



Charging for Data Services

Australian Government Charging Framework

This information sheet is to be read in conjunction with Resource Management Guide No. 302: Australian Government Charging Framework available at www.finance.gov.au.

Purpose

This information sheet is relevant for Australian Government corporate and non-corporate Commonwealth entities within the General Government Sector. It provides information for staff involved in data services, including charging for data services. Data services that entities could consider charging for include:

- specialised data collection (e.g. survey development and/or conducting a survey)
- provision of specialised data and data analysis services (e.g. developing or tailoring existing data, provision of data in specific formats and provision of reports based on data analysis)
- facilitating specialised access to data (e.g. provision of additional data infrastructure)
- data support services (e.g. assistance with interpretation or data presentation of survey results, education, call centre assistance or maintenance of data sets).

Entities considering charging for data services should be aware of the Government's Public Data Policy Statement¹. This policy statement outlines that Australian Government entities are to make non-sensitive data open by default. Under the policy statement, Australian Government entities may "... only charge for specialised data services and, where possible, publish the resulting data open by default." Corporate Commonwealth entities may choose to apply this policy statement.

Data Services Charging Considerations

In assessing whether to charge for data services, entity staff should consider:

- whether charging for the data service will be cost-effective, including assessing any required changes to policy, processes, infrastructure, services or systems
- the likely impact of charging for data services, including the impact on the:
 - entity's capacity to meet its purpose
 - effectiveness and performance of the entity and its programmes, including the potential impact on other activities and accessibility

¹ The Public Data Policy Statement is available at <http://www.dpmc.gov.au/pmc/publication/australian-government-public-data-policy-statement>.

- perceived integrity, transparency and/or impartiality of the entity
- data collection activities
- entity's clients and stakeholders, including any competitors.
- consistency with government policy, including whether charging for the proposed data services is likely to:
 - be consistent with the Government's Public Data Policy Statement
 - affect other government policies (e.g. community service obligations)
- whether the proposed data service will comply with applicable Commonwealth, state and territory laws, including the entity's enabling legislation
- privacy, confidentiality, law-enforcement and security requirements
- branding and intellectual property requirements.

Better Practice Processes

Entities should:

- develop and publish the entity's policy on charging for data services, if they undertake significant and/or ongoing services
- determine and publicise the types of data services that the entity will or will not charge for, in what circumstances and any conditions that may apply
- develop processes to handle data service requests (e.g. application forms, processing timeframes and service standards)
- have in place relevant approval arrangements, including determining when ministerial approval or notification is required
- develop costing and pricing models for data services
- implement relevant risk management, complaints and conflict resolution processes
- implement appropriate reporting, such as publishing a summary of data services revenue, in the entity's annual report
- engage with stakeholders, including consulting prior to introducing new charges and actively managing client relationships
- document and actively manage data services arrangements, including ensuring that any arrangement:
 - allows for the Australian Government to refuse or withdraw from the arrangement at its discretion
 - provides that the contractor fully disclose any matters relevant to the arrangement
 - allow for review of any arrangement, at least annually
 - details any restrictions, acknowledgement requirements or other conditions.