



AUSTRALIAN DATA AND DIGITAL COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ 6 SEPTEMBER 2019

Today, the Australian Data and Digital Council met in Brisbane, where the Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers considered a range of data collaboration projects and digital transformation priorities underway nationally to improve services to the Australian public.

This was the first meeting chaired by the Commonwealth Minister for Government Services, the Hon Stuart Robert MP. The following State and Territory Ministers also attended the meeting:

- The Hon Victor Dominello MP (New South Wales)
- The Hon Gavin Jennings MLC (Victoria)
- The Hon Mick de Brenni MP (Queensland)
- The Hon John Gardner MP (South Australia)
- The Hon Michael Ferguson MP (Tasmania)
- Mr Mick Gentleman MLA (Australian Capital Territory)
- The Hon Lauren Moss MLA (Northern Territory)

On 9 August 2019, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to elevate the Australian Data and Digital Council to a formal COAG Council. Ministers noted the elevation of data and digital matters to First Ministers' attention provided greater opportunity for governments to work together to improve services and deliver tangible outcomes for individuals and businesses.

Transforming services around life events

There are key moments in life – significant 'life events' – when people need to interact with and rely on government. By designing services around people's needs, rather than how government is organised, government can deliver better services when people need them most.

Today, Ministers agreed to a new national approach to improve government services at key life events, such as having a baby or looking for work. Ministers agreed to principles to guide national life event-based initiatives to transform design and delivery of services to improve outcomes for people and businesses. The principles include the need to reduce duplication, ensuring the efficient use of collective resources and maximising the benefits of cross-jurisdictional learning, sharing and integration.

The Birth of a Child pilot led by the ACT will deliver a seamless experience for parents to engage with government services about their new baby and establish a trusted and verified identity for the child. This pilot is designed to dramatically reduce the time, effort and repetition that new parents currently experience when registering the birth of their child and enrolling for Medicare and Centrelink payments. A simpler service for parents is also expected to increase the number of birth registrations in Australia, a fundamental

underpinning of our national data and social policy assets. Noting the benefits of this initiative, the Council today agreed to work on a national basis to design, test and implement this work.

NSW, QLD and the Commonwealth agreed to work together to investigate digital birth certificates, to enhance the Birth of a Child life event project.

National Disability Data Asset

Barriers to sharing data between jurisdictions impede governments' ability to deliver services in ways that meet the expectations and needs of Australians.

The Council agreed to develop an enduring longitudinal National Disability Data Asset, incorporating datasets from multiple levels of government. This is an exciting collaboration – the first of its kind – and will allow governments to better understand how people with disability are supported through services, payments and programs across multiple service systems.

This pilot will initially bring together data from the Commonwealth, the National Disability Insurance Agency, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. All jurisdictions noted the priority of improving services for people with disability. Ministers asked the Senior Officials Group to prioritise the development of a business case and a sustainable funding model, to inform other jurisdictions' decision to opt into the Asset. The interim findings of the pilot phase will be brought back to this Council by mid 2020.

The Commonwealth agreed to provide up to \$15 million to cover the costs of the pilot phase. The Council will work closely with the Disability Reform Council to consider ongoing funding for the Asset.

Embracing new technologies to transform e-invoicing arrangements

Another area not yet fully embracing technological advances is the way suppliers and buyers interact when invoicing for goods and services. The current practice for many small to medium businesses when processing invoices is a manual, and often time consuming process. E-invoicing is a digital solution which provides a direct exchange of invoices between systems, leading to improved cash flow cycles, efficiencies and reducing error.

To assist reforms progressing in this area, Ministers agreed to develop a plan for widespread adoption of e-invoicing across all government agencies. The Commonwealth and NSW also agreed to a joint limited pilot of the PEPPOL standard with industry, noting the Commonwealth's requirement for passage of legislation.

Ministers agreed to invite New Zealand to observe the e-invoicing pilots being delivered by the Council, noting the active role New Zealand has played in e-invoicing to date.

All reforms are reliant on building and maintaining community trust

Ministers discussed the importance of community trust. All governments acknowledged that these important reforms are designed to improve the lives of citizens, but they must progress with community buy-in and support.

Cooperation and harmonisation on cross-border service delivery matters

Ministers discussed the importance of working to an agreed plan to guide efforts to harmonise digital activities across borders and to integrate government service delivery activities. Ministers asked the Senior Officials Group to undertake a strategic stocktake of these interface opportunities, including within existing fora, and provide advice to the Council at its next meeting.

Digital drivers licence reforms

Jurisdictions agreed to work together to consider digital interoperability of digital drivers licences and whether a consistent approach can be developed. Ministers asked the Senior Officials Group to investigate opportunities for reform and report back to the next Council meeting.

Next meeting

Ministers agreed the next Australian Data and Digital Council will be held on 6 December 2019 in Sydney.

Information on the Australian Data and Digital Council, including records of previous meetings, can be found at www.pmc.gov.au/ADDC.