



# Registry stabilisation and uplift design

Background paper to accompany exposure draft legislation

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# Consultation Process

## Request for feedback

Feedback is sought on the exposure draft of the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Business Registries Stabilisation and Uplift) Bill 2025*. Feedback is also sought on the overall regulatory burden and user experience of the model.

It is also expected that this design will also be the model for the future incorporation of beneficial ownership information into a centralised register. Views on the workability of this as a model are also welcome.

Electronic lodgement is preferred via email to [RegDataPolicy@treasury.gov.au](mailto:RegDataPolicy@treasury.gov.au) by 10 February 2026. For accessibility reasons, please submit responses via email in a Word, RTF or PDF format.

Submissions will be shared with other Commonwealth agencies and may be used in public documents and may be made publicly available. All information (including name and address details) contained in submissions may be published or shared with other Commonwealth agencies unless you indicate that you would like all or part of your submission to remain in confidence. Automatically generated confidentiality statements in emails are not sufficient for this purpose.

Legal requirements, such as those imposed by the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, may affect the confidentiality of your submission.

### Closing date for submissions: 10 February 2026

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Mail	Registry Data Policy Unit Digital Policy and Corporations Division The Treasury Langton Crescent PARKES ACT 2600
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## Introduction and scope

Australia's business registers are core economic infrastructure, underpinning trust and transparency across the economy. They serve as a "source of truth" for businesses, consumers, and regulators—verifying who they are dealing with and supporting informed decisions. In an environment where confidence in other sources of information is declining, ensuring the integrity and accessibility of information on the registers is crucial for maintaining trust, supporting efficient markets, and enabling effective regulatory oversight.

To address historic underinvestment and reliance on ageing legacy systems, the Government has committed \$382 million since December 2023 to stabilise and uplift the registers. This program, led by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), has delivered several milestones this year including:

- a new professional register search function
- a streamlined Australian Financial Services Licensee registration portal
- a redesigned ASIC website consolidating company and business registration information.

The next key milestones include the delivery of new company search services in 2026, followed by the launch of new company registration services and the linking of the Director Identification Number (Director ID) regime to the Companies Register, by 1 July 2027. The new updates to the register will provide a more streamlined user experience with enhanced security, while Director ID linking will strengthen transparency, enabling businesses and the public to have greater confidence in directors' identities and to trace their relationships across corporate entities more easily.

In order to deliver the stabilisation and uplift of the registers, legislative change is required to improve processes and facilitate information sharing. This legislative framework will also be used as the model for the future incorporation of beneficial ownership information into a centralised register.

### What this paper does

This background paper accompanies the exposure draft of *the Treasury Laws Amendment (Business Registries Stabilisation and Uplift) Bill 2025* and explains the design and implementation of the stabilisation and uplift of the registers. It outlines:

- the design of the regime and obligations for companies and directors
- publication and privacy considerations
- regulatory powers and compliance arrangements.

The proposal builds on existing law and is informed by a targeted consultation in 2024 on the design and implementation of Director ID linking. This followed earlier consultations on the regime's design in 2021 and 2018. Across these consultation processes, the objective has consistently been to strike a balance between enhancing transparency and accountability, protecting privacy, and ensuring efficient, timely processes for creating and managing companies.

## Director ID linking

The Director ID regime, which has applied since November 2021, is the core element of the current stabilisation and uplift program. This was a foundational reform designed to strengthen corporate transparency and combat unlawful activity such as illegal phoenixing. A Director ID is a unique, lifelong identifier for individuals appointed as directors or acting alternate directors of companies, registered



Australian bodies and registered foreign companies under the *Corporations Act 2001* and the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act).

Since the regime's introduction, 3.0 million directors have obtained a Director ID. To realise the full benefits of the Director ID regime, Director IDs will need to be linked to and published on the Companies Register. To achieve this, companies will be required to submit Director IDs for each of their directors as part of their ongoing reporting processes.

Linking will commence in a beta testing phase during the first half of 2027, with full rollout commencing on 1 July 2027. From that date, each company will be required to provide Director ID information for their directors when notifying changes to directors' details or at the time of their annual review, effectively requiring that all companies must provide Director ID details no later than 30 June 2028.

