

Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture

# Domain name registration and management standard

Final

January 2017

V2.0.0

PUBLIC

## Document details

<b>Security classification</b>	PUBLIC			
<b>Date of review of security classification</b>	January 2017			
<b>Authority</b>	Queensland Government Chief Information Officer			
<b>Author</b>	Queensland Government Chief Information Office			
<b>Documentation status</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Working draft	<input type="checkbox"/> Consultation release	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Final version

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## Acknowledgements

This version of the *Domain name registration and management standard* was developed and updated by Queensland Government Chief Information Office.

Feedback was also received from a number of agencies, which was greatly appreciated.

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*Domain name registration and management standard*

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## Information security

This document has been security classified using the Queensland Government Information Security Classification Framework (QGISCF) as PUBLIC and will be managed according to the requirements of the QGISCF.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

A Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture (QGEA) standard provides information for Queensland Government departments and agencies on the mandatory and recommended practices for a given topic area. They are intended to help departments and agencies understand the appropriate approach to address a particular issue or to do a particular task. Unlike a guideline, which is best practice advice, a QGEA standard is mandatory and is enforced by policy. For further information on QGEA document types, go to the [QGCI website](#).

This standard, in conjunction with the related [Domain name policy](#), supersedes the previous *Information Standard IS39: Domain names* and covers the requirements for registering and maintaining domain names held by Queensland Government agencies.

For further information, see:

- [Internet – IS26](#) including supporting standards and guidelines
- [Service delivery provider – online and phone channels policy](#)
- [Government domain names website](#).

## 1.2 Audience

This document is primarily intended for any of the following:

- Chief Information Officers
- ICT operational management and staff
- staff maintaining websites.

## 1.3 Scope

This standard relates to the domain T-4.2.1 – Network name and address services within the technology layer of the QGEA.

The following are out of scope of the current standard:

- Email addressing
- .edu.au domain.

Note:

The [.au Domain Administration Ltd \(auDA\)](#) is the body with responsibility for the entire Australian domain space. auDA has delegated responsibility for .edu.au to the Australian Information and Communications Technology in Education Committee (AICTEC), a cross-sectoral, national committee responsible for providing advice to the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) on the economic and effective use of online technologies in Australian education and training. AICTEC has in turn delegated .edu.au policy authority to a subcommittee, the .edu.au Domain Administration Committee (eDAC).

## 1.4 Applicability

It applies to whole-of-government, including all Queensland Government departments and agencies.

It also applies to Queensland statutory authorities and local government entities for registering a name within the Queensland Government domain. These entities however, are not required to register a government domain name if they register a name within a non-government domain.

## 2 Queensland Government domain delegate

In accordance with the governance framework of the .gov.au domain provider a single agency will be registered as the Queensland domain provider with the delegated authority to assess individual domain name applications for Queensland.

The current contact details for the Queensland domain provider can be found at <http://www.domainname.gov.au/contact-us/Queensland/>.

## 3 Agency procedures

Each agency must develop procedures in support of this standard. Agency procedures must nominate a single point, to be registered with the Queensland Government domain provider, who is responsible for domain names within the agency.

Agency procedures must provide for proactive management of domain names held by the agency including maintaining a full list of all domain names held by that agency and their renewal dates. At the time of renewal agencies must also regularly review the continued requirement for domain names on this list.

Agencies are able to extend this standard for use within their agency, but must not at any time conflict with the specifications marked as must or required in this document. Agencies are strongly encouraged to consult the Queensland Government Chief Technology Office to resolve any issues conflicting with the required conventions. The copyright, acknowledgement and permissions sections must be included in any extensions to these standards.

## 4 Pre-registration considerations

### 4.1 Internal agency approvals

Application for domain name registration must only be made once the relevant internal procedures for consultation and approval for such matters as campaign titles, project names and slogans has been achieved.

Internal agency approvals for new domain names must also be in accordance with any relevant government policies regarding provision of online services and consolidation of websites; including, but not limited to, the QGEA policy for [Service Delivery Provider – Online and Phone Channels](#).

### 4.2 Choice of domains

In general, domain names registered by Queensland Government agencies should be in either the .qld.gov.au or .qld.edu.au domains, however there are reasons why names may also be registered in other domains.

