Digital ID and verifiable credentials Strategy

Developing a strategic direction reflecting alignment of Commonwealth, state and territory governments

This strategy, developed by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, reflects alignment on the common strategic direction and set of priorities for digital IDs and verifiable credentials in Australia to ensure a cohesive, national approach.

Executive Summary

Vision

As an individual, I find it easier and safer to identify myself and access services.

2030 vision: Individuals

As a relying party, I can trust that the people and organisations I interact with are verified correctly, and the attributes they provide are accurate.

2030 vision: Businesses

Principles

Convenient
Governments will align on standards so that digital IDs and credentials are easy to use and widely accepted.

Inclusive
Digital IDs and credentials will enable access to services for anyone who chooses to use them.

Secure
Strong security safeguards will keep information safe and private, and let people share only what's necessary

Sustainable
The systems will be cost-effective, scalable, and regularly updated to meet new standards and evolving needs.

Voluntary
Using digital IDs and credentials is not mandatory. People can choose to access services digitally or keep using alternative options.

Interoperable
Key verifiable credentials should be designed and implemented to ensure national and international interoperability.

Outcomes

Outcome 1
Strengthening the foundations for identity that are consistent & inclusive.

Outcome 2
Enabling widespread use of digital IDs in the economy.

Outcome 3
Creating the framework for delivering interoperable credentials

Outcome 4
Protecting and helping people and organisations

Context

The Australian Commonwealth, state and territory governments are committed to working together to make it easier and safer for individuals to identify themselves to access services in ways that minimise sharing of personal information and make it easier for individuals to control access to their personal information.

Jurisdictions are developing fit-for-purpose digital ID services, in most cases closely linked with state/territory service apps. The Commonwealth's myID is also available to support jurisdictions without their own digital ID and is being used for some state and territory services. We agree that a cohesive national approach requires digital IDs and verifiable credentials to be convenient, inclusive, secure, sustainable, voluntary and interoperable. We need to work together to ensure that more people can access a wide range of services.

All jurisdictions agree that our approach should focus on:
- Enabling better services for people;
- Being useable across government services and in the broader economy; and
- Helping those who want to use digital IDs and verifiable credentials to obtain and use them.

Strategic Priorities

Our agreed strategic priorities are:

1 **Ongoing development of digital IDs in the Commonwealth, States and Territories**
- For states and territories these are generally fit-for-purpose solutions that are closely coupled with their service apps and/or digital driver licences.
- Jurisdictions can choose to adopt or include the Commonwealth's Digital ID solution that is designed for use across private and government services.
- Identity proofing will be aligned with the National Identity Proofing Guidelines and/or Digital ID Rules.
- Digital IDs and verifiable credentials will continue to leverage the Commonwealth's Identity Verification Services for greater use of biometrically backed IDs.

2 **Making sure that our most important verifiable credentials are interoperable across borders**
- Jurisdictions will collaborate to agree nationally consistent policy settings for interoperable verifiable credentials.
- This includes the use of common standards for an agreed set of verifiable credentials that will be nationally interoperable.
- Jurisdictions will deliver verifiable credentials in line with respective government priorities and investment cycles.

3 **Working together to make digital IDs more inclusive in Australia**
- Collaborating across jurisdictions to promote initiatives that expand access to digital IDs for all individuals.
- Continue to address collective barriers to adoption and promote equitable participation.

Vision

2030 Vision: Individuals

As an individual, I find it easier and safer to identify myself and access services.

This means:

- It is easy for me to use a digital ID and/or a verifiable credential, and I know what services I can access with them.

- I have confidence in using my digital ID and verifiable credentials because they are recognised across Australia. I understand government-issued digital IDs are valuable for accessing government services.

- It is straightforward and seamless for me to establish and maintain an authorised connection between my digital IDs and the record of someone who I care for or support when I need to act on their behalf.

- If I have few or no identity documents, I am still able to prove my identity and obtain my digital ID and my verifiable credentials that enable me to access services. This allows me to access services in the same way as the rest of my community.

- I am quickly notified if my details have been compromised, and the process for replacing my documents and restoring my digital IDs and verifiable credentials is straightforward, quick and not costly to me.

- When I need to prove something, I can securely prove a claim without giving unnecessary data. If I want to I can see what I have shared, to whom and for how long, without compromising my privacy.

2030 Vision: Businesses

As a relying party, I can trust that the people and organisations I interact with are verified correctly.

This means:

- My business can reduce the information we keep about our customers and staff. This helps to reduce our exposure to cybercrime risk while enhancing privacy and safety outcomes for our customers and staff.

- My business can interact as a trusted business across the economy, with other businesses and with government.

- Standards for verifiable credentials allow my business to accept verifiable credentials from any jurisdiction. This makes it easier for people to access the products and services we provide.

- It is easy for my business to verify my staff's digital IDs and verifiable credentials. We have the assurance that the credentials are valid, up-to-date and meet job requirements. This increases efficiency and reduces the regulatory burden on my business.

- Verifiable credentials offer real-time verification of compliance and eligibility. My business can be confident that our staff have the most current accreditations and are permitted to discharge their duties and provide sensitive services (e.g., working safely with children).

- A common approach to digital IDs and verifiable credentials gives clarity to my industry on the investments we can make to accept and verify digital IDs and verifiable credentials to provide seamless access to my products and services.

- If my business needs to verify credentials, we will not need to invest in multiple systems to verify a range of credentials. We can make a one-time investment and be assured that a standards-based digital IDs or verifiable credentials – regardless of where in Australia they come from – will work.