The objectives and benefits of Director ID linking are:

*Streamlining processes and protecting privacy* - Linking and publishing Director IDs will reduce the reliance on other personal details of directors that would be required to otherwise establish their identity, enabling simpler identification and record maintenance. This will also allow for the publication of less personal details, including use of an 'address for service' instead of residential addresses.

*Enhancing identity verification and reducing fraud* - Director ID linking ensures individuals are accurately identified and verified as directors, reducing the risk of fraudulent appointments and supporting victims of coercive control or financial abuse to view their appointment details and take appropriate action.

*Improving transparency and traceability* - Businesses, investors, and the public will be confident in directors' identities and will be able to conveniently trace directors' current and historical relationships with corporate entities. This supports informed decision-making and builds confidence in commercial dealings.


*Strengthening regulatory oversight* - High-quality, linked data enables regulators to better detect and respond to illegal phoenix activity, scams, and misuse of the corporate veil. It also supports businesses to satisfy their anti-money laundering/counter-terrorism financing (AML/CTF) and 'know your customer' (KYC) regulatory requirements. For example, financial institutions and advisers that will be required to collect Director IDs as part of KYC will be able to meet their obligations to verify the information of their customer by searching the Companies Register.

*Building trust and confidence* - Improved registry integrity strengthens trust in the corporate system by exposing bad actors and enabling ASIC to take action to disqualify them. As transparency increases, the credibility and reputation (or 'brand') of compliant directors and companies is enhanced, giving them a material commercial advantage when competing against less compliant entities.

## Future integration of beneficial ownership information into the Companies Register

This consultation also welcomes feedback on whether the legislative framework and process design can be applied as a model for integrating beneficial ownership information into the Companies Register.

ASIC will update its registry stabilisation and uplift technology roadmap to incorporate beneficial ownership information in the Companies Register, to enable IT design work to occur in 2027–28.



There will be further detailed policy development for the beneficial ownership register in 2027 and the Government will seek to progress legislation before the end of that year.

Treasury's 2022 consultation paper foreshadowed that, subject to technical feasibility specifications and future consultation, existing government services for verifying the identity of individuals could be utilised as part of the design of the beneficial ownership register. Verification and confirmation processes similar to those outlined in this paper for Director ID may provide one method for satisfying the requirements for adequate verification of beneficial ownership information. This could involve:

- treating beneficial owners who have a confirmed Director ID as having already had their identity satisfactorily verified for the purposes of the beneficial ownership register
- extension or replication of the verification processes underpinning the Director ID system to cover beneficial owners who are not directors of an unlisted company (either alone or in conjunction with other options).

Early feedback will help ensure the design for Director ID takes into account the potential future adaptation for use as part of the beneficial ownership register.

## Legislation and regulatory responsibility allocation

The Director ID regime was established in 2020 through the *Commonwealth Registers Act 2020* and various amending laws, in particular the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Registries Modernisation and Other Measures) Act 2020*. These laws established the role, functions and powers of the Registrar, including powers to make legislative instruments that set requirements for lodgement and disclosure of information in Commonwealth business registers, and to issue (and cancel) identification numbers for company directors.

Australian Business Registry Services (ABRS), which is managed by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), administers the Director ID regime, including issuing Director IDs and maintaining the Director ID database. The Commissioner of Taxation has been appointed as the Registrar.

ASIC is responsible for enforcing the Director ID offences set out in the Corporations Act. This includes failure to have applied for a Director ID when required to do so, failure to apply for a Director ID when directed by the Registrar, applying for multiple Director IDs and misrepresenting a Director ID.

ASIC is also responsible for administering the Companies Register, along with other business registers. There are other registers of company information administered by the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). The proposal does not include linkage of Director ID information to these registers. Future consideration will be given to how best to achieve consistency of data held across registers administered by ASIC and those administered by other agencies. Most immediately, this will include looking at opportunities to synchronise information on charitable companies provided to the ACNC with the Companies Register.

This background paper provides an explanation of the design elements to support views on the exposure draft of the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Business Registries Stabilisation and Uplift) Bill 2025*.

# Design and requirements

## Overview of the design

Linking Director IDs to the Companies Register involves technology and process design that considers sources of data and interactions between directors, companies and government.

The process builds on existing systems and obligations, leveraging:

- **ABRS** as the issuing authority for Director IDs
- **ASIC** as the collector and publisher of company information.

This approach uses the current Director ID application system, enabling both agencies to utilise the data for regulatory and enforcement purposes.

