staff spent three days together focussed on establishing shared priorities for the 2023-24 financial year, while the auDA Board came to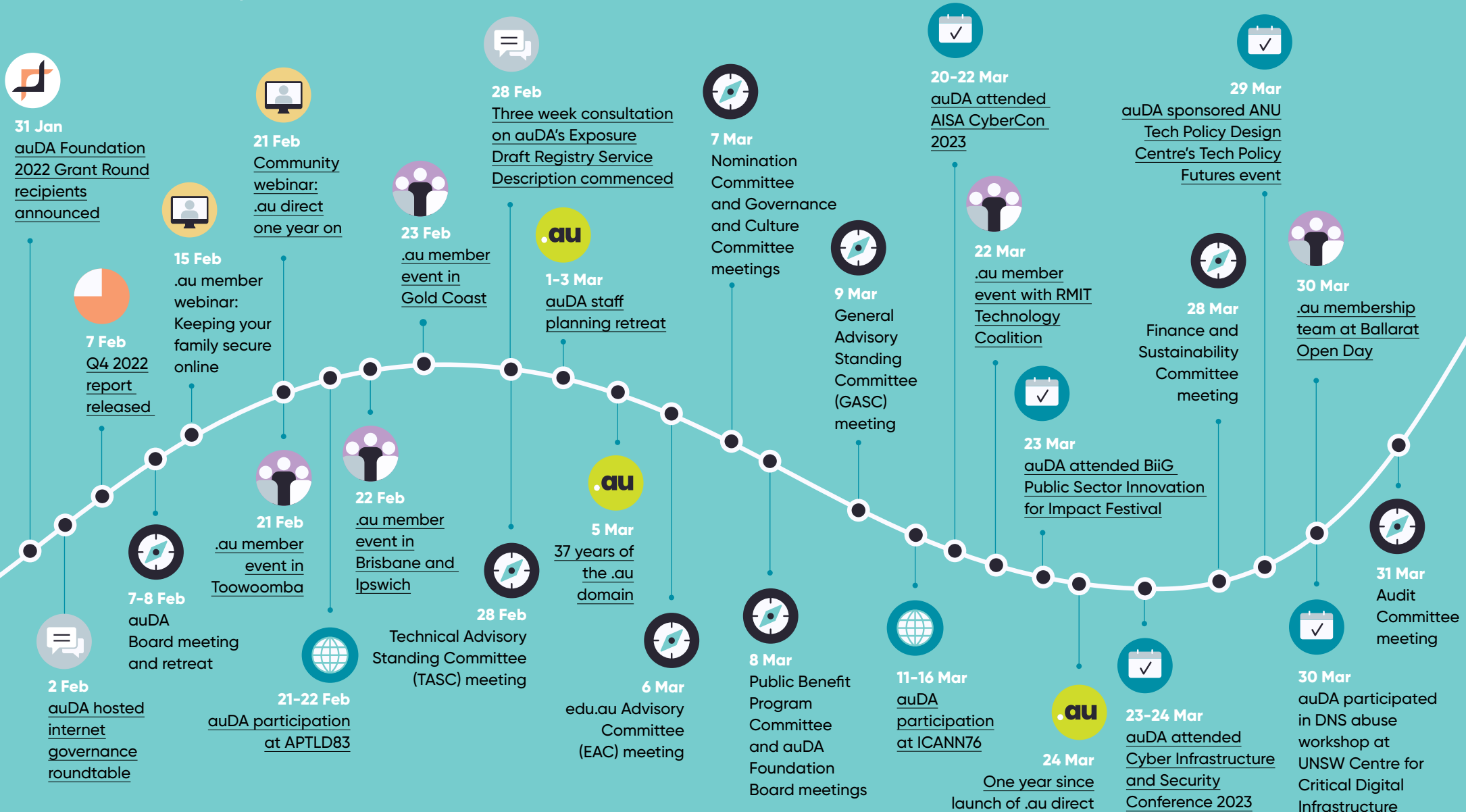gether as a group to review key governance arrangements. Following changes to the Board composition in November 2022, five Board Committees were established to support the auDA Board in fulfilling its role.

Finally, in March we released an Exposure Draft Registry Service Description for public consultation. This was a first step towards our upcoming tender to appoint a .au registry operator from 1 July 2024. The tender will be released in Q2 and ensure auDA continues to deliver reliable, trusted services on the .au domain into the future.

As we look forward, the auDA Team is energised for another exciting quarter supporting Australians through .au and an open, free, secure and global internet.

