



Australian Government

Australia's first Open Government National Action Plan

The Australian Government has finalised Australia's first Open Government National Action Plan and submitted it to the Open Government Partnership.

The National Action Plan sets out an ambitious agenda for the next two years, focused on: transparency and accountability in business; open data and digital transformation; access to government information; integrity in the public sector; and public participation and engagement.

The creation of a National Action Plan is part of the commitment the Australian Government made when it became a member of the Open Government Partnership.

What is the Open Government Partnership?

The Open Government Partnership is an international initiative established in 2011 that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. There are over 70 participating countries. More information can be found at www.opengovpartnership.org.

What action is the Government taking?

This is Australia's first National Action Plan. It sets out the initial actions the Government will take to uphold the principles of open government, improve and build confidence in Australian institutions, and strengthen our democracy. A package of 15 commitments will be implemented across five themes, as set out on the following page.

How was the Plan developed?

The National Action Plan was developed through a year-long process which started in November 2015.

The first round of public consultation was undertaken from November 2015 – April 2016, and involved a

variety of activities to raise awareness of the Plan's development, and to seek ideas on potential commitments.

Following the 2016 Federal election, an Interim Working Group of senior public servants and non-government stakeholders was established to inform the drafting of the Plan and the commitments, drawing upon earlier consultations. A final round of broader public consultation was undertaken in November 2016, which included public meetings in selected capital cities and a written submission process. The Government updated the Plan in response to public feedback (information on how submissions were taken into account will shortly be posted on the [OGPAU website](#)).

What happens next?

The Minister for Finance, Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann has responsibility for co-ordinating Australia's involvement in the Open Government Partnership on behalf of the Prime Minister. He will be supported by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Now the Plan has been lodged, the Government's focus will turn to implementation. There will be ongoing engagement with the public throughout implementation, with many of the commitments involving a further, detailed round of public consultation.

Work will also commence in 2017 on the development of Australia's next National Action Plan, which is due in mid-2018.

Further information

A copy of the National Action Plan and other information about Australia's involvement in the Open Government Partnership can be found at <http://ogpau.pmc.gov.au>.

National Action Plan commitments

I. Transparency and accountability in business

- Improve whistle-blower protections in the tax and corporate sectors.
- Improve transparency of beneficial ownership information available to relevant authorities, including consulting on the details, scope and implementation of a beneficial ownership register of companies.
- Implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to enhance disclosure of company payments and government revenues from oil, gas and mining.
- Strengthen Australia's ability to prevent, detect and respond to corporate crime, particularly bribery of foreign officials, money laundering and terrorism financing.

II. Open data and digital transformation

- Work with the research, not-for-profit and private sectors to identify and release high-value datasets, which will drive social and economic outcomes.
- Engage with the public and improve privacy risk management capability across government to build public trust around data sharing and release.
- Deliver a whole-of-government digital transformation roadmap and live public dashboards measuring the performance of government services.

III. Access to government information

- Ensure information access laws, policies and practices are modern and appropriate for the digital information age, including consulting on reform options to develop a simpler and more coherent framework for managing and accessing government information (including the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the *Archives Act 1983* and, where relevant, the *Privacy Act 1988*).
- Improve understanding of the public's use of freedom of information laws by working with states and territories to collect and publish uniform data.
- Improve the discoverability and accessibility of government data and information through central portals and digital platforms.

IV. Integrity in the public sector

- Work with the Parliament and the public to investigate the conduct of the 2016 election, use of technology in elections and the framework of donations to political parties and other political entities.
- Strengthen Australia's ability to prevent, detect and respond to corruption in the public sector, including reviewing the jurisdiction and capabilities of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity and the AFP's Fraud and Anti-Corruption Centre with the development of each National Action Plan.
- Ensure transparency in government procurement, including a public review of the Australian Government's compliance with the Open Contracting Data Standard.

V. Public participation and engagement

- Work with civil society to monitor implementation of the National Action Plan and draft future National Action Plans. This will include establishing a multi-stakeholder forum and transparent reporting and accountability mechanisms.
- Develop a whole-of-government framework to improve public participation in government decision making for better policy development and service delivery.