AusCheck
COST RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

July 2026

Charging for regulatory activity involves government entities charging individuals or organisations in the non-government sector, some or all of the minimum efficient costs, of a specific government activity. The Australian Government Charging Policy, which includes the Cost Recovery Policy sets out the policy under which government entities design, implement and review charging for regulatory activities. The Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) is the public document to ensure the transparency and accountability for the level of the charging and to demonstrate that the purpose for charging, as decided by Government, is being achieved.

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1. INTRODUCTION

AusCheck delivers Australia's national background checking capability to protect against trusted insider threats across security-sensitive sectors. AusCheck operates on a cost recovery basis in line with the Australian Government Charging Framework (AGCF), where AusCheck recovers the costs of the background checking services it provides at a minimum efficient cost. These costs are recovered for the aviation, maritime, health and critical infrastructure sectors, Global Entry program[1], and declared major national events (MNEs).

1.1. Purpose of the CRIS

A Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) is required under the AGCF.[2] This CRIS represents recent updated fee-for-service arrangements that are a regulatory charge imposed on participants who are required by law or regulation to obtain an AusCheck background check. This includes checks under the *AusCheck Act 2007*, *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004*, *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003*, *National Health Security Act 2007* and *Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018*. This CRIS reports actual financial and non-financial performance information for AusCheck background checking activities and contains financial and demand forecasts for 2026-27 and two forward years.

1.2. Description of regulatory activity

AusCheck charges for the delivery of background checks for the following schemes:

Table 1: Legislative basis for AusCheck schemes

#	Scheme	Decision-Making Authority
1	Aviation Security Identification Card (ASIC)	*Aviation Transport Security Act 2004* and *Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2005* (Aviation Regulations)
2	Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC)	*Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003* and *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Regulations 2003* (Maritime Regulations)
3	Security Sensitive Biological Agents (SSBA)[3]	*National Health Security Act 2007* and SSBA Standards 2013 (SSBA Standards)
4	Major National Events (MNE)	*AusCheck Act 2007* and *AusCheck Regulations 2017* (AusCheck Regulations)
5	Security of Critical Infrastructure (SOCI)[4]	*SOCI Act 2018* (SOCI Act) and Security of Critical Infrastructure (Critical infrastructure risk management program) Rules (LIN 23/006) 2023 (CIRMP Rules), the Security of Critical Infrastructure (Telecommunications Security and Risk Management Program) Rules 2025 (TSRMP Rules)

Whilst the Global Entry program is a resource charge (outside the scope of the AGCF), it has been included to provide a holistic overview of the Schemes AusCheck operates on behalf of the Commonwealth.

[2] Implementing the Charging Framework (RMG 302) | Department of Finance.

[3] The SSBA scheme utilises the National Health Security Checks to meet its legislative requirements.

[4] The SOCI scheme utilises the Critical Infrastructure Background Checks to meets its legislative requirements.

#	Scheme	Decision-Making Authority
6	Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment Identity Card (NSSIC)	SOCI Act and Security of Critical Infrastructure (Naval shipbuilding precinct) Rules (LIN 23/007) 2023 (NSSIC Rules)
7	Global Entry program (GEP)	*AusCheck Act 2007* and *AusCheck Regulations 2017* (AusCheck Regulations)

Background checks undertaken by AusCheck are similar across schemes. A sample of the components of AusCheck's different schemes are summarised as follows:

Table 2: Summary of AusCheck's scheme components

Scheme	Identity verified	Right to work check	National Security Assess ment	Criminal history assessment	Criminal Intelligence Assessment	Defence Service offences	Validity period
ASIC (over 18 years)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	2 years
MSIC (over 18 years)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	2 or 4 four years
SSBA	×	×	✓	✓	×	×	12 months or 2 years, depending on result
MNE[5]	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	Event's end
SOCI	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	As required by SOCI entity/ies
NSSIC	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	2 years
GEP (10 years and over)	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	5 years
GEP (under 10 years)	✓	✓	×	×	×	✓	5 years

[5] The types of checks for each MNE are decided by the Minister for Home Affairs.