### Responsibility in the design:

- **Directors** retain their existing obligations with ABRIS (they must apply for a Director ID). Directors will need to keep their personal details up to date with ABRIS to ensure successful Director ID linking with ASIC.
- **Companies** provide Director ID details to ASIC at interaction points.
- **ASIC and ABRIS** share data to verify linkages between directors and companies.
- **Directors** will also be asked to confirm they are aware of their appointment.

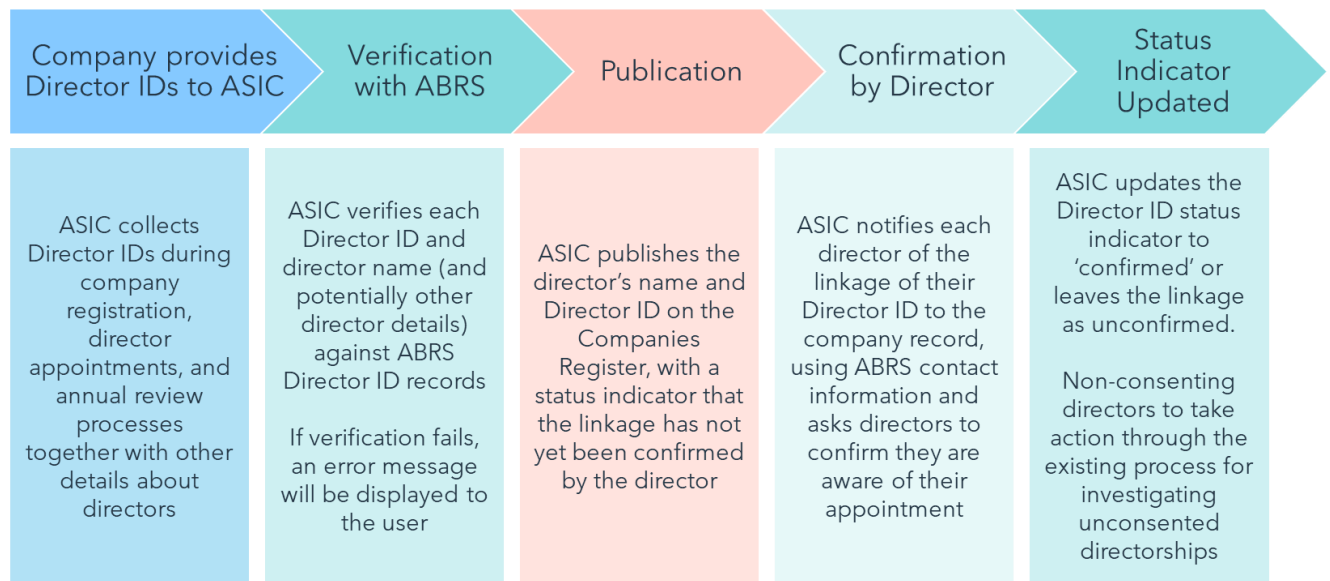
### Core concepts in design:

- **Authentication** – process for ensuring users prove they are who they say they are and are authorised to access certain information or resources – which may include gaining access to information on the registers.
- **Verification** – process for ensuring the accuracy of Director ID information.
- **Confirmation** – process for confirming the director is aware of their appointment.
- **Beta testing phase** – a testing period expected to start in the first half of 2027 when the law is in place so the design and obligations can be tested with users to ensure they operate effectively – minimising the regulatory burden for users and maximising the efficiency of the interaction with the registers.

An overview of the Director ID linking process is provided in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1: How the linking process will function**



## The role of the ABRS and ASIC

**ABRS** remains the issuing authority for Director IDs and the point of call for directors updating their personal details. It will be responsible for:

- issuing and maintaining Director IDs
- sharing Director ID information with ASIC to assist with verification and director confirmation.

**ASIC** continues to be the agency responsible for collecting and publishing company information, including director information, and continues to be responsible for compliance. It will be responsible for:

- collecting Director IDs from companies
- undertaking verification and director confirmation
- publishing linkage status on the Companies Register
- enforcing compliance where obligations are not met.

## Requirements for directors

All directors are required to get a Director ID. Under the Corporations Act and the CATSI Act, directors are legally required to keep their personal information up to date, and companies must ensure this information is current with ASIC.

