Subject: Portfolio Panels for IT Services Policy

Approved by the Secretaries' ICT Governance Board on 16 November 2011

Circular No: 2011/004

To all agencies under the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act)

Should an agency wish to opt-out from a Whole-of-Government arrangement, approval must be sought from the Secretaries' ICT Governance Board (SIGB).

Purpose

The purpose of this Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) Circular is to inform agencies that on 16 November 2011, the SIGB endorsed the Portfolio Panels for IT Services policy. The policy states that:

- Australian Government Portfolios will reduce the number of IT Services panels to a maximum of three across the whole of the Portfolio. Any newly established IT Services panel can be administered by any agency within the portfolio and will be counted as part of the maximum of three across the portfolio.
- FMA Act Agencies must include a multi-agency access clause in IT Services panels to allow access to the panel by any agencies interested in procuring from the panel.
- FMA Act Agencies must report on their progress as required to Chief Information Officer Committee (CIOC) and SIGB.
- Agencies seeking exemption from the policy must apply to the SIGB for approval.

Key Points

1. The Australian Government currently has over 120 IT Services panels/standing offers in operation. This policy aims to reduce, by December 2014, the number of panels by 50%; significantly reducing the burden and cost of establishing and administering such a large number of panels.

2. Agencies establishing a new IT Services panel should consult with all of the other agencies within its portfolio to ensure the needs of the entire portfolio are met.
3. Prior to the establishment of a new IT Services panel, an agency should investigate which IT services panels across the Australian Government can meet the agency’s IT Services requirements.

4. Existing IT Services panels can run their full term to ensure that Australian Government agencies attain the maximum value for money from existing arrangements.

5. Regular monitoring of the number IT Services panels across Australian Government will determine the effectiveness of this policy.

6. IT Services are defined at Attachment A.

**Background**


8. Finance conducted a series of consultations with both Government and Industry about the prospect of a Whole of Government ICT Services Panel (WISP). At the completion of these consultation activities the WISP was not the preferred option for achieving efficient optimisation of IT Services panels across the Government.

9. In April 2011, the CIOC agreed that the transition to limit the number of portfolio IT Services panels was the preferred option to achieve optimisation of the IT Services panels.

10. In November 2011, the SIGB endorsed the policy.

**Action Required:**

11. Australian Government Agencies will reduce the number of IT Services panels to a maximum of three across the whole of the Portfolio.

12. FMA Act Agencies must include a multi-agency access clause in IT Services panels established after 24 December 2011.

13. FMA Act Agencies must report on their progress as required to CIOC and SIGB.

**Contacts**

14. If you have any questions regarding this AGIMO Circular, please contact ICT Procurement within AGIMO at ictprocurement@finance.gov.au.

---

John Sheridan
First Assistant Secretary
Agency Services Division
Australian Government Information Management Office
20 December 2011