The specific business processes for which AusCheck charges are outlined in section 3 of this document. Individuals must apply for background checks through the relevant entity, depending on the scheme. These entities may include:

- An issuing body (ASIC and MSIC schemes)
- An Organising Body (MNE)
- A Registered Entity (SSBA)
- A Responsible Entity (SOCI/NSSIC)
- United States Customs and Border Protection (Global Entry program)

These entities are responsible for submitting applications to AusCheck, which coordinates the background check process.

AusCheck also functions as an Issuing Body for the purposes of the ASIC and MSIC schemes for the Department of Home Affairs, including the Australian Border Force and other Commonwealth agency employees. Upon receiving a completed application, AusCheck coordinates a background check. Once the background check is complete, AusCheck advises the applicant of the outcome.

Consistent with the AGCF, AusCheck recovers the cost of its services from those who demand it at a minimum efficient cost. AusCheck recovers the costs associated with conducting background checks from the issuing body. AusCheck does not control any charges to applicants by background checking partners, and/or issuing bodies for background checking and card issuing services.

2. POLICY AND STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CHARGE (COST RECOVER)

2.1. Government policy approval

In December 2005, the Australian Government agreed to establish a centralised government background checking coordination unit, AusCheck, to commence operations from 1 July 2007. The AusCheck Bill 2006 Explanatory Memorandum,[6] circulated by the Attorney-General, articulated the intention for AusCheck to recover costs for conducting background checks, ensuring expenses related to background checks are covered by the fees charged.

This was initially outlined in the 2003-04 Budget,[7] with specific allocations and the cost recovery model for AusCheck detailed in the 2006-07 Budget Papers by the Attorney-General.[8] Updates to the cost recovery framework were subsequently implemented, as outlined in the 2011-12,[9] 2013-14,[10] 2021-22,[11] and 2023-24[12] Budgets.

In the 2024-25 Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO),[13] adjustments were made to support the introduction of new the Global Entry program. In the 2026-27 Budget,[14] adjustments were made to support

[6] AusCheck Bill 2006 Explanatory Memorandum (austlii.edu.au)
[7] Budget 2003-04, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[8] Budget 2006-07, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[9] Budget 2011-12, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[10] Budget 2013-14, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[11] Budget 2021-22, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[12] Budget 2023–24, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[13] Budget 2025-26, https://archive.budget.gov.au/index.htm
[14] Budget 2026-27, https://budget.gov.au/index.htm

updated fee-for-service arrangements for AusCheck, including full recovery of costs for background checking partners from 1 July 2026.

