11 September 2017

Email: joseph.walsh@treasury.gov.au

Attention: Joseph Walsh
Amalyst
Digital Policy
Small Business and Consumer Division
Markets Group
The Treasury
CANBERRA   ACT 2600

Dear Joseph

Registry Modernisation – Modernising Business
EziPPS Engine – *Personal Property Securities Act 2009* **(PPSA) RegTech**

Thank you for your email of 7 September 2017.

I hope that the below are both practical and useful.

1.   What do you see as the main strengths with existing business registry services? How does this support your business?

   a)   They are wholly owned by the government and have not been privatised. EziPPS believes that privatisation of business registry systems would lead to conflicts of interest between the "private owner" and potential competitors and users, such as to maximisation of profit versus general access to transparent data;

   b)   They are supported by the members of the various public service, who serve for the benefit of the government, the commonwealth and its people generally under rigorous policy discussion with all stakeholders. The current model supports buyers of, and those who access, data, such as EziPPS. As opposed to this, pricing, reducing access and "bundling" of data access costs and other controls are often primarily aimed at those of shareholder interests in privatisation models;

   c)   It is not conducted to maintain a monopoly of viewing access to regulatory data, but only as to its collection, storage and security. This supports businesses such as EziPPS who might otherwise be shut out of effective access if privatised;

2.   What do you see as the main weaknesses with existing business registry services? Does this significantly impact on your business (e.g. time or costs)?

   a)   Lack of co-ordination with other data systems inside and outside of Australia (eg foreign corporate registries) cause duplication of API's being required at additional expense;

   b)   That identifiers of individuals cannot be verified against reliable government databases eg names and dates of birth of sole traders and company officers,

and name of registered owners of vehicles cannot be verified or verified easily from the Personal Property Securities register (called **"PPSR"**) or otherwise.

c) That the trustees of trusts are not currently shown on the ABN register. This causes lack of certainty of the contracting legal entity in the case of trusts;

d) Lack of alerts (also called "notifications") being able to be created on the PPSR according to the ABN or name and date of birth of a potential grantor. This causes additional costs in checking registrations made against a grantor who is not an ACN, ARBN or ARSN grantor identifier under the PPSR's rules.

3. What would you like modernised business registry services to deliver for you in the future? How would you prioritise these?

A single search on ASIC, ABN with the PPSR and multiple grantor identifiers able to be used eg ACN of company and ABN of trust, able to show all officers and PPSR security registrations, as similarly previously available under ASIC company charges.

4. What would be the advantages of bringing together the ASIC registers and the ABR within a single agency? How might this impact businesses, intermediaries or other users? Do you have concerns about a single agency being responsible for consolidated registry services?

Single searches would be possible and reduce cost and time. This would be ideal for many users if also used in conjunction with the PPSR and multiple grantor identifiers able to be used eg ACN of company and ABN of trust.

5. Do you see other opportunities to reduce duplication of business registers and associated services across government?

See above as to co-ordination between ABN, ASIC and PPSR. Also, provision of "director numbers" would be very useful and practical as per below.

6. What advantages or disadvantages would there be in a consolidated set of business data, for example in accessing data, updating business information, data confidentiality?

None foreseeable.

7. Would more open and accessible registry data benefit business and/or the wider economy? How/why?

Better, quicker and cheaper access to transparency as to whether an enterprise and/ or its trustee company is in liquidation/ had winding up proceedings commenced at the same time as undertaking a PPSR search. Similarly as to partners and/ or partnerships (see below).

8. Do you have a view on the steps the Government could take to make registry data more open and accessible? For example, do you have a view on the format of data, frequency of data released, platforms for release, or pricing?

Make all reports able to be downloaded in spreadsheet and pdf format.

9. Is there business data that would be useful to collect in a modernised registry service, but currently is not being collected or published? Do you have concerns about the publication of certain data?

I would like to be able to see details of the trustee of trusts on the ABN, as well as the cross referencing of whether a company director (ie an individual) or partner/s is or has been bankrupt (or has had bankruptcy proceedings commenced against them (in a federal court)) and verification of their name and date of birth according to current driver's license state records. Co-ordination of this data in a single search would be invaluable for providers of credit to enable enhancing of business finance.

10. Is there any information currently collected by the Commonwealth that is, in your view, redundant?

No.

11. Information confidentiality and security is paramount. Do you have a view on how security should be maintained, and/or how users can be empowered to manage permissions relating to their data held in registers?

"Director numbers" being allocated by ASIC, with email and text alerts able to be selected so that a person is notified if their name is used, or removed, as an officer of a company. This would reduce false directors, phoenix businesses as well as ensure correct data is maintained as much as possible.

12. What are the implications for business of changes to the way registers are currently delivered? For example, the cost of updating systems, products, or changes to any customer services?

It would be better if systems were altered by software and not substantive legislative changes, so as to enable better co-ordination with registries and users. More and better API's are also requested, so as to reduce cost of entry for competitors/ users of data bases.

13. We understand any changes may impact your business and sufficient lead time will be required. How would you like to be involved in any future changes?

Yes.

14. How long would parallel services (new and old) be required for you to transition your software and customers?

6-7 months normally.

Thank you again for your assistance and I apologise for the brevity of these submissions.

Kind regards

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