



DPC/G5.3

ACROSS GOVERNMENT GUIDELINE

# Government domain management guideline

## Purpose

This document describes in general terms, the procedure for registering and naming domains for internal and external domains required by the South Australian Government Public Sector agencies.

This guideline is applicable to all domains regardless of purpose, i.e. website, application etc.

## Scope

This guideline must be read in conjunction with the governing policy [Government Domain Management Policy](#) which also defines all associated policies relating to the management of Government Domains.

A summary of relevant national and international Internet governance arrangements is included in **Appendix A**.

## Background

### Domain Management

The allocation of domain names is centrally managed to avoid the risk of conflict and duplication.

The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) is the approving authority for all requests associated with the 'gov.au' domain and manages the 'gov.au' policies and administration in consultation with the inter-jurisdictional Domain Consultative Committee comprising of representative domain providers from each jurisdiction.

In South Australia, the Approving Authority for requests associated with the 'sa.gov.au' domain is the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC). The South Australian Domain Provider has the delegated authority to assess individual domain name applications for the 'sa.gov.au' domain.

The Approving Authority will work collaboratively with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet – SA.GOV.AU (Major Programs, DPC) to ensure that the creation of domains aligns with SA Government policy.

## Guideline detail

### Approving authority

The Approving Authority for requests associated with the 'sa.gov.au' domain is the DPC CIO.

For assistance or queries regarding domain naming, approval and registration policy, process or re-delegation of existing domains, please contact:

Domain Registrar  
Department of the Premier and Cabinet  
Email: [hostmaster@sa.gov.au](mailto:hostmaster@sa.gov.au)  
Phone: 8207 2070

## Domain considerations

Requests for new domains will only be accepted after consideration has been given to the following requirements.

### 1. Host the content on [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au)

If your domain request is for a new website you must determine if the content should be hosted on the whole of government site at [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au).

Before lodging a request for a new website domain, contact Major Programs, DPC ([sa.gov.au](http://sa.gov.au)) to discuss if the content is appropriate for [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au).

Whole of Government Website ([www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au))  
Chief Editor - SA.GOV.AU  
Major Programs  
Department of the Premier and Cabinet  
Email: [chiefeditor@sa.gov.au](mailto:chiefeditor@sa.gov.au)

Content determination can be found here <https://www.sa.gov.au/editors/content-guide>.

### 2. Creating a subdomain or new directory within an existing domain

Consider using a subdomain or directory path under an existing parent domain if:

- your information or project is short term, e.g. 12 months or less
- you want to avoid the administrative overhead and associated cost of creating and managing a new domain
- your information will fit appropriately under an existing domain name.

Please allow up to five working days for new sub-domain requests.

Example:

Existing domain:	<a href="http://www.barossa.sa.gov.au">www.barossa.sa.gov.au</a>
Subdomain:	<a href="http://www.wine.barossa.sa.gov.au">www.wine.barossa.sa.gov.au</a>
Directory path:	<a href="http://www.barossa.sa.gov.au/wine">www.barossa.sa.gov.au/wine</a>

For the purposes of managing South Australian Government domains, a 'parent' domain is any domain name which ends in [sa.gov.au](http://sa.gov.au).

## Registration guideline

All registration services for 'sa.gov.au' domains are located at [www.domainname.gov.au](http://www.domainname.gov.au). The registry site (NetRegistry) is provided by DTA and registrants must make all new domain requests through this site. The following functions can be undertaken through the NetRegistry system:

- Register a new domain name
- Change or administer registrant details
- Renew a domain name
- Delete a domain name
- Transfer a domain name

Government domains must be **renewed** every **two years**. You will be notified by the NetRegistry system when your domain is due for renewal.

The **cost** for each new registration and renewal is the responsibility of the agency.

The estimated turnaround to establish a new domain may take up to ten working days

In addition to the domain considerations outlined in section 6, all requests for new domain names must be **pre-approved** by your agency Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Information Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Director or an equivalent delegate.