2.2. Statutory authority to charge

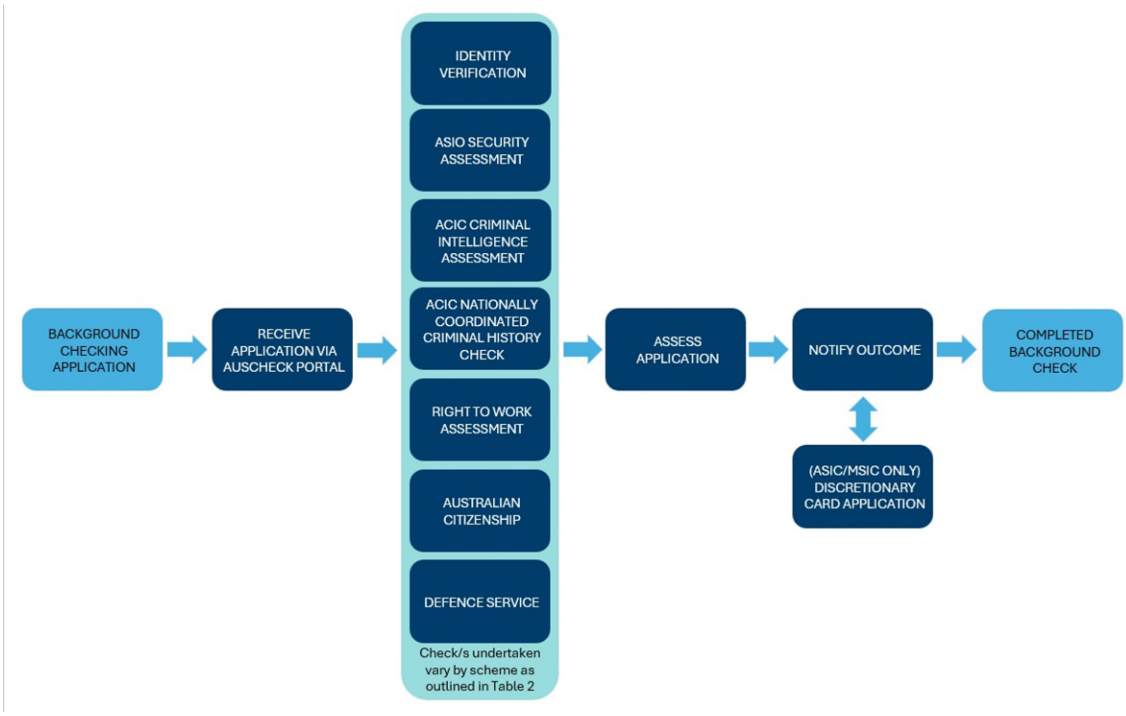
Subsection 18(2) of the *AusCheck Act 2007*[15] provides for charging and recovery of fees and other charges related to the delivery of background checking services. Regulation 30 of the *AusCheck Regulations 2017*[16] authorises the Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs (Secretary) to impose a fee for a background check by AusCheck. Regulation 6.60 of the *Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2005*[17] provides statutory authority for an issuing body to charge fees to recover costs and expenses reasonably incurred by the issuing body in relation to the issue of an ASIC. Regulation 6.09A of the *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Regulations 2003*[18] provides statutory authority for an issuing body to charge fees to recover costs and expenses reasonably incurred by the issuing body in relation to the issue of an MSIC.

3. CHARGING (COST RECOVERY) MODEL

3.1. Activities, outputs and business processes

To ensure consistent service delivery and procedural fairness, AusCheck undertakes standardised background checking processes. Diagram 1 below summarises the background checking process. In addition to the outlined processes below, exceptions exist for applicants under the age of 18.

Diagram 1: Background checking process



[15] AusCheck Act 2007 – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)
[16] Federal Register of Legislation - AusCheck Regulations 2017
[17] Federal Register of Legislation - Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2005
[18] Federal Register of Legislation - Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Regulations 2003

3.2. Cost of activities, outputs and business processes

3.2.1 Activity costs

The costs associated with AusCheck's background checking and card issuing activities include a combination of direct and indirect costs.

Direct costs

Direct costs are expenses that can be directly attributed to the activities involved in conducting a background check. Examples include:

- **Background checking partner charges**: Costs incurred from third-party external agencies, such as the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) for national security assessments and the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) for nationally coordinated criminal history checks and criminal intelligence assessments. These are essential components of each individual background check, and the background checking partner charges are directly attributed to the applicants undergoing these background checks.
- **Development and maintenance of the AusCheck system**: Expenses related to the development, operation, and ongoing sustainment of the AusCheck system and application portal, which are critical for processing background checks efficiently.
- **Staffing expenses:** Costs associated with AusCheck staff directly involved in processing background check applications and staff involved in administration work and other core functions necessary for the efficient operation of AusCheck.
- **Stakeholder engagement**: Expenses for activities such as industry meetings, forums, conferences and other forms of stakeholder engagement, which are vital for maintaining communication and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards.

Direct costs are allocated to specific outputs to help determine the costs of particular services that AusCheck offers. For example, background checking partner charges are directly charged as part of the fee for each background check, as they can be allocated to a specific application.

