

# **auDA Competition Model Advisory Panel**

## **Stage One Report**

### **Competition Status and Issues for .au Second Level Domains**

**December 2000**

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# 1 PREAMBLE AND INITIAL ISSUES SUMMARY

## 1.1 Preamble

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to state the current environment for the provision of domain name services in Australia, as regards competition and future policy direction in respect of competitive service provision. This is in accordance with Stage 1 of the Terms of Reference for the Competition Model Advisory Panel.
- 1.1.2 Stage 2 of the Panel's Terms of Reference examines other ccTLD and gTLD domain name service environments and identifies issues and models to be addressed in Stages 3 and 4 of the Terms of Reference.

## 1.2 Issues Summary

- 1.2.1 Competition is of general community benefit when it is in the long term interests of end users. Where these interests lie in relation to competition in the domain name areas requires further exploration. Elements in the balance could include pricing, service provision, maintenance of any-to-any connectivity, and certainty and stability.
- 1.2.2 Only one .au second level domain (2LD) has even limited competitive service provision at this time, through reseller agreements. This is understood to be the primary consideration this Panel needs to address by identifying models for introduction of wider competition across all relevant 2LD. (the competitive service provision within id.au is noted separately below)
- 1.2.3 The lack of any fully open 2LD clearly impacts on the ability of proposed competing registries to offer cheaper services to registrants: both in terms of the complexity of their application of policy (which implies costs to be borne by applicants) and the lack of volume of names associated with fully open domains. This is likely to have an impact on funding for non-contestable functions under **any** model of competition.
- 1.2.4 The decision to create new 2LDs with as little policy constraint as possible, or to simplify policy to permit both mechanistic, simple policy determination (ie cheaper) by competing registries and to permit an expected increase in applications (and hence permit volume related reductions in costs) **lies outside the scope of this Panel**. However the Panel has no hesitation in noting the impact of these changes on competition policy, and may make recommendations in that light.
- 1.2.5 The particular value (utility, or financial) that users of names place in any specific 2LD such as com.au or net.au is not necessarily in the control of the providers of domain name services. However it is clear that substitutability of 2LD (the ability to select a name in more than one space) can exist, and could be enhanced by provision of more 2LDs, or by changes to policy in existing 2LDs. It is important to consider this as an aspect of competition policy, but distinct from substitutability in the provision of services, which is noted below.
- Substitutability of domain names is noted to exist in limited forms between 2LD domains under .AU such as com.au and net.au and to a lesser extent asn.au and org.au. Within id.au (subject to various conditions), substitutability exists between the subdomains of id.au.
- 1.2.6 Technical requirements placed on registrars by delegates, and on registrants by registrars vary across the 2LDs under .au and this suggests that the introduction of competition in services equally across relevant domains will require coordination to equalise back-end requirements on competing registrars. This is likely to be affected by the choice of method to provide non-contestable services. Since this addresses operational stability of the DNS it can be held to be directly in line with the goals of the Terms of Reference.
- 1.2.7 Non-contestable functions are not well defined. Public interest functions for each 2LD such as **whois** are not equally defined or required for each 2LD. The roles and

responsibilities in Domain Name management in general are not well defined or equally applied to the 2LD under .AU. This needs to be addressed as part of this panels activities.

1.2.8 Only one 2LD has a defined service level agreement (SLA) and dispute resolution regime. This will need to be addressed as a function of considering competitive service provision where competing registrars can be expected to offer services in more than one 2LD. Registrants are unlikely to appreciate the difference between disputes over names, and disputes over service and will expect a unified framework for dispute resolution which will require coordination with auDA's Name Policy Advisory Panel. Introduction of competition is likely to lead to an increase in dispute over application of policy by competing registrars (noting that simpler or mechanistic policy may offset this), as well as the need for dispute resolution in each possible instance of delegate-registry-registrar-registrant relationship.

1.2.9 Substitutability of domain names is not felt to be a useful indication of competition at present, even if it remains important for equity of access to names. Substitutability of service provision will be a natural outcome of providing competitive service provision, and is a distinct consideration. The subdomains of id.au are noted as providing some substitutability of service provision.

## 2 ISSUES CONSIDERED

2.1 For each 2LD, the Panel has considered the issues which are likely to either define, or be affected by, competition in provision of name registration services. These are presented here so they can be referred to briefly in the body of the report.

### 2.2 List of issues applied to each 2LD in section 3.

#### 2.2.1 *Is there existing competition in service provision for the 2LD?*

2.2.1.1 Competition can exist in many forms. The Panel has considered if any aspect of the domain provisioning already provides competitive services in that there are a number of registrars who can undertake a name registration and they openly compete for consumer business. Where these exist, the Panel has made a value judgement on their qualitative aspects and how they might influence competition processes for other domains. Since this will be inherently subjective, it will require further discussion and should be noted for review.

2.2.1.2 At the time of writing, the only form of direct competitive provision of services believed to exist is that of reselling of services otherwise provided by a single entity. This implies a secondary tier of relationships between applicants and holders of domain names, and the registry-provider.

#### 2.2.2 *Is there separation of delegate and registrar?*

2.2.2.1 The degree of separation of duties between delegate and registrar has been noted. Unitary application of policy and integration of domains under a natural monopoly of .au management is a given for this review, so separation of registrar functions will be vital to promote competitive practices.

2.2.2.2 The identified roles in the management and provision of service for a domain are:

- **Policy** provided and managed by the delegate for the domain. This is unitary for a given domain.
- **Registry functions**, whois, AUNIC lodgement of policy details, update of zone files for DNS. These are likely to represent non-contestable functions. They might be distributed but have to come together in the unitary action on the zone file if nothing else. Determination of a preferred set of 'canonical' registry functions is for future study.
- **Registrar functions**, being the maintenance of registry level data under the given policy guidelines. These should be fully contestable.

