



Commonwealth AI Assurance Framework Pilot Survey

At the end of each Framework assessment, agencies are required to complete this survey and provide along with completed assessments to the DTA.

Completed Framework assessments and surveys are to be emailed to aistandards@dta.gov.au.

Assessment Details

Name of AI Use Case

Finalised No Debt

Reference Number

EAREf 112 / AI0019

Lead Agency

Services Australia

Assessment Contact Officer Name

Section 22

Assessment Contact Officer Email

Section 22

The Framework

1. On a scale of 1-5, how useful did you find this assessment process for ensuring responsible use of AI? (1 being not useful at all, 5 being very useful)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☒ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Please include a brief explanation of your score. (Optional)

We found there was duplicated effort across assurance steps in the plan and agency requirements - e.g. Ethical Data Assessment/DataTEST, risk assessment, Legal sign offs etc. Framework would be useful if integrated with agency requirements at the commencement of an initiative that involves AI.

2. On a scale of 1-5, how clear and easy to understand were the questions in the Framework? (1 being very unclear, 5 being very clear)

☐ 1 ☒ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Please include a brief explanation of your score. (Optional)

Some of the questions were hard to understand, and the guidance document didn't always clarify what information should be provided in each question. Suggest including short examples or checklists of information that could be included.

3. What sections or questions, if any, did you find particularly challenging to complete? Why?

Restrictive word limits for some questions made it difficult to adequately explain technical and complex information. The AI lifecycle in the Assurance Plan is not consistent with what we use in the agency and was confusing. When we tried to access more information on the provided links in the guidance document, many were expired or not accessible. Assessment section is in the middle of the document, as opposed to at the end, and it wasn't clear that it was an assessment of the recommendation to continue on with the rest of the document. When we asked for internal guidance from our Assurance team, they were not able to provide clear information as to what part of the form to complete when. The assessment officer role was unclear on who should undertake this role and provide the recommendation. To be fair, the ASO Branch was also learning a new process and wasn't provided with information about the assessment role.

4. Approximately how many people were involved in completing this assessment? What are their roles within your agency (for example, project officer, decision maker, procurement officer etc.)?

Several staff across three different teams provided direct input or were consulted in completing this assessment. This included staff in the Data Science Section (Project Manager EL1, Project Officer APS6, Director EL2, Lead Data Scientist EL2, Data Scientist EL1, SRO National Manager/Decision Maker), the Integrity Transformation (project) team (Assistant Director EL1, Senior Project Officers APS6, Director EL2, National Manager, SRO/Decision Maker), and the Automation and Service Optimisation Branch (Assistant Director EL1)

5. Did any of the delegates request further information before approving the assessment? If yes, please briefly describe.

Yes, the National Manager (SRO/Decision Maker) sought clarity on the nature, process, and purpose of the form, given the assurance steps already undertaken. They queried the assessment's purpose, the full assessment's requirements, the ramifications of not participating in the trial, and the next steps. They also asked about the audience and how to include all the technical information

6. Did you need to consult any specialist expertise to complete the assessment? If so, what kind and why?

Yes, we consulted Data Scientists and technical leads, Business Owner specialists, Subject Matter Experts, and the Automation Service Optimisation Branch (internal assurance). Additional steps and sign-offs were intertwined with the completion of the form

7. Did the Framework help you **identify and assess** any risks that existing processes would not have captured? If yes, please briefly describe.

No, we already have robust Data Ethics and Legal Assessments in place, and the project had already undergone all required Assurance stages and risk management processes. The form did not capture any additional risks beyond those already covered by existing Governance and Assurance processes

8. Did the Framework help you **manage and mitigate** any risks that existing processes would not have? If yes, please briefly describe.

The framework duplicated existing processes which help capture and mitigate initiative risks. Although it would have been useful if internal processes were not in place, in this case it led to additional effort. There may be an opportunity to address this by integrating the framework with internal processes.

9. Did completing this assessment lead to any changes in your AI project or use case? If yes, please briefly explain.

Yes, although we feel that the action item is on us to manage this internally. The

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10. Did you encounter any usability issues with the Framework document itself?

The formatting was challenging, with inconsistent font sizes requiring additional time to ensure formatting continuity

11. How long do you estimate it took to complete a) the Framework document, and b) the overall assessment process? (i.e. hours, days, weeks)

The framework document took approx. 2 weeks to complete, including several drafts and review sessions prior to Decision Maker review, feedback and then sign off. Another 7 days were taken for internal areas to complete their assessment and sign off.

12. Do you have any suggestions for improving the Framework or assessment process?

We feel that the framework is useful for areas that are new to AI development and implementation, and do not have existing assurance processes in place. Some of our suggestions warrant consideration on how different agencies/departments will implement this framework given their maturity in the AI space. It may be relevant for this DTA to have visibility of this. Suggestions below: 1. Integrate with other assurance

processes in place within agencies. This will limit duplication and streamline the pathway to delivery.2. Ensure the suggested reference links are accessible.3. Simplify the questions within the framework, or provide guidance on how to respond to them with examples.

The Guidance

13. On a scale of 1-5, how helpful was the guidance for completing the framework? (1 being very unhelpful, 5 being very helpful)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☒ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Please include a general explanation of your score. (Optional)

It was thorough but not necessarily relevant to our agency in light of existing processes in place

14. What additional guidance or resources would have been helpful in completing this assessment?

Accessible links, examples of the type of responses that could be provided. Communication on the purpose behind the completing the form, assessment and its intended use.

Governance

15. What is your agency's governance structure for the oversight of this AI use case?

The approval process and governance structure includes sign off from: Project Manager, Director, EL2 Boards (Rapid Assessment Team, Data Trust and Ethics Committee, Automation Working Group, National Manager Decision Maker, General Manager Decision Maker, Digital Capability Automation Committee, Automation Service Optimisation Branch oversight and approval. Fraud Risk Assessment Review, Cyber Security Review, Data Ethics Assessment, Legal Service - Privacy Threshold Assessment, Program Legal Review, Payment and Assurance Priorities Board,

16. Was your agency's existing governance structure sufficient to oversee this AI use case? If yes, please briefly explain why? If not, what did you change to ensure it is?

Yes, we felt that the agency's governance and assurance processes provided guardrails for AI use cases.

Anything else?

17. Any other comments or feedback in relation to the Framework, Guidance or governance structures.

Agencies and departments that are implementing this framework should consider adding a comms strategy to complement the implementation.