Examples of reasons include that:

- there is a compelling commercial business reason to do so, such as tourism sites (e.g. [www.queenslandholidays.com.au](http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au)) or other organisations that may not be readily recognised as government bodies
- there is a need 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 for commercial or political gain – this is known as 'cybersquatting'<sup>1</sup>.  
Note that this would only be necessary for high profile or commercially valuable brands and should not be done as a matter of course.

For advertising campaigns or programs of a short duration (six to 12 months), a subdomain or directory under an existing agency domain name, or the use of the Queensland Government domain (i.e. [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au)) must be used rather than purchasing another domain name.

If it is desired that the campaign or program should have a website with its own domain name, the department should apply to the One-Stop Shop Strategy and Implementation Office (OSSSIO) for approval to use a [new domain name](#).

Agencies must only apply for registration of domain names outside of the [.qld.gov.au](http://.qld.gov.au) or [.qld.edu.au](http://.qld.edu.au) domains after registration of the [.qld.gov.au](http://.qld.gov.au) equivalent has been completed.

In the cases where registration under nongovernment or education domains is for protection against cybersquatting, agencies should consider both of the following issues in deciding which domain names to register:

1. Level of risk (i.e. likelihood and impact) from cybersquatting.  
Is the level of risk high enough to warrant protection? (Note: this should be assessed in accordance with the agency's risk management procedures.)
2. Variations of the name to be registered.  
When determining what domain names to register consider that, generally speaking, a name is able to be registered unless it is *identical* to one already registered. Therefore, consideration should be given to both of the following:
  - a. registering the name under several different subdomains (i.e. [.com](http://.com), [.net](http://.net), [.org](http://.org), [.com.au](http://.com.au), [.net.au](http://.net.au), [.org.au](http://.org.au).)
  - b. registering variations of the name, including common misspellings.

### 4.3 Trade marks

When seeking to register a domain name, consideration may be given to whether the chosen name should also be registered as a trade mark. A registered trade mark can offer greater protection against unauthorised use. Further information on trade mark registration can be obtained from [IP Australia](#). Professional legal advice should be sought if a decision is taken to register a trade mark.

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<sup>1</sup> Cybersquatting is the act of deliberately registering a domain name which is the same or similar to a well-known trade mark, company or person (without having a legitimate right or interest in it) with the intention of either exploiting the domain name, or selling the domain name to the legitimate party or to the highest bidder (potentially including other cybersquatters).

Political cybersquatting includes registering a politician's, political parties or other government-affiliated name as a domain name and publishing misleading messages or damaging information on the website, or attempting to obtain money from the politician, political party, the government or the highest bidder.

## 5 Government domains

### 5.1 Selecting government domain names

When selecting a domain name for .qld.gov.au registrations, agencies must ensure all of the following:

- names adhere to the Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) *Eligibility and allocation policy* and *Choosing a domain name* guideline which can be found on the [Government domain names website](#)
- names align with [Your guide to Queensland Government advertising](#) (Queensland Government employees only) published by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on how domain names should be used in advertising (note that adherence to this guide will not, by itself, constitute automatic approval of a domain name)
- names in the form of acronyms are not also the name of a more broadly recognised international organisation or company e.g. oecd.qld.gov.au, or could apply to multiple organisations e.g. bpa.qld.gov.au for the Bundaberg Port Authority and the Beach Protection Authority
- names preceding the state's suffix do not contain the state suffix e.g. ecommerceqld.qld.gov.au
- domain names for local government authorities be consistent across Queensland, and ideally across Australia – the following examples show the accepted convention: sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au, scenicrim.qld.gov.au and brisbane.qld.gov.au.

### 5.2 Registration request procedure .qld.gov.au domain names

DTA is the delegated authority for the .gov.au domain and name requests are lodged through DTA's domain name registration web site, <http://www.domainname.gov.au>. DTA then automatically forwards an email to the Queensland Government domain name provider (.qld.gov.au) at the Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation (DSITI), for consideration and approval.

If the domain name is for a campaign or program website, approval should be sought from OSSIO before submitting the domain name registration request online. OSSIO inform the Domain Name Provider (qld.gov.au) when they have approved a new domain name request.

The delegate nominated by the agency, will be used as the central contact when the Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation (DSITI) verifies that authorisation has been obtained for the submission of a new domain name registration request.

All .qld.gov.au requests must be checked for errors or omissions before submission, otherwise requests may be rejected by the domain provider leading to processing delays. Where the domain name is for a campaign or program website, if approval has not been received from OSSIO, the domain name provider will decline the request.

A full description of why the domain name is required should be included in the 'Stated Purpose' section of the domain name registration request form.