#### 2.2.3 *What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?*

2.2.3.1 In order to assess the 2LD status set against other policies (both in .au and worldwide for any domain which can be considered to compete), the Panel tried to identify how restrictive the rules on entry to the 2LD are. The Name Policy Advisory Panel has decided to use a simple two point scale to differentiate between 2LDs for the purposes of naming policy. For now, our working model assumes a linear spread from fully open to fully closed, with the following noted criteria:

- **Fully open:** First come, first served (FCFS) with no additional criteria. The .com gTLD exemplifies this status. **No fully open domains exist at this time under .au and this is identified as a substantive issue for further study by the Panel.**
- **Partially open:** (or partially closed, the use of either term probably reflects subjective views of the 2LD). This could mean simple criteria which can be achieved at low cost or consequence to the applicant, or more substantive criteria

which define exclusivity and require substantive sign-off with some authority either via delegate or their policy as effected by the registrar(s) for the domain to achieve status. New 2LDs vested in bodies such as professional associations could fall into this class.

- **Fully closed:** single body, autonomous, acting as delegate and registrar. In the strict sense, this really only applies to csiro.au at this time, however edu.au and gov.au can also be considered fully closed due to their explicitly exclusive nature. Should a new 2LD be created under an authority where external rules cannot apply, it might fall into this class.

## **2.2.4** *What substitutability exists for the 2LD?*

- 2.2.4.1 Candidate 2LDs which can be considered to compete for provision of domain names to (potential or actual) domain name holders have been identified. The extent to which an applicant can apply for more than one domain name has also been noted (some 2LDs explicitly prohibit multiple domain name holding).
- 2.2.4.2 The caveat is that the DNS is often perceived as a surrogate directory system for the Internet, and this leads to the interpretation of the upper levels of a name hierarchy as an implicit directory qualification. From such a perspective a consumer may perceive quite significant qualitative differences in the suitability of one domain hierarchy over another. While there is no procedural or technical impediment to substitutability of one hierarchy for another, the consumer may regard two domain hierarchies as not equivalent in function or value.
- 2.2.4.3 For example there are minimal restrictions to register in the hierarchies .com, .net and .org. Despite this, 80% of registrations are in .com, 12% in .net, and 8% in .org. This seems to be because consumers associate .net with network services providers, .org with non-profit organisations, and .com with everyone else. Likewise in Australia, there is very limited true substitutability between .com.au, .net.au and .org.au, and thus there is limited competition available on the basis of substitutability. This may change through the introduction of new second level domains that are more attractive to consumers.
- 2.2.4.4 More substantive substitutability can also apply in provision of services, price differentiation etc where real competition exists, and this too needs to be noted as an issue by some phase of this Panel's activity.

## **2.2.5** *Are there any service level agreements (SLA) or guarantees?*

- 2.2.5.1 Only com.au is believed to offer a formal SLA and any guarantee of process. Where any statement exists, this has been noted. For 2LDs which otherwise represent or have been claimed to offer substitutability with com.au, lack of SLA/guarantees has been noted. If any claim or general statement is made this is noted as informal.
- 2.2.5.2 In line with 2.2.6 below, SLA or other contractual relationships will need to be defined between:
  - Registrar and delegate
  - Registry and delegate
  - Registry and registrars
  - Between registrars
  - Registrar and customers

## **2.2.6** *Is there a dispute resolution policy?*

- 2.2.6.1 Again, only com.au is believed to have a formalised dispute resolution framework. The same criteria applies to this issue. Where the domain name policy notes a less formal process, this is noted as informal.

2.2.6.2 Disputes can arise between different parties in the provision of domain name services:

- Policy (the delegate) and registrars
- Registrars and resellers
- Registrars or resellers and registrants
- Registrants and registrants (or potential registrants)
- Registrants and policy (the delegate)

This will need to be explored more fully by later phases of the Panel.

### **2.2.7 *What pricing applies?***

2.2.7.1 Where charges are levied, these are noted. Differentiated pricing such as an initial application fee, a renewal fee, a fee for change, or discounted fees for bulk entries, have also been flagged. Where reselling exists, pricing variances amongst resellers is noted.

2.2.7.2 Clearly, any pricing, or absence of charges, will be reflected in the revenue issue for auDA.

### **2.2.8 *What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

2.2.8.1 There are already indications that pricing and volume are likely to be related for some models of competitive provision of service. Therefore statements of pricing need to be made in a context where existing volume of business is understood.

### **2.2.9 *Are domain names licensed, for a defined period?***

2.2.9.1 Where the domain name policy defines a licence arrangement, the term has been noted. For 2LDs which do not claim any period, it is understood that the domain name process is not held to create property rights at this time. This is a matter for further study.

### **2.2.10 *Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?***

2.2.10.1 Where the domain name policy restricts rights (eg. transference, scope of use, exclusivity) these are noted. The requirement for a single domain name is an example of such a restriction.

### **2.2.11 *Are there any other customer service issues?***

2.2.11.1 Where known, issues in quality of service are noted. Excessive delay is known to cause some problems for domain name applicants. Some customer service issues reflect complexity of the current domain name policy and need to be distinguished from those that relate to competitive provision. This will require wider canvassing of interested parties and may not be resolved by this phase of the Panel.

### **2.2.12 *What technical arrangements apply?***

2.2.12.1 The requirements for DNS provisioning and whois management for entries is noted if defined in the domain name policy. Other technical criteria may exist and should be detailed since they may represent cost factors, barriers to entry or otherwise affect competition.

### **2.2.13 *Where is customer data held?***

2.2.13.1 If the 2LD has its *own* whois server, this is noted. If it uses AUNIC, this is flagged. Where possible, other data held in connection with domain name holders that may not reside in a whois resource, and any other data schema have been identified. A more neutral name for customer databases is required to permit the general

requirement to hold data to be distinguished from the specific function of whois/registry which has defined technical requirements for access protocols. Data ownership is likely to be a substantive issue for competition and will need to be clarified if a schema is defined.

