



Australian Government



Services  
Australia

## Meeting of the Interim Services Australia Independent Advisory Board

Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14 August 2024

Arrangements for the Interim Independent Advisory Board (the Board) have been extended temporarily pending completion of enduring arrangements.

During the Board meeting on 13 and 14 August, the Board noted the Australian Government's Budget 2024-25 investment in the enduring Independent Advisory Board will build on the work of the Interim Board. The Minister for Government Services the Hon Bill Shorten MP reinforced the important role the Board plays in providing expertise and diversity of thought in government service delivery improvements. Minister Shorten said the Board will provide critical expert advice to support connected government service delivery across digital, telephony and face-to-face channels, with technology the foundation to achieve this vision.

Members of the Board congratulated the Minister and Services Australia for their significant advances in addressing claims backlogs and call waiting times.

At that meeting, members also discussed:

- the ongoing work to develop a consistent, people-centred and agency-wide approach to identifying, documenting and supporting people in vulnerable circumstances
- Services Australia's approach to emerging technologies, and the role these technologies can play in improving customer and staff experiences.
- myGov initiatives underway, including progress on Budget outcomes

Board members discussed their priority focus areas for the remainder of the 2024 calendar year. The Board acknowledged the need for the forward work program to be flexible to adapt to emerging priorities, while balancing the priority areas identified below:

1. Advice on proposed action to address the Robodebt Royal Commission Findings and Recommendations.
2. How government service delivery is supporting broader government strategies, including Closing the Gap and Gender Equality.
3. Use of emerging technologies in order to strengthen fraud, privacy and security of government services.
4. Legislative reform to deliver connected government services to unlock the potential for technology, and improve the customer experience.
5. Use cases and projects for the use of Automation and Artificial Intelligence.

### ***Identifying and responding to circumstances of vulnerability***

Building on discussions with the Board in March 2024, Services Australia briefed the Board on its progress in developing an agency specific definition of vulnerability so staff can better support people experiencing disadvantage with timely and tailored services.

Members were presented with customer journeys that illustrated the expected experience for people and staff; and provided insights and expertise on the benefits and risks.

The Board was pleased to hear about Services Australia's engagement with peak bodies, specialist services and research and welcomed further input into this consultation process.

Members discussed best practice approaches and suggested next steps, including further discovery work that could include:

- identifying the most critical and relevant customer circumstances to capture within an agency-wide solution
- further consideration of legislative and operational perspectives
- ongoing engagement with people and staff
- a staged approach to interim and longer term options.

### ***Using technology to grow the customer and staff experience***

The Board discussed Services Australia's progress in exploring how automation and artificial intelligence (AI) could be used to support customers and staff. The Board recognised the value in using these emerging technologies to improve both customer and staff experiences, provided they are undertaken with transparency and with appropriate legal, ethical and evidence-based guardrails. The Board acknowledged the agency's extensive stakeholder engagement to date and in ensuring its frameworks are aligned to national standards for ethical and responsible use of AI across government.

Members agreed these checks and balances will be critical to support future pilots and use of emerging technologies in the agency. The Board noted the agency will seek members' endorsement and insights on the proposed governance and assurance processes to underpin the use of these emerging technologies at the September 2024 meeting.

### ***Digital Update – myGov***

Board members were briefed on the scope and progress of myGov improvements funded through Budget 2024-25. Board members were provided with a summary of the recently released Ombudsman own motion report on keeping myGov secure, and the actions underway to address the findings and recommendations.

Board members reflected on their participation in the myGov passkeys beta and their advocacy for this capability, with myGov among the first digital government services in Australia to introduce this security feature. The Board was pleased to hear that passkeys have been created on more than 172,000 myGov accounts as a more secure alternative to passwords.

Members were pleased with the announcement of the Trusted Exchange (TeX) pilot, using the myGov app wallet, as well as the update on the recent addition of DVA Veteran Cards in the myGov wallet, and planned onboarding of a new state-based service.

Board members welcomed the news that more than 5.6 million people are using the myGov app for convenient access to government services. The Board encouraged Services Australia to consider further uptake strategies and explore additional services and capabilities for myGov.