

# **Community Geographic 2LDs - Domain Name Policy Rules and Guidelines**

Draft for Public Comment, November 2003

## **Introduction**

The National Reference Group invites public comment on the draft policy rules and guidelines for community geographic domain names set out in this document.

Public submissions should be addressed to:

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The closing date for submissions is **Friday 10 January 2004**.

All submissions will be posted on the auDA website.

## **Background**

In November 2002, auDA announced that it would create eight new 2LDs for Australian states and territories - act.au, nsw.au, nt.au, qld.au, sa.au, tas.au, vic.au, wa.au - in order to preserve Australian geographic names for use by the relevant community.

The proposed domain structure is placename.state/territory.au - for example, bathurst.nsw.au or ballarat.vic.au. The central principle of the proposal is that use of the domain names be restricted to community website portals that reflect community interests, such as local business, tourism, historical information, special interest groups, and cultural events.

auDA is committed to ensuring that the geographic 2LDs are implemented in a way that maximises their public appeal and utility, whilst still preserving their community-based purpose. auDA has therefore established a National Reference Group comprising key stakeholders, including representatives of all levels of Australian government, to play a high-level policy advisory role during the implementation period. The policy rules and guidelines set out in this document have been drafted by the National Reference Group.

More background information about the community geographic 2LDs and the National Reference Group is available on the auDA website.

## Draft Policy Rules and Guidelines

### *1. Geographic domain names available for registration*

#### Policy 1a)

Applicants may only license a domain name that is listed in the registry database. The registry database contains the names of all addressable localities (eg: suburbs, localities and towns) within the Commonwealth and each Australian state and territory, as defined by the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA).

#### Guideline 1a):

Addressable localities are places or locations where populations reside. These include towns, cities and suburbs.

Geographic names that are non-addressable localities (eg. names of cultural significance such as the Murray River and the Great Barrier Reef) will not be included in the initial available registry database for this name space. The National Reference Group will consider the allocation and use of non-addressable locality names at an appropriate time.

#### Policy 1b)

Where a suburb has the same name as a town or city within a state or territory, the name of the suburb will be hyphenated to the name of the relevant place name.

#### Guideline 1b):

An example is the town of Richmond in NSW, and the suburb of Richmond in Sydney. The domain name for the town of Richmond would be richmond.nsw.au, and the domain name for the suburb of Richmond would be richmond-sydney.nsw.au.

The Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia (CGNA), as the authority on geographic naming in Australia and Australasia, would determine the appropriate hyphenated name for any duplicate names within the state/territory name space.

Any disputes regarding the allocation of the hyphenated name would be referred to the CGNA for consideration by the appropriate state/territory geographic names board.

## *2. Eligibility criteria for registration of geographic domain names*

Policy 2a):

To be eligible to license a community geographic domain name, the registrant must be:

- i) a legally registered, not-for-profit entity  
(company limited by guarantee, incorporated association or registered cooperative);  
and
- ii) representative of the local community for the purpose of holding the domain name licence.<sup>1</sup>

Guideline 2a)i):

### Evidence of legal registration and not-for-profit status

Applicant registrants must provide valid registration details for the not-for-profit entity (eg. company name and ACN) accompanied by a copy of its constitution and current membership, including the names of members and the community/ interest group/s they represent.

### Funding and support

As a not-for-profit entity, registrants should demonstrate what methods of funding would be developed to fund the website and its maintenance. Support and revenue sources may include but are not limited to: sponsorship, website advertising, monetary and in-kind donations and contributions.

Such information provides evidence of the registrant's ability to establish and maintain the website for the local community in an effective and timely manner.

It may also be considered in the context of any grants schemes and funding opportunities developed by external parties or government agencies developed to assist such ventures.

Guideline 2a)ii):

### For the purpose of holding the domain licence

- “Representative” is defined as:
  - a reasonable cross-sample or typical embodiment of the local residing population reflecting the variety of interests of those residing in the local area; and

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<sup>1</sup> As defined under policy guideline 2a)ii)

- relevant to and generally accepted as a representative sample of the ‘local community’.
- “Of the local community” is defined as:
  - *Local* - the physical place, geographic location or area as geographically bounded by its name and local area by the relevant state/territory Geographic Names Board and as it is recorded on the CGNA national register for geographic names.
  - *Community* – the population physically residing in the local place or area, and the variety of interests of the population (represented as communities of interests within the local residing population).

