

Pilot Long Term Insights Briefing – How might AI affect the trustworthiness of public service delivery?

What is a Long Term Insights Briefing?



An opportunity for the APS to consider significant, cross-cutting and complex policy issues, and how they may affect Australia and the Australian community in the medium and long term.

What did the Pilot LTIB do?

Explored how the APS could integrate AI into public service delivery in the future, and how this might affect the trustworthiness of public service delivery.

The briefing used **community** and **expert engagement, research** and **futures thinking** to explore how AI could transform public service delivery and the potential impacts of these changes on trustworthiness of service delivery agencies.

We will need to innovate to meet community expectations of public services in the future, including by adopting AI



The Australian community expects a higher standard of care, tailored and personalised services, and greater convenience and efficiency when accessing services.



Australia's population is ageing, increasing demand for care and support services.



A transition from informal to formal care is increasing demand for a higher standard of care.



Climate-related events like natural disasters will cause peaks in demand for resources, while reducing resources available to fund other public services.

Opportunities to improve public service outcomes include:

- AI-driven automation can increase efficiency
- Healthcare advancements
- Enhanced decision making
- Improved customer experience
- More efficient resource management

Using AI is not risk free:

- AI can inherit biases present in training data
- Privacy concerns from use of personal data
- Unintended consequences
- Dependency and reliability
- Inaccuracies
- Job displacement

Community views on AI and public service delivery



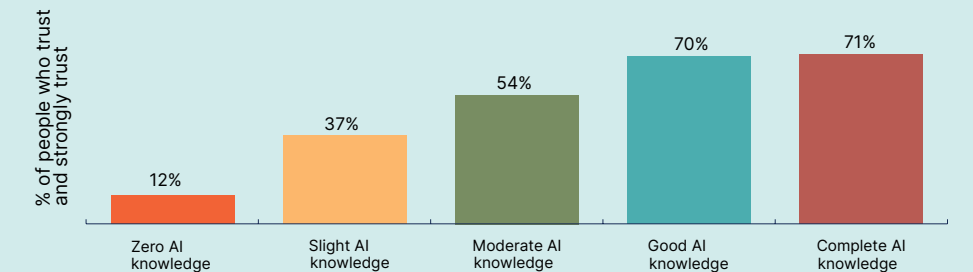
57% zero or slight knowledge of AI



63% zero or slight understanding of when AI is being used

People who know more about AI have higher trust in government's ability to use AI for public service delivery.

Trust in government to responsibly use AI for 'faster processes or service delivery times'



Source: Australian Public Service Commission, Survey of Trust in Australian Democracy (forthcoming)

What does trustworthy use of AI in public service delivery look like?



Trustworthiness of public service delivery is built when

Integrity is established through

- Regulation and processes to protect personal data.
- Clearly communicating to the community about their rights and protections.
- Frameworks to ensure ethical, fair, accountable and transparent use of AI.

Empathy is demonstrated by

- Offering face-to-face service delivery, especially for people experiencing vulnerabilities and those with complex needs.
- Taking into account individuals' needs, contexts and experiences when making decisions.

Performance is improved by

- Using AI to better meet users' needs and deliver efficient, timely, good quality and reliable services.
- Upskilling frontline agency staff so that they can clearly explain AI outcomes to end-users.

Competence is built by

- Scalable and reliable technology infrastructure to support AI solutions.
- Investing in the skills to steward the community through the transformations to public service delivery that AI will bring about.



Trustworthiness of public service delivery is eroded if

Integrity is undermined by

- Security and privacy breaches.
- Failing to communicate how individuals' personal data and information is being used.
- Failing to establish lines of accountability and avenues to appeal AI outcomes.

Empathy is lost when

- Agencies fail to offer enough of a relationship to service users.
- End users' experience fake empathy in an AI-facilitated interaction.

Performance is reduced when

- Agencies fail to address unintentional biases and stereotypes perpetuated by AI.
- Agencies fail to accommodate the digital experience, connectivity to AI knowledge of the community that the agency serves.
- Artificial intelligence makes it harder for people to access and engage with public services.

Competence is undermined by

- Lack of workforce skills and system capability to develop, use and implement AI.
- Failing to train AI models on high quality and representative data.
- Outcomes that are biased or perceived to be unfair.

What did we learn?



Insight #1: AI must be designed and implemented with integrity

This means that people and organisations employing AI are accountable for AI outcomes and transparent about how AI is being used, practise ethical values and principles when designing, developing and implementing AI, and ensure personal privacy and data security.

AI regulation and frameworks will only build trustworthiness if they are clearly communicated and explained to the community.

Insight #2: Using AI shouldn't come at the expense of empathy

When the public service demonstrates empathy for the people it serves, this builds trustworthiness.

In practice, this means providing enough of a relationship – human interaction – with public services. What that looks like depends on an agency's trust history, the community it serves, and the type of service it offers.

Insight #3: AI should improve performance

If using AI perpetuates unintentional biases and stereotypes, or makes it harder for people to access and engage with public services, trustworthiness will be eroded.

New skills and capabilities will be needed to adopt and use AI in ways that improve public services. This includes upskilling frontline staff to be able to explain the output of AI systems to others in a clear and understandable way.

Insight #4: Successful service delivery depends on supporting people to engage with AI-enabled services in the long term

Public services must be available for everyone, including those who don't want to engage with digital and AI-enabled systems or provide additional personal data. In the long term, we will live in a more connected world, and the APS will need to steward the community through the transformations that AI will bring.

It will be important to invest in building the AI literacy and digital connectivity of the community.