**Australian Government**

**Digital Transformation Agency**

# Digital delivery of government services

Digital Transformation Agency submission to the Finance and Public Administration Committee

dta

# Contents

# Message from the CEO

In 2016, the Australian Government set out its digital transformation agenda. The agenda is focused on delivering better and more accessible digital services to individuals and businesses. This includes modernising myGov, providing Australians with secure control of their personal information, adopting cloud technologies to deliver better digital services, making it easier for small-to-medium enterprises to win government work, and increasing the transparency of government services.

The purpose of the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) is to help the Australian Government accelerate its digital transformation agenda.

The DTA is working across government to achieve three objectives:

1.   move more services to digital channels

2.   improve the user experience for individuals and businesses, and

3.   improve the return on ICT and digital investment.

To support these objectives, the DTA has set five priorities for the next 12 months:

## 1.  Develop a digital transformation roadmap

The roadmap will allow the government to identify and fund the digital transformation initiatives that will have the greatest impact on user experiences. Most digital services are designed to address the needs of a single portfolio or agency, but for many Australians, getting things done requires them to engage with many different agencies. By providing a framework that can track these 'life journeys', the government can assess what digital initiatives to invest in to make these life journeys easier, faster and simpler for users.

## 2.  Deliver and improve shared digital platforms

A digital platform is a system that provides functionality multiple agencies can use to deliver services to users. The DTA is leading delivery of a number of whole-of-government digital platforms and services. These include digital platforms for Digital Identity, Tell Us Once, Notifications, Payments In and Federated Data Exchange. Delivering and improving shared digital platforms means agencies won't have to reinvent the wheel every time they need to deliver a new service, and the government doesn't have to support and maintain a multitude of systems that all essentially do the same job. This approach will deliver better experiences for customers, who will be able to transact with multiple agencies via common and familiar interfaces, and trust the technology is doing the hard work for them.

## 3. Oversee and advise on ICT and digital investment

The DTA has oversight of all significant government ICT and digital investments. Oversight of the government's ICT project portfolio gives the DTA the opportunity to consider potential risks, assess whether projects are cost effective and delivering their intended benefits, find opportunities to share platforms, and coordinate procurement so the government can make the most of its buying power. This makes sure digital services are delivering value for the right price, and the government's digital investment can provide more digital services and the best possible digital experience for customers.

## 4. Transform ICT procurement

The DTA develops and provides guidance to agencies on the application of ICT procurement policy through coordinated procurement strategies, whole-of-government panels for commodity goods and services, and the Digital Marketplace. Best practice procurement, inclusive markets and good working relationships between buyers and sellers will ensure agencies can embrace modern, streamlined ways of doing business now and into the future.

## 5. Build Australian Public Service ICT and digital capability

The DTA is leading digital transformation by helping agencies achieve best-practice digital service delivery, partnering with agencies to improve how they buy and deliver digital services, and raising the level of digital skills and capability across government. Skilled digital workers can design the best digital experiences for customers and champion the adoption of digital service delivery channels. Building internal digital capability makes the public service less exposed to increasing market rates for contractors, reduces design and delivery risk, and will encourage innovative thinking.

I welcome the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee's interest in the DTA and the government's digital transformation agenda. I look forward to showcasing how the DTA is working with agencies to make this vision a reality.

**Gavin Slater,**
29 September 2017
Chief Executive Officer

# Key achievements

1. **Digital Marketplace** – SMEs can now compete for government work in an environment that is appropriate for smaller-scale, innovative procurements. The marketplace has listed over 290 opportunities, approved more than 640 sellers, and registered over 760 government buyers.

2. **Digital Service Standard** – the DTA produced a 13-step guide for agencies to build services that are simple, clear and fast. Since May 2016, the standard has been mandatory for new or redeveloped public-facing services. The DTA is training APS staff to better understand the Digital Service Standard and digital transformation. As of 30 June 2017, the DTA has trained about 1,300 staff to use and apply the standard, and has taught more than 500 assessors to assess services against the standard

3. **Digital capability uplift** – The DTA runs the Australian Government ICT Apprenticeship Program, the Australian Government ICT Cadetship Program, and the Australian Government ICT Graduate Program. These programs received 1,387 applications for 173 positions available across 15 participating agencies in the 2018 cohort.

4. **ICT Procurement Transformation** – On 23 August the DTA released the *Report of the ICT Procurement Taskforce* and a new ICT Procurement Policy limiting any new ICT contract to not exceed $100 million or a three years initial term.

5. **Improving myGov** – the DTA partnered with DHS to deliver improvements to myGov, which included a new look and feel, simplified content, and better accessibility.

6. **Performance dashboards** – the DTA is increasing transparency around the performance of government digital services. There are eight services currently publishing key performance metrics to dashboards.gov.au, with more to come.