A request for a new domain is not an automatic approval. Requests are subject to the Domain Registrar, verifying that the domain registration meets policy conditions and:

- your CEO or equivalent delegate has approved the request for a new 'sa.gov.au' domain name registration
- you have given due consideration to hosting the new domain content on [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au) and can provide evidence for not doing so. The guide to **content determination** can be found here <https://www.sa.gov.au/editors/content-guide>
- your application meets the naming criteria defined in this document
- you have clearly described the reason and purpose for the new domain.

### 1. Applying for a new domain name

The approval and registration process is as follows:

- a request should be raised using the online registration at [www.domainname.gov.au](http://www.domainname.gov.au). This site is managed by NetRegistry and requires a user account and password
- the proposed name of the domain must comply with the naming guidelines included in this document
- sufficient evidence to justify the creation of a new domain must be included
- requests that do not comply with the specified criteria will be returned to the requesting agency.

The agency may:

- modify the requirements to fall within policy conditions and resubmit
- cancel the request, or
- appeal the decision by raising an application for Exemption.

Information regarding applications for **exemptions** can be found at:  
<https://dpc.sa.gov.au/digital/exemption>.

## 2. Domain approvals

The Domain Registrar is notified by NetRegistry of pending requests for new domains.

- the Domain Registrar will contact the applicant requesting the following information:
  - evidence of CEO (or delegate) approval
  - IP Address for the new domain
  - Internode Client ID (or DNS hostnames where Internode is not hosting DNS)
- the Domain Registrar verifies the request against the policy conditions and approves the domain through NetRegistry
- the applicant will be notified when the new domain has been created.

The process of registration operates within the public domain and the information submitted via NetRegistry (excluding the stated purpose of the domain) will be publicly available on the Internet after the registration request has been processed.

## 3. Subdomains

Creation of sub-domains can be arranged by sending an email request to the Domain Registrar at [hostmaster@sa.gov.au](mailto:hostmaster@sa.gov.au). The physical IP address to which the sub-domain will resolve must also be provided.

Subdomains can be created for 'internal' (within StateNet only) or 'external' access.

NetRegistry must not be used to register subdomains. Only fourth level domains are registered through this system, i.e. police.sa.gov.au, police being the fourth level.

## 4. Domain deletions

Registered domains that are no longer required may be deleted. Deleting a domain is done via [www.domainname.gov.au](http://www.domainname.gov.au). The request for domain deletion will be lodged with the Domain Registrar for approval. Failing to renew a domain registration will result in a lapsed domain. The system will delete lapsed domains six months after the registration has expired.

The registrar will verify if there are any dependencies or services reliant on the domain name including email, subdomains, FTP before approving the domain deletion.

## 5. Transferring existing domains

You can apply to manage an existing domain name via [www.domainname.gov.au](http://www.domainname.gov.au) and "Apply to Manage an Existing Domain Name".

This function is particularly useful when Machinery of Government changes have moved business units between agencies.

The Domain Registrar is notified of any changes to, or transfers of domain names. Notification will be sent to the requestor when the transfer is approved and access to the requested domain information is granted.

Internal domains should only be registered through NetRegistry if the hosts want to send email to external Internet addresses.

## Domain name conventions for websites

Agencies should observe the following guidelines when proposing registration of a domain name for a website. Domain names are intended to be memorable addresses that direct to online information or services. In short, domain names must be:

- logical and intuitive
- easy to memorise, easy to say
- short and simple
- easy to type and spell

The following are format restrictions that all 'gov.au' domain names must adhere to and should be applied by all SA Government Compliant Authorities. Domain name must:

- include the extension '*sa.gov.au*'
- only include:
  - letters A-Z
  - numbers 0-9
  - hyphens (-)
  - no other characters are allowed, i.e. \$, @, % etc
- not exceed 40 characters in length including the '*sa.gov.au*' extension.

