

CEO's Report

auDA Activities and Progress – 2009

2009 marked the 10th Anniversary of auDA's establishment as the not-for-profit body tasked with managing Australia's vital .au domain space for the benefit of the Australian Internet community. Over the last decade, we've witnessed radical changes in how "the Internet community" is defined and exponential growth in the role the Internet plays in every part of our everyday lives – in commerce, education, communications and social interaction.

In many ways, auDA's development has mirrored these changes to the Internet –from our start as a small, new company with a largely technical stakeholder and user base, through an unprecedented period of growth and development, and to a new phase of consolidation and maturation.

An important part of auDA maturing as an organisation has been the development of a Strategic Plan for 2008-10 - a clear and detailed expression of our organisational goals, challenges and management strategies.

Aligned with the principal purposes outlined in auDA's Constitution, auDA has responsibilities in 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

Over the last twelve months, auDA has made significant progress against these responsibilities. Highlights from 2008-09 include:

- Security: Improvements to the resiliency and redundancy of .au DNS infrastructure.
 - An agreement with UltraDNS to provide secondary DNS resolution services for the .AU and 2LD.AU zones; and
 - A strengthening of auDA's own DNS services through the establishment of a third auDA-owned site in Europe and preparations for a fourth in North America scheduled for the first half of 2010.
- Policy: An ongoing schedule of policy reviews and updates, including:
 - A review of Registrar Accreditation Criteria;
 - The implementation of policy recommendations from the 2008 Industry Competition Advisory Panel and 2007 New Names Panel;
 - Public consultation on the Domain Renewal, Expiry and Deletion policy; and
 - The launch of a public consultation process regarding the potential creation of new .au 2LDs and the reactivation of conf.au and info.au.

- Regulatory compliance:
 - An audit of over 18,000 registrations in the “org.au” 2LD, to ensure registrant policy compliance; and
 - An in-depth review of internal complaints-handling procedures and ongoing improvement to the complaints management database.
- Registry and Registrars: Following the recommendations of the Industry Competition Advisory Panel:
 - The re-opening of auDA’s registrar accreditation process in June 2009; and
 - The extension of the auDA’s Registry Licence Agreement with AusRegistry from 4 to 6 years – a move that will deliver significant security and stability benefits and an increased likelihood of further wholesale .au domain name price reductions.
- International activities: Ongoing representation of the interests of the Australian Internet community in international fora, including at:
 - The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the global manager of internet naming and numbering systems;
 - The United Nations’ Internet Governance Forum; and
 - The Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association.
- Proactive engagement with the Australian Internet community, including:
 - auCD’s continued support for Australian communities, helping them establish and develop a unique identity online (particularly those affected by the 2009 “Black Saturday” bushfires in Victoria);
 - continued grant funding of eligible Internet-related projects through the auDA Foundation; and
 - the launch of the inaugural Australia and New Zealand Internet Best Practice Awards.

We look forward to taking further steps in 2009-10 to confirm the operation .au as an example of world’s best practice in ccTLD management.

As a final note, one issue I would like to afford special mention is the increased level of legal action in which auDA has been involved in 2008-09. While it would not qualify as a highlight per se, it is a demonstration of auDA’s commitment to the enforcement of policy compliance within the .au environment and an indication that auDA takes its role as .au manager very seriously.