Other direct costs are grouped and calculated based on the estimated share of total effort from that cost pool. For example, the direct costs associated with an ASIC or MSIC background check include the background checking partner charges associated with that specific application, as well as a portion of staffing and system maintenance costs based on ASIC/MSIC volumes.

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are those not directly attributable to a background check. Indirect costs are necessary for the overall functioning of AusCheck operations, for example:

- **Indirect - Corporate overheads:** Staff and contractor support costs for human resource services, financial services, insurance and other minor corporate related overheads
- **Indirect – Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** corporate information technology services, corporate software licenses and data storage to support staff and ICT contractors with their daily work.
- **Indirect – Property:** cost related to rent and other property related expense to support staff and contractors.
- **Depreciation:** Depreciation of AusCheck's ICT system and other corporate related depreciation.

Indirect costs are allocated to specific outputs to help determine the costs of the services AusCheck offers. As indirect costs cannot be specifically tied to individual applications, they are proportioned based on the estimated share of total effort across all outputs.

Table 3: AusCheck direct and indirect costs for financial years 2022-23 to 2024-25

Category $ millions	Cost type	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Expenditure Direct costs	Employee Expenses	$4.795	$8.750	$12.068
	Supplier Expenses	$15.475	$14.862	$15.808
	Total Direct Costs	**$20.270**	**$23.61**	**$27.876**
Expenditure Indirect Costs	Corporate Overheads	$1.449	$2.538	$4.163
	ICT	$1.272	$2.979	$4.263
	Property	$0.312	$0.359	$0.323
	Depreciation	$3.345	$5.711	$7.858
	Total Indirect Costs	**$6.379**	**$11.588**	**$16.607**
Total Expenditure		**$26.649**	**$35.199**	**$44.483**

3.2.2 Cost Drivers

Key cost drivers influencing the overall cost of AusCheck activities include:

- **Volume of applications**: Higher application volumes lead to increased direct costs, particularly in staffing and checking partner charges.
- **New schemes and responsibilities**: Expansions to AusCheck background checking remit increases costs, especially in areas such as communications, stakeholder engagement and policy development.
- **Technological upgrades:** Costs associated with maintaining and upgrading the AusCheck system, particularly when new schemes and functions are introduced.

3.2.3 Volume Drivers

The volume of background checking and card issuance work delivered by AusCheck has increased over time, driven by factors such as the expansion of AusCheck's remit to include new schemes like MNEs, SOCI, and the Global Entry program, as well as activity growth in regulated sectors.

Future volume increases could be driven by:

- the addition of further schemes under AusCheck's responsibility
- changes to policy settings that increase demand for background checks in particular sectors
- an increase in the number of MNEs hosted by Australia.

The historical background checking volumes associated with each scheme over 22-23 to 24-25 financial years is detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: Actual scheme volumes 2022-23 to 2024-25

Scheme/program type	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Aviation Safety Identification Card (ASIC)	92,112	95,836	97,605[19]
Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC)	39,974	56,115	56,913[20]
Security of Critical Infrastructure Background Checks (SOCI)	-	972	2,607
National Health Security Card (NHSC)	519	395	302
Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment Identity Card (NSSIC)	160	6,608	4,409
Major National Events (MNE)	45,926	14,035	0
Global Entry program	-	-	999
Total	**178,691**	**173,961**	**162,835**

3.2.4 Cost averaging approach

Consistent with the AGCF, background checking costs include both direct (e.g. staff, partner charges, service delivery, ICT) and indirect costs (e.g. overheads, depreciation), all reflected in application fees.

To ensure consistency and minimise frequent adjustments, AusCheck averages costs across similar schemes over five years. For example, ASIC and MSIC processes share the same security components, enabling a single, consistent fee.

