



Australian Government

Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

Mr Taylor Black

Statutory Review of the *Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022*

By email DATAActReview@finance.gov.au

Submission to the Statutory Review of the Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022

The Department of Industry Science and Resources (DISR) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Statutory Review of the *Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022* (the Act).

Experience to date

DISR became an accredited user under the Act in June 2023, among the first agencies to become accredited. Our accreditation leveraged DISR's mature data governance, systems and capability, and allows us to build on existing data sharing arrangements. In 2023-24, the department had 95 formal and 38 informal sharing arrangements in place. To date, we have not received a request from an accredited user under the Act.

Data held by DISR is shared in a number of ways, including through:

- publicly facing mechanisms (e.g. data.gov.au and the [Digital Atlas of Australia](#))
- making data available through the Australian Bureau of Statistics Data Lab Environment, that provides a range of government, academic and public policy research institutes access to data for approved projects
- data sharing agreements between Commonwealth and State government agencies.

There is significant overlap in the user groups able to access the arrangements above and those that can participate under the Act, in particular other government agencies and universities. Our experience is similar to that expressed in the Issues Paper and note other requests that have been refused under the Act due to data being already available and accessible or being able to be resolved under other legislative authorisations¹.

However, the establishment of Dataplace can play an important role in uplifting data sharing in line with best practice and improving transparency of sharing arrangements.

Opportunities to improve the Act

While the early operation of the Act made some progress on increasing the availability and use of Australian Government data to inform government policy and service

¹ [ONDC Annual Report 2023-24](#)

delivery, and support world-leading research, there are further changes to the Act that could be made to make further progress.

Extending the entities who can become accredited users under the Act would provide a pathway for entities who currently cannot access data through other means to do so, this includes Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. This could support other government objectives, including the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Priority Reform 4) and the Framework for the Governance of Indigenous Data.

The Australian Government Data Catalogue has been an important means of increasing the transparency of government data holdings and lifting data governance across the Australian Public Service. Continuing to build and maintain the Catalogue so that it provides a comprehensive view of government data holdings will make it easier for those seeking to access data, particularly for those users who have not used traditional data sharing arrangements, and continue to enhance transparency.

Implications of the Act sunseting

The Act provides a pathway for agencies to securely share information and plays a key role in the broader government data ecosystem. It helps enable detailed, meaningful and collaborative evaluation of policy and program impacts. If the Act were to sunset there may be instances where there are limited alternative mechanisms for data sharing.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Statutory Review. If you would like to discuss further, please contact officer Bede Jones, Chief Data Officer ([REDACTED]).