

## PROPOSALS FOR INFO.AU

Prepared by auDA Staff, December 2009

### Background

The info.au 2LD was created by Robert Elz and administered by Geoff Huston. According to the old AUNIC website, info.au was “for major information resources”. There are approximately 15 info.au domain names (eg. missingpersons.info.au and scienceweek.info.au).

auDA’s Name Policy Advisory Panel undertook a review of .au 2LD policies in June 2000. Geoff Huston appeared to have stopped providing registration services for info.au by that time, and the Panel was unable to locate a published policy or any other documentation which explained the basis on which info.au domain names were allocated.

The Panel recommended that auDA conduct a public review of info.au (along with conf.au) to determine its role in the Australian DNS, and it suggested that registrations in those 2LDs be suspended pending the outcome of the review. This recommendation was accepted by the auDA board.

auDA issued a call for proposals for new 2LDs in 2002, including proposals for changes to info.au. Only one proposal was received and it was not recommended by the New Names Advisory Panel, leaving info.au in suspension.

### Purpose of auDA staff proposals

auDA called for proposals for info.au as part of a call for new 2LD proposals in October 2009. Again, only one proposal was received.

auDA staff believe that info.au has significant potential to be a useful domain space for Australian internet users. With only one proposal to be considered, we are concerned that the current review process will leave info.au in limbo yet again.

Under the circumstances, we think it appropriate for auDA staff to put forward alternative proposals for info.au. The staff proposals will be published for public comment and subject to assessment and evaluation by the New 2LDs Advisory Panel, along with other proposals received.

### Proposals for info.au

auDA staff put forward the following three, alternative proposals for consideration by the New 2LDs Advisory Panel.

#### 1. Continue the original policy purpose for info.au.

- a. The purpose of the 2LD.

The purpose of info.au would be for major information resources.

- b. The intended users of the 2LD (including both registrants and non-registrants who may benefit from or use the 2LD).

The intended registrants of info.au domain names would be organisations that maintain major public information resources, and/or conduct major public information campaigns. Existing examples are the Australian Federal Police (missingpersons.info.au) and the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (scienceweek.info.au).

The intended users of the info.au 2LD would be the general public, more specifically people who are looking for official or authoritative information about various subjects.

c. The proposed eligibility criteria and allocation rules that would apply in the 2LD.

The current eligibility criteria for com.au/net.au and asn.au/org.au would be applied to info.au. Government entities would also be eligible.

The current allocation rules for com.au/net.au and asn.au/org.au would also be applied to info.au – ie. registrants could register a domain name that is an exact match, acronym or abbreviation of their name or trade mark, or under the close and substantial connection rule. However, the registrant would need to warrant that they intend to use the domain name to provide a major information resource and/or conduct a major public information campaign. Domain names that were not used for the stated purposes would be in breach of policy and subject to deletion by auDA. Registering info.au domain names for the purpose of domain monetisation would not be allowed.

## 2. Change info.au into a “premium” commercial 2LD.

a. The purpose of the 2LD.

The purpose of info.au would be for “premium” commercial domain names.

b. The intended users of the 2LD (including both registrants and non-registrants who may benefit from or use the 2LD).

The intended registrants of info.au domain names would be commercial entities that have not been able to register their desired com.au/net.au domain name, or that want to differentiate themselves from the existing com.au/net.au domain spaces.

The intended users of the info.au 2LD would be the general public, more specifically people who are looking for a “legitimate” Australian business website.

c. The proposed eligibility criteria and allocation rules that would apply in the 2LD.

The current eligibility criteria for com.au/net.au would be applied to info.au.

The allocation rules for info.au would be restricted to an exact match, acronym or abbreviation of the registrant’s name or trade mark. The close and substantial connection rule would not apply in info.au, and registering info.au domain names for the purpose of domain monetisation would not be allowed.

### 3. Close down info.au.

One interpretation of the lack of proposals for info.au is that people are not interested in it. If that is the case, then auDA staff suggest that the best thing to do would be to close it down, rather than keep it suspended indefinitely.

Registrants of legacy info.au domain names would be given reasonable notice that their domain name is to be deactivated. We note that some registrants appear to have already transitioned to a new domain name (eg. the website at [www.missingpersons.info.au](http://www.missingpersons.info.au) refers users to a new website at [www.missingpersons.gov.au](http://www.missingpersons.gov.au), and [www.scienceweek.info.au](http://www.scienceweek.info.au) automatically redirects to [www.scienceweek.gov.au](http://www.scienceweek.gov.au)).