### 1. Naming Conventions

Departmental Names	Departmental names should be presented as 'department.sa.gov.au' or the commonly accepted acronym, e.g. <b>police.sa.gov.au</b> or <b>sapol.sa.gov.au</b>
Local Government	Local Government entities should be uniform within the state presented as 'localauthority.sa.gov.au', e.g. <b>loxtonwaikerie.sa.gov.au</b>
Statutory Authorities and other government bodies	Agencies, Statutory Authorities and other government bodies should be presented as 'agency.sa.gov.au' or the commonly accepted acronym, e.g. <b>environmentprotection.sa.gov.au</b> or <a href="http://www.epa.sa.gov.au">www.epa.sa.gov.au</a>
Generic or common terms	<p>Shall <u>not</u> be used unless referring to a whole-of-Government online presence or application, or a service involving many agencies, e.g. a cluster, access to an across government system.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to whether another agency could request the same name. If the answer is yes, the name should be made more specific to the function of the applicant agency.</p> <p>Terms such as <i>projects</i>, <i>budget</i>, <i>statistics</i>, <i>access</i> must be included with the department or agency name to be unique and meaningful, e.g. <b>projects.dpc.sa.gov.au</b> or <b>access.epa.sa.gov.au</b></p>
English spelling	Names should conform to correct English spelling, grammar and syntax

Long names	Domain names (parent domains) should be no more than 40 characters in length (including 'sa.gov.au'), e.g. <b>botanicgardens.sa.gov.au</b> (24 characters)
Dates	Dates must not be used within a domain name unless the domain is referring to a high-profile activity, e.g. <b>2000games.sa.gov.au</b>
Common acronyms	A name in the form of an acronym shall not be used if it is also the name of a more broadly recognised local or international company or organisation, e.g. <b>ibm.sa.gov.au</b> , <b>microsoft.sa.gov.au</b> .
Non agency names	Domain names not consisting of an organisational name should bear a direct semantic connection to the function performed by the agency or organisation. Names should represent the most readily recognised concept associated with that domain name.
Domains ending in 'sa'	Domain names ending in 'sa' should be avoided, e.g. <b>fishingsa.sa.gov.au</b>
Trademarks	Trademarks or copyrighted text must not be embedded within names
State or Territory references	Names preceding 'sa.gov.au' must not refer (or appear to refer) to a State or Territory, e.g. <b>vic.sa.gov.au</b>
Offensive language	Names must not contain obscene or offensive language
Political viewpoint	Names expressing a value judgement or political viewpoint should not be used, e.g. <b>beststate.sa.gov.au</b>
Other exclusions	Personal names Geographical names (unless embedded in the name of a department or agency) Names of electoral divisions Names consisting entirely of numbers

## 2. Non-sa.gov.au Domain Names

It is recommended that Government agencies should only register outside of 'sa.gov.au' if:

- there is a compelling business reason to do so, e.g. organisations that may not be readily recognised as government bodies
- in order to protect against the use of government brands in other domain spaces, e.g. to stop someone else from using a high-profile government brand such as **tourism.sa.com** or **barossa.com** etc
- agencies registering outside of the 'sa.gov.au' domain should also register the 'sa.gov.au' equivalent and link to the non-sa.gov.au site, e.g. **tourism.sa.com** and **tourism.sa.gov.au**.

Note that this would only be necessary for high profile or commercially valuable brands.

