

Meeting of the Minister's Independent Advisory Board

Wednesday, 21 May 2025

Members of the Independent Advisory Board (the Board) met on Wednesday, 21 May 2025 in Canberra to discuss a range of government service priorities and to hear updates on previous matters brought before the Board.

Legislation, policy and service alignment

Services Australia (the Agency) provided Board members with an overview of an approach to identify and resolve issues where alignment of legislation, policy and service delivery is needed.

Members acknowledged this approach will improve the Agency's understanding and management of the impacts of these issues on customers and staff. The Board provided advice on key delivery risks and the importance of assurance mechanisms.

Improving payment accuracy and debt management

The Board heard about the work underway to improve the accuracy of customer payments. The Agency provided an overview of a proof of concept involving proactively contacting customers to ask them to check and update their bank account balances online.

The Agency sought the Board's advice and expertise on the user perspective and associated benefits and barriers to these concepts.

Online service improvements

Members were provided with an update on the Agency's commitment to strengthen and promote the uptake of its online services. Members noted the Agency's commitment to delivering efficient, user-centred and accessible digital services, and commended its efforts to date towards a more streamlined online experience.

The Board heard the Agency is preparing to assess online services against the Digital Service Standard, in line with the 1 July 2025 timeframe, and members are interested in further updates.

Safe and ethical use of automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Agency spoke of its ongoing commitment to rigorous assurance processes to ensure initiatives involving AI are people-centred, fair, trusted, ethical and legal.

Members heard about the Agency's ongoing work with stakeholders and external providers to uplift automation and AI capability, in line with whole-of-government frameworks and industry best practice.

The Board noted and provided advice on the challenges with implementing these improvements and ensuring ethics frameworks remain current in the face of rapidly evolving technology and customer expectations.

Connected government legislative reform options

The Agency updated the Board on its progress exploring opportunities to remove legislative barriers to delivering more connected and customer-centric government services for Australians.

The Board provided advice on risks, issues, and opportunities for connected service delivery legislative reform. This included the potential challenges of large-scale reform and how to create further appetite for change.