7. **Oversee and advise on ICT investment** – the Digital Investment Management Office is monitoring 72 major ICT projects with an aggregate ICT investment budget of $5.3 billion and is providing oversight to 19 initiatives representing 53 per cent of the portfolio by budget.

8. **Trusted Digital Identity Framework** – the DTA has delivered the private beta of a nationally-consistent set of rules, policies and standards for digital identity. The framework was released for consultation in September 2017.

9. **Coordinated procurement** – the DTA now manages a suite of ICT procurement panels and is in negotiations to establish new coordinated procurement arrangements with SAP, IBM and will soon begin talks with Oracle.

## Priority 1:
# Develop a digital transformation roadmap

*This priority helps deliver the government's digital transformation agenda by moving more services to digital channels, improving the user experience for individuals and businesses, and improving the return on ICT and digital investment.*

The DTA recently started developing a digital transformation roadmap that will show how users interact with government across different portfolios. The roadmap will also identify opportunities to improve user experience of the most-used services that the government provides. The roadmap will be delivered iteratively over the course of 2017–18. The government will be able to use this roadmap to identify and fund the digital transformation initiatives that will have the greatest impact on user experiences. The roadmap will also provide a way to measure digital maturity to allow the government to track progress over time.

Most digital services are designed to address the needs of a single portfolio or agency. But for many Australians, certain life events will require them to engage with many different agencies — and even different governments — to get things done. The resulting user experience can be fragmented and time-consuming. The roadmap will track significant 'life journeys' that trigger engagement with government, and will provide a framework for assessing how digital initiatives will contribute to making these life journeys easier, faster and simpler for users.

The DTA is collaborating with the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Employment, the Department of Social Services, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS), the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to map two life journeys: 'Finding Work' and 'Growing a Business'.

User research undertaken by the DTA has consistently shown that people want to interact with government as a whole, and not with individual agencies. The DTA is well positioned to lead this work and provide a cross-portfolio view of digital services from the user's perspective.

## Priority 2:
# Deliver and improve digital platforms

*This priority helps deliver the government's digital transformation agenda by moving more services to digital channels, improving the user experience for individuals and businesses, and improving the return on ICT and digital investment.*

The DTA is coordinating work on a number of whole-of-government digital platforms that will help agencies deliver services to their customers — like identity, change of address and payments to government.

A digital platform is a system, including the governance and financing of that system, that provides functionality multiple agencies can use to deliver services to users. Any one service experienced by users might draw on multiple platforms, each delivering a different function.

Common platforms can be used and reused by any agency to ease their digital workload. Building platforms that deliver essential stages in a government transaction — like processing credit card payments — will make it easier for agencies to deliver new digital services. Users will be able to do more online, and have a more consistent experience when doing so. Agencies won't have to reinvent the wheel every time they need to deliver a new service, and the government doesn't have to support and maintain a multitude of systems that all essentially do the same job.

The DTA's analysis identified that agencies could potentially save about $100 million per year by implementing four whole-of-government platforms — Federated Data Exchange, Tell Us Once, Notifications and Payments In.

## Digital identity

Many digital services require users to prove their identity in one way or another before completing a transaction. This may be as simple as setting a username and password, to providing documents like a passport or a driver licence for more sensitive transactions.

Australia's fragmented approach to digital identity leads to a disjointed user experience, where customers have to prove their identity multiple times and in

different ways to deal with different agencies. The Australian Government runs more than 30 different digital credentials or logins for digital service delivery. This increases the time taken and costs incurred for government, business and people, and creates more opportunities for identity fraud.

Providing a single sign-on through myGov has already achieved significant simplification of this process. However, the DTA's analysis indicates the Digital Identity platform could save users a further 50,000 hours in lost productivity. A Digital Identity platform will also allow users to complete transactions entirely in digital channels. For example, someone applying for a Centrelink payment could create a digital account, verify their identity and lodge a claim without ever needing to physically attend a service centre.

Since early 2016, the DTA has been working with agencies, other jurisdictions and the private sector to develop the GovPass program, which will produce a common model for verifying identity that can be used across government. The GovPass program consists of two digital platforms — the Identity Provider platform, which people can use to provide their identity online, and the Exchange Hub, which agencies can use to verify details about people's identity without accumulating personal data in a central repository.

The DTA is working closely with the ATO, DHS and DIIS to make sure the GovPass program addresses user and government needs for the Private Beta in late 2017 and a planned Public Beta by mid-2018. This work is focussing on data security and protecting privacy, with DTA and DHS cyber security teams engaged to analyse and eliminate potential risks.

To complement the GovPass program, the DTA has developed the Trusted Digital Identity Framework, a comprehensive set of rules, policies and standards that will set a nationally consistent approach to accredit, govern and operate identity across the digital economy. The first iteration of the framework focused on digital identity for individuals and was released for consultation in September 2017.

