

Independent review of the *Service Victoria Act 2018*

Ministerial Response to the Final Report

Introduction

The *Service Victoria Act 2018* (Vic) (Act) came into operation on 1 July 2018. Under section 57 of the Act, the Minister for Government Services is required to cause an independent review on the operation of the Act after the third anniversary of its commencement, and cause a copy of the report of the review to be laid before each House of Parliament within 12 months after this date.

The independent reviewer delivered its report, *Service Victoria Act Final Report* (Final Report), on 31 May 2022.

I welcome the independent reviewer's Final Report and thank the lead reviewer, Dr Claire Noone, and the Secretariat for their work in preparing the Final Report. I would also like to thank all those who provided input to the review.

Ministerial response

The Final Report provides insights into the significant policy reforms and increased use of Service Victoria since the Act came into effect four years ago. This report acknowledges the many initiatives the Victorian Government has already introduced to meet the growing expectations of its citizens to be able to transact with the government online at a time and place that's convenient to them.

This Government's commitment to embracing digitisation can be seen in the Digital Strategy, *A Future-ready Victoria: Victorian Government Digital Strategy 2021–2026* and through the establishment of Digital Victoria. Service Victoria currently supports the objectives of this Strategy and customers can access a growing list of more than 80 government services through Service Victoria.

The Final Report makes a total of 12 recommendations identifying potential opportunities for further improvement to the operation of the Act. The recommendations cover such areas as options for promoting greater uptake of Service Victoria and broadening its functions, developing a broader Victorian identity strategy, streamlining legislative privacy and security requirements, and promoting customer access and inclusion. Importantly, the Final Report finds that:

- “A range of previous barriers to adequate, effective and efficient service delivery were addressed following the amendment of the Service Victoria Act through the passage of the *Service Victoria Amendment Act 2022* (Amendment Act).”¹ The recent and substantive reforms to the Act reduce the complexity of service agency engagement with Service Victoria

¹ Dr Claire Noone, *Service Victoria Act Final Report*, 31 May 2022, page 2.

and enables Service Victoria to quickly deliver digital transactions and services to Victorians and meet the increasing demands for its services.

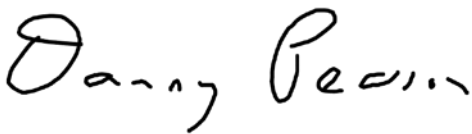
- The current version of the Act adequately enables Service Victoria to deliver government transactions effectively and efficiently.²
- Ongoing monitoring of the impact of the Amendment Act reforms is required before considering what further amendments to the Act may be required.³ There are potential opportunities to expand the role and remit of Service Victoria in delivering and supporting digital services and to accelerate its use across government.⁴

As the responsible Minister, I support in principle all 12 recommendations in the Final Report.

The Final Report makes it clear that Service Victoria plays a key role in transforming and modernising the Victorian Government's approach to customer service. Service Victoria is delivering digital products designed around customer needs and is making it easy for people to complete more online services more often from the comfort and safety of their own homes.

As indicated in the Final Report, ongoing review and a continuous improvement approach will be critical to ensure great services are always delivered to Victorians and Victorian businesses.

It is appropriate that the Government considers the findings in the Final Report and undertake further work before adopting a final position on how the recommendations will be implemented.



The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Minister for Government Services

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² Dr Claire Noone, Service Victoria Act Final Report, 31 May 2022, page 2.

³ Dr Claire Noone, Service Victoria Act Final Report, 31 May 2022, page 20.

⁴ Dr Claire Noone, Service Victoria Act Final Report, 31 May 2022, page 24.