



MBR Design Working Group outcomes

OFFICIAL External

Title:	MBR Design Working Group		
Venue:	WebEx		
Event date:	21 February 2023	Start: 10:00am	Finish: 11:00am

Chair:	Mary Arrowsmith	Contact	DPO@ato.gov.au
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Attendees: names/section	Chris Denney (DSPANZ), Warren Renden (BGL Corporate Solutions), Luke Phillips (Computershare), Alex Whiteside (Easy Companies), Andrew Baritchi (Expert Software), Sue Zhao (MYOB), John McCarthy (Pitcher Partners), Gabriel Dukes (Shelcom), Erin Adams (Xero) Mir Ali (ASIC) Amit Hossain (ATO), Brian Shepherd (ATO), Caroline White (ATO), Cedric Herbert (ATO), Eleanor Beer (ATO), Joel Guttenberg (ATO), Joshua Close (ATO), Joshua Eckersley (ATO), Karen Spicer (ATO), Kelvin Dexter (ATO), Maddison Gilmore (ATO), Nick Andree (ATO), Scott Birch (ATO), Sonia Lark (ATO), Timothy Deacon (ATO)
Apologies: name/section	Samantha Fosberry (ATO), Jodie Stevenson (ATO), Natalie Ross (ATO), Rita Stevens (ATO)
Next meeting	TBC

Agenda item: 1 – Welcome – Sonia Lark

Sonia Lark welcomed the group to the first meeting for 2023, which is an out-of-session meeting specifically for Digital service providers (DSPs) to discuss and work through a technical solution for retrieving filing details.

A program update was provided, noting the Government has announced an independent review of the MBR program. Work on the program and its associated deliverables will continue.

Karen Redhead will be taking over as Chair for the group with meeting dates to be confirmed for the year.

Agenda item: 2 – Retrieving Filing Details API – Eleanor Beer and Joshua Close

The current state of the business document lodgement service is that users can access forms lodged with ASIC by searching for them using different criteria. In the future state, filings will replace forms and satisfy the legislative requirement to publish lodgement details on the register. The filings list will display all filings for the entity in focus, and some filings may include attachments. One lodgement may result in two or more filings, with a one-to-one ratio with the documents lodged. The concept is similar to what is currently on ASIC.

The process for retrieving filing details will involve requesting a list of filings, then specific filing details and attachments. The filing data will contain information relevant to the lodgment itself and can be filtered by date to manage the size of the data from a performance perspective.

A member questioned how the filing list will work for changes to directors/shareholders and how much historical information will be available by default. It was noted the design for certain filings and date ranges will be explored. Another member noted the importance of ensuring the data provided will be accurate and relevant.

The group discussed consideration of how the current data retrieval process works, which involves accessing data behind a paywall and using older technology. There is interest in making the data more accessible and improving the ability to verify and check data automatically through machine processes. The design team is also exploring ways to provide greater access and functionality to the register for users with authorisation.

The team is looking to understand how to prioritise data and format when accessing filing and lodgement information from ABRS. Feedback was sought on the following:

- What types of services does your product currently offer and would ABRS filing services add any additional value?
 - There was general agreement that the filings information will continue to be used by DSPs and are an important part of their product offering. There was a discussion about the need for different subsets of information, as some users only require a small amount of data to confirm a company's existence. A member noted there may be opportunity for the filings data to be used in future by a broader group of DSPs (not typically represented as registry service providers) to support emerging product offerings and validation/identification services as digital identity evolves.
- Is all information for a filing necessary or just "key" data?

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- The group discussed whether all information for a filing is necessary or just key data, and how to prioritise the right data in the right format. The group also explored differences between general and specific information in a filing, and how the format of information provided (PDFs vs data downloads) can impact its usefulness.
 - Members considered the cost and usefulness of accessing historical data versus documents, with the consensus being that data is more important for general operations, but documents may be necessary for legal proceedings.
 - The issue of share value in filings was raised, as the current EDGE system aggregates a share's value as opposed to the original lodged value as per the company record.
 - Would you consider supporting filing information for all companies and lodgements or only a specific subset (e.g., top 10 services by traffic)?
 - Some commonly requested documents include Form 484, Form 201, and Form 388 in terms of overall volume, but there are lower volume forms that remain critically important so access would still be required. The group discussed the priority of these details, with some members noting that 95% of lodgements are already covered. In future, current forms may be structured differently into services (e.g. Form 484 is likely to consist of six separate services) which may affect the relative priority of information. Members noted that whilst there are many processes involved, officer shareholder and address changes were deemed most important.
 - Have your customers shown interest in accessing filings and lodgements for companies and are there any specific ways your product could use this information effectively?
 - The group discussed the importance of historical data and the interest of customers in accessing filings and lodgements for companies. They emphasised that historical data is a higher priority and can be hard to obtain in some cases, especially in the event of a dispute or agent change. The completeness of records also mentioned as an important factor.

The members were invited to provide any further feedback from the session to the DPO if there were concerns around sensitivities.

Agenda item: 3 – Other business and close – Sonia Lark

Members noted their preference for data fields over PDF documents for accessing filing information, with the option for PDF forms in the future.

The group also discussed the process for gathering information and the need for a method to verify official records. The possibility of an electronic lodgment protocol or equivalent for ABRS was discussed by the group. It was requested that any feedback on this be sent to the DPO mailbox.

It was noted that the timeframe and the party conducting the independent review were not yet announced.