The framework will be extended to address non-digital identity for individuals to allow for alternate pathways for those unable to complete identity verification digitally. It will be further iterated and adapted for business identity in mid-2018.

The framework has been developed in consultation with Commonwealth agencies; state and territory governments, with particular involvement from New South Wales and Victoria; the banking sector, in particular the Payments Network and the

Reserve Bank of Australia; civil society and privacy groups, in particular the Australian Privacy Foundation and federal and state and territory government privacy commissioners; and with Australia Post through our private sector partnership.

## myGov

As at 30 June 2017, there were more than 11 million active myGov accounts. Account holders can access 10 member services which together offer access to more than 100 online transaction types.

myGov has transformed the way people interact with government. In 2016–17, an average of 265,000 people were using myGov successfully every day. This is a 62 per cent increase on 2015–16, which saw an average of 163,000 logins each day. There were 16.5 million logins to myGov in July 2017, compared with 14.2 million logins in July 2016 and 7.5 million in July 2015. The busiest day so far in 2017 was in July where 760,000 people logged in to myGov. This was an increase on the 2016 busiest day where 660,000 people logged in.

On 1 July 2016, responsibility for myGov was split between the DTA and DHS. The DTA is responsible for myGov service strategy, policy, user experience, and the onboarding of new services to myGov. DHS is responsible for administering and hosting myGov, including system development and testing, security and operational performance.

The DTA and DHS have worked closely together to deliver myGov 2.0, giving users simplified content, improved accessibility and responsiveness across devices. Over the next 12 to 18 months the DTA, DHS and partner agencies will further improve myGov by adding new services and making it easier for users to verify their identity, update their personal details and check their notifications.

## myGov 2.0 – Collaborating with DHS to improve myGov

On 20 May 2017, the DTA and DHS successfully delivered myGov 2.0, a major platform re-design to address user needs and known customer pain points. myGov 2.0 delivered simplified content, improved accessibility and better responsiveness across mobile devices.

myGov 2.0 is a good example of how the DTA works with agencies to develop better digital services and easier, faster and simpler customer experiences. The DTA contributed user research, content design, interaction design and agile development skills to the project, while DHS contributed programmers, testers and other technical resources.

Early user feedback was collected in the 30 days following the release of myGov 2.0. Customers said myGov 2.0 improved the user experience thanks to clearer language, less cluttered screens and simpler navigation on smartphones and tablets. For example, users said they found it much easier to check their messages, due to the pared back screen design.
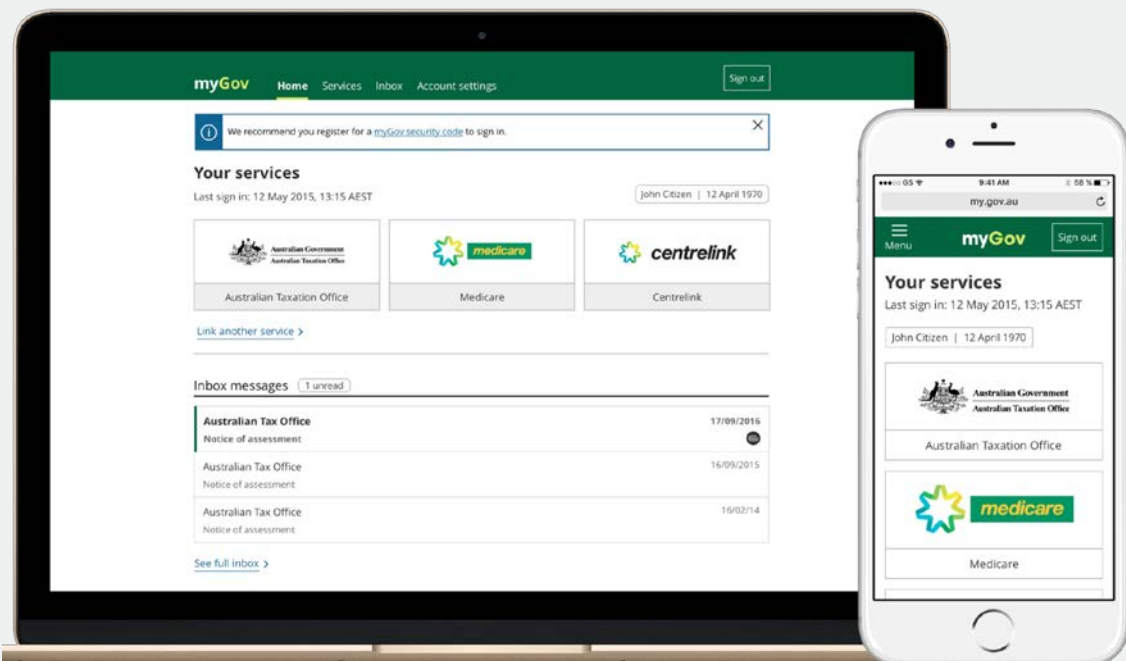


*Image: Screenshot of the new myGov 2.0 front page, full screen and mobile version.*

# Pilot platforms

The DTA is leading work on testing and delivering four digital platforms across government, which will become the building blocks of modern, streamlined and easy-to-use customer services and provide Australians with secure control of their personal information:

1. Tell Us Once – users will be able to choose to share details like updated addresses and phone numbers across government agencies, instead of updating each one separately.

