



Terms of Reference for a review of the .au Domain Administration

Purpose

The terms of the Australian Government's endorsement of the .au Domain Administration (auDA) as the appropriate entity to administer Australia's top-level domain (.au) on behalf of Australian internet users were established in 2000. The Department of Communications and the Arts will undertake a full review of the governance arrangements for .au.

The review will examine whether Australia's top-level domain, .au, is being managed consistent with Government and community expectations. It is anticipated that the review would be finalised in early 2018.

Scope

In keeping with the Australian Government's commitment to the multi-stakeholder approach to internet governance, the review will involve public consultation to seek industry and community views on best practice approaches and processes for the management of .au to ensure that the governance structure is fit for purpose.

The review will examine and make recommendations on:

- the most appropriate framework for the management of the .au top level domain
- how to ensure that Government and community expectations inform auDA's operation and decision-making, and
- mitigation strategies to address future risks to the security and stability of .au.

Background

auDA is the independent not-for-profit organisation responsible for the policy and technical administration of Australia's country code top-level domain, .au. The Government's expectations for the management of .au were set out by the Minister of the day in a letter of endorsement in 2000.

They include:

- recognising that the Internet naming system is a public resource
- operating as a fully self-funding and not-for-profit organisation
- being inclusive of and accountable to all members of the Australian internet community
- adopting open, transparent and consultative processes
- promoting competition, fair trading and provisions for consumer protection and support
- establishing appropriate dispute resolution mechanisms, and
- representing Australian internet industry interests in the internet domain name system at national and international fora.

There are reserve legislative powers under the *Telecommunications Act 1997* and the *Australian Communications and Media Authority Act 2005*.