



Australian Government
Australian Taxation Office

Digital Service Provider Architecture Reference Group (DARG) Charter 2025/26

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. We pay our respects to them, their cultures, and Elders past and present.

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Context

For the purposes of this document, the term 'industry' refers to organisations that develop and deliver tax and super related digital services to the community, including software developers, gateway providers, third-party providers, clearing houses, and system implementers.

Purpose

Role

Stakeholder Relationship Group

Stakeholder Relationship Groups aim to develop and maintain ongoing relationships with business, industry representatives and key intermediaries and use their specialist knowledge and experience to help build a clear and mutual understanding of the tax, superannuation, and registry systems.

The Digital Service Provider Architecture Reference Group (DARG) is a Stakeholder Relationship Group operated by the ATO. This charter has been established for the DARG and is underpinned by the [ATO Consultation framework](#). The group reports outcomes and organisational details to ATO Consultation.

Scope

The **DSP Architectural Reference Group (DARG)** acts as a technical advisory forum, providing expert industry insights to support the design, delivery, and evolution of the ATO's data exchange platforms and associated services and APIs.

A core function of the group is to establish agreed positions or recommendations on messaging design and implementation matters related to these platforms.

DARG maintains a strong architectural and technical focus, with the following key responsibilities:

- **Influence Emerging Initiatives**

Provide industry-aligned input to shape the technical and architectural direction of new and evolving initiatives, particularly those impacting:

- Bulk Data Exchange (BDE): Bulk lodgment capabilities
- Standard Business Reporting (SBR): Digital reporting channel
- Digital Services Gateway (DSG): API gateway.

- **Guide Platform Management**

Offer ongoing technical advice to support the governance, enhancement, and operation of the ATO's data exchange platforms.

- **Facilitate Technical Consultation**

Host forums to consult on architectural design, security, and risk considerations.

- **Assess Emerging Trends**

Evaluate the technical implications of new business models and whole-of-government initiatives to ensure alignment with future digital service delivery.

- **Shape Future Solutions**

Identify opportunities to influence the development of innovative technical solutions across the tax, superannuation, and registry ecosystem.

- **Resolve Technical Escalations**

Address technical or architectural issues referred by other groups that cannot be resolved through standard change processes.

- **Refer Strategic Issues**

Redirect business or strategic matters to the appropriate initiative, project group, or governance forum.

Roles and responsibilities

The **Chair** will ensure the group operates efficiently and effectively to achieve its desired purpose.

The Chair should ensure:

- they provide an opportunity for members to declare any conflicts of interest, and these are considered with the appropriate course of action determined and noted in key messages
- they are informed about matters that may arise during group discussions
- they define and approve the direction of the forward agenda
- they direct the deliberations of the group by framing the issues, maintaining group scope, setting the tone for discussion and actively engaging members
- the group builds a culture of respect where different views can be openly expressed:
 - members views are heard while balancing staying on time and on track
 - members are encouraged to present their position on the subject matter, identify issues and any other relevant concerns
 - members hear and understand the experience of other members.
- members engage in good faith and respect the expertise and contributions of others
- members abide by the [ATO Consultation Framework](#)

Members are expected to:

- represent and act in the best interests of the digital service industry in relation to tax, superannuation, and registry systems, as well as the broader finance-based and whole-of-government applications

- actively contribute to the meeting discussion
- engage in good faith and respect the expertise and contributions of others
- have subject matter knowledge, skills and experience related to the purpose and scope of the group
- commit to attend meetings in person, with the expectation of nominated proxies attending in their absence
- disclose any matters that could be perceived to be, or are, conflicts of interest and take appropriate action to manage/mitigate those conflicts
- maintain confidentiality of information provided
- meet their legislative requirements regarding their personal tax obligations
- advocate for their represented organisation's adherence and compliance to [the Operational Security Framework \(OSF\)](#) where applicable.

The **Secretariat** will support the Chair by managing administration matters relating to the group, including:

- arranging meetings and distributing agendas and key documents
- taking and circulating key messages
- identifying and recording action items noting who is accountable and the timeframes
- managing the forward work program.

Membership

Membership of the group must be refreshed at regular intervals, and no longer than every 2 years from the establishment date. Membership is filled by Expression of Interest and members may reapply for selection in subsequent years.

The Chair will select members based on their expertise and experience to actively contribute to the purpose of the group. Members should include a range of entities that are part of the software supply chain and/or support the wholesale environment. Consideration will be given to current membership retention to maintain group continuity.

To fill any industry or technology representation gaps, the Chair has the discretion to invite additional members to participate. This ensures a comprehensive and diverse representation within the group.

Current members are listed on [Software Developers](#) website.

Meeting requirements

The DARG operates in an environment of transparency where information is considered public unless stated otherwise.

Members are not authorised to disclose confidential information without the prior written approval of the Chair. This includes making public statements or announcements on information discussed or provided at a DARG meeting which:

- is declared confidential or
- the member ought to reasonably know is confidential.

A minimum of 3 meetings will be held per year with additional meetings being scheduled as required.

Key meeting papers will be distributed at least 5 business days before a meeting.

Key messages will be available to members within 6 weeks of a meeting. Members will be notified of their availability.

Key messages will be published in full on the DSP Hub in Online services for DSPs. A summary of key messages will be published on the Software Developers website.

If you have any questions or feedback, please raise a ticket in the [DSP service desk](#) or email the secretariat at DPO@ato.gov.au.