2. Notifications – agencies will be able to contact users through their preferred channel, such as email or SMS.

3. Payments In – users will be able to access a simplified and consistent set of options for making payments to government.

4. Federated Data Exchange – agencies will be able to to quickly and securely share information across government.

This work is expected to start in October 2017. Discovery work for Tell Us Once, Notifications and the Federated Data Exchange is planned to be completed mid-2018. In partnership with DHS, the DTA will continue to build on the myGov 2.0 release. The DTA will provide user experience feedback about current Notifications and Tell us Once functions and investigate incremental improvements, such as better information about updating addresses across a number of services using myGov, making it easier to link to services using myGov and providing additional information to users about the source of notifications from government services.

Discovery work for Payments In is expected to be done in late 2018. Once completed, the platforms will mean Australians will only need to update their details once when dealing with different parts of government, and will benefit from notifications services, allowing them to nominate their preferred channel for contact, such as email or text.

# Secure cloud strategy

The secure cloud strategy is being developed to increase government understanding and adoption of cloud services. The strategy will address a number of areas to encourage government adoption of cloud, such as promoting cloud in a government context, building confidence in compliance and streamlining assurance processes, creating shared capabilities, guiding agencies to transition to the cloud, and working with industry to make cloud offerings more comparable and easier to adopt.

The secure cloud strategy will give agencies a clearer understanding of how government can harness the opportunity of cloud to increase agility, reduce duplication, increase efficiency and improve competition to get value for money from ICT investment. It will provide the frameworks and platforms for agencies to ensure they have the confidence and capabilities to move services to the cloud.

Work on the strategy started in April 2017 and is almost complete. The strategy has been developed with agencies, industry, and key policy stakeholders, and is expected to be released later this year.

# Performance Dashboard

The DTA publishes a number of dashboards on dashboard.gov.au which transparently track the performance of government services against key metrics like user satisfaction, digital take-up, and user completion rate.

The performance dashboards encourage continuous improvement of digital services, and enable agencies to meet criteria 11 of the Digital Service Standard, "Measure Performance". Transparency of service performance also allows for the highest impact, highest value services to be prioritised for improvement. Service quality metrics deliver high value evidence that avoids wasted investment based on incorrect assumptions.

Discovery for the performance dashboard began in February 2016, and the Beta version was released in February 2017, after passing a Beta assessment against the Digital Service Standard in October 2016.

There are currently eight government services and products reporting on the performance dashboard. The DTA is working with agencies to increase the number of digital services reporting, and over the next 12 months the DTA expects to see more government performance information added to dashboard.gov.au.

# data.gov.au and NationalMap

As of 14 September 2017, the DTA is responsible for operating the government's two key data-sharing platforms, data.gov.au and NationalMap. data.gov.au provides an easy way to find, access and reuse public datasets from Government. The main purpose of the site is to encourage public access to and reuse of public data. NationalMap is a website for map-based access to spatial data from Australian Government agencies.

The data.gov.au and NationalMap platforms host more than 28,000 and 10,000 datasets respectively. In August 2017, approximately 52,000 users visited data.gov.au and 12,000 users visited the NationalMap.

## Priority 3:
# Oversee and advise on ICT and digital investment

*This priority helps deliver the government's digital transformation agenda by improving the user experience for individuals and businesses and improving the return on ICT and digital investment.*

The Australian Government spends about $6.2 billion on ICT goods and services every year. Digital delivery is complex, technical and can be expensive, so it is critical Australian taxpayers are confident they are receiving appropriate benefit from this investment.

Projects work best when clearly identified business owners are responsible and accountable for delivering programs in their agency. The DTA is not responsible for delivering every single government ICT project, but has oversight of all significant ICT and digital investments by the government through the Digital Investment Management Office (DIMO). This sort of oversight makes sure digital services are being delivered for the right price, and the government's digital investment can provide more digital services and the best possible digital experience for customers.

The DIMO was established in November 2016 to improve how agencies initiate, plan and deliver digital and ICT investments across government. It is made up of the Portfolio Management Office, the Digital Investment Office and the Cyber Security Unit.