Registrant applicants must therefore demonstrate their *representation of the local community* through membership, ensuring:

- The registrant group (legally registered, not-for-profit entity) complies with the minimum number of members as per the legal requirements for a company limited by guarantee, incorporated association or co-operative. As a guideline, in most cases, a minimum of 8 members is recommended.
- Members must represent a broad range of community interests and groups. Groups may include, but are not limited to: special community sector interest groups, sporting clubs and groups, hobby groups and clubs, tourism, business, historical clubs/societies, education, charities, not-for-profits, media, arts, culture, entertainment, spirituality/religious, aboriginal, multicultural, women, men, seniors, youth, parents, etc.
- Ideally, members should be the elected or most appropriate representatives of their particular community of interest group.

Policy 2b)

No individual person or single entity is eligible to license a community geographic domain name. Any individual person or single entity wishing to license a community geographic domain name must establish a legally registered, not-for-profit entity with appropriate local community membership for the purpose of holding the domain name licence.

Guideline 2b):

Only a legally registered, not-for-profit entity with representative members from a broad cross-section of the local community is eligible to register a domain name in this name space.

This means that no individual person or single entity, on its own, is eligible to register a domain name in this name space.

Local councils are regarded as single entities and therefore would not be eligible to register domain names on their own behalf. However, the National Reference Group recognises the special role of local councils as active and representative members of the local community. Therefore, as part of the local community, councils are encouraged to be involved in developing this local public asset through membership of the registrant entity. In fact, in many cases council may be the driving force to create and seek membership for the registrant entity.

*The National Reference Group in association with relevant stakeholders will determine the appropriate role of local government in relation to the endorsement or approval of the registrant within the domain name registration process.*

### **3. Domain name licence conditions**

#### **Policy 3a)**

The domain name licence period is fixed at 2 years. It is not possible to license a domain name for a shorter or longer period.

#### **Guideline 3a):**

Two-year domain licence periods are the standard practice within the .au name space and accordingly would also apply to this name space.

*Information on the cost of registering a domain name in this name space will be included in this guideline once the National Reference Group has determined price guidelines/policy.*

#### **Policy 3b)**

The registrant must use the domain name solely for the purpose of operating a community website.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Guideline 3b):**

##### Solely for the purpose

The registrant must use the domain name solely for the purpose of operating a community website on behalf of the local community. The domain name must not be

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<sup>2</sup> In addition to guideline 3b, further best practice guideline specific to community websites will be made available on the completion of the NSW test case, 2004.

used for the interest or benefit (commercial or otherwise) of an individual person or single entity.

#### Community website

The website must be developed for the benefit of the entire local community, including all communities of interest within the local community. As the website is developed for and on behalf of the community, it must remain accurate, relevant and up-to-date.

As per footnote 2: Additional information, best practice rules/model/s for community websites within this name space will be included in this guideline on the completion of the NSW test case.

#### Policy 3c)

To renew a domain name licence at the end of the 2-year period, the registrant must demonstrate:

- i) that it still meets the eligibility criteria; and
- ii) it is using the domain name to operate a community website.

#### Guideline 3c):

All policy guidelines relating to 2a, 2b, 2c and 3b relate directly to policy 3c.

All domain names will be reviewed at the 2 year expiration. The registrant's ability to comply with the policy rules and guidelines, along with any complaints or objections placed against the registrant will be taken into consideration during the renewal process.

#### Policy 3d)

There is no restriction on the number of domain names that may be licensed by a single registrant, provided that it meets the eligibility criteria for each domain name.

#### Guideline 3d):

This rule relates specifically to instances where there are a number of addressable localities in close proximity to each other that wish to form an entity which is representative of all relevant local communities in order to manage the domain names and website/s for the whole group.

It aims to assist in effective and efficient use of resources across smaller communities which share geographic boundaries and similarities in a particular geographic area/proximity.

This rule does not however, allow an entity to apply for a range of geographic domain names in non-adjourning areas where the entity is clearly not 'representative of the local community' as per policy 2a.