Directors' obligations include:

- applying for a Director ID through ABRS
- notifying their company of changes to their personal details within 7 days to enable the company to comply with its obligation to notify ASIC.

Directors should also keep their personal details current with ABRS (for example, updating their name, residential address, phone number or email address).

Updates can be made via ABRS online services using myID, by phoning the ABRS call centre, or by mail. Directors do not provide their Director ID directly to ASIC.

Unlike the ASIC Companies Register where agents, authorised company representatives, and company secretaries can update the company's director information on behalf of a director, only directors can update their details with the ABRS.

It is important to note that a company will not be able to meet its obligations to ASIC for Director ID linking without a director getting a Director ID and keeping their details up to date with the ABRS. If the director details held by the ABRS does not correspond with those held by ASIC, ASIC will be unable to link the director to their Director ID. This will result in the company failing to meet its obligations to ASIC for Director ID linking. Therefore, directors should ensure their details on the ABRS are consistent with the information they provide to their company and ASIC.

## Requirements for companies

Companies, including registrable Australian bodies and foreign companies (collectively referred to as 'companies' in this paper), will be required to provide Director ID information to ASIC as part of their existing reporting and registration obligations. This includes a new requirement to supply Director ID details for each director at the following points of interaction:

- upon company registration
- as part of the annual review process for Australian companies, or in response to a return of particulars
- when there is a change in the directors or change of director details.

**Existing companies** will be required to provide the Director IDs of their directors as part of the company annual review process, or as part of notifying ASIC of changes in director details (including when a new director is appointed) where the company is required to notify of other changes.

**New companies** will be required to provide Director IDs for all proposed directors upon company registration. Once registered, Director IDs will be required as part of notification requirements to ASIC when a new director is appointed and as part of the annual company review process.


ASIC will be able to take enforcement action against companies that do not provide Director ID information.

**If an existing company fails to provide Director ID information**, this will not prevent the appointment of new directors. However, the company will be flagged on the Companies Register as having director(s) for whom Director IDs have not been provided, or who have not confirmed the linkage of their Director IDs.

**If a new company applying for registration fails to provide Director ID information or the Director ID information is not valid**, ASIC will have the power to refuse new company registration.

As part of this process, companies or their agents should coordinate with their directors to ensure information on the Companies Register is current and aligned with the Director ID information that has been provided to the ABRS.

Exceptions and extensions will be available in certain circumstances, such as where the applicant has had to mail in identification information or is appointed without notice in a company meeting. This



allows for the continuance of the longstanding principle that shareholders can appoint directors ‘from the floor’ and means these appointments would still be valid.

These processes will be carefully developed through the beta testing stage with a focus on minimising regulatory burden and making interactions with the registry as efficient as possible.

## Verification with ABRS and confirmation with directors

Verification and confirmation are critical integrity measures designed to ensure directors’ Director ID details align between regulator records and ensure that directors are aware of their appointments. This will help to prevent fraudulent misuse of director identities and to reduce scam activity.

### Verification

As the Director ID regime, administered by ABRS, operates separately from the ASIC Companies Register, verification is essential to maintain the accuracy and integrity of both datasets.

ASIC and ABRS will undertake a verification process to confirm that:

- the Director ID provided by companies matches a Director ID issued by the ABRS, and
- the director’s name and potentially other relevant information align across both systems.

If verification fails, an error message will be displayed to the submitting party, ensuring discrepancies are addressed promptly.

### Director confirmation

Once a Director ID is linked to a company record on the Companies Register, ASIC will notify the director seeking a confirmation to ensure they are aware of the appointment. This step ensures:

- directors are aware of their appointment
- directors can dispute the appointment and linkage (via a separate process) if they did not consent to the directorship
- fraudulent or unauthorised appointments can be identified and addressed quickly.

Directors will be notified using contact details previously provided by them during the Director ID application process and any updates provided by the director to ABRS. Directors who do not consent can initiate a process with ASIC to investigate and remove disputed linkages and director appointments.

## Authentication of registry users

Registry users can include company officeholders and business representatives, who update information recorded on the registers, and entities that search the information on the registers. To improve the veracity of registry information, and to ensure that only properly authorised people can update Registry records, ASIC will implement an authentication process for all users who are seeking to create or update registry information. ASIC will continue to support users searching the registers for certain freely publicly available information without requiring user authentication.

