

Annual advice to stakeholders of Board's performance (2018-19)

November 2019

During the past 18 months, the auDA Board was heavily focused on meeting the terms of the Government's Review. In order to cope with this workload and to continue to meet the business-as-usual demands on the Board, there were many more meetings than would ordinarily be expected and considerable pressure on both management and Directors. The business-as-usual included the appointment process and transfer of responsibility to the new Registry Operator. The Board was closely involved in oversight of this critical process – and in establishing the ongoing monitoring and accountability framework.

Many of the requirements of the Government Review contributed to systemically improving the operation of the Board, including obtaining approval for a new Constitution and revising supporting documentation and processes set out in Policy documents and Board and Committee Charters. These included a revised Transparency and Accountability Framework. During the period, the Board also reviewed its calendars to ensure alignment with the requirements of the Board and Committee Charters.

The Review also required the Board to systematically strengthen its engagement with auDA stakeholders through establishment of the standing advisory committees and providing support for the incoming Nominations Committee.

Despite that effort, the Board were cognisant that there remained aspects of its responsibilities that did not receive sufficient attention during this period. Once Review milestones were achieved the Board turned its attention, in particular, to strategy development, to strengthening the performance management framework for auDA and to its own effectiveness.

To restart its approach, the Board set aside time for a strategic retreat with the Chair and members of the Governance Committee actively involved in this process, requiring a number of papers of management. Directors also prepared material for the retreat.

The Board retreat was also used as an opportunity to assess the Board's effectiveness and an external governance facilitator was engaged to conduct a survey-based self-assessment, to interview Directors and to lead a Director's workshop at the Retreat, identifying strengths and weaknesses and improvements to the internal working of the Board.

Outcomes from the workshop included, in particular, that the Board confirmed its resolve to continue to govern proactively and to address the key challenges facing auDA irrespective of the likelihood of a substantially new Board resulting from the Nomination Committee process.

A program of work was agreed with the CEO to further develop aspects of the draft strategic plan. The Board recognised that as more of its time became available, it needed to dedicate more to performance oversight and made it a priority to work with the CEO to re-set his performance agreement and KPIs, establishing a small Board working party to do the drafting and to seek external advice. The Board also discussed with the CEO his capability assessment of the senior executive team and identified some gaps that required action.

The Board also resolved to become more involved in the key auDA 2.0 initiatives of rebuilding and expanding the membership and providing support for the standing advisory committees.