The DTA's oversight involves providing, through the DIMO, advice and guidance to agencies at all stages of the investment lifecycle to make sure projects are implemented smoothly and efficiently. This ongoing monitoring allows the DTA to identify successful initiatives, key delivery risks, areas of duplication, and opportunities to leverage common platforms and cloud services, and to provide advice on project remediation.

# The Portfolio Management Office

The Portfolio Management Office identifies risks, clarifies benefits and then monitors initiatives and provides oversight to increase the probability that the government's digital and ICT investments are successful.

It monitors all digital and ICT initiatives with a budget of more than $10 million and not classified as Secret or Top Secret. As of September 2017, the office is monitoring 72 projects with an aggregate budget of $7.2 billion and an ICT investment component of $5.3 billion.

The PMO engages on priority initiatives where:

- agencies' self-reporting identifies, or the where the DTA detects, material risk to successful delivery and/or intended benefits;

- it is directed to review a project by the government; and/or

- the DTA is specifically funded to provide oversight.

Engagement is tailored based on the remedial needs of the initiative and can range from participation within the initiatives' governance layers through to direct advice to senior responsible officers and program managers. These engagements may be short, targeted interventions or longer-term involvement.

The office has also produced the Digital Portfolio Investment Report to provide a comprehensive picture of ICT and digital technology investments. Government will be able to see the costs, benefits, risks and status of these initiatives.


# The Digital Investment Office

The Digital Investment Office provides advice to government on future ICT investments.

The office engages early with agencies that are bringing forward new proposals to be considered by the government, to ensure they align with the government's agenda and priorities. The office's advice and actions also help the government modernise and maintain critical infrastructure to help government make the right investments, in the right way, to produce the right benefits.

So far, the office has provided specialised briefing to the Digital Transformation Committee of the Cabinet for proposed investments worth more than $2 billion.

# Cyber Security Unit

The Cyber Security Unit was established on 1 July 2017 in response to the recommendations of the *Review of the Events Surrounding the 2016 eCensus.*

The unit is a specialised security team that collaborates with agencies to improve the government's security posture. The unit achieves this by working with agencies to identify and understand their risks and providing advice on how to address and manage them. The unit also focuses on the implementation of cyber security at the agency and application levels.

## Priority 4:
# Transform ICT procurement

*This priority helps deliver the government's digital transformation agenda by improving the return on ICT and digital investment.*

The DTA is responsible for developing and providing guidance to agencies on the application of ICT procurement policy.

Price can be a barrier to agencies adopting the latest technologies and moving services to digital channels. Best practice procurement, inclusive markets and good working relationships between buyers and sellers will ensure agencies can embrace modern, streamlined ways of doing business now and into the future.

One of the ways the DTA manages this is through coordinated procurement strategies, such as whole-of-government panels for commodity goods and services. The DTA also runs the Digital Marketplace to make it easier for smaller businesses to compete for government contracts for digital and ICT goods and services, and provides advice, guidance and standards to help agencies ensure they are using the right procurement tools and practices to get the best value for money from their ICT and digital spend.

The DTA will assist small-to-medium enterprises in increasing their portion of government business, which in the past have found it hard to secure government business. The DTA is removing barriers to entry so Australian companies can fairly and transparently compete for contracts, and so that agencies can make the most of dynamic and innovative local products.

## Coordinated procurement

The DTA, in collaboration with other government agencies, is responsible for managing a range of digital and ICT coordinated procurements. Coordinated procurement aggregates the government's purchasing power and makes it easier for agencies to get the digital and ICT goods and services they need by simplifying the process, reducing administrative costs, improving terms and conditions, and securing value for money.

It is estimated coordinated procurement has reduced the government's ICT costs by about $1.2 billion since 2008. It has also reduced duplication, improved transparency and increased agency compliance with policy.

The DTA's coordinated procurement is implemented through a range of mandatory ICT coordinated procurement arrangements including for data centre facilities, hardware equipment and services, mobiles phones, Microsoft software, and telecommunications services. Each arrangement, their ongoing operations, and future strategies are based on extensive consultation with agencies and suppliers to government.

The DTA is expanding the number of ICT coordinated procurement arrangements, with negotiations underway with major IT vendors SAP and IBM and negotiations expected to soon begin with Oracle. Together, these three vendors have 283 contracts in place (from 2005) with the Australian Government worth approximately $2.5 billion.

## ICT Procurement Transformation Program

The DTA is transforming how government manages its ICT procurement, in response to the *Report of the ICT Procurement Taskforce,* released in August 2017. This will encourage more innovation and small-scale experimentation by agencies to give industry the opportunity to pitch innovative ideas. The work will also consider how to improve skills across government agencies, and will include new features for the Digital Marketplace to show how easy it is to procure goods and service in government.

The program of work will also remove the systemic and cultural barriers to small business receiving government contracts, and aims to increase small-to-medium enterprises' share of the government's annual ICT contract spend by 10 per cent. There is also a target in place to reduce total annual ICT spend by 10 per cent over the next four years.

