



**SENATOR THE HON MITCH FIFIELD**  
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE  
MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS  
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

Mr Chris Leptos AM  
Chair, auDA Board  
Level 17, 1 Collins Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3004

Chris

Dear Mr Leptos

### **Outcomes from the review of the management of the .au domain**

In October 2017, I announced that the Department of Communications and the Arts would undertake a review of the .au Domain Administration (auDA) to consider whether Australia's top-level domain, .au, is being managed in accordance with Government and community expectations.

The Department has completed its review, which has raised a number of issues regarding the governance and operations of auDA, and indicates that urgent reforms are necessary.

The Department has finalised a report which includes a series of recommendations and new Terms of Endorsement (ToE) for auDA. A copy of the report is attached (**Attachment A**). The full report will be made publicly available through the Department's website in due course.

The Commonwealth's endorsement of auDA as the appropriate entity to hold the delegation of authority for administration of the .au ccTLD will be subject at all times to auDA meeting the conditions as outlined in the ToE (**Attachment B**). These new ToE replace the former terms set by the then Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and come into effect immediately.

I request that auDA provides a written response to the report's recommendations and the accompanying ToE within 10 business days from the date of this letter, including an assessment of the achievability of implementing the revised ToE. As part of this response, I request that auDA provides an assurance regarding the likelihood of successful implementation of the registry transformation project. Further, I understand that consultation is underway regarding direct registration and I request an update on this process.

The Australian Government expects that auDA will implement reforms to achieve compliance with the new ToE within the next twenty-four months (by April 2020). During this period, progress will be formally evaluated by the Department at six, twelve and eighteen months, with a follow-up review at twenty-four months to consider whether the reformed company is performing effectively and enhancing the management of the .au name space. I expect significant progress to have been made by auDA at each of these checkpoints.

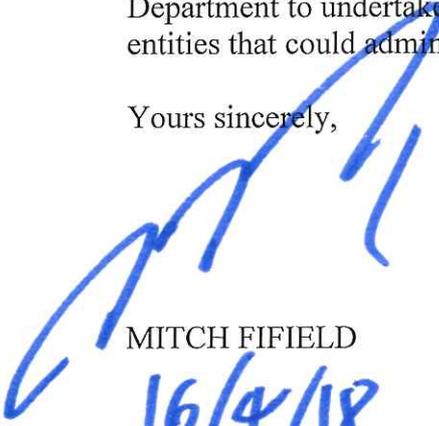
I request that within 30 days from the date of this letter you provide my Department with an implementation plan to demonstrate how auDA will achieve full compliance with the new ToE by April 2020. Once agreed, and in the interests of transparency, the implementation plan should be published on auDA's website.

As you understand, the stability and resilience of the .au namespace is paramount. auDA's implementation plan should carefully consider how best to transition to the new arrangement described in the ToE while safeguarding the continued operation of .au for all Australians.

Consistent with the review, and to ensure that reform initiatives remain on track, I also ask that auDA commence quarterly reporting to the Department. This should be provided at face-to-face meetings with the Department, with the first meeting to be held in June 2018. A high-level timeline outlining implementation and reporting milestones is attached **(Attachment C)**.

Finally, Australia's ccTLD is a public resource and it is imperative that the .au namespace is appropriately managed in the interests of all Australian internet users. In the event that auDA fails to demonstrate progress in achieving the necessary reforms, I will instruct my Department to undertake a public expression of interest process in the future to identify other entities that could administer .au, consistent with the ToE.

Yours sincerely,



MITCH FIFIELD

16/4/18