

Enacting the policy for responsible use of AI in government in Australia

Creating a trusted and coordinated approach to the government's use of AI

What you need to know

- ▶ For this policy, agencies should adhere to the [AI definition](#) approved in November 2023 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries, or subsequent updates.
- ▶ Agencies should also consider other relevant policy frameworks that may apply to them, including:
 - ▶ APS Code of Conduct
 - ▶ Australia's AI Ethics Principles
 - ▶ Engaging with AI guidance
 - ▶ Interim guidance on government use of public generative AI tools
 - ▶ Cyber security
 - ▶ Data governance
 - ▶ Privacy
 - ▶ Risk Management
 - ▶ Intellectual Property

AO(s) responsibilities

- ▶ Drive the policy's implementation.
- ▶ Be the contact point and facilitate cross-government collaboration and coordination.
- ▶ Report high-risk use cases to the DTA to support whole-of-government risk mitigation approaches. The policy includes a risk matrix to help agencies identify high-risk use cases.
- ▶ Share link to the transparency statement publication with DTA.
- ▶ Ensure AI transparency statements are written in clear and plain language.

Background

The Australian government has implemented a new [policy framework](#) aimed at positioning itself as a leader in the safe and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI).

The policy, which took effect on 1 September 2024, is designed to unify and coordinate the government's approach to AI, reinforcing existing frameworks without duplication. The policy is overseen by the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA).

Who is covered

The policy applies to all Non-corporate Commonwealth entities (NCEs) except for those in Defence or the *national intelligence community* (NIC). Corporate Commonwealth entities are also encouraged to apply this policy.

Policy aims and principles

The policy aims to embrace the benefits of AI by providing a unified approach for government engagement to ensure the safe and responsible use of AI. It also seeks to strengthen public trust through enhanced transparency and governance and remain flexible to adapt over time to the changing nature of AI and regulatory developments.

The policy key principles are based on the *Enable, Engage, and Evolve* framework:

- ▶ Safely engage with AI to enhance productivity and service delivery, while ensuring accountability and long-term APS-wide capability
- ▶ Ensure AI use is transparent and explainable, with proportionate risk mitigation to protect Australians from harm
- ▶ Forward-leaning, adaptive approach with ongoing review and embedded feedback mechanisms

Mandatory actions

- ▶ Designate **accountable official(s) (AOs)** for implementing the policy
- ▶ Publish a **transparency statement** outlining the approach to AI adoption and use to be reviewed and updated annually, or sooner if a significant change in the approach or a new factor materially impacts its accuracy

Recommended actions

- ▶ Train all staff on AI fundamentals and additional subjects based on roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Track internal AI use
- ▶ Integrate AI considerations into related existing frameworks
- ▶ Participate in the pilot of the Australian government's AI Assurance framework
- ▶ Apply the *Interim guidance on government use of public generative AI tools*
- ▶ Monitor and evaluate use cases and governance approaches to AI

Timeframe

- ▶ The policy took effect on 1 September 2024
- ▶ By 30 November 2024, the AO(s) **must** be designated and the contact details informed to DTA
- ▶ By 28 February 2025:
 - ▶ AI transparency statements **must** be published on the agency's public-facing website
 - ▶ AI fundamentals training for all staff **should** be completed

Next steps

- ▶ Agencies need to identify a suitable AO(s), whether that is an individual, a chair of a body or multiple officials, and notify the DTA
- ▶ Agencies will need to have a comprehensive understanding of their approach to AI adoption and use to draft, publish and update their transparency statement.
 - ▶ This includes tracking use cases, classifying AI use based on usage patterns and domains, evaluating the effectiveness of AI systems and measures to protect the public from negative impacts, and ensuring regulatory compliance.
- ▶ Agencies will need to consider developing an AI fundamentals curriculum to train all staff and any additional specialised training

How EY teams can assist

Using our propriety tools and enablers, EY can assist you with meeting the requirements set out in the policy, including:

- ▶ Evaluating your current level of AI maturity
- ▶ Reviewing your AI solution inventory
- ▶ Defining an approach for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of AI use
- ▶ Development of a Responsible AI Roadmap with prioritised recommendations

Get in touch for more information:



Christina Larkin
Associate Partner, AI Assurance Leader
Ernst & Young Australia
Christina.Larkin@au.ey.com



Tahney Keith
Partner, Technology Consulting
Ernst & Young Australia
Tahney.Keith@au.ey.com



John Hoffman
Partner, Technology Consulting
Ernst & Young Australia
John.Hoffman2@au.ey.com



Vanessa Gaskin
Director, Risk Consulting
Ernst & Young Australia
Vanessa.Gaskin@au.ey.com

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