A detailed explanation of all fields is provided on the electronic form itself, and further information can be accessed on [auDA's frequently asked questions page](#).

The general process for applying for a .qld.gov.au domain name is outlined below in figure 1 (page 8) of this document.

Information provided in the DTA template will be publicly available on the internet once the registration request has been processed. The status of an existing or proposed domain name can be checked on the [Government domain names website](#).

Agencies should ensure that where the domain name request is for a cross-jurisdictional program, this information is included when submitting the domain name application.

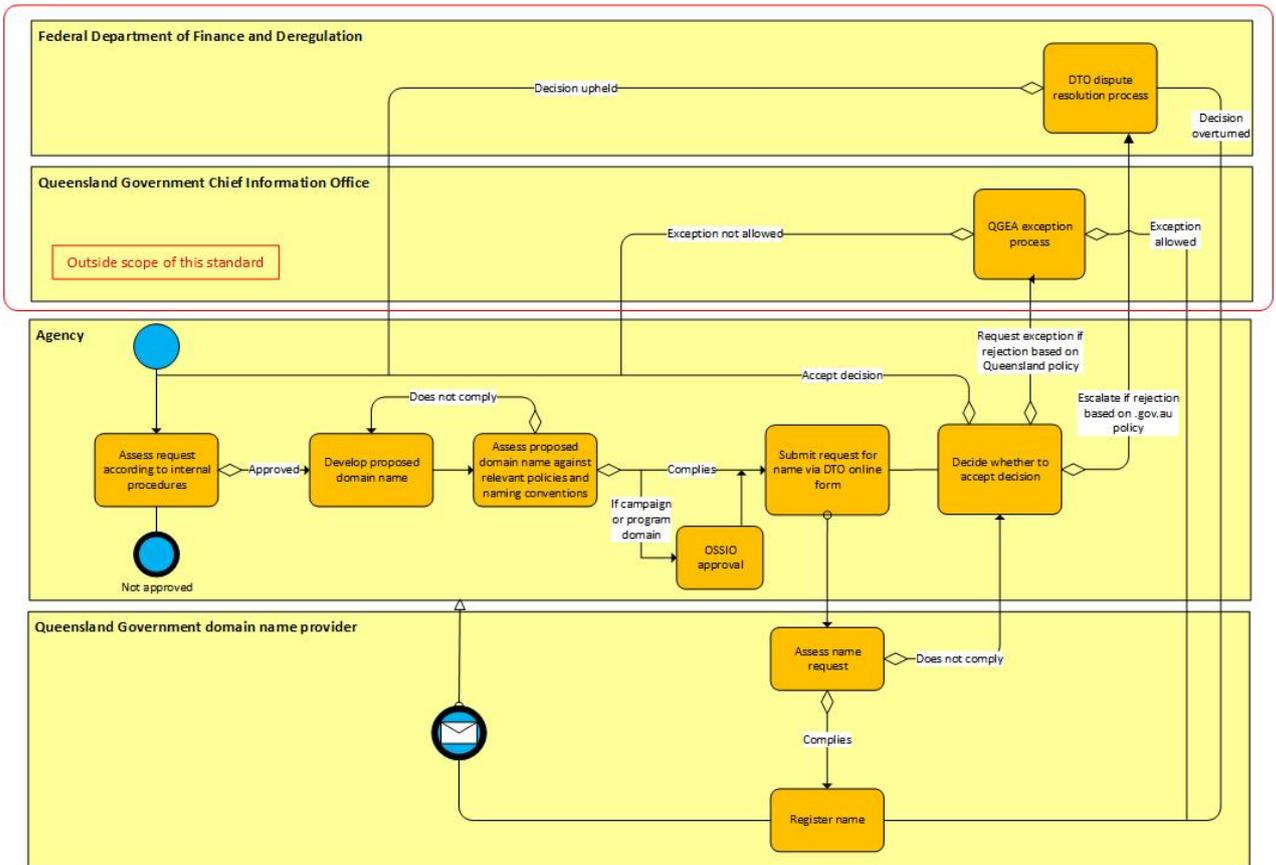


Figure 1: General registration process

### 5.3 Dispute resolution for .qld.gov.au domains

Under the government domain registration process, an applicant, in lodging the request for a name, asserts they have a right to the requested name. It is assumed the applicant has a legitimate right to a name and the process only assesses compliance with the policies of the .qld.gov.au and higher domains.

