

CEO's Report

auDA Activities and Progress – 2002

The word watershed is much misused. However, I think it very appropriately sums up the last year for auDA. It means a turning point; a crucial event. And the last year has certainly been both of those for us. Key Achievements of auDA So much has happened in the last 12 months that I propose simply to list the key areas and comment only briefly them.

1. We transitioned from the old to the new regime. This was a nine month exercise that involved an enormous amount of planning and implementation including:
 - Awarding the tender for the registry
 - Accrediting test-bed registrars
 - Finalising negotiations with the incumbent 2LD delegates and in the case of org.au, re-delegating Rigorous registry testing
 - Numerous public consultations on aspects of policy and documentation
 - Drafting and publishing numerous auDA policiesTransitioning the data from 3 different registries to the new registry AND Informing domain name registrants of the changes
2. The transition culminated in the go-live to the new registry and the new regime on 1 July 2002. Despite the pessimistic predictions of some, the switch-over was seamless from a registrant's point of view.
3. During the same period, we ran the generic names auction process and completed the auction of over 1500 names. The balance of the names were recently released into the general pool of com.au names. Again, I am delighted to say that, despite some predictions to the contrary, the process, whilst long and time consuming, was ultimately both logistically and financially successful.
4. During the year we also facilitated an industry Code of Practice working group which has now released a Code of Practice replacing the interim one published by auDA last year. There is more work to do in this area.
5. We have convened a new names panel which is currently considering proposals for new 2LDs in .au.
6. We have flexed our muscles in the reseller arena by issuing Consumer Alerts and in 2 cases, bringing actions under the TPA that was ultimately settled in our favour.
7. We have started to set up the auDA Foundation, a body that will use some of the money raised from the generic auctions to enhance the utility of the .au space for the benefit of the Australian community through private and public sponsorship of education and community projects.
8. Finally, we have been very active on the international front by playing a key role at ICANN and its associated entities. I sit on the Board of the apTLD association and am a member of the ICANN Evolutionary Reform Committee's Assistance Group on cc matters.

As I hope you can tell from the above, it has indeed been a watershed year for auDA as well as an extraordinarily busy and productive one. Before I move on to briefly outline our ongoing activities, I'd like to take this opportunity to pause and make a few acknowledgements.

The auDA Board. The vast majority of these people are volunteers who do this job because they actually care what happens in the .au name space. It's hard work and often difficult decisions need to be made. Over the last 12 months each of them, in their own way, has helped the executive in getting the job done efficiently and effectively. Their advice, support and cool headed input has been of critical importance and I thank them for it.

auDA out-sources its legal, accounting and technical service requirements. Craig Ng and Maddocks, are our legal team; John Higgins and Hayes Knight are our accounting team and David Keegel and Cybersource provide technical advice and services. I thank all of them for being pro-active, flexible and willing to help at the drop of a hat.

auDA has a staff of 3 including me. Elspeth Ross joined us in March this year as our Administration Manager and gallantly took control of managing the generic name process. Her patience, willingness to learn and ability to muck in and get the job done have been impressive to say the least. Now that the generic task is completed she has agreed to manage our registrar liaison, another challenging role, I suspect.

Which brings me, finally, to our Chief Policy Officer, Jo Lim. It is no exaggeration to say that without Jo, the vast majority of last year's achievements may never have happened. She has been intimately involved in almost every aspect of the transition period and beyond and the successes of the last 12 months are in no small part due to her attention to detail, depth of knowledge, skill and integrity. I could say much more but knowing how much Jo hates being in the spotlight, I'll leave at that plus my simple thanks for a job well done.

Ongoing Activities

The next 12 months are shaping up to be a busy and interesting period. Our ongoing activities include;

Setting a 5 year vision for auDA coupled with a series of long term goals that fit within the scope of that vision

- Reviewing existing policy
- Reviewing the registrar accreditation criteria
- Finalising the work of the New Names Panel and implementing their recommendations
- Continuing our public education process
- Working to increase auDA membership
- Completing the setup of the Foundation and gaining industry recognition for it
- Continuing our role in ICANN and the ccTLD constituency at this crucial time in their development.

Thank you.