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New2LDsAP Meeting - 25 May 2010

Present: David Cake, Sally Foreman, Jo Lim, Andrew Lonsdale, Kim Lowton, Graham McDonald, George Pongas, Derek Whitehead

Teleconference: Kim Heitman (until 4.30pm), Holly Raiche, David Lee (observer), Peter Nettlefold (observer)

Actions:

- DW to write to the Department of Parliamentary Services, Parliament of Australia regarding the proposal for parliament.au
- DW and JL to draft Panel's recommendations to the auDA board.

Discussion:

1. Review of public submissions and survey responses

The Panel received 7 formal submissions and 63 responses to the online survey (NB 1 person did both). The Panel noted that the online survey elicited a much higher response rate than has been the case in previous Panel consultations. Many of the survey responses included extensive comments, making it a valuable mechanism for garnering public feedback.

The Panel noted the submission from the Department of Parliamentary Services, Parliament of Australia, which was in the form of a proposal to create a new 2LD parliament.au. The Panel agreed that it is too late to consider the proposal as part of the current process, and that it should be referred to auDA for consideration at a later date. DW will write to the Department of Parliamentary Services providing some informal feedback on the proposal.

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2. Discussion of Panel's draft recommendations

blog.au

The Panel noted that comments received in relation to the proposal for blog.au were mostly negative. The Panel

reaffirmed its view that there is no demonstrated need or demand for the creation of blog.au.

event.au

The Panel noted that its initial belief that event.au would have a broader appeal than conf.au was not borne out by the public consultation. The Panel concluded that to the extent that there is support for an events-related 2LD, it is for conf.au not event.au.

conf.au

The Panel noted that the majority of responses to the online survey were from people who wanted to express their support for the reactivation of conf.au, and of those, the majority focused specifically on the continuation of linux.conf.au. The Panel acknowledged that the Linux conference has established a long-standing online identity through the use of linux.conf.au.

Leaving aside the case of linux.conf.au, most Panel members felt that the arguments in favour of reactivating conf.au were no stronger than they were prior to public consultation. Two Panel members disagreed, and their minority opinion will be included in the Panel's report to the auDA Board.

The Panel discussed the suggestion that, if conf.au was not to be reactivated, then linux.conf.au should be grandfathered. It was agreed it is not within scope for the Panel to make a recommendation to the auDA board on this point, however the Panel will express its view that a strong case for grandfathering has been made.

info.au

The Panel noted that there was no strong support for reactivating info.au. Responses to the survey indicated a mild level of support for the suggestion to expand AusRegistry's proposal for info.au to include people who don't want to register in other 2LDs, however this was counter-balanced by concerns about the prospect of defensive registrations if info.au was reactivated as another commercial domain space.

New 2LD policy and process

The Panel discussed public comments in relation to auDA's policy and process for new 2LDs. There was no suggestion that the policy principles or selection criteria for new 2LDs are incorrect or misguided. There appeared to be a general acceptance that public interest should be the overriding concern in the consideration of new 2LDs.

The Panel noted the submission from AusRegistry regarding commercial considerations and who should be responsible for developing the business case for a new 2LD. auDA's process places the onus on the proponent, however this time around the Panel has attempted to do its own research through targeted consultation. Whilst Panel members endorsed the general principle that it should be the responsibility of the proponent to make the case for a new 2LD, it was agreed that there needs to be a degree of flexibility so that a potentially good idea is not disregarded on process grounds. The Panel agreed to recommend an amendment to the wording of auDA's new 2LD process to address this point.

3. Next meeting

The June meeting was cancelled to allow sufficient time for public consultation. Dates for the next Panel meeting will be canvassed on the mailing list.

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