**2.2.14 *What are the implications for new 2LDs (competition template)?***

2.2.14.1 Where possible, issues which might affect the creation of new 2LDs have been noted to help derive a competition issues template to consider in any new 2LD process.



### **3 Competition Status for Second Level Domains under .AU**

#### **3.1 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: asn.au**

**Purpose:** For associations  
**Delegate:** Michael Malone  
**Registrar:** Connect West Pty Ltd  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by auDA  
**Policy Source:** <http://www.west.net.au/asn.au>

##### ***3.1.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?***

Connect West Pty Ltd, SENET and Zeta share the ability to perform registry functions for asn.au.

##### ***3.1.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

Michael Malone was the delegate, but has passed control to auDA. Registry is hosted at linet and is shared between 3 parties. Two may no longer have a substantive role, Connect West is known to still provide service.

##### ***3.1.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

Applicants for a domain name in asn.au must meet minimum standards for registration as an association or like body. Therefore, asn.au is partially open.

##### ***3.1.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

For bodies unable to meet com.au and net.au requirements, org.au provides limited substitutability - noting that as a name of last resort, applicants would have to be rejected by asn.au before org.au could be expected to provide a substitute domain name.

However, applicants to asn.au would also appear to have basis for applying for a domain name in net.au and com.au in many cases. This is reflexive, so asn.au can be considered to offer at least limited substitutability with other 2LDs as well.

asn.au domain name holders can have only one domain name. Therefore, it cannot substitute for any 2LD that supports multiple domain names per entity.

##### ***3.1.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

There is no formal SLA or guarantee for service in asn.au. Applicants are informed when mailed that application usually completes in 24 to 48 hours but may take up to a week. Average response time over the past two years has been less than six hours, 24x7.

##### ***3.1.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is no noted dispute resolution process for service in asn.au.

##### ***3.1.7 What pricing applies?***

No fees apply.

##### ***3.1.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

There are currently 2037 asn.au domain names. Based on the tabled rates of growth, a figure of approximately 50 new domains a month is noted.

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Volume	Δ per month
01/10/2000	1839	54
01/07/2000	1677	55
01/04/2000	1512	59
01/01/2000	1335	43
01/10/1999	1206	49
01/07/1999	1059	41
01/04/1999	935	35
01/01/1999	829	—

**3.1.9 Are domain names licensed, for a defined period?**

Domain name validity is undefined. Policy states that in theory, the registry can mail domain-name holders annually and remove names whose contact does not respond in a timely manner or are otherwise not active.

**3.1.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?**

Applicants must be able to show a "legal" claim to the domain name - derivation is implied.

**3.1.11 Are there any other customer service issues?**

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in asn.au.

**3.1.12 What technical arrangements apply?**

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement.

**3.1.13 Where is customer data held?**

Customer data is held in the Connect West registry. An offer is on record to perform nightly update of data to an AUNIC registry if desired.

**3.1.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?**

asn.au is a purposeful 2LD, targeted at entities that have registered status but are not commercial.

**3.2 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: com.au**

**Purpose:** For commercial entities, currently registered and trading in Australia  
**Delegate:** au Domain Administration  
**Registrar:** Melbourne IT Ltd  
**Policy Status:** Policy inherited from Robert Elz and cannot be varied without endorsement by an "appropriate Internet community body"  
**Policy Source:** <http://www.ina.com.au/register/names.html>

(Refer to [4.1 Diagram of com.au processes](#))

**3.2.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?**

Melbourne IT (through its division Internet Names Worldwide) is the manager of the zone file for com.au, and is responsible for administering the com.au policy as set by auDA.

Resellers enter into contractual relationships with Melbourne IT and offer competition in services to applicants and domain name holders, and a range of prices based on their position in the marketplace and the Melbourne IT bulk discount rates. Resellers lodge domain name applications, but checking conformance with the com.au name policy is carried out by Melbourne IT. Melbourne IT also directly sells to end users.

### ***3.2.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

Melbourne IT is the registrar. auDA is the delegate.

### ***3.2.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

Applicants must meet the com.au Domain Name Allocation Policy for registration in com.au, so it is partially open.

### ***3.2.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

There is limited substitutability with net.au, and with asn.au and org.au for non-commercial entities that can satisfy com.au requirements.

com.au arguably competes directly with .com.

### ***3.2.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

com.au offers differentiated times for customer service based on fee.

### ***3.2.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is a noted dispute resolution procedure for dealing with disputes relating to the naming policy.

There is no dispute resolution mechanism for disputes between domain name registrants (eg. over who should have the rights to a particular name).

### ***3.2.7 What pricing applies?***

Melbourne IT Retail \$140 (including GST) for 2 years  
Wholesale \$112 (including GST) for 2 years

Retail prices vary for resellers (eg. Telstra \$330, NetRegistry \$301.40, inet \$200 set-up plus \$200 per year)

### **3.2.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?**

Approximately 200,000 com.au domain names exist, with a growth rate of between 5,000 and 10,000 per month.

<b>Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Δ per month</b>
01/12/2000	203008	4188
01/09/2000	190443	7615
01/06/2000	167597	8465
01/03/2000	142200	7243
01/12/1999	120470	6719
01/09/1999	100311	6260
01/06/1999	81530	4338
01/03/1999	68514	2674
01/12/1998	60491	2811
01/09/1998	52058	3066
01/06/1998	42860	1995
01/03/1998	36874	1739
01/12/1997	31657	2005
01/09/1997	25640	1888
01/06/1997	19975	1422
01/03/1997	15709	1191
01/12/1996	12135	1156
01/09/1996	8667	769
01/06/1996	6360	656
01/03/1996	4392	606

### **3.2.9 Are domain names licensed, for a defined period?**

Domain names are licensed for a 2 year period. Domain names allocated in advance of any leasing arrangement can vest for longer periods, but drop into a 2 year lease on any change of status.

### **3.2.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?**

Applicants must be able to show a "legal" claim to the domain name - derivation is implied.