### The Report of the ICT Procurement Taskforce

On 23 August 2017, Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation, the Hon Angus Taylor, released the *Report of the ICT Procurement Taskforce*. The Australian Government accepted all ten recommendations in the Taskforce report.

Under the new framework announced by the Assistant Minister, government ICT contracts are capped at a maximum of $100 million or three years' duration. This will benefit small-to-medium enterprises, who will now have the opportunity to bid for smaller individual components of larger projects.

The taskforce consulted widely with industry sellers and government buyers to develop its recommendations for improving the government's ICT procurement processes. The Taskforce received 36 submissions, held five roundtables involving 77 participants in four cities, and conducted 56 one-on-one interviews over a period of three months.

## Digital marketplace

Since it was launched in August 2016 as part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda, the Marketplace has listed over 290 opportunities, approved more than 640 sellers, and registered over 760 government buyers. More than $40 million worth of contracts have been awarded through the marketplace and 81 per cent of these, worth $32.5 million, have been awarded to small-to-medium enterprises.

The marketplace is building an ecosystem where government buyers and private sellers can connect and have the procurement interactions they need — at the level of simplicity or complexity appropriate to their circumstances — and to make the outcomes of those interactions more transparent.

The marketplace has been developed in accordance with the Digital Service Standard and the DTA's service design and delivery process.
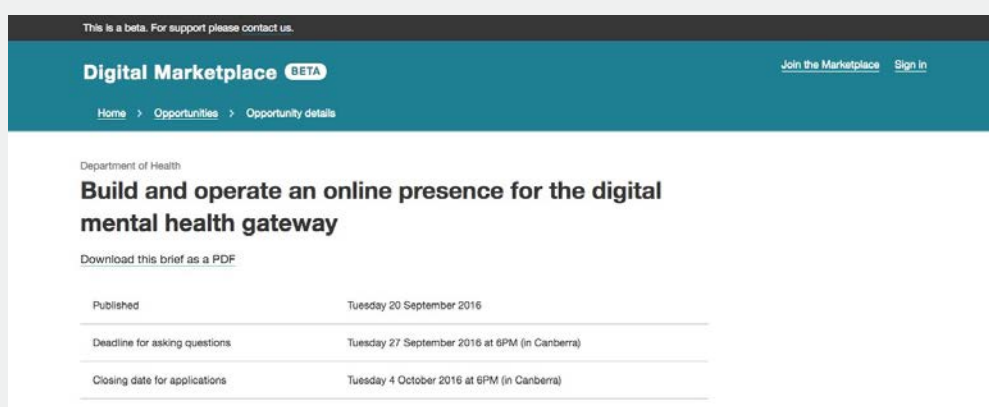
## Procurement of the Mental Health Gateway through the Digital Marketplace

One great result from the Digital Marketplace is the multi-million dollar design of the government's new digital mental health gateway Head to Health, which is the highest value contract awarded through the site to date. Head to Health will deliver an engaging experience for Australians seeking access to high-quality digital mental health treatment, information and resources.

By opening the procurement to all the sellers on the Digital Marketplace panel, the Department of Health considered a host of providers they had no prior experience with. As a result, the department found a collaborative partner who brings user-centred design, rapid prototyping and development ability, and engaging online content strategies.

Because of the marketplace's ability to link small business with government buyers, Speedwell, a small-to-medium enterprise in Brisbane was able to compete for the work and win. Speedwell won the contract and formed a consortium with another Brisbane agency, Liquid Interactive.

The feedback from both the department and the seller has been great, with both parties enjoying a productive working relationship that has resulted in the timely design and delivery of an innovative government service that has attracted many positive reviews from its early users.



*Image: Screenshot of the Digital Marketplace opportunity for the Mental Health Gateway.*

# Priority 5:
# Build Australian Public Service ICT and digital capability

*This priority helps deliver the government's digital transformation agenda by moving more services to digital channels, improving the user experience for individuals and businesses and improving the return on ICT and digital investment.*

Skilled staff are crucial to delivering effective digital services. But as technology advances, so do the kinds of skills and capabilities needed. To keep up, government agencies need to attract and retain staff with specialist digital skills, improve the digital literacy of senior leaders, and make sure existing staff have access to the tools and resources they need to deliver modern, easy-to-use and effective digital services.

An Australian Public Service that is innovative, curious and digitally savvy will galvanise the government's ability to realise its vision for digital transformation. Skilled digital workers can design the best digital experiences for customers and champion the adoption of digital service delivery channels. Building internal digital capability makes the public service less exposed to increasing market rates for contractors, reduces design and delivery risk, and will encourage innovative thinking.