This approach smooths demand fluctuations, technology costs, depreciation, and economic impacts, supporting stable, predictable pricing. It also ensures equitable cost sharing across application types using the same inputs, while avoiding variable charges based on applicant complexity. Given fewer than one percent of ASIC and MSIC applicants receive adverse findings, targeting this group for higher cost recovery would be administratively burdensome, inefficient and impractical.

3.2.5 Background checking partner costs

Some activities related to background checks are delivered by third party agencies, known as background checking partners, who may charge AusCheck for their services. The costs associated with these services are agreed to with the background checking partner and included in AusCheck fees.

As of 1 July 2026, background checking partner charges cover ACIC services (nationally coordinated criminal history checks and criminal intelligence assessments), ASIO national security assessments, and Department of Defence service offence checks. Prices for these services increased on 1 July 2024, but due to delays in implementing the Government Single Issuing Body (SIB), ASIC and MSIC application fees have remained frozen, with these increases not passed on to applicants. Additionally, previous checking partner charges no longer reflect current costs, particularly in the case of ACIC criminal intelligence assessments costs which have not been applied to ASIC and MSIC applicants to date.

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[19] Figure includes adult, minor ASIC applications, and ASIC issued by AusCheck to Canberra and Adelaide airport employees, as part of the pilot Single Issuing Body.

[20] Figure includes adult, minor applications, and the second year MSIC check for a four-year application.

From 1 July 2026, background checking partners will fully recover costs as set out in **Table 5**. These charges will be incorporated into AusCheck's updated fee arrangements and passed on to applicants.

Table 5: Background checking partner pass-through costs

Background Check	Pass-through costs from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026 (increase absorbed)	Pass-through costs from 1 July 2026
ACIC National Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC)[21]	$28.00	$28.00
ACIC Criminal Intelligence Assessment (CIA) - Aviation / Maritime Identification Card (ASIC / MSIC)	N/A	$90.00
ASIO National Security Assessment (NSA)	$40.00	$57.00

3.2.6 Situations when fee changes could occur

There are three key scenarios which may result in AusCheck changing its fees:

- The Australian Government makes regulatory changes to an existing background checking scheme by:
    - changing the types of information reviewed or
    - the manner of reviewing information or
    - introduces new background checking schemes to be delivered by AusCheck.
- A background checking partner changes the fees they charge to AusCheck.
- A significant change in demand for AusCheck background checking services, which may impact operational costs and pricing consistency across comparable services.

If AusCheck fees change, AusCheck will engage with affected industry participants as part of the change process.

3.2. Design of cost recovery charges

AusCheck's regulatory fees follow a 'fee-for-service' model, where the fee charged to each applicant reflects the delivery cost of the specific service they require. This model ensures that the costs associated with each service are recovered fairly and transparently. AusCheck's regulatory charges are also reviewed regularly to align with changes in demand and costs. The cost of AusCheck's service offerings across all schemes is detailed in Table 6 below.

3.3.1 Charging design

While AusCheck administers a range of schemes, the activities and enabling costs involved are largely consistent across schemes. Whenever possible, AusCheck ensures that costs remain the same for comparable services, with comparable background checking activities attracting the same price. Commonwealth entities are also charged the same prices for clearances as non-Commonwealth applicants.

[21] The amount charged for a NCCHC is set by the Minister with responsibility for the ACIC and must be considered annually. Should there be amendments to this fee, this would need to be factored into the AusCheck cost recovery model.

Where possible, costs directly associated with a specific application are charged directly to that applicant (individually or via their employer). For example, the cost associated with an ACIC nationally coordinated criminal history check is included in the cost for a background check. In other cases, costs related to background checking are aggregated into cost pools, which are allocated to specific services based on the effort associated with those services to help design the cost recovery charge.