### **3.2.11 Are there any other customer service issues?**

Most customer complaints seem to reflect difficulties with the current policy rather than quality of service issues. Approximately 30% of applications are rejected as non-compliant with the auDA names policy for com.au There have been some complaints about reseller activity at domain name renewal time (spam mailing).

### **3.2.12 What technical arrangements apply?**

An end-user is not required to delegate a domain name to a nameserver. Thus an end-user can license the name, without actually having a corresponding website.

### **3.2.13 Where is customer data held?**

Melbourne IT holds customer data relating to billing and the application process. The AUNIC whois database is used for public information listing the contact details of a domain name

holder. Melbourne IT maintains the com.au zone file which maps domain names to their corresponding nameservers. This zone file is sent to the primary nameserver for com.au at munnari.oz.au, maintained by the University of Melbourne.

### ***3.2.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?***

Change in policy to allow first-come, first-served (FCFS) or other changes to names policy. Consistency of registration requirements across substitutable 2LDs.

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## **3.3 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: conf.au**

**Purpose:** For short duration conferences and exhibitions  
**Delegate:** Robert Elz  
**Registrar:** Robert Elz  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the delegate  
**Policy Source:** Not available

### ***3.3.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?***

Robert Elz is the exclusive service provider for conf.au.

### ***3.3.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

Robert Elz is both the registrar and the delegate.

### ***3.3.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

No formal restrictions are placed on the domain name apart from meeting obvious current social norms. However, domain names have a fixed deadline within a reasonable time after the conference (or event). Arguably this 2LD is more fully open than partially open.

### ***3.3.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

conf.au is a purposeful 2LD and as such, provides temporary naming services for conferences where no permanent entity need exist.

In almost all cases, some other domain name could be used, but with limited appeal to most users of this 2LD. For entities that have an ongoing requirement for a domain name, conf.au is not suitable and other domain names would be used for their conferences (eg. interop.com.au).

### ***3.3.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in conf.au.

### ***3.3.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is no noted dispute resolution procedure for service in conf.au.

### ***3.3.7 What pricing applies?***

No fees apply.

### 3.3.8 *What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?*

A summary of usage over the years has been collated from information provided by the Delegate. No clear trend beyond slow growth is imputed.

Year	Volume	Δ over previous year
2002	6	N/A (more may come in)
2001	11	N/A (more may come in)
2000	17	-2
1999	19	6
1998	13	6
1997	7	0
1996	7	4
1995	3	—

### 3.3.9 *Are domain names licensed , for a defined period?*

Domain name validity is restricted to a window around the actual conference date.

### 3.3.10 *Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?*

No other restrictions apply.

### 3.3.11 *Are there any other customer service issues?*

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in conf.au.

### 3.3.12 *What technical arrangements apply?*

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement.

### 3.3.13 *Where is customer data held?*

Customer data is held directly in the .au domain server. No whois data is required or maintained.

### 3.3.14 *What are the implications for new 2LDs?*

conf.au is a purposeful 2LD, targeted at temporary events. There is a potential for breach of trade mark rights. Other temporary event focused domain names are possible (concerts, festivals, galas) and permitted under the delegates intended-use, suggesting promotion of the domain namespace would be useful.

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## 3.4 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: **csiro.au**

**Purpose:** For exclusive use by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)  
**Delegate:** CSIRO  
**Registrar:** CSIRO  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the delegate  
**Policy Source:** Not available

### 3.4.1 *Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?*

Service provision for csiro.au is internally provided by CSIRO.

**3.4.2 *Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

CSIRO is both the registrar and delegate.

**3.4.3 *What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

Applicants must be sub-entities of CSIRO. This is a fully closed domain.

**3.4.4 *What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

CSIRO applies for commercial domain names on an as-needs basis for its activities that have a commercial status.

CSIRO co-owns domain names in other 2LDs (edu.au, com.au) through its participation in the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) program and other collaborative relationships.

None of these provide a substitutable domain space comparable to csiro.au.

**3.4.5 *Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in csiro.au.

**3.4.6 *Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is no noted dispute resolution procedure for service in csiro.au.

**3.4.7 *What pricing applies?***

No fees apply.

**3.4.8 *What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

Unknown.

**3.4.9 *Are domain names licensed, for a defined period?***

Domain name validity is undefined.

**3.4.10 *Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?***

No other restrictions apply.

**3.4.11 *Are there any other customer service issues?***

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in csiro.au.

**3.4.12 *What technical arrangements apply?***

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement.

**3.4.13 *Where is customer data held?***

Unknown.

**3.4.14 *What are the implications for new 2LDs?***

csiro.au is a purposeful 2LD, targeted at a single entity, which spans education, research, commercial and government activity. It is comparable to inria.fr and like bodies.

---

### **3.5 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: edu.au**

**Purpose:** For nationally significant educational bodies  
**Delegate:** Geoff Huston  
**Registrar:** Geoff Huston  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the Delegate  
**Policy Source:** <http://www.aunic.net/policies.html>

#### ***3.5.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?***

Geoff Huston is the exclusive service provider for edu.au.

#### ***3.5.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

Geoff Huston is the delegate and registrar.

#### ***3.5.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

Applicants must meet minimum standards for registration as an education provider. Therefore edu.au can be considered fully closed.

#### ***3.5.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

Educational institutes register and use com.au and net.au domain names.

Educational institutes also obtain domain names under state government naming schemes rooted in gov.au.

Some institutes also hold .com and other gTLD domain names.

#### ***3.5.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in edu.au.

#### ***3.5.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is no noted dispute resolution procedure for service in edu.au.

#### ***3.5.7 What pricing applies?***

No fees apply.

#### ***3.5.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

Unknown.

#### ***3.5.9 Are domain names licensed, for a defined period?***

Domain name validity is undefined.

#### ***3.5.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?***

No other restrictions apply.



### ***3.5.11 Are there any other customer service issues?***

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in edu.au.

