

Criteria for selecting service provision sectors for inclusion in the Report on Government Services

Under recommendation 12 of the COAG-endorsed review of the *Report on Government Services* (RoGS), the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision is required to:

... during 2011, develop a set of formal criteria to determine whether the RoGS should include particular service sectors in its reporting regime. These criteria, to be approved by COAG, should include, among other considerations:

the level of government budget expenditure

policy areas covered by the COAG reform agenda

the costs and benefits of establishing new reporting requirements in the relevant sector

the availability of comparable performance indicator data consistent with the National Performance Reporting System (NPRS), including data characteristics set out in the IGA on Federal Financial Relations and the principles set out in this report [i.e., the report on the review of the RoGS].

The Steering Committee developed a set of formal criteria that was endorsed by Senior Officials at their meeting on 17 February 2012 (box 1).

Box 1 Criteria for selecting service provision sectors for inclusion in the Report on Government Services

The Report on Government Services (RoGS) provides a significant repository of information on the equity, efficiency and effectiveness of government services in Australia.

The Steering Committee will apply the following criteria to ensure that new services included in the RoGS offer the greatest potential return for the resources invested in performance reporting. Services already included in the RoGS will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they continue to satisfy the criteria for inclusion.

1. The RoGS' focus will be the effectiveness and efficiency of services provided directly to the community by or on behalf of government. Information on targeted income support or subsidies may be reported where it provides contextual information relevant to service performance or influences the achievement of service objectives.
2. Services included in RoGS should either:
 - have common or similar objectives across jurisdictions, lending themselves to comparative performance reporting; or if jurisdiction-specific
 - be of such community or economic significance to the national context in its own right that time series analysis in RoGS is appropriate
 - make a significant contribution to the outcomes of services provided by other governments
 - be part of a suite of services delivered across government.
 - or make an important contribution to the community and/or economy, such that there is a significant public interest in the effectiveness and efficiency of service provision.
 - Significance to the community may be indicated by the recognition of a service as a COAG priority or other measures of national public importance, recognising that priorities change over time. Significance to the economy may be indicated by the level of government expenditure or by the direct or indirect economic impact of a service.
3. In making a decision about including new services in RoGS, the Steering Committee will consider:
 - the scope to rationalise or reduce reporting in other areas of the Report (particularly when Review resourcing costs are likely to be significant)
 - whether proposed reporting will add sufficient value to other existing reporting exercises to offset the reporting burden
 - whether relevant data collections to enable reporting according to the Steering Committee's guiding principles exist
 - the benefits and costs of establishing any new reporting requirements.
 - Relevant benefits of establishing new data collections include those to potential users of the RoGS, and other users of the data, such as service clients, service providers, government purchasers of services, policy makers and researchers.
 - Relevant costs of establishing new data collections include those to jurisdictions, service providers, data providers and the Productivity Commission in resourcing the Review Secretariat.