Australia’s IT tool for RIA oversight

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Background

- Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) sits within Federal Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet.
- Australian RIA system covers all Australian Federal Government Ministries and National/Sub-national decision making forums.

RIA in Australia

- All policy proposals require a RIA, until confirmed otherwise.
- A subjective assessment threshold for when RIA is required.
- Significantly volume (1,500 – 1,800) of proposals are assessed by OBPR each year.
What is the problem?

OBPR uses a legacy IT system developed in the early 2000s. Two key problems with the current system:

• Limits our efforts to engage and upskill the Australian Public Service in evidence-based policy making.

• Highly inefficient, with many manual steps that risk holding up major processes of Government.
What are we doing?

Implementing a new IT system
- Designing a bespoke IT system for a RIA oversight body.
- Uses the Microsoft Dynamics Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform.

Key objectives of the new system
- Improve the quality of our impact analysis advice.
- Enable better management of our workload.
How will the new system help?

Improve the quality of our impact analysis advice

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<tr>
<th>What we currently do</th>
<th>What the new system will enable us to do</th>
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<tr>
<td>RIA assessment is good on a case-by-case basis, but difficult to see a wider perspective</td>
<td>Ability to see aggregate assessments by Ministry or topic allows us to better target training and upskilling.</td>
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<td>Quality of RIA not captured systematically over time.</td>
<td>Quality assessment captured over time to show evidence of improvement.</td>
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<td>While much information is captured, it is not easily searchable or categorised.</td>
<td>Search and categorisation features provide a valuable policy knowledge base.</td>
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How will the new system help?

Enable better management of our workload

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<td>Many manual, purely administrative steps.</td>
<td>Automated steps reduce administration time and improve capture of important information.</td>
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<td>Lack of notification or alerts for when things are due.</td>
<td>Notifications and alerts allow better prioritisation of work.</td>
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<td>Teams do not have any system-based visibility of workload.</td>
<td>Dashboards provide better visibility of team capacity, helping to balance workload across the branch.</td>
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Lessons Learned

Key lessons learned in our project so far include:

• While internal workload improvements are important, build your business case around opportunities to improve impact analysis across Government.

• Have a good understanding of your own processes – but be willing to change!

• Ensure project is driven by the business unit, not IT.