### ***3.5.12 What technical arrangements apply?***

No technical preconditions apply.

### ***3.5.13 Where is customer data held?***

Whois data is maintained using the AUNIC registry.

### ***3.5.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?***

edu.au is a purposeful 2LD, targeted at entities that have status in the educational community as a provider of national standing.

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## **3.6 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: gov.au**

**Purpose:** For exclusive use by Australian Governments

**Delegate:** National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE)

**Registrar:** Geoff Huston

**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the Online Council

**Policy Source:**

<http://www.govonline.gov.au/projects/wholeofgovonline/australiangovernmentdomainguidelines.htm>

### ***3.6.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?***

NOIE is the exclusive service provider for gov.au.

### ***3.6.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

NOIE is the delegate. Registrar services are provided by Geoff Huston (former gov.au delegate) in the absence of any formal agreement, as an interim voluntary role.

### ***3.6.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

Applicants must meet minimum standards for registration as an arm of government, state or federal. This is a fully closed 2LD.

### ***3.6.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

Government agencies hold domain names in com.au and net.au where appropriate (eg. abc.net.au).

For core government structure, no other 2LD makes much sense.

### ***3.6.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in gov.au.

### ***3.6.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is no noted dispute resolution procedure for service in gov.au, however the Online Council is due to consider a proposed dispute resolution procedure in November 2000.

### ***3.6.7 What pricing applies?***

No fees apply.

### ***3.6.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

There are over 2,500 domain names in the gov.au 2LD, mainly at state and local government level. The delegate advises that applications are currently being processed at the rate of three per day.

### ***3.6.9 Are domain names licensed , for a defined period?***

Domain name validity is undefined. Domain names that are unlikely to persist for more than one year are discouraged.

### ***3.6.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?***

No other restrictions apply.

### ***3.6.11 Are there any other customer service issues?***

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in gov.au.

### ***3.6.12 What technical arrangements apply?***

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement.

### ***3.6.13 Where is customer data held?***

Whois data is maintained using the AUNIC registry.

### ***3.6.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?***

State and local government domains are structured as named subdomains of gov.au. Consideration could be given to transitional domain names for campaigns, or a politicised domain for politicised processes.

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## **3.7 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: id.au**

<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>For subdomains providing domain-names for individuals</b>
<b>Delegate:</b>	<b>Robert Elz</b>
<b>Registrar:</b>	<b>Robert Elz</b>
<b>Policy Status:</b>	<b>Policy determined by the delegate</b>
<b>Policy Source:</b>	<u><a href="http://www.id.au/policy-id-au.html">http://www.id.au/policy-id-au.html</a></u>

### ***3.7.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?***

Robert Elz is the exclusive service provider for id.au. However, treating 3LDs as entities in the same sense as 2LDs, there is substantive competition in the provision of various id.au subdomains.

### ***3.7.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

There are a number of id.au 3LD registrars, 9 individuals and organizations. The id.au delegate and the delegated parties for sub-domains regard each sub-domain as fully delegated and so need to be considered for separation of roles/duties individually.

### **3.7.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?**

Domain names must reflect certain rules, so id.au cannot be considered fully open. However, barriers to entry are minimal, so id.au can be considered partially open.

### **3.7.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?**

No other 2LD appears to provide services targeted at individuals in the same sense, although ICANN's decision to introduce the .name gTLD could provide substitutability. Within id.au, the general idea of substitutability is encouraged by the provision of sufficient id.au subdomains which have comparable policies to permit individuals to find a suitable domain name.

### **3.7.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?**

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in id.au. A number are known to have informal SLA which are not specified.

### **3.7.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?**

There is no noted dispute resolution procedure for service in id.au.

### **3.7.7 What pricing applies?**

A range of fees apply. They are noted under each id.au 3LD.

### **3.7.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?**

The Volumes within the various sub-domains of id.au at this time are:

<b>Subdomain</b>	<b>volume</b>
<b>Dropbear.id.au</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Echidna.id.au</b>	<b>(9 as of march/1999)</b>
<b>Emu.id.au</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Ironbark.id.au</b>	<b>(15 as of September/1999)</b>
<b>Lorikeet.id.au</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Wallaroo.id.au</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Waratah.id.au</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Wattle.id.au</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>Wombat.id.au</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>441</b>

<b>Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Δ per month</b>
<b>08/05/2000</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>07/09/1999</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>23/03/1999</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>12/02/1999</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>19/01/1999</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>01/11/1998</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>19/07/1997</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>—</b>

### ***3.7.9 Are domain names licensed , for a defined period?***

Domain name validity is undefined in some cases. In others, the id.au 3LD may promote a lease period and fee for renewal.

### ***3.7.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?***

Acceptable use guidelines apply. Australian residence, or connection with Australia, can apply. Organisations can be excluded.

### ***3.7.11 Are there any other customer service issues?***

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in id.au.

### ***3.7.12 What technical arrangements apply?***

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement if delegation is required. Registration does not require any DNS servers.

### ***3.7.13 Where is customer data held?***

Some data is held in AUNIC. The id.au delegate policy generally imposes privacy rules on the registrars of the 3LDs, a general whois service would probably breach that restriction.

### ***3.7.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?***

The .name gTLD could have implications for id.au and other personal 2LDs in .au.

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## **3.8 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: info.au**

<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>For major information resources</b>
<b>Delegate:</b>	<b>Geoff Huston</b>
<b>Registrar:</b>	<b>Geoff Huston</b>
<b>Policy Status:</b>	<b>Policy determined by the Delegate</b>
<b>Policy Source:</b>	<b>Not available</b>

The registrar has not published the policy for info.au.

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### **3.9 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: net.au**

**Purpose:** For entities that carry on, or propose to carry on, an Internet related business in Australia  
**Delegate:** Chris Chaundy  
**Registrar:** connect.com.au Pty Ltd  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the delegate and registrar jointly  
**Policy Source:** <http://register.connect.com.au>

(Refer to [4.2 Diagram of net.au processes](#))

#### ***3.9.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?***

connect.com.au Pty Ltd is the exclusive service provider in net.au.

