

Findings

FINDING 1



myGov is indispensable national digital infrastructure.

Australia's transport networks, hospitals, utilities and education systems are critical infrastructure relied on by Australians everyday as they go about their lives. Investing in roads, hospitals and schools is essential to serve Australians' basic needs, to drive economic growth and build a stronger Australia. So too, myGov is essential infrastructure that connects people to information and digital services leading to better health and social outcomes.

The *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008* defines nationally significant infrastructure as including transport, energy, communications, and water infrastructure 'in which investment or further investment will materially improve national productivity'. Social infrastructure is also considered, such as health, education, social housing and community facilities. As a guide, for a proposal to be considered nationally significant, it should concern a problem or opportunity that will have more than \$30 million per annum impact on the economy (nominal, undiscounted). Unquantified social benefit considerations are also taken into account.⁴

Providing high-quality, resilient, accessible and equitable digital infrastructure in an era of accelerating digitalisation has been identified as a key priority for Australia by Infrastructure Australia.⁵

Similarly, the Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy 2015 defines critical infrastructure as 'those physical facilities, supply chains, information technologies and communication networks, which if destroyed, degraded or rendered unavailable for an extended period, would significantly impact the social or economic wellbeing of the nation, or affect Australia's ability to conduct national defence and ensure national security'.⁶

Daily myGov usage has more than tripled in the past 5 years. myGov now supports more than 1.1 million sessions on an average day, with daily rates often exceeding 1.4 million. More people use myGov each day than use public transport⁷. *Daily* myGov usage is also greater than the average number of *monthly* hospital admissions in Australia.

In 2017, there were 11.7 million myGov accounts. Today, there are more than 25 million. Almost 20 million Australians have a digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate, and almost 4.6 million have downloaded their International COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate – all through myGov.

myGov is part of most Australians' lives and unlocks the value of government policies. With this comes an important caution. myGov's strong recent performance has raised the stakes. When performing well, myGov drives positive outcomes for Australians, the economy and government. If myGov fails to deliver, the impacts are severe, with those who need help the most significantly and disproportionately affected.

4 Infrastructure Australia, Infrastructure Glossary [website], accessed December 2022, <<https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/Infrastructure-glossary>>

5 Infrastructure Australia, *2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan*, 2021

6 Cyber and Infrastructure Security Centre, Defining critical infrastructure [website], accessed December 2022, <<https://www.cisc.gov.au/what-is-the-cyber-and-infrastructure-security-centre/defining-critical-infrastructure>>

7 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia's Journey to Work [website], 2022, accessed December 2022, <<https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/australias-journey-work#public-transport>>

The myGov experience mirrors what is happening in the private sector. In Australia, one study found that Australian businesses undertook 10 years' worth of technology adoption and transformation during the pandemic alone.⁸ It also reflects global trends. Internationally, digital increased from 20% of customer interactions in 2018 to 58% in 2020 across the private and public sectors.⁹

The challenge for government used to be how to create demand for digital services. No longer. The challenge now is how to meet rapidly growing demand for high-quality, safe and secure digital services. There is rightly a higher standard for government digital services. That is why approaching myGov as a piece of indispensable infrastructure, and not just another IT project, is key in meeting this new challenge.

Other countries are also building this infrastructure for their citizens. The Panel commissioned a review of global best practice from the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) (refer to Volume 2, Attachment A). This evidence was used to inform the Panel's recommendations and to benchmark Australia's progress.

From this review it is clear no nation has fully realised the 'promise' of connected digital service delivery. Each national path reflects history, culture, and investment and technology choices. Nevertheless, BCG discerned 4 features of high-quality government digital service offerings:

1. single whole-of-government entry points that have the highest adoption and satisfaction combine navigation, information and transactions
2. citizens increasingly expect omni-channel experiences in line with best practice private offerings (e.g. chatbots, virtual assistance, telephony, mobile, online)
3. best practice portals eliminate redundancy by promoting Tell Us Once
4. portal design and development leverage a contemporary open and modular architecture with embedded digital identity.

FINDING 2



Recent investments have built the foundations to deliver on myGov's promise, but myGov will not fulfil its potential without further investment and discipline to ensure adoption of new capabilities across government.

myGov today is changing thanks to a temporary \$200 million boost provided in 2021–22 for the two-year Enhanced myGov program.¹⁰ This temporary boost came on top of business-as-usual sustainment funding in the order of \$38 million per year. This brought annual funding for myGov to a total of close to \$138 million per year over the 2021–22 and 2022–23 financial years.

The program is delivering overdue improvements to myGov's underlying IT platform and the quality of the digital front door it provides Australians. Importantly, the new technology is based on open standards using an approach designed to allow services to come easily together in a single interface. Testing suggests that myGov can now support 500,000 concurrent users – 50 times more than it did previously.¹¹

The recently released myGov app is another a big step forward. myGov has been late to the app game, but the new app delivers functionality and a user experience close to that provided by the private sector.

⁸ Alphabet Australia, *Australia's digital resilience: How technology strengthened Australian business during COVID and beyond*, 2020

⁹ McKinsey and Company, *How COVID-19 has pushed companies over the technology tipping point and transformed business forever*, 2020

¹⁰ Australian Government, *2020–21 Australian Government Budget – Budget Paper No. 2*, 2020

¹¹ Services Australia data (unpublished)