3.3.2 Rationale for averaging costs

Once the total cost of delivering each service has been determined, these costs are averaged over five years, and that average cost becomes the cost recovery charge for the service. This cost averaging process serves several purposes:

- **Demand smoothing**: By spreading costs over a longer period, AusCheck mitigates the impact of any single year's atypical demand or expenditure on prices.
- **Price stability**: Since AusCheck operates on a cost recovery basis, averaging costs over multiple years and schemes where the activities involved are the same helps smooth out the effects of fluctuations in AusCheck's operational costs, which would otherwise necessitate a temporary price increase.

3.3.3 Special considerations

Specific considerations regarding AusCheck operations are outlined below.

Applicants under 18: incur lower charges, reflecting the reduced scope of background checks compared to adults. This aligns with AGCF principles by setting fees based on efficient service costs and charging only for the functions required.

4-year MSIC: AusCheck offers a 4-year MSIC background check. When applying for a 4-year MSIC, an initial background check by AusCheck and checking partners is undertaken, and another is performed in year 2. This check is automatically triggered by AusCheck and takes place without the need for a new application. The fee for the second background check is included in the initial cost.

Table 6: AusCheck fees as of 1 July 2026

Output name	Background Check
2-year ASIC or MSIC (adult)	$262.00
2-year ASIC or MSIC (under 18)	$87.50
4-year MSIC (adult)	$504.50
Security Sensitive Biological Agents (National Health Security Checks)	$190.00
Major National Event (adult)	$190.00
Major National Events (under 18)[22]	$113.00
Security of Critical Infrastructure (Critical Infrastructure Background Checks)	$190.00
Global Entry (10 yrs and over)	$263.50
Global Entry (9 yrs and under)	$123.50

[22] Major National Events scheme does not have separate provisions for Under 18 applicants, unless through Ministerial Determination.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1. Risk management

In fulfilling its responsibility for managing risks associated with its background checking and card issuance activities, AusCheck has implemented proactive risk mitigation measures to ensure the integrity, security, and continuity of its operations. These measures include:

- **Formal operating policies and procedures:** AusCheck developed operating policies and procedures to ensure staff handle sensitive client data in compliance with the *Privacy Act 1988,* information restriction requirements under the *AusCheck Act 2007* and other relevant legislation. These policies and procedures are routinely updated, and staff undergo regular training on data protection protocols, so they are well-versed in the latest privacy requirements and best practices.

- **Security clearance procedures:** AusCheck staff who access sensitive information are required to undergo security clearance procedures. This includes background checks and ongoing monitoring to ensure that only individuals with the appropriate clearance levels handle sensitive data. For instance, access to critical systems is restricted to staff with at least baseline clearance, and any changes to an employee’s security status are immediately reviewed and acted upon to prevent unauthorised access.

- **Comprehensive operating procedures:** AusCheck operating procedures are underpinned by legislation, ensuring all information is appropriately protected and managed. These procedures include detailed steps for verifying the identity of applicants, processing applications, and securely storing data. Specific examples include the use of multi-factor authentication for system access and regular updates to encryption protocols used for data transmission and storage.

- **Regular ICT threat and risk assessments:** The Department of Home Affairs (department) conducts regular ICT threat and risk assessments, including penetration testing, to safeguard its systems against malicious and unauthorised access. These assessments involve simulated attacks to identify vulnerabilities, which are then addressed through targeted system updates and patches.

- **Comprehensive ICT maintenance process:** To ensure continuity of service and minimise system downtime, AusCheck implemented a thorough ICT maintenance process. This process includes regular system updates, hardware checks, and performance monitoring. For example, routine maintenance is scheduled during off-peak hours, when critical systems are updated and backups performed. This ensures potential issues are identified and resolved with minimal disruption to service delivery.

- **Ongoing monitoring and management of cost recovery arrangements:** AusCheck regularly monitors and manages its cost recovery arrangements to ensure sustainability and alignment with service delivery costs. This includes regular reviews of fee structures and changes in demand or operational costs.