#### ***3.9.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?***

connect.com.au is the registrar. Chris Chaundy is the delegate. Chris Chaundy is an employee of connect.com.au and policy is noted as being jointly determined, so separation is notional.

#### ***3.9.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?***

net.au is considered partially open due to derivation and registration/corporation status rules.

#### ***3.9.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?***

The main substitutability is with com.au, and with org.au and asn.au to a lesser degree. There is also some substitutability with the .net, .com and .org gTLDs.

#### ***3.9.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?***

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in net.au. The internal self-imposed service level target is:

- < 24 hours for a new registration (usually same day)
- Same day redelegation (if submitted before 6pm)
- < 24 hours for provision of domain name key (if not immediate)

The registry currently operates during normal business hours. The support team escalate to the registrar via mobile / email if required after hours.

#### ***3.9.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?***

There is no formally noted dispute resolution procedure for service in net.au. While there is no internal dispute resolution process, the policy does include a reference to Connect's position regarding any disputes.

#### ***3.9.7 What pricing applies?***

Self-registration of a domain name costs \$137.50 (including GST) for 2 years. There is no update fee for self-redelegation.

#### ***3.9.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

Volume is currently around 10,000 names. The growth rate is typically 230 - 250 new names per month.

#### ***3.9.9 Are domain names licensed, for a defined period?***

Domain names are licensed for a 2 year period.

**3.9.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?**

Acceptable use guidelines apply.

**3.9.11 Are there any other customer service issues?**

There are no known customer service issues with service provision in net.au.

**3.9.12 What technical arrangements apply?**

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement.

**3.9.13 Where is customer data held?**

Customer data is held in the connect.com.au registry.

**3.9.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?**

The close substitutability with com.au means that policy changes to either will affect both.

---

**3.10 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: org.au**

**Purpose:** For organisations  
**Delegate:** Robert Elz  
**Registrar:** Robert Elz  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the delegate  
**Policy Source:** <http://munnari.oz.au/netinfo/org.au-policy>

(Refer to [4.3 Diagram of org.au processes](#))

**3.10.1 Is there existing competition in provision of services for the 2LD?**

Robert Elz is the exclusive service provider in org.au.

**3.10.2 Is there separation of registrar and delegate?**

Robert Elz is both the registrar and delegate.

**3.10.3 What is the domain status on the scale from open to closed?**

org.au is partially open. Corporate entities, unable to satisfy the registrar that other 2LDs are not more appropriate, will be refused a domain name.

**3.10.4 What substitutability exists for the 2LD?**

asn.au offers substitutability for bodies not able to obtain domain names in com.au or net.au.

**3.10.5 Are there any service level agreements (SLAs) or guarantees?**

There is no formal or informal SLA or guarantee for service in org.au.

**3.10.6 Is there a dispute resolution process?**

There is no noted dispute resolution procedure for service in org.au.

### ***3.10.7 What pricing applies?***

No fees apply.

### ***3.10.8 What volume of domain names exist in the 2LD and what rate of growth applies?***

Approximately 6500 names exist in org.au with a rate of change of around 150 per month.

<b>Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Δ per month</b>
01/12/2000	6513	139
01/09/2000	6094	166
01/06/2000	5596	169
01/03/2000	5087	166
01/12/1999	4589	182
01/09/1999	4042	182
01/06/1999	3495	111
01/03/1999	3161	134
01/12/1998	2757	135
01/09/1998	2350	130
01/06/1998	1959	122
01/03/1998	1592	72
01/12/1997	1374	86
01/09/1997	1115	89
01/06/1997	846	81
01/03/1997	603	53
01/12/1996	442	47
01/09/1996	301	33
01/06/1996	200	28
01/03/1996	114	17

### ***3.10.9 Are domain names licensed , for a defined period?***

Domain name validity is undefined.

### ***3.10.10 Are there other restrictions on the licensed right to a domain name?***

No other restrictions apply.

### ***3.10.11 Are there any other customer service issues?***

There are some stated concerns about the timeliness of processing applications.

### ***3.10.12 What technical arrangements apply?***

The usual 2-DNS servers at time of lodgement for delegation. No technical requirement is placed for registration.

### ***3.10.13 Where is customer data held?***

Whois data is held in the AUNIC registry.

### ***3.10.14 What are the implications for new 2LDs?***

org.au and asn.au may be substitutable domain spaces for the non-profit sector. Desirability of org.au as branding for many entities forced to register in asn.au, net.au or com.au.

---

### 3.11 SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN: **oz.au**

**Purpose:** For machines visible on the ACS network  
**Delegate:** Robert Elz  
**Registrar:** the ACSnet 'statefile'  
**Policy Status:** Policy determined by the delegate  
**Policy Source:** Not available

This domain is largely historic. ACSnet promoted hostnames directly into the "oz" domain with no intermediate domain name structure. When connected into the global internet the .au domain suffix was added.