## Digital Service Standard

The Digital Service Standard ensures digital teams build government services that are simple, clear and fast. Since May 2016, the standard has been mandatory for new or redeveloped public-facing services of non-corporate Commonwealth entities.

The standard contains 13 best-practice criteria for government services. It requires services to be accessible to all users regardless of their ability and environment (criteria 9), that agencies design and build using an agile and user-centred approach (criteria 3), and that agencies identify the data and information the service will use or create and put appropriate legal, privacy and security measures in place (criteria 5).

The DTA owns the standard, and supports its implementation across government by providing guidance, training, advice, and help with assessments. As of 30 June 2017, the DTA has trained about 1,300 staff to use and apply the standard when developing services, and has taught more than 500 assessors to assess services

against the standard. The DTA has also helped with, advised on or carried out
44 assessments of services under the standard.

## Designing with the Digital Service Standard

The National Blood Authority Bloodnet service is a good example of how the
Digital Service Standard can be applied to create simple, clear and fast
services. Bloodnet allows health facilities to order blood and blood products in a
standardised, secure and easy manner, and helps to save lives. Bloodnet was
recently assessed against the standard. The team passed in all areas and
excelled in understanding the needs of their users and working in an agile,
iterative manner. After building their prototypes, the team will continue user
testing and expect to conduct their Beta assessment in November 2017.

Another example of agencies applying the principles of the standard is the
Bureau of Meteorology. The Bureau did a trial assessment of the BOM Weather
app against the Digital Service Standard before its mandated release in May
2016. The Bureau has since used the Digital Service Standard in developing a
User-Centred Design Framework and is now using it for the development of a
new weather digital service. This service will be assessed against the Standard.

# Digital Service Standard

**The Digital Service Standard helps digital teams build government services that are simple, clear and fast.**

**01** Understand user needs. Research to develop a deep knowledge of the users and their context for using the service.

**02** Establish a sustainable multidisciplinary team to design, build, operate and iterate the service, led by an experienced product manager with decision-making responsibility.

**03** Design and build the product using the service design and delivery process, taking an agile and user-centred approach.

**04** Understand the tools and systems required to build, host, operate and measure the service and how to adopt, adapt or procure them.

**05** Identify the data and information the service will use or create. Put appropriate legal, privacy and security measures in place.

**06** Build the service with responsive design methods using common design patterns and the style guide.

**07** Build using open standards and common government platforms where appropriate.

**08** Make all new source code open by default.

**09** Ensure the service is accessible to all users regardless of their ability and environment.

**10** Test the service from end to end, in an environment that replicates the live version.

**11** Measure performance against KPIs set out in the guides. Report on public dashboard.

**12** Ensure that people who use the digital service can also use the other available channels if needed, without repetition or confusion.

**13** Encourage users to choose the digital service and consolidate or phase out existing alternative channels where appropriate.

dta.gov.au  @DTA
Date: 1 May 2016
dta.gov.au/standard

*Caption: The Digital Service Standard Criteria*

# Digital capability uplift

The DTA is working with the Australian Public Service Commission to raise digital capability across the APS through the Building Digital Capability Program. This program, announced in the 2017–18 Budget, will attract and retain digital talent across government, help provide leading-edge digital training to agencies, and deliver a digital transformation leadership program to help public service leaders contribute to the digital transformation agenda. The leadership program is expected to commence delivery early in 2018.

The DTA is also responsible for overseeing the Australian Government ICT Apprenticeship Program, the Australian Government ICT Cadetship Program, and the Australian Government ICT Graduate Program. Since 2007 these programs have matched people interested in an ICT career with agencies looking for new ICT talent. These programs received 1,387 applications for 173 positions available across 15 participating agencies in the 2018 cohort.

# Collaboration centres

The DTA has set up a collaboration centre in Sydney and has plans to set up another in Canberra. The centres will give agencies a place where they can build their digital capabilities, such as agile delivery and user-centred design, and access hands-on learning opportunities from private sector experts, as well as develop and iterate their digital services.

# Whole-of-government content strategy

The DTA is leading a whole-of-government content strategy to improve how information is made available on government websites. The strategy will produce best practice advice and guidance to help agencies deliver websites and content to make it simpler, easier and faster for people to engage with the government online.

There are currently more than 1,500 government websites, and more than 44 million content items. Common user journeys can involve a dozen websites with potentially hundreds of pages of content. More than 30 government agencies are working with the DTA to develop the strategy, which aims to reduce the amount of content on government websites, improve its quality and guide agencies on how to be more efficient with developing content. Work began on the strategy in February 2017, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

# Guides

The DTA is developing a set of guides that will be a single source of best practice information on service design and delivery. The guides provide ongoing support to agencies to help them design, deliver and maintain great services. The content will remain relevant and up-to-date for the emerging digital landscape with continued research and testing, as well as offer tools, assets and advice for website design.

