

Australia

General Aspects

Australia covers a surface of 7,7 million sq. Km. Population is 19,2 millions inhabitants. It is a Federal government.

Diffusion of ICT

The diffusion of new technologies in Australia is by far advanced. All indicators reveal a very high penetration of communication technologies. 66% of population has a personal computer while 50% has an Internet accesses. Users of residential telephone services are estimated 91%; while penetration of mobile telephones is 54% of the population.

Application of ICT to Public Administration

Australia is moving fast to electronic administration.

The totality (100%) of public servants both in Central and Local Public Administration has a PC and internet and e-mail access in work environment;

Governmental offices of the Central and the Local Public Administration can communicate each other through Intranet/Extranet networks.

Public Administration's visibility on line

All governmental bodies of the Central Public Administration have their own internet web site (among them, the Executive and Legislative body). The percentage decreases to 51% for Local Public Administrations.

Government's principal web sites generally include press release, speeches and statement of the Head of Government, official documents, transcription of parliamentary debates, government and legislative acts. It is possible to carry out transactions and to send requests for information through e-mail.

There is also a specific portal for citizens.

E-government issues

Australian Public Administration offers to the citizens and companies many services: publication/dissemination of information; feedback; applications; access to databases; registration; sale of products/services; policy consultation; lodgement of returns; access to personal records.

Government has started an action program (described in a specific *Action Plan and White Book*) to enhance services to users and to improve the internal efficiency of Public Administration. All federal Government department and agencies are the main targets of the plan. Main issues are: Government On line - The commonwealth Government's Strategy; A strategic framework for the information Economy; Investing for Growth Statement.

The e-government program is formalised in an *Action Plan*, available at the address www.govonline.gov.au

- The efforts are concentrated on specific projects: Trials of Innovative Government Services Online project aims to make Commonwealth, State and local government services easier to find and to use through the application of new technology and management arrangements.
- Customer Focussed Portals build on the existing Commonwealth Government Entry Point (www.fed.gov.au), adding a related set of web sites that present collections of

government information and services in ways that are designed around customer groupings and subject matter areas, rather than merely reflecting administrative structures

- Gatekeeper is the Commonwealth's strategy for the use of Public Key Infrastructure and a key enabler for the delivery of Government Online and e-commerce.
- Australian Business Number – Digital Signature Certificate is a specification that will allow all Commonwealth agencies to transact online with businesses. This will allow businesses to require only one online identity in their dealings with government agencies and has the potential for use by a business with its e-commerce business partners.
- The Government Electronic Resources Network (GOVERNET) is a co-operative project to enable access via the Internet to information and services from all levels of government.
- Commonwealth Electronic Procurement Strategy consists of an overarching framework and a series of projects, and will assist Commonwealth agencies and their suppliers implement online procurement. The e-procurement strategy has two goals: electronic payments being established as the normal means for Commonwealth payments by 2000; and all agencies to conduct e-procurement by the end of 2001.
- All federal government agencies were required to develop and publish Online Action Plans describing their strategies in placing information and services online.

In the future the Australian's government to intend promote other projects like:

- To develop a Shared Services Delivery solution to assist smaller agencies with resource restrictions in meeting their current online obligations.
- To further develop and update agencies Online Action Plans.
- To further develop the Government Online Strategy and set targets for beyond 2001.
- To develop a strategy on how government can engage citizens online beyond the delivery of electronic services.