The next steps for Tasmanian Government data centres and related IT infrastructure services
December 2013

The Tasmanian Government ICT Strategy[1] has five objectives covering improved productivity, improved service delivery, better access to information, leadership and investment, and a common approach to commodity ICT services. One of the major actions to support the ICT Strategy is to implement a common approach to data centre/storage.

The ICT Policy Board is responsible for the oversight of the ICT Strategy. As part of this role, the ICT Policy Board has examined the issue of data centres and managed services and determined that the priorities of this work are[2]:

1. Availability and reliability of critical ICT services to support the business requirements of government at comparable Australian industry prices.
2. Support Government requirements during disasters and other major incidents – during such incidents Government business priorities, public expectations, and resourcing options change (eg national facilities can be made available, demand for critical police, emergency management and/or medical services may increase, demand on information services may increase).
3. A common approach to the provision of quality and efficient data centre and managed services to government agencies.
4. Availability of quality, competitive, innovative data centre and related services made available to the government and private sectors in Tasmania.

During 2013 a strategic review and business case was developed to examine options for how government manages and sources data centre and related IT infrastructure services.

The scope of the review and recommendations includes all ICT server and storage equipment and related ICT services, except small server installations and network equipment providing services to users at local sites and higher-layer 'cloud' services, such as software as a service (SaaS).

Current arrangements

Agencies currently use over 22 separate data centre and computer room facilities. 17 of these are agency owned and operated facilities, most often collocated in leased office accommodation. The remainder are in third party facilities, including facilities operated by TMD, Telstra, Aurora Energy and TasmaNet. The services provided by Telstra, Aurora Energy and TasmaNet are provided through whole-of-government agreements managed by TMD. TMD operate and manage one facility, which is scheduled to be decommissioned in mid-2016.

A whole-of-government Infrastructure as a Service contract is managed by TMD and operated by Anittel. Services include the provisioning of a virtual data centre for the creation and management of compute and storage (ie infrastructure as a service or IaaS) and other services such as backup and business continuity. This agreement commenced in September 2013.

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1   www.egovernment.tas.gov.au/ict/strategy
2   ICT Policy Board communique of 11 December 2013, www.egovernment.tas.gov.au/about/modernising_ict_governance/communiquees

The majority of the ICT infrastructure and services housed within the data centres are managed directly by agencies. Agencies also utilise a number of third parties to manage specified services or infrastructure.

The strategic review and business case found that the current arrangements, as outlined above, have evolved in a piecemeal manner and present a number of challenges to the delivery of reliable government services, both today and into the future. It concluded that the current approach is less viable and unable to sustain the requirements of government into the future.

Future arrangements

The ICT Policy Board considered the review and endorsed on 11 December 2013 the establishment of a panel of service providers and the phasing out of in-house data centre facilities, including:

1. Phased migration from agency owned and managed data centre services and ICT server and storage facilities to the use of a panel of service providers.
2. Creation of mandated whole-of-government panel contracts for the supply of services, including infrastructure as a service (cloud) services, to government.
3. Clear policy and process for managing and approving exemptions to the above.

Implementation Steps

Activity	What	Who	By When
Coordination			
Governance	Confirm governance arrangements	OeG	Q1 2014
Policies	Draft and seek endorsement of supporting polices	OeG	Q2 2014
Transition plan	Work with agencies on the development of agency transition plans	OeG	Q3 2014
Communication	Communicate strategic direction to key stakeholders.	OeG, TMD	Q2 2014
Service requirements			
Requirements			
Data Centre facilities	Review existing contractual arrangements	TMD	Q2 2014
Compute and storage (including IaaS)	Define future requirements and develop procurement approach.	TMD	Q3 2014
Related IT infrastructure services	Define future requirements and develop procurement approach.	TMD	Q3 2014
Procurement	Procure initial round of services.	TMD	Q2 2015
Agencies			
Transition plans	Develop agency transition plan, and endorsed by agency executive	All agencies	Q3 2014
Start migration	Start migration of agency services to new model (start date will vary)	All agencies	Now
End migration	Target date for complete migration and decommissioning of all agency facilities	All agencies	Q2 2018