Volume data as provided by the delegate:

---

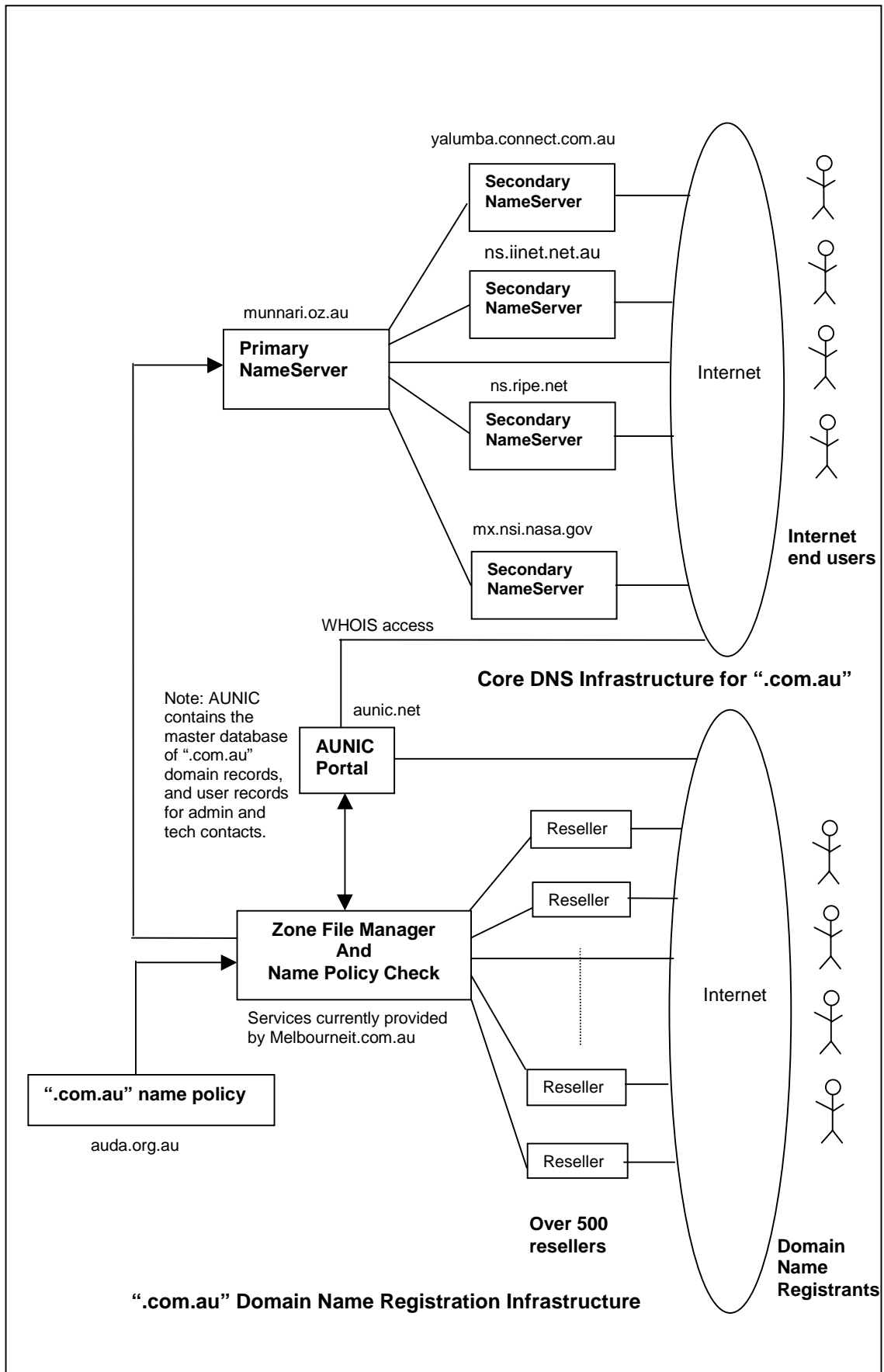
<b>Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Δ per month</b>
01/12/2000	197	0
01/09/2000	195	0
01/06/2000	195	0
01/03/2000	194	0
01/12/1999	196	-1
01/09/1999	201	0
01/06/1999	202	-2
01/03/1999	210	0
01/12/1998	212	0
01/09/1998	210	-1
01/06/1998	213	-3
01/03/1998	222	-1
01/12/1997	227	-2
01/09/1997	233	-3
01/06/1997	243	-2
01/03/1007	249	-1
01/12/1996	253	1
01/09/1996	248	-6
01/06/1996	268	0
01/03/1996	266	-1

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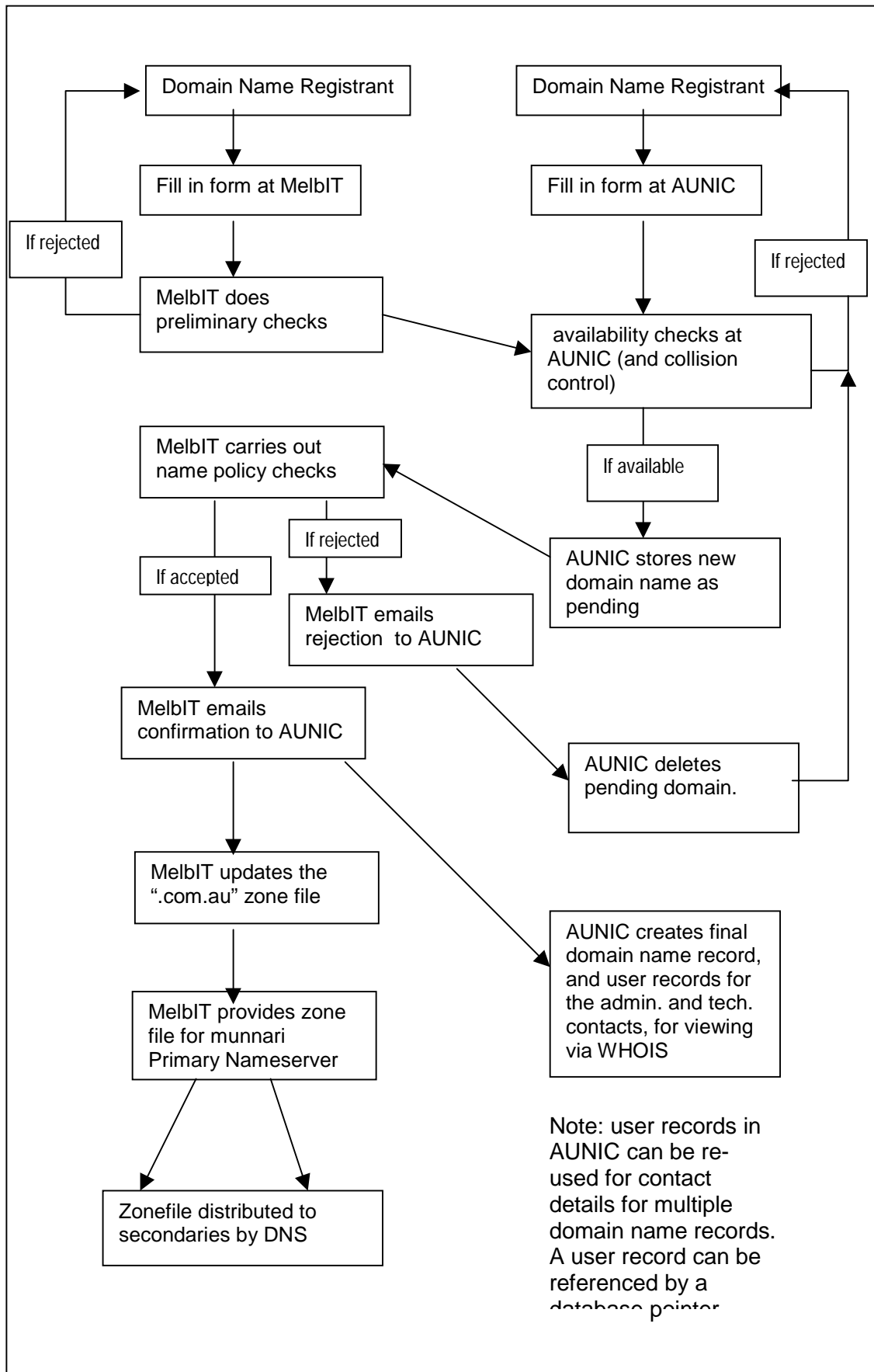