## Reporting

Not relevant.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Approving Authority</b>	Officer or organisation empowered to approve the allocation of government domain names.
<b>Compliant Authority</b>	A South Australian Government instrumentality that is required to adhere to Government policies, standards, procedures and notifications in relation to Information and Communication Technology.
<b>Domain name</b>	Unique text descriptor for a service, website, application or network.
<b>Domain Registrar</b>	The Australian Domain Administration (auDA) authorised provider that offers services to people who want to register a new domain name, renew their existing domain name, or make changes to their domain name record.
<b>Registrant</b>	A registrant is the individual or organization that holds the right to use a specific domain name. This person or organization is the "domain license holder" or legal entity bound by the domain policy and agreement.
<b>Registry</b>	An entity that maintains the master database of web names for a particular top level domain. NetRegistry is the master registry for all 'gov.au' domains including 'sa.gov.au'.
<b>Subdomain</b>	Any domain which is part of a larger domain. For the purposes of managing SA Government domains a subdomain is any domain name which adds to the <b>parent</b> domain. Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>barossa.sa.gov.au where <b>barossa</b> is the parent domain.</li> <li>wine.barossa.sa.gov.au where <b>wine</b> is the <b>subdomain</b> of barossa.sa.gov.au.</li> </ul> A parent domain can have many subdomains.
<a href="http://www.sa.gov.au">www.sa.gov.au</a>	South Australia's whole of government website.

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Approved by: OCIO Policy Review Group

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## Appendix A – Governance of Internet Domains

### A.1 Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (**ICANN**)

ICANN is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers<sup>1</sup>. All top level domains .com, .net, .org, etc. are administered by ICANN.

### A.2 Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (**IANA**)

The IANA is the body responsible for the global coordination of the DNS Root, IP addressing, and other Internet protocol resources<sup>2</sup>. IANA is one of the Internet's oldest institutions, with its activities dating back to the 1970s. Today it is operated by ICANN.

### A.3 The Australian Domain Name Administrator (**auDA**)

auDA is the industry self-regulatory body for the .au domain. It is an independent, not-for-profit organisation<sup>3</sup>. Its roles include setting policy for open second level domains (i.e. com.au, net.au, org.au, asn.au, id.au). The registry administered by auDA is called AusRegistry. ICANN recognised auDA as the suitable operator for .au under a Sponsorship Agreement in October 2001<sup>4</sup>.

The Australian Government formally endorsed auDA as the appropriate body to administer the .au domain space in December 2000<sup>5</sup>.

### A.4 Digital Transformation Agency (**DTA**)

The DTO holds a sub-sponsorship agreement with auDA for management of the gov.au domain. The DTO manages the gov.au policies and administration in consultation with an inter-jurisdictional Domain Consultative Committee comprising of representatives from each jurisdiction<sup>6</sup>.

### A.5 Gov.au

gov.au is known as a "closed" domain, which means it is only available for use by a defined community of interest. In the case of gov.au, that community of interest is Australian, state and local government bodies<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.icann.org/en/about>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.iana.org>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.auda.org.au>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.icann.org/en/about/agreements/cctlds/au>

<sup>5</sup> The Government holds reserve powers in relation to domain names under the *Telecommunications Act 1997*.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.domainname.gov.au/domain-policies/policy-and-governance-framework>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.domainname.gov.au/About>

## A.6 AusRegistry Pty Ltd

AusRegistry is the top level registry administered by auDA. The registry receives web name information from accredited domain registrars who register web names on AusRegistry on behalf of registrants. It provides registry services for the 'gov.au' domain.

- AusRegistry Pty Ltd has the license to operate the registry system in Australia. It is the Registry (wholesale provider) for web names in .com.au, .net.au, .org.au, .id.au and .asn.au<sup>8</sup>. The company effectively manages all current open second level domains along with the government (gov.au) and education Domain Names (edu.au).
- AusRegistry cannot be approached directly for the purpose of registering a domain name. Domain names have to be registered through an approved and licensed registrar.
- AusRegistry receives web name information from Registrars (retail providers), who register web names on behalf of Registrants. The Registry puts that information into what is called a 'zone file', which allows computers to route Internet traffic to and from domains around the world.

## A.7 NetRegistry

The process for the operation of .gov.au domain registration (including **sa.gov.au**) has been outsourced to NetRegistry<sup>9</sup>, an auDA accredited domain registrar.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ausregistry.com.au>

<sup>9</sup> <http://netregistry.com.au/domain-name-registration>