## Service standards and ease of use

In implementing the Government's registry stabilisation and uplift program, ASIC is applying the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) Digital Service Standard, which puts people and business at the centre of Government digital service delivery.

The Government has funded ASIC to develop new digital registry services that will apply the Digital Service Standard to create and maintain digital services that are:

- user-friendly
- inclusive
- adaptable
- measurable.

Introducing enhanced authentication for users who will create or modify registry records will improve the quality and integrity of registry data and make the registry data more useful for the businesses and individuals who rely on it for a range of purposes, including for AML/CTF and KYC obligations.

Enhanced user authentication processes will contribute to improving the overall user experience but will also require some additional effort from users to adopt new and changed processes.

Requiring company directors to confirm the linking of their Director ID to the Companies Register will improve the quality and integrity of registry data. It will also reduce instances of people being appointed as directors without their consent. However, this will require some additional effort from company directors to complete that confirmation step.

## Publication and privacy

This section outlines how ASIC will manage the publication of Director ID information on the Companies Register while balancing transparency, compliance, and personal privacy considerations. It explains the approach for displaying Director ID status, publishing limited identifying details and removing sensitive personal information to address fraud risks.

### Displaying Director ID status on the Companies Register

ASIC will display an existing company's director appointments on the Companies Register and will distinguish between directors with a 'confirmed' Director ID and those without a confirmed status.

ASIC will be able to refuse the registration of new companies if Director ID information is not provided to ASIC or the information is not valid.

For existing companies on the Companies Register, ASIC will indicate where directors' identities have been verified, and whether appointment has been confirmed or remains unconfirmed. This distinction provides visibility of this information without disrupting the current operation of commercial law. Over time, directors with pending applications or who face administrative delays will have this resolved and transition to confirmed status, leaving only those deliberately avoiding the Director ID requirement or intentionally withholding information identifiable for compliance action.

For new companies, ASIC will be able to refuse registration if any proposed director does not have a verified Director ID. This step will ensure compliance from the outset.

Displaying director information and their Director IDs status - including cases where details remain unverified or unconfirmed - will help regulators and stakeholders identify risks, strengthen confidence in the accuracy of company records, and make fraudulent appointments easier to detect. Additionally, Director IDs will appear on ASIC's Banned and Disqualified Register, further supporting enforcement and transparency.

### Publishing Director IDs and personal information on the Companies Register

The Companies Register will display the Director ID details of a director and will omit the display of some personal information about directors.

Public accessibility of identifying information about directors is a critical underpinning of trust in the Australian economy. However, there is increasing misuse of information made publicly available. As such, an appropriate balance between securing accountability of directors and protecting the personal privacy of directors needs to be maintained.

To address this, changes will be made to legislation to enable ASIC to control access to information. This is expected to be applied within the 4 tiers outlined in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Types of access to registries information**

Search level	Access features
Non-authenticated	Free search without authentication requirements. Such as current search through ABN Lookup or free online company summary extracts.
Authenticated	Access by third party providers as well as access by individuals to more detailed or sensitive information could be through a Digital ID authentication or another form of identity verification. ASIC will also ensure that users of information provided by third parties have appropriate authentication.
Paid search	Authentication from above would be required. In addition, fees apply to access more commercially valuable or sensitive information.
Special use access	Higher tier of access to sensitive information for particular uses. Access would be limited to particular information for defined groups such as regulators, insolvency practitioners, financial institutions, journalists, victim representatives and litigants.

The publication of Director ID information would appear against company and director records so both the directors of a company and a director's relationships with other entities (their other directorships) would be identifiable. Access to Director ID information would require a basic level of authentication, such as Digital ID or another form of identity verification (such as providing an email address) and possibly a fee. This would assist in preventing large-scale data scraping and avoid disincentivising access to information through wholesale search. This process would be refined through the beta testing stage to ensure that the appropriate balance is reached.

The beta testing stage will also be used to assess how this would interact with or replace existing ASIC search forms and fee structures, including form 963 *Application for information about a specific personal name* and company search forms.

The provision and publication of Director ID will then enable the removal of some sensitive personal information from the public-facing Companies Register. To protect directors' privacy while supporting legal processes, the law will enable the replacement of residential addresses on the Companies Register with an 'address for service', and ASIC will be able to publish this in place of a residential address on the Companies Register. Where no address for service is provided, the residential address would remain accessible to ensure legal documents can be served and to enable functioning of legal processes.