## 4 Diagrams

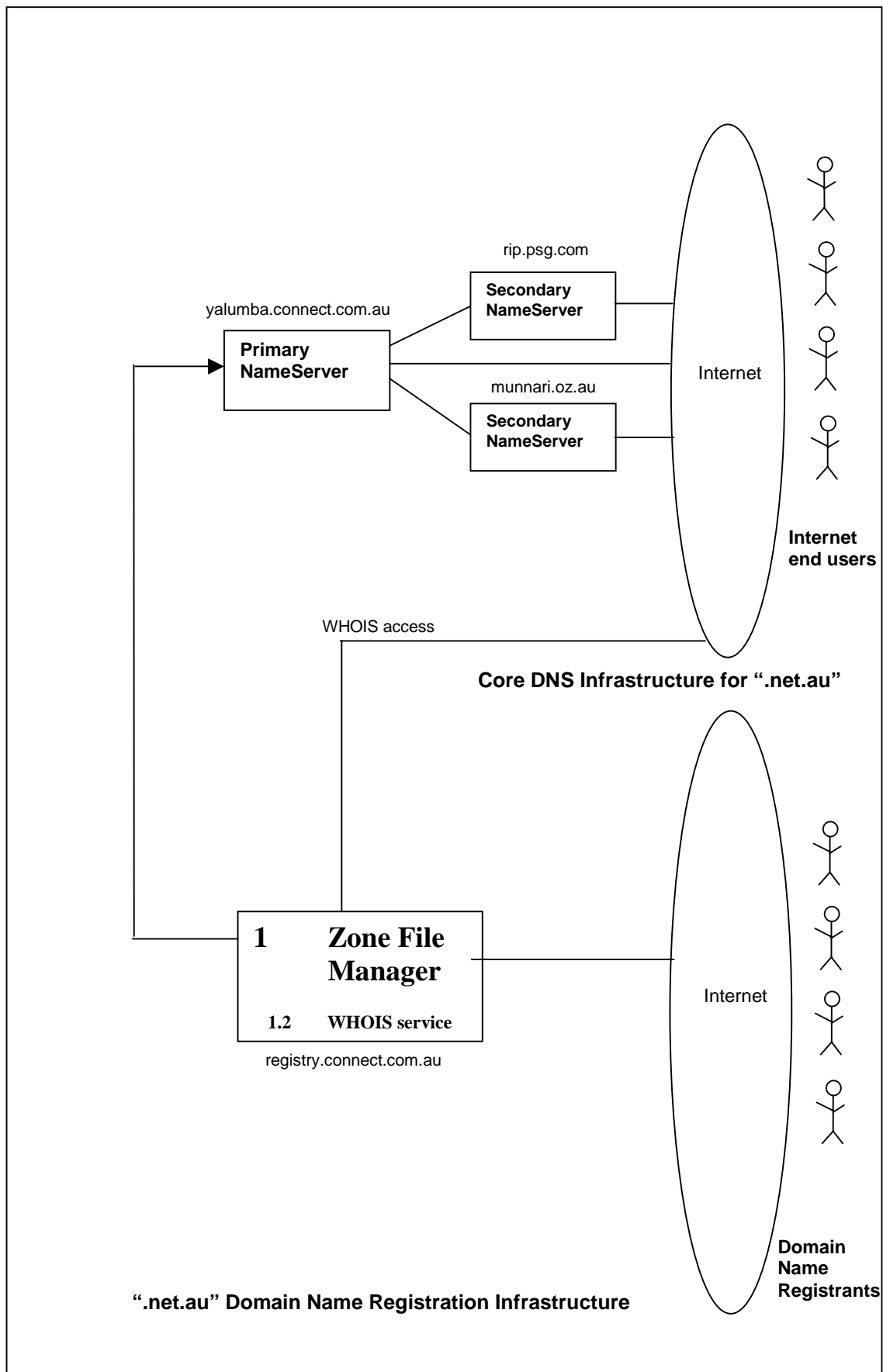
### 4.2.1 Diagram of com.au processes



#### 4.2.2 Flow diagram for successful com.au registration



## 4.2 Diagram of net.au processes



### 4.3 Diagram of org.au processes