In the case of conflicting name requests between an applicant and an existing .gov.au domain name registration, in the first instance the parties concerned (applicant and existing registrant) should attempt to resolve the matter, and report to the domain provider (.qld.gov.au) if the resolution includes a change of registration details.

Should a dispute not be able to be resolved between the parties, this should be reported to the relevant domain provider (.qld.gov.au) for further consultation and mediation.

If the domain provider (.qld.gov.au) declines to register a requested name and the requesting agency wishes to appeal, in the first instance this should be directed back to the domain provider.

If the appeal remains unresolved at this level and if further action is desired, then agencies should either:

- follow the QGEA exception process, if rejected on the basis of Queensland policy
- approach DTA as the administrator of the .gov.au domain, if rejection is based on DTA policy.

### 5.4 Management of .qld.gov.au domains

Domain name administration for .qld.gov.au is managed centrally by DTA which has appointed a registrar, NetRegistry, to provide registration services for .gov.au domain names.

Requests for domain names are lodged online through DTA, the delegated authority for all .gov.au domain name requests. DTA then automatically forwards qld.gov.au requests to the .qld.gov.au domain provider at CITEC for consideration and approval.

All .gov.au domain names are now required to be renewed every two years. An expiry and renewal notice will be sent to all owners of .qld.gov.au domain names 60 days before the expiry date. Failure to renew the domain name within this time will result in the domain name expiring. A small fee will be payable with each two-year domain name licence registration and renewal.

Fourth level domain management and associated decision making is the responsibility of individual agencies. This is referring to the management of domains such as transport.qld.gov.au or health.qld.gov.au and their subdomains. For more information contact the .qld.gov.au domain provider DSITI by email: [dna@qld.gov.au](mailto:dna@qld.gov.au).

## 6 Other domains

### 6.1 Government equivalent names

To ensure that names are obtained in domains other than government or education can also be registered in the .qld.gov.au, registration in those domains must only be undertaken after the name has been registered in the .qld.gov.au domain.

Note: Statutory authorities do not have to meet this requirement.

## 6.2 Selecting domain names

### 6.2.1 Availability of desired non-.qld.gov.au name

When seeking to register a proposed domain name, a search of the name on a number of domain name registration sites must be performed to determine whether the name is available for registration.

When conducting your search, the following tips may assist:

1. Search a database from an accredited domain name registration service for registered names (including variations). Some options for this search are:
  - a. [Domain Name Registrar \(Australia\)](#)
  - b. [VentralIP](#)
  - c. [MelbourneIT](#)
  - d. [NetRegistry](#)
  - e. [AustDomains](#).
2. Conduct a general search using an internet search engine (e.g. Google, Yahoo).
3. Conduct a search of the trade mark database at the Australian Trade Mark On-line Search System to ensure that the domain name you wish to register does not conflict with a trade mark that has already been registered. The search system may be accessed at [IP Australia's Trade Mark On-line Search System](#).

If a name is already registered in circumstances where it is likely to constitute cybersquatting, remedial action may be available as outlined in section 6.2.3 of this document. The fact that a name you wish to register as a domain name is already registered however does not necessarily mean cybersquatting has taken place and care should be taken to determine whether its use is legitimate before taking remedial action.

### 6.2.2 Selecting other domain names

When selecting a domain name where the use of other domain name extensions has been approved by the nominated delegate, agencies must adhere to [auDA's domain name eligibility and allocation policy rules for open second level domains \(2LDs\)](#) or for generic top level domains refer to the [Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers \(ICANN\)](#).

### 6.2.3 If requested name in the chosen domain is already registered

A determination needs to first be made as to whether the registration constitutes cybersquatting. It will be an agency policy decision based upon the level of harm that has been caused or may be caused and the level of effort and resources it will take to combat the threat as to whether formal steps are taken to pursue the registered owner of the domain name. If you consider cybersquatting has occurred, seek legal advice with regard to the options below.

If you believe the domain name you wish to register is victim to cybersquatting, you should initially contact the owner to discuss the transfer or cancellation of registration. If that fails, the following list provides several courses of action, one of which may be appropriate:

- (a) Reservation of domain names  
It is possible to reserve a domain name so registration of the domain name passes to you once the current registration expires. In circumstances where a domain name is already registered, reservation of the name should occur to ensure the state

obtains the registration, regardless of the outcome of any negotiations or further action regarding the threat of cybersquatting.