The guides will also support online communities of practice where users can engage across government, showcase successful application of the standard and other examples of best practice service design and delivery. The guides will feature content about user research, the service design and delivery process, starting a team and content strategy.

# Design system

The DTA is developing a whole-of-government design system in collaboration with a community from across the government. The design system works like a catalogue of reusable design components, including code, that can be used freely by agencies.

This brings consistency to the design of government websites and services. It reduces duplication across government by providing flexible, reusable and shareable components, instead of reinventing the wheel every time an agency needs a new website. This empowers agencies to transform their services efficiently, bringing usability, accessibility and consistency to the forefront.
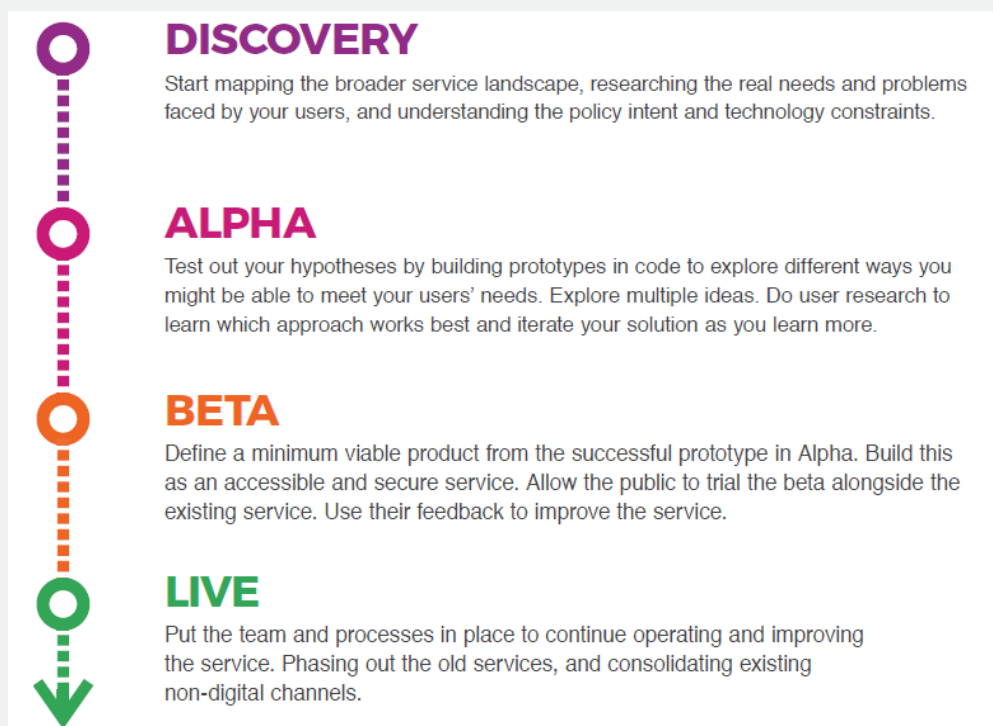
This open source community of agencies is collaborating to build world-class tools and designs. The design system is already in use by eight agencies, and components from the catalogue have been used to support high-profile services such as myGov 2.0.

## The DTA's service design and delivery process

The Digital Service Standard requires new services to be designed and built taking an agile and user-centred approach. Agile development is about iterating quickly to deliver value to your users and managing risks proactively. Agile development requires continuous delivery, improvement and feedback from users and business owners. The benefit is that delivery teams can quickly adapt and align services with user needs in rapidly changing environments. Agile practices don't guarantee success — you can still fail, but failure should be treated as an opportunity to learn. The ideas of learning by doing, failing fast, and adapting and adjusting to changes are all core agile practices.

In contrast, the waterfall approach progresses projects along a linear path. It provides easily identifiable milestones in the development process and is best suited to projects where the requirements and scope are fixed. A waterfall approach works well in scenarios where benefits are realised at the end of a project, such as in the construction of a building or bridge, but does not effectively deliver incremental benefits throughout the life of a project.

The Digital Service Standard sets out a four-staged service design and delivery to assist agencies in adopting an Agile development approach.

**DISCOVERY**
Start mapping the broader service landscape, researching the real needs and problems faced by your users, and understanding the policy intent and technology constraints.

**ALPHA**
Test out your hypotheses by building prototypes in code to explore different ways you might be able to meet your users' needs. Explore multiple ideas. Do user research to learn which approach works best and iterate your solution as you learn more.

**BETA**
Define a minimum viable product from the successful prototype in Alpha. Build this as an accessible and secure service. Allow the public to trial the beta alongside the existing service. Use their feedback to improve the service.

**LIVE**
Put the team and processes in place to continue operating and improving the service. Phasing out the old services, and consolidating existing non-digital channels.

*Caption: Diagram of the DTA service design and delivery process.*