Quarter at-a-glance

Timeline of key milestones and events

31 Jan
auDA Foundation 2022 Grant Round recipients announced

7 Feb
Q4 2022 report released

15 Feb
.au member webinar: Keeping your family secure online

21 Feb
Community webinar: .au direct one year on

23 Feb
.au member event in Gold Coast

28 Feb
Three week consultation on auDA's Exposure Draft Registry Service Description commenced

7 Mar
Nomination Committee and Governance and Culture Committee meetings

20-22 Mar
auDA attended AISA CyberCon 2023

29 Mar
auDA sponsored ANU Tech Policy Design Centre's Tech Policy Futures event

1-3 Mar
auDA staff planning retreat

9 Mar
General Advisory Standing Committee (GASC) meeting

22 Mar
.au member event with RMIT Technology Coalition

30 Mar
.au membership team at Ballarat Open Day

2 Feb
auDA hosted internet governance roundtable

7-8 Feb
auDA Board meeting and retreat

21 Feb
.au member event in Toowoomba

22 Feb
.au member event in Brisbane and Ipswich

5 Mar
37 years of the .au domain

28 Feb
Technical Advisory Standing Committee (TASC) meeting

6 Mar
edu.au Advisory Committee (EAC) meeting

8 Mar
Public Benefit Program Committee and auDA Foundation Board meetings

11-16 Mar
auDA participation at ICANN76

24 Mar
One year since launch of .au direct

23-24 Mar
auDA attended Cyber Infrastructure and Security Conference 2023

28 Mar
Finance and Sustainability Committee meeting

23 Mar
auDA attended BiiG Public Sector Innovation for Impact Festival

21-22 Feb
auDA participation at APTLD83

30 Mar
auDA participated in DNS abuse workshop at UNSW Centre for Critical Digital Infrastructure

31 Mar
Audit Committee meeting

.au by numbers

Overview of key Q1 operational metrics

Variations are year-on-year

REGISTRATIONS

Domains under management, March 2023

4,211,843 +20%

New domain names created in Q1

152,666* –30%

MEMBERS

.au members, March 2023

4,068* –11%

New members in Q1

294

SECURITY

24	9
Registrars with ISO 27001 certification or equivalent	**Registrars with ISO 27001 progress plan in place**

ENGAGEMENTS

3
Registrar briefings

6
.au member events
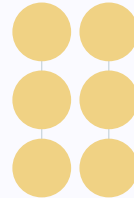
1
.au member webinar

1
Community webinars

COMPLIANCE

Enquiries	Complaints	auDRP disputes	Compliance audits	Enforcement body requests
720 –45%	**276** –24%	**24** +500%	**2,167** +141%	**9** –40%
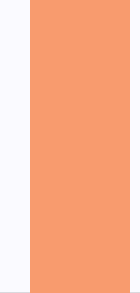
DNS AND REGISTRY SERVICES

.au DNS queries per second in Q1

57,500* +41%

DNS availability

100%

WHOIS availability

100%

Registry database availability

100%

---

* The launch of .au direct on 24 March 2022 drove a spike in new .au domain names created in March 2022. * Increase in DNS queries traffic is due to logging improvements at some DNS nameservers.

* .au membership transitioned to a new model on 27 September 2022, as set out in auDA's Constitution. 3,170 Associate Members opted-in to the terms and conditions of the new model and became auDA Members under the Constitution.

.au scorecard

Objective	Key Result	Status
Trust		
Drive down DNS abuse	.au domain names affected by DNS abuse down to 0.025 per cent	G
Drive up the integrity of the .au domain	90 per cent of .au domain names have a validated Australian presence (new registrations and renewals)	G
Lead world's best practice ccTLD security	ISO 27001 adopted by registrars managing 90 per cent of .au domain names*	G
Innovation		
Improve the utility of the .au by providing greater choice of .au domain names	.au direct reaches five per cent of total .au domain names*	G
Produce leading insights from our data and community research	$1,300,000 funding for registrar impact projects	G
Invest to enable innovation and research by others	$600,000 funding for community impact projects	G
Multi-stakeholder engagement		
Grow and diversify auDA's membership	Grow auDA membership 20 per cent from the number of members at transition (3,170)	G
Increase auDA's influence in multi-stakeholder internet governance	Actively engage in ICANN work streams	G

Objective	Key Result	Status
People		
Build an organisation regarded as an Employer of Choice	Improve culture survey result by 10 points	G
Governance		
Strive for excellence in our reporting	Fully adopt two of the eight content elements of the Integrated Report Framework for the 2022-23 Annual Report	G

Target: achieve Key Results by 30 June 2023

*.au direct reached 18 per cent of total .au domain names at 31 March 2023

On track	
Being managed within tolerance	
Outside tolerance	