

# Australia Tech Future

## Australia

E-Government

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### Definitions of Data:

N/A

### Main Focus of Document:

Outlines a strategy for digital skill building for Australians.

### Target Beneficiaries or Sectors:

Australians

### Key Elements:

Outlines Australia's plan to maximise efforts to develop technology skills of its citizens by supporting persons in the area of automation and building digital skills alongside other essential skills.

**Digital Infrastructure** The growth of the Internet of Things (IoT) is taking shape and accelerating. Australians are already investing in technology to enable smart homes where lighting, heating and security systems can all be controlled with mobile phones. Continuing private sector and government investment as well as government facilitation of behind-the-scenes infrastructure will determine how fast Australia can adopt further advances such as automated vehicles and drones. Modern research laboratories are extremely reliant on technology. They depend on access to high-performance computers and data stores, just as much as physical workshops and labs. Australian researchers and businesses depend on access to supercomputers to crack computational problems standard computers can't handle. Investing in this infrastructure in Australia will grow the national capability in fields such as genetics, cyber security and climate science. By ensuring businesses and scientists have access to the right tools to do their work, they are more likely to stay in Australia. Planning to meet future needs infrastructure that does not meet reasonable consumer expectations will impact the daily lives of Australians and Australia's economic growth. Delivering infrastructure requires major investments and long lead times, so it is crucial to plan ahead to meet changing business and community needs. Australia faces some unique challenges in delivering infrastructure due to its vast size and distributed population. The Government is enabling the right conditions for investment to support delivery of digital infrastructure that meets the needs of all Australians now and into the future. A key way to reduce national security risks of adopting new technologies (including infrastructure such as 5G and the Internet of Things) is by promoting security-by-design where technologies are designed from the ground up to be secure, rather than as a future consideration. A review is being conducted of the general Telecommunications Consumer Safeguards that apply to all services, to assess what safeguards may be needed in the future. Recommendations are expected to be made to government by the end of 2018. An open and competitive mobile market already exists, and the Government is making the allocation of a critical input, spectrum, more efficient. Australia's mobile network operators—Optus, Telstra and Vodafone—already provide more than 99 per cent of Australians with access to world-class mobile coverage. Vodafone and TPG have announced their intention to merge (subject to regulatory approval), potentially forming stronger competition in the sector.

**Digital Government** Millions of Australians are already securely accessing a range of government services online everyday through platforms such as myGov. These services include myTax (ATO), Medicare rebates and a range of Centrelink claims and benefits. Technology allows Government to more easily engage with the community through a variety of digital channels. This ensures the views of people who use government services can more effectively be understood and addressed in developing new policy. Government services need to keep pace with the opportunities of digital transformation and provide value for money to the community. Emerging technologies, data and analytics, and artificial intelligence present significant opportunities for the Government to deliver better outcomes for the public and the ability to do so more efficiently and effectively. By harnessing the opportunities of digital technologies the Government can continue to improve citizen and business experience. Millions of Australians are already securely accessing a range of government services online everyday:

- myGov has about 14 million active accounts. It provides access to 11 services with one login: My Health Record, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Medicare, MyTax, Centrelink, Child Support, Australian Job Search, Department of Veterans Affairs, HousingVic Online Services and National Redress Scheme and My Aged Care
- myTax usage has increased from 1.7 million people lodging their tax return online in 2014–15 to over 3.5 million in 2017-18
- My Health Record is used by more than 6.3 million consumers as of November 2018, enabling them to securely share their key health information about medical conditions, treatments and medicines with their healthcare providers

The Government's Digital Transformation Strategy complements Australia's Tech Future. It identifies what the government needs to deliver to be a world-leading digital government. This includes looking at how data already held by government is used to incorporate information for future claims or services, in turn making the process simpler, clearer and faster. In 2017, significant improvements were made to myGov. The Government is now working on a new digital identity solution, GovPass, which will make it simple, safe and secure to prove who you are when accessing government services online. The replacement of Australia's ageing welfare payment ICT system is well under way – driving big improvements in the delivery of student payments. Significant improvements to services for business have already been made, including the release of the Business Registration Service. This brings all Commonwealth business registrations together in

one place, reducing the average time taken to register for an Australian Business Number (ABN) from over an hour to less than 15 minutes.

Using artificial intelligence The Government is also exploring opportunities to use technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain to enhance government service delivery. The Government is using artificial intelligence to increase administrative efficiency, improve policy development, deliver new and improved services, and analyse complex datasets. Some of its uses include: • IP Australia using a virtual assistant, named Alex, to help answer customer's queries, decreasing phone calls by 50 per cent and costs by 66 per cent • GeoScience Australia analysing satellite data to detect physical changes in soil and coastal erosion, crop growth and water quality. It is important that taxpayer money is invested wisely to deliver benefits and value to the community. The Digital Marketplace is making it easier for businesses – particularly smaller businesses – to provide common ICT services to Government. The DTA is also undertaking ICT Procurement reform. As at October 2018, \$300 million in contracts were awarded through the Digital Marketplace, with around 75 per cent being awarded to small and medium businesses. The Government's Secure Cloud Strategy is helping agencies to move to the cloud, reducing costs and freeing up effort to focus on better service delivery. Ensuring people have the right skills to deliver great services.

Artificial Intelligence Automation Blockchain Cloud-based services Competition Data Dataset Digital identity Digital infrastructure Digital skills Emerging technologies ICT Services Internet of Things Internet Mobile Platform Private sector Procurement Satellite Spectrum

**Policy/regulation mirrored:**

N/A

**Countries:**