Federal Budget 2019-20 analysis:

Government Digitisation

To be among the top digital government nations, the Government must leverage industry expertise in technological innovation and use a people first approach to prioritise and accelerate the digitisation of services – AIIA March 2019

Who's responsible ?

The Hon Michael Keenan – Member for Stirling Western Australia and Federal Minister for Human Services and Digital Transformation, (until the Federal election as Mr Keenan will not be recontesting his seat).

Government's Digital Transformation Strategy 2018

The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) has oversight of all non-secret Government ICT projects costing over $10m[1] and tracks progress against the Government's 2018 Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS).

The DTS "outlines more than 100 key projects and milestones, backed by over $1bn of investment, being delivered by over 20 agencies over the next 24 months"[2], and addresses three priorities:

- Government that is easy to deal with
- Government that is formed by you, and
- Government that is fit for the digital age.

DTA has an overarching digital governance responsibility and maintains a comprehensive Roadmap of these projects.

What was in the budget?

However, in spite of the DTS and its Roadmap there is no single consolidated list of all budget measures relevant to Government Digitalisation.

AIIA has scanned the 2019 Budget Papers and has compiled the following summary – complete with page references for digital expenditures:

- New! **$249.8** million over five years to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Jobs and Small Business (DJSB) to "pilot key element s of **a new employment service model**" starting in July 2019. This is a big initiative with the pilot involving around 95,000 jobseekers who will test "digital employment servicing". (BP2, P166)

- Continuing investment of **$219.3**[3] million over four years for the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) **Veteran Centric Reform** program, elements of which include the expansion of the **MyService** digital experience, simplifying the telephone experience, and through DHS expanding Veteran (and their families) face-to-face services. (BP2, P174)

- An additional **$200** million in 2019-20 to the Australian Digital Health Agency to continue the **MyHealth** Record System – which allows individuals to track and share their medical history. This measure extends the 2017-Budget measure, funding had already been provided the Government. (BP2, P48)

- **$128.8** million over four years to extend the **Cashless Debit Card** (CDC) trial to June 2021, including expansion and enhancements of supporting technology. The expenditure will be shared across DHS, the Department of Social Security (DSS) and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), this split across agencies are

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[1] Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee
[2] Address to the Australian Information Industry Association

[3] Veteran Centric Reform – putting Veterans and their Families First

'nfp' - not-for-publication - as commercial negotiations are yet to be finalised. (BP2, P157)

- An **$82.4** million over four years expansion of the Australian Tax Office's and DVA **Single Touch Payroll** (STP) initiative, which is intended to reduce the compliance burden for employers and individuals reporting information to multiple Government agencies, through more streamlined data collection and data use. (BP2, P170)

- **$67.1** million in 2019 to continue development and infrastructure to support the **GovPass** digital identity service. This is a key component of the Government's digital transformation program. Funding is distributed across DHS, DTA, Department of Finance, with the bulk going to ATO. According to DHS[4] this expansion of GovPass "will affect up to 200,000' people" who access DHS services. (BP2, P155)

- **$38.3** million over three years for the **Australian Bureau of Statistics** (ABS) to facilitate the delivery of the **2021 Census**, taking on board recommendations from the reviews of the 2016 e-Census. (BP2, P165)

- New funding of **$10.8** million over two years for a market approach for **new polling place technology and infrastructur**e by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). (BP2, P80)

- The National Library of Australia (NLA) has received **$10** million over four years to establish a **Digitisation Fund** and to expand the content and availability of its award winning **Trove** online database. (BP2, P58)

- **$1.3** to the ATO to set up a local **Pan European Public Procurement On-line** (PEPPOL) authority to facilitate **Electronic Invoicing** adoption. This continues $1 million provided last year to DHS to kick off this great initiative. The PEPPOL e-invoicing framework is used across 32 countries. (BP2, P166)

- The ATO gains **$1.0** million funding from 2020 to **Strengthen the Australian Business Number** to disrupt black economy behaviours by requiring ABN holders to be more accountable in meeting Government obligations. (BP2, P13)

Health Research and investment in Data

- **Health and Medical Research Future Fund** investment of **$1.4 billion** is a core commitment of the Government's future strategy, and digital technologies will be a fundamental and central enabler of this vision.