After the law takes effect, dates of birth and residential address information will only be accessible to high tier authenticated users with 'special use access' and appropriate functions that require access to the information, such as insolvency practitioners and financial institutions.

Documents lodged with ASIC that contain this information before the law commences will continue to be available using the present access arrangements. This reflects international best practice and the complexity of attempting to retrospectively amend documents.

# Streamlined reporting, information access and compliance

To strengthen the integrity of corporate governance information, and streamline processes for compliance and reporting, ASIC will be provided with new regulatory and enforcement powers. These will enable ASIC to update and publish Director ID information on the Companies Register, enforce strict liability offences for non-compliance, and take timely action against breaches. Together with improved data-sharing arrangements between ASIC, ABRIS, and other agencies, these measures aim to ensure accurate and up-to-date registry information, reduce fraud risks, and support proactive compliance across the corporate sector.

Improved data sharing and enhanced corrections, publications and reporting powers will reduce duplicative reporting requirements, supporting the Australian Government's 'tell us once' approach to government services.

## Enhanced publication and reporting powers

ASIC will be provided with broader powers to enable the operation of these reforms, as well as the ability to take enforcement action against breaches of these laws.

ASIC will have the power to update the Companies Register to:

- publish Director IDs
- remove companies from the register, such as where a person provides misleading information
- indicate whether a director's Director ID has been provided to ASIC
- indicate whether a company has any directors that have not provided their Director IDs
- update the register to publish information provided by other agencies if ASIC believes the benefit outweighs any risks and is in the public interest.

In addition, ASIC will also be provided with other powers including:

- the establishment of a strict liability offence (which may be directly enforced against the company secretary) for companies that fail to provide Director ID information when notifying ASIC of a new director appointment, or when updating company or director details
- the ability to issue infringement notices, in line with ASIC's existing infringement notice regime, where there is a reasonable belief the Director ID strict liability offences have been contravened
- the ability to assess late fees where information is provided after the required timeframe
- the ability to disqualify persons from managing corporations, where they are a director who has not complied with their obligation to apply for a Director ID
  - while disqualification would be for a specified period and allow persons to manage corporations after their period of disqualification, their disqualification would be reflected on ASIC's Banned and Disqualified register, which is a permanent record
- discretion to approve the manner or format in which documents or information are lodged or given to it.

## Information sharing provisions

To support linking of accurate Director ID information to the Companies Register, existing data sharing arrangements will be updated to enable near real-time verification of director information between the ASIC and the ABRS using Director ID information. Near real-time data sharing will ensure:

- better currency and accuracy of information
- active verification of director information
- timely publishing of verified and confirmed director information on the Companies Register
- earlier identification of errors or director and company non-compliance and fraud
- timelier responses to reduce the impact of illegal behaviours on the community.

## Registrar correction power

The Registrar will have power to correct Director ID information where it is satisfied that the existing details are inaccurate and it has access to more reliable data. For example, where people have separately updated their contact details with the ATO, the Registrar would be authorised to update the Director ID records accordingly.

## Registers containing director information that are not administered by ASIC

This paper does not include possible linkage of Director ID information to other registers, such as charities regulated by the ACNC and corporations regulated by ORIC that are companies.

As said earlier in the paper, future consideration will be given to how best to achieve consistency of data held across registers administered by ASIC and those administered by other agencies. Most immediately this will include looking at opportunities to synchronise information on charitable companies provided to the ACNC with the Companies Register.



## Next steps

### Submissions

Treasury is seeking submissions from stakeholders on the content of the exposure draft legislation circulated with this paper.

To contact us, please use the following contact addresses. Please note that Treasury does not intend to reply to each submission.

#### Closing date for submissions: 10 February 2026

Email	<a href="mailto:RegDataPolicy@treasury.gov.au">RegDataPolicy@treasury.gov.au</a>
Mail	Registry Data Policy Unit Digital Policy and Corporations Division The Treasury Langton Crescent PARKES ACT 2600
Enquiries	Enquiries can be directed to <a href="mailto:RegDataPolicy@treasury.gov.au">RegDataPolicy@treasury.gov.au</a>

### After submissions close

Through feedback received on the exposure draft, the Government will review the draft legislation and progress the legislation for enactment.