(b) Dispute resolution policy

Both the universal domain names resolution policy (UDRP) and the auDA domain name resolution policy (auDRP) are efficient and cost-saving means of addressing cybersquatting without resorting to court.

The UDRP's jurisdiction is limited to '.com', '.net' or '.org' domain names, while the auDRP's jurisdiction is limited to Australian subdomains (i.e. '.com.au', '.net.au' or '.asn.au' etc).

The only remedies available to a complainant from either the UDRP or auDRP are either the cancellation of the domain name, or transfer of the domain name to the complainant. A court order is required should the complainant seek damages or any other remedial order.

The protection afforded by the UDRP and auDRP can extend to personal names, despite not being registered trade marks. However, this is in limited circumstances (particularly under the auDRP) and usually only successful for nonbusiness celebrities such as actors and professional sports people, whose names can be said to be used in trade or commerce.

Further information is available from the following websites:

[Uniform Domain-Name Dispute-Resolution Policy](#)  
[.au Dispute Resolution Policy \(auDRP\)](#).

(c) Court proceedings

Alternate remedies may exist either under common law or legislation, such as [Competition and Consumer Act 2010](#) (Cth) and [Trade Marks Act 1995](#) (Cth), to stop or prevent cybersquatting.

Agencies should obtain legal advice if cybersquatting is encountered and an agency wishes to instigate legal proceedings.

### 6.3 Registration procedure for names in domains other than .qld.gov.au and .qld.edu.au

Registration of names in domains other than .qld.gov.au or .qld.edu.au is undertaken directly by the agency with commercial domain name registrars using their normal purchasing process. Agencies must ensure that appropriate approval processes, adhering to the requirements in this standard, surround the decision to obtain a domain name in a domain other than .qld.gov.au or .qld.edu.au.

Once a domain name is registered, it must be included in the list of agency-owned domain names maintained by the agency's nominated domain name delegate.

### 6.4 Management of domains other than .qld.gov.au and .qld.edu.au

Unless agencies can demonstrate a compelling need, they should adhere to the .qld.gov.au or .qld.edu.au domain names and refrain from establishing nongovernment domain names.

Registration outside .qld.gov.au should only occur when one or more of the following apply:

- redirecting customers to the correct .qld.gov.au site
- a communication strategy aims to target an international audience
- a commercial imperative exists for the site to use other domain extensions
- a collaborative web project exists outside of government (see [CUE standard](#)).

Agencies should consider transferring all names in domains other than .qld.gov.au or .qld.edu.au to one of those domains if the purpose of the site is not within the scope of the above definitions.

## 7 Maintaining domain name registrations

### 7.1 Expiry of domain names

For the qld.gov.au name space, NetRegistry as the domain name registry will send emails to domain name account holders about 60 days before the domain name is due for renewal as an advisory. Further email reminders will be sent periodically until the domain name has expired. In general, this arrangement will also occur for names registered with other domain name registries (i.e. for .com.au or other domains).

A decision must then be made as to whether the domain name registration should be renewed. Consideration should be given to whether the project or slogan is still current, what level of goodwill is held in the domain name, and the level of perceived risk in relinquishing the domain name.

### 7.2 Domain names ownership and contact details

If agencies contract or deal with third parties, contracts must stipulate that ownership of domain names that arise out of or that may be registered in relation to such dealings is retained by the State.

A registered domain name can carry significant value and this arrangement should clearly be reflected in the relevant contract or agreement between the parties. Professional legal advice should be sought in this respect.

To ensure that ownership of a domain name is not lost due to a failure to renew, agencies must put in place procedures to ensure that domain name registries are updated with the contact details of new responsible account holders when they change.

### 7.3 Transferring domain names

There may be circumstances where it will be necessary to transfer a registered domain name to another party. For example, a machinery-of-government change may transfer an area of responsibility, from one department which owns a related domain, to another. Where this applies, the new owning agency of the domain name should submit the 'Apply to Manage an Existing Domain' form which is available on the [Domain name website](#).

When this occurs, all contact and ownership details must be updated in the relevant databases and registries.

## 8 Deleting domains

Agencies must review all existing domains on an annual basis and make an assessment as to whether these domains are still required. Agencies are individually responsible for organising any period of remapping or redirection from old domain names that may be necessary prior to the deletion of the name in question.

Agencies wanting to delete .qld.gov.au domain names must advise their nominated delegate and complete the electronic form available from [DTA](#).