- **Discretionary card ASIC/MSIC applications:** Discretionary card applicants are assessed prior to the issue or refusal of a card in accordance with the aviation and maritime regulatory framework, which includes:

    - the nature of the offence the person was convicted of,
    - the length of the term of imprisonment imposed,
    - conduct and employment history since the sentence/suspended sentence was imposed and
    - anything else relevant that the Secretary knows, including open-source information.

- **Governance of discretionary applicants holding expired ASIC/MSIC**: Governance includes notifying relevant compliance teams within the department.

- **Information sharing**: Information is shared, consistent with legislative requirements, between the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, Australian Border Force, Australian Federal Police, and relevant compliance teams within the department to support operational targeting and compliance of discretionary cardholders.

These measures demonstrate AusCheck's proactive and comprehensive approach to risk management, highlighting its commitment to maintaining high standards of security, compliance and operational continuity. By continuously reviewing and enhancing its risk mitigation strategies, AusCheck ensures the ongoing protection and reliability of its background checking processes; to enhance national security.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

5.1. Stakeholder engagement strategy

AusCheck aims to support our stakeholders both internally and externally through targeted, timely and professional communications and engagement activities to help mitigate malicious and trusted insider personnel risks.

We achieve this by engaging regularly with industry, communicating in plain English and leveraging existing departmental and industry networks/channels.

The appropriate level of engagement is key. All engagement methods have benefits and limitations, and are subject to regular review to ensure that the method best fits the environment, person or opportunity including:

- **Inform**: To inform or educate stakeholders in one-way communication activities. There is no invitation or expectation to respond. AusCheck informs stakeholders about cost recovery via the AusCheck website, industry forums & emails.

- **Consult**: To gain information and feedback from stakeholders to inform decisions made internally. This includes limited two-way communication and an opportunity for questions and answers. AusCheck consults with stakeholders about cost recovery via meetings, industry forums and email.

- **Involve**: To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that issues and concerns are understood and considered. Two-way or multi-way communication where learning takes place on both sides. AusCheck involves stakeholders in the cost recovery process via industry forums, working groups, meetings and advisory groups.

- **Collaborate**: To partner with stakeholders for the development of mutually agreed solutions and joint plan of action. Two way or multiway communication where learning, negotiation and decision making on both sides. Stakeholders work together to take action. AusCheck collaborates with stakeholders via industry/sector groups, joint projects, co-design and partnerships.

- **Timely**: To delegate decision making to the stakeholders on a particular issue. Stakeholders are enabled and equipped to actively contribute to the outcomes. AusCheck engages with stakeholders in a timely way by ensuring stakeholders can contribute to the outcomes of changes to the cost recovery process.

Future background checking reform will engage with stakeholders on a number of topics, including cost recovery.

5.1.1 AusCheck service standards

AusCheck commits to providing high quality, professional service to its various stakeholders via the AusCheck service charter which includes, but is not limited to:

- **Our mission:** AusCheck's mission is to provide fast, fair and reliable background checking services. This will enhance national security and advance national interests.

- **Our vision:** We aim to deliver excellence in national background checking services.

- **Our values:** We have a commitment to AusCheck's mission of enhancing national security. Our values include:

    - impartiality
    - a commitment to service
    - accountability
    - respectfulness
    - high ethical standards.

5.1.2 Standards of service

AusCheck is committed to providing professional and consistent service. We will treat your dealings with us in confidence, and:

- act in a helpful and professional manner
- give an accurate, concise and well-considered reply, and will be in plain English
- give system access of 99% agreed availability time. Agreed availability means notifying our stakeholders of planned outages, for example, system maintenance
- acknowledge 100% of all applications in 1 business day:
    - Most applications progress through the AusCheck background checking process within a short period of time. However, some applications may take longer due to various factors relating to the criminal history and security assessment process. Once an application is endorsed by an issuing body, organising body or responsible entity and the applicant's identity is verified, it proceeds to the background checking partner agencies, and the results are then returned to AusCheck. As a guide, applications should be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to an operational need to allow sufficient time for background checking, processing, card creation and dispatch.
