Introduction

This document presents the results from the fourth and final round of the Government Online survey. This reporting round is the final benchmark of agencies’ progress towards meeting the Government’s online services delivery commitment to "deliver all appropriate Government services online via the Internet by the end of 2001". Previous reporting rounds were carried out in June and September 2000 and March 2001. Where comparisons are made in this document, they are generally made with respect to the March 2001 reporting round (Round 3), although where possible comparisons are made with earlier reporting rounds.

As at October 2001, the majority of agencies had either met, or expected to meet the Government’s commitment to provide all appropriate services online by the end of 2001. Subsequent follow up with agencies in January 2002 confirmed that all agencies had met the 2001 target.
Considerable progress has been made against all areas of the Government's Online Strategy, representing a significant achievement by agencies in meeting the ambitious targets. With the majority of remaining goals and targets anticipated to be met in 2002, the Government will now be looking at making further progress in developing and improving current and future online services to an even greater degree.

**Round 4 Response rate**

131 agencies reported on their progress towards the implementation of online service delivery. This represented a 100% response rate of relevant agencies.

**Key results**

- *Online service delivery* – the round 4 survey revealed that by October 2001, 48% of agencies had already met the Government’s commitment to provide all appropriate services online. Subsequent follow up in January 2002 confirmed that all agencies met the 2001 target.

- *Sophistication of services* - online services are becoming more sophisticated, with a move from services providing static information only to those with transactional capabilities. Future online services will be more sophisticated – 55% are predicted to be transactional or integrated services.

- *Electronic payment of suppliers* - the proportion of agencies paying more than 90% of their suppliers electronically has increased since Round 3 (from 20% to 30%). Over three quarters of agencies (79%) pay more than 50% of the value of their payments electronically. The major impediment cited by agencies with reference to overall e-procurement implementation was a lack of supplier readiness.

- *E-Procurement* – Nearly two-thirds of agencies (64%) anticipate full implementation of simple e-procurement systems by the end of 2001. The majority of remaining agencies expect to implement simple e-procurement in 2002.
Service level data

- There are 1665 current online services and 602 future services, the vast majority of which are directed at external clients.

- The majority of identified services (75%) were categorised as Information and Communication services.

- 30% of current externally directed services were categorised within the three highest levels of sophistication (transactional or integrated).

- Business/Industry and all Australians were the groups most often cited as beneficiaries of online services.

Standards, Guidelines and User Confidence

- Online Information Service Obligations (OISOs) – the OISOs require that a minimum set of publicly accessible information and services be provided online. 75% of agencies currently have 100% of the required information types available online, and by December 2001, 118 agencies expect to be compliant.

- Metadata tagging – metadata is information about resources that facilitates the management and identification of those resources. 117 agencies have now analysed their resources with a view to determining those which require metadata tagging, and over 70% of agencies have 70% or more of their resources metatagged.

- National Archives of Australia (NAA) accreditation - 82% of agencies anticipate receiving NAA accreditation by December 2001. More agencies (up to 25% from 22% in Round 3) have already received NAA accreditation for their Australian Government Locator Service (AGLS) metadata. NAA accreditation certifies that the metadata on an agency website is AGLS compliant.

- Harvest Control Lists – a Harvest Control List is an index of the pages on a website containing AGLS metadata. Since Round 3, more agencies have established a Harvest Control List (up to 63% from 42%).
• *Privacy guidelines* – assessments by agencies of compliance with all four privacy guidelines indicates that 75% of are meeting all four guidelines.

*Security*

• *PSM and ACSI-33 compliance* - all agencies are required to comply with the provisions of the Protective Security Manual (PSM) and Australian Communications-Electronic Security Instructions (ACSI-33). 40% of agencies state that they are fully compliant with these security standards. The main barrier cited by agencies in achieving full compliance was that a security review was underway but not yet complete.

• *Security proforma* – the number of agencies reporting that their CEO had signed a security proforma declaring compliance with security standards has doubled since Round 3 – up from 13% to 26%. The most common reasons given for failing to sign the proforma were that a security review was currently underway within the agency, and that compliance of an external party was being determined.
PART ONE

Online service delivery

Anticipated date of all services being online

As at October 2001, 48% of agencies reported that all appropriate services targeted at external clients were available online, while 51% of agencies reported that all services directed at Government agencies (including their own) were online. The remaining agencies indicated that they remained on track to meet the December 2001 commitment.

Follow up with remaining agencies in January 2002 confirmed that all met the December 2001 target.

Service Types

Government online services can be directed in one of three ways – internally (to other Government agencies), externally (to external clients) or towards e-procurement activity. Agencies were asked to identify the direction of activity for each individual service. For both current and future services, the vast majority (89% and 80% respectively) were reported to be directed externally. The full results are charted below.
Proportion of total services online

Agencies were asked to report the proportion of their total services that are currently online or are anticipated to go online – in that not all services delivered by an agency are appropriate to be delivered in an online environment. The results in this section give an indication of the proportion of total services that have been deemed appropriate for online delivery. A majority of agencies (57%) reported that more than 60% of their services would ultimately be delivered online. This includes 15% that reported that all of their agency's services would be online. Approximately a quarter of agencies (26%) responded that less than 30% of their total services would be online.
Each agency has undertaken an assessment as to the appropriateness of a particular service being delivered online, and in some cases it is simply not feasible for a particular service to be delivered in the online environment. In the future, agencies will continue to assess services in terms of their suitability for online delivery.

**Impediments to online service delivery**

Throughout the four reporting rounds, agencies were asked whether they encountered any impediments in meeting the Government’s commitment to deliver all appropriate services online by 2001. The major impediments identified by agencies, in the final reporting round, were:

- lack of resources, in terms of financial and staffing levels (44%); and
- standards, both meeting the required standards, especially regarding security, and lack of consistency in standards (21%).

Other significant issues include client/supplier readiness for online service delivery and lack of infrastructure in place to provide services online. See the table below for further detail:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impediments to Online Service Delivery</th>
<th>No. of Agencies</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards (security, privacy, authentication, etc.)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client/supplier readiness</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency size</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of expertise</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor business case to support initiative</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of technology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nature of online services

Total number of services

As at October 2001, 1665 current online services were identified by agencies. A further 602 services are currently planned for the future (planned services are those services identified as being required at a later date). As noted previously, the majority of these identified current and future services were categorised as being directed towards external clients (1474 current and 483 planned). The following analysis only relates to identified external services.

Functional category of services

Throughout all reporting rounds, Information and Communication has been the most common functional category cited by agencies, with almost three-quarters (75%) of current services classified in this way. The majority of future services (61%) will also to be in the Information and Communication category.

Table: Functional category of current and future services (externally directed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional category</th>
<th>Current services</th>
<th>Future services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communication</td>
<td>1474</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB – Percentages do not equal 100% as some agencies cited multiple impediments.
**Beneficiary groups**

Agencies were asked to specify which groups were likely to benefit from each online service. Multiple responses were allowed, ie. agencies could specify more than one beneficiary group for each service.

**Table: Beneficiary groups of current and future services (externally directed)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary group</th>
<th>Current services</th>
<th>Future services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Industry</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Australians</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/non-govt organisations</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International organisations</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSI* people</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth 67 5 22 5
People from culturally diverse backgrounds 32 2 13 3

NB – Columns do not total number of services/100% as services can target/benefit more than one group

* Australian and Torres Strait Islander

**Level of sophistication of services**

In the final reporting round, agencies were asked to assess the sophistication of their services against five categories. These are:

- Services that provide static information only;
- Services that provide access to downloadable information;
- Transactional services;
- Integrated informational services; and
- Integrated transactional services.

**Current services**

Of the 1474 externally directed services:

- 147 were categorised as integrated (both informational and transactional) with other agencies or organisations; and
- 292 (20%) were described as services that are transactional (ie where the service involves an exchange of information between the agency and the individual Internet user).
Future services

The sophistication of future services is expected to be higher than current services. In round 4, agencies reported that they anticipate over half (55%) of their future services will be categorised within the highest levels of sophistication (transactional or integrated), while only 22% are expected to be static information services. Furthermore, a significant majority (77%) of total future services will be directed at external stakeholders.
The results for both current and future services are consistent with the general trend identified across all reporting rounds with a gradual increase in sophistication of services as agencies shift from providing static information on websites to transactional and integrated services. This trend is expected to continue in the future.

**Rural/Regional Australia**

Of the 1957 current and future externally directed services identified, 353 (18%) are or will be specifically targeted at rural/regional Australia. Of these, 238 are current services – representing 16%, an increase from 11% in Round 3.

The total number of Government online services (current and planned) targeted at rural and regional Australians has steadily increased throughout the reporting rounds – from 1.8% in Round 1 to 18% in the final round. It should also be noted that all online services benefit rural and regional Australians to some degree in terms of both accessibility and convenience.
E-payment and E-procurement

Paying suppliers electronically

Agencies have made continued progress in paying suppliers electronically. Almost a third of agencies (30%) reported that they pay 90% or more of their suppliers electronically (up from 20% in round 3).

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of agencies now pay 50% or more of the value of their payments electronically, increasing from 67% in round 3. Half of agencies are paying more than 80% of the total value of their payments electronically.

37% of agencies claim to pay a higher proportion of their payments electronically by value than by volume. By contrast, only 5% pay a higher proportion by volume than by value (the remaining 56% quote the same proportion for both value and volume). This supports the inference that larger suppliers (with larger value contracts) are more likely to be paid electronically than are smaller suppliers.

Agencies’ ability to conduct simple procurement electronically

At the time of the Round 4 survey, close to one third of agencies (30%) had implemented an e-procurement capability using open standards (such as the Open Buying on the Internet (OBI) and Extensible Markup Language (XML) standards). Almost two thirds of agencies (64%) reported that they expected to conduct simple procurement electronically by the end of 2001. Although this represents a decrease from Round 3, where 89% of agencies expected to be able to conduct simple procurement by the end of 2001, this can be explained by the more realistic and cautious approach being adopted by agencies, particularly in light of the need to implement complex system requirements. The majority of remaining agencies have indicated they will meet the Government’s requirements in 2002.

Electronic trading with suppliers

88 agencies reported that they were conducting at least a low level of electronic trading with suppliers (0-10% of electronic ordering). The remaining agencies are conducting a higher level of electronic trading (11-100% of electronic ordering).
Agencies are generally trading electronically with only a limited number of suppliers, and supplier readiness is nominated as the major impediment to take-up of e-procurement by 43% of agencies. This is consistent with the findings of the Australian Bureau of Statistics that only 6% of Australian businesses were ‘Internet commerce active’ (using the Internet to sell or purchase goods) in June 2000 [NB 2001 survey results expected in December 2001]. Agencies can be expected to do more trading electronically as more suppliers develop an e-commerce capability.

Impediments to electronic payments and purchasing

In addition to the most significant problem of supplier readiness and willingness (mentioned by 43% of agencies), the following impediments to electronic payments and purchasing were cited by 7% or more of agencies:

- lack of resources (24%);
- lack of ‘whole of Government approach’ (7%);
- standards (6%); and
- small agency size (6%).

Industry Development Opportunities

Agencies were asked to indicate whether any of their proposed online service delivery initiatives would require assistance from the private sector in the development of technical solutions. A vast majority (85%) of agencies reported that they would require private sector assistance and expertise in the following areas:
Agencies requiring private sector assistance in the development of technical solutions

This has been a consistent trend in all reporting rounds.
PART TWO

Standards and guidelines

Minimum Online Information

Agencies were asked to report on the number of services outlined in the Online Information Services Obligations (OISOs) as the minimum that should be accessible online that were actually available on their web sites. OISOs require that a minimum set of publicly accessible information and services be provided online. A vast majority of agencies (88%) have more than 90% of the information types available online. The percentage of information types available online has steadily increased through all reporting rounds.

![Graph: Proportion of OISOs]

Forms available online

Agencies were asked to report the proportion of their forms for public use available online and, if this was not 100%, the date all forms were expected to be available online.
Of the agencies that reported, 52% have all public forms online. A further 18% of agencies have between 90% and 99% of their forms online. The majority of agencies (72%) currently or expect to have placed all forms online before the end of 2001.

Agencies’ good progress in providing public forms online has been apparent throughout the reporting rounds – between Round 2 and the final round the figure for 100% success in terms of having all public forms online has increased from 21% to 52%.

**Metadata**

Agencies were asked to state whether or not they had analysed their resources to determine appropriate documents/material for metadata tagging.

Of the relevant agencies that reported, 89% have analysed their resources for metadata tagging – up from 85% in Round 3.

Over three-quarters of agencies (77%) have more than 70% of their relevant resources retrievable using AGLS metadata, including 50% that have all of their resources retrievable. These percentages have both increased by approximately 15% since the last reporting round in March 2001.

A significant proportion of agencies (71%) have incorporated metatagging and its maintenance into their business practices, and half of those agencies remaining expect to do so by the end of 2001.

In terms of gaining NAA accreditation for AGLS metadata, the proportion of formally accredited agencies is 25%, with a further 8% currently gaining accreditation. Overall, of the agencies that reported, 81% expect to gain accreditation by the end of 2001. NAA accreditation certifies that the metadata on an agency website is AGLS compliant. Agencies seek accreditation once all relevant metadata has been applied.

Significant progress has been made by agencies on the establishment of Harvest Control Lists. 63% of agencies report that they now have a Harvest Control List on
their web site – up from 42% in Round 3. A Harvest Control List is an index of the pages on a website containing AGLS metadata.

**Accessibility**

Agencies were asked about two aspects of accessibility:

- whether or not their web sites pass priority 1 (or conformance level A) of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines; and
- whether or not all contracts for web site development and design include accessibility as a key performance requirement.

Since the last reporting round (Round 3, March 2001) there has been a marked increase in the number of agencies reporting that they have web sites that already meet the accessibility guidelines (up to 63% from 48%). Of those agencies not fully compliant, nearly half (47%) indicate that 70% or more of their pages meet the guidelines.

Of the 47 agencies that do not have web sites that pass priority 1 (or conformance level A), half anticipate full compliance by the end of 2001 (53%).

The majority of agencies (86%) indicate that all of their contracts for web site development and design include accessibility as a key performance requirement. Of the agencies currently indicating less than 100% compliance – 67% anticipate all contracts will include accessibility by the end of 2001.

**Electronic publishing and record keeping**

The *Guidelines for Commonwealth Information Published in Electronic Formats* establishes principles for language use, information presentation, production and best practice conventions for electronic publications.

There has been a significant increase in the number of agencies which have developed all their publications in accordance with the electronic publishing guidelines – with
over two-thirds of agencies reporting full compliance in Round 4 (69%), up from 57% in Round 3. Of those agencies not currently achieving 100% compliance – 74% anticipate meeting the standards by the end of 2001. In line with the guidelines’ recommendation, over half of agencies (55%) notify the National Library of Australia of new publications which are only available online.

The NAA’s E-Permanence standard provides guidelines on Commonwealth record keeping in electronic environments.

Over half of all agencies (51%) reported in Round 4 that they have captured all their records into systems compliant with the Archives Act 1983 - up from 39% in Round 3. Of the remaining agencies, 62% expect to adequately document online activity by the end of 2001.

An examination of changes in results between Rounds 1-4 reveals significant progress made by agencies in record-keeping compliance activity. The percentage of agencies who ensure that all new and existing publications available online comply with the Archives Act 1983 has steadily increased; 25% in Round 1; 36% in Round 2; 39% in Round 3; and 51% in Round 4.

Impediments to implementing standards and guidelines

As with impediments to Online Service Delivery, lack of resources (especially staff) was stated as the most common barrier (24%) to implementation of standards and guidelines. Financial constraints (13%) and lack of, or problems with, software (10%) were also cited as impediments.
PART THREE

User confidence

Agencies were asked about the following aspects of user confidence:

• use of authentication and encryption technologies;

• Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) and Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technologies or service providers used;

• awareness of the Government’s requirement for the Australian Business Number – Digital Signature Certificate to be acceptable for business to government transactions;

• compliance with security guidelines; and

• compliance with privacy guidelines.

PKI authentication processes

18 of the 47 agencies utilising authentication processes indicated they where using PKI. Analysis of the data collected indicates that potentially 7 of the 18 appear to be utilising PKI from Gatekeeper accredited providers.

Note: For some agencies authentication/encryption technologies are not appropriate or required at this time.

Awareness of Government’s requirements

Agencies who answered positively to the question addressing use of PKI were then asked if the Australian Business Number – Digital Signature Certificate (ABN-DSC) was used to transact with businesses. A vast majority of agencies (91%) reporting in Round 4 stated that they are aware of the Government’s decision that the ABN-DSC be used for business to government transactions if using PKI.
Slower than anticipated take up of the ABN-DSC appears to have been effected by the lack of available applications by agencies, and the initial cost of issuing the certificates.

Impediments to using authentication and encryption

The most commonly mentioned barriers were lack of resources (17%) and financial constraints (14%). Other impediments mentioned by 5% or more of agencies were difficulties with service providers, software, uptake and agency size. Many agencies are currently undergoing security assessments/audits and examining options for security (authentication, encryption and privacy) technologies, software and outsourcing.

Security

Agencies were asked about the following aspects of security:

- to what degree their online activities comply with the provisions of the Protective Security Manual (PSM) and the Australian Communications Security Instructions 33 (ACSI-33);
- whether or not non-government service providers comply with existing Commonwealth online security standards deemed to be appropriate by agencies; and
- whether or not their CEO had warranted their compliance with security guidelines.

Compliance with PSM and ACSI-33

40% of agencies state that they are fully compliant with the PSM and the ACSI-33 standard. This represents an increase from 31% in Round 3. Of those agencies not fully compliant, over half (54%) reported that they expect to fully comply by the end of 2001.

Furthermore, two thirds (67%) of agencies using outsourced online service providers report that those providers are fully complying with appropriate security standards or
practices, and of those not currently reporting full compliance, over half (60%) anticipate meeting the target by the end of 2001 – which will bring the total to 83% of agencies in full compliance.

**CEO warranty of compliance with security guidelines**

There has been an 100% increase, from Round 3, of agencies reporting that their security arrangements have been warranted as compliant by their CEO (up from 13% to 26%). Only 2 agencies failed to respond to this question. The remaining 73% of agencies were requested to explain their position briefly. The 3 most common reasons given for having not signed the proforma were:

- a review of security is currently underway within the agency (37%);
- external parties are used compliance being determined (23%); and
- agency online systems and websites are not compliant yet (17%).

Feedback from agencies indicates that security policies are in place, however many agencies are seeking to finalise internal reviews before signing off on compliance against the relevant standards.

NOIE will continue to liaise with the Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) and Attorney General’s Department who have formal policy responsibility for this matter.

**Impediments to meeting security guidelines**

As with authentication and encryption, many agencies are currently undergoing security assessments/audits and examining options for security (authentication, encryption and privacy) technologies, software and outsourcing. Other issues cited included contracted external parties may not be compliant, and broader compliance issues.
Compliance with privacy guidelines

Agencies were asked to report how the Privacy Commissioner rated them in their most recent audit. In all cases, over 75% of agencies indicated that they met all four guidelines:

- Guideline 1 – Openness (92%);
- Guideline 2 – Collection of personal information via a web site (76%);
- Guideline 3 – Security (90%); and
- Guideline 4 – Publishing personal information on a web site (75%).

For those agencies reporting less than 100% compliance – at least half reported, for each guideline, that their online activities complied to a level of at least 80%, and more than 50% anticipated meeting all four guidelines by the end of 2001.

It should be noted that a comparison to Round 3 results is not appropriate in that the question has altered from self-assessment in Round 3 to formal audit results in Round 4. However as a general indication of overall improvement by agencies with regard to privacy issues throughout the reporting rounds, the average level of compliance has risen from 50% in Round 1 to 83% in Round 4.
CONCLUSION

The Government Online reporting process has in many ways acted as a driver in focussing agency attention to the requirements of the Government's Online Strategy. Since the commencement of the first reporting round, the number, range and complexity of online services has steadily increased. Agency compliance against core standards and guidelines has progressively increased to a stage where the majority of agencies are now significantly advanced in meeting these requirements. Likewise, agency progress in meeting user confidence standards has steadily increased throughout all reporting rounds.

While there are still areas where improvements can be made, the task set by Government has, in the main, been met. The challenge now is for Government to move forward with the next stage of Government Online - enhancing online service provision and the endless opportunities that the online environment provides for all Australians.
Appendix A – Acronyms

ACSI-33 – Australian Communications Security Instructions 33
AGLS – Australian Government Locator Services (AGLS)
CEO – Chief Executive Officer
DSD – Defence Signals Directorate
NAA – National Archives of Australia
NOIE – National Office for the Information Economy
OISOs – Online Information Service Obligations
PKI – Public Key Infrastructure
PSM – Protective Security Manual
SSL – Secure Socket Layer
W3C – World Wide Web Consortium