- The Government has earmarked **$80 million** for new Department of Health (DOH) **Data Infrastructure** to provide registries, biobanks and linkage platforms. (BP2, P101: Paper 1.9 P24)

- On a more immediate and important focus, DOH also gains **$38.4** million over five years to strengthen **Aged Care risk-based compliance** - read "big data analysis". (BP2, P102)

Cyber Uplift and Cross portfolio activities

- An unpublished (nfp) allocation has been made across "various agencies" for **Cyber Uplift** – to enhance whole-of-government cyber security arrangement including support for the 2019 Federal election. (BP2, P66)

- **$70** million has been provided over two years (starting 2018-19) across several agencies to "undertake preparatory work required by the **ATO** to migrate to an **alternative data centre provider**. (BP2, P61)

AIIA's Government Digitalisation policy

AIIA listed five recommendations in its Government Digitisation policy position statement calling for:

- closer collaboration between the Government, industry and research institutes to accelerate government digitisation;

- capability development of the APS in the design and delivery of government digital services;

- improvements and efficiencies in digital sourcing;

- ensuring data collection through government transactions are secure, private, accurate and afford required consumer protection and,

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- continued focus on inclusivity and accessibility of all services and digital communications to ensure that no one is left behind.

While the 2019-20 budget expenditures do not directly map to these recommendations there are current Government initiatives that provide some alignment including:

- convening of the Australian Digital Council which brings together Federal, State and Territory "digital and data" Ministers. Its terms of reference include data security, equitable access to digital services, and to build trust and transparency in government digital services;

- rollout of Building Digital Capability Program which aims to develop specialist digital skills within the APS, and

- according to Minister Keenan, the most successful engagement with industry being the commissioning of the Digital Marketplace which has over 1800 registered buyers and 1200 suppliers, with $358 million in contracts awarded.

Other digitally relevant initiatves listed in the 2019-2020 Budget

- **$25.1** million over three years for the **Office of the Australian Information Commissione**r to respond to privacy complaints in a timely manner, as well as strengthen enforcement around social media and online platform that breach privacy regulations. (BP2, P53)

- **$10.0** million over four years to the **Office of the eSafety Commissioner** to establish a new **Online Safety Grants Program** to support online safety education for children by non-government organisations. (BP2, P58)

- **$20.1** million over four years to better identify emerging skill needs in the Australian economy as part of the **Jobs and Education Data Infrastructure Project**, and simplified access to student records via an expanded **Unique Student Identifie**r. (BP2, P70)

- **$11.7** million over four years for the **Commonwealth Grants Commission** (CGC) to improve its ICT capacity. (BP2, P166)

- **$10** million for the rollout of **smart technology infrastructure** in Adelaide's city centre and **$6.0** million to establish the **space discovery**

centre under the previously announced **Adelaide City Deal**. (PB2, P123)

- The **Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Citie**s is allocated **$5.2** million for the design of a **freight data hub**, and **$3.3** million for the establishment of a **freight data exchange pilot**, to allow access to freight data in real time. (BP2, P145)

- **$7.8** million over four years to the **Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission** to establish the already announced **National Public Register of Child Sex Offenders**. (BP2, 113)

- **$4.0** million in 2019-20 to the **Department of Education and Training** to improve the operation of the **Child Care Subsidy System** and the inclusion of a support portal to "reduce administrative burden on service providers". (BP2, P67)

- **$2.0** million in 2019-20 for the **Department of Communications and the Arts** to conduct a feasibility study for improving **digital connectivity** in Western Australia's Grainbelt region. (BP2, 57)

Links

- AIIA Government Digitisation policy position statement
- AIIA Pre-Budget Submission to Treasury 2019
- The Hon Michael Keenan - Address to the Australian Information Industry Association
- Treasurer's Budget Address, April 2019
- Australian Government 2019-2020 Budget Papers
- Federal Government's Digital Transformation Strategy: *Vision 2025: We will Deliver World-leading Digital Services for the Benefit of all Australians*
- Digital Transformation Agency Roadmap

For an excellent overview of Government Digitalisation initiatives AIIA highly recommend Public sector digital transformation: a quick guide, produced by the Parliamentary Library's Cyber and Digital Research Group.