



14 May 2010

Jo Lim
Chief Policy Officer
114 Cardigan Street
Carlton VIC 3053

Dear Jo Lim

**Submission for a new second level domain (2LD) name –
“parliament.au”**

Purpose of ‘parliament.au’

1 The current url for the Parliament of Australia is aph.gov.au. This implies that the Parliament is a government agency, which is not correct. The Parliament of Australia consists of:

- (a) The Queen represented by Australia's Governor-General
- (b) The Australian Senate
- (c) The Australian House of Representatives.

2 The Parliament of Australia is made up of a total of 226 people elected to the Senate and House of Representatives to represent the interests of Australians and to 'make laws for the peace, order and good government of the nation' (section 51 Australian Constitution).

3 A 2LD name of “parliament.au” will enable the Parliament of Australia to be correctly recognised. In addition to this:

- (a) **Most people understand full words and phrases more clearly than acronyms.** There are some exceptions to this, e.g. radar, but there is a much stronger cognitive association between the Parliament of Australia and the word ‘parliament’, than there is with ‘APH’. Using www.parliament.au would therefore increase the public’s ability to identify and find the site.
- (b) **It is more closely aligned with what people are searching for.** Statistics from the keywords that people use in search engines to arrive at the APH website show that the most common term used is ‘parliament’. Changing the website address to parliament.au will aid recognition of links to the website within lists of search results.
- (c) **It will facilitate top ranking in search engine results when the word ‘parliament’ is searched.** Google and other search engines display search results in order of relevance and popular association;

the first links in results are usually where words in the website address most closely match what was searched for.

- (d) **Be consistent with international practice.** The UK, New Zealand and Scottish parliaments use "parliament" as the 2LD name - <http://www.parliament.uk>, <http://www.parliament.nz/> and <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/> respectively.

Intended users of this domain name and number of eligible registrants

4 Other eligible registrants for this domain name would be limited to the federal, state and territory parliaments e.g. nsw.parliament.au, vic.parliament.au and so forth.

Selection criteria response that would apply to 'parliament.au'

5 The proposed domain name will better serve the needs of users – within Australia and internationally of the Parliament of Australia website as the existing website address www.aph.gov.au is ambiguous and the acronym refers to Parliament House rather than the Parliament of Australia. Other user groups in the future include other parliaments who are currently identified as www.parliament.nsw.gov.au using the .gov domain which is technically not correct especially for the Parliament of Australia.

6 Implementation of this domain name is strongly supported by the Clerks (senior executives of the House of Representatives and Senate chamber departments) and Senators and Members of Parliament. You will shortly be provided with letters expressing their support. We have also received over the years a number of emails from the public community including former members of parliament and staff, requesting a meaningful domain name for parliament. These persons have extension communications with international legislative and parliamentary entities that access the parliament's website and find the url unclear and not meaningful.

7 This domain name will contribute to the broad use of the Australian DNS and be very relevant and meaningful to users (includes both registrants and non-registrants) to reach and access the Parliament of Australia website.

8 We can confirm that this domain name of 'parliament.au' will be consistent with the existing .au 2LD hierarchy and compliant with auDA policies.

9 In order to appropriately address the domain of Parliament and its chambers, we recommend that other related 2LD domain names such as Senate and House of Reps or HoR not be created or approved without prior discussion with executives (especially the Presiding Officers) within Parliament House.

Yours sincerely



Roxanne Missingham
Parliamentary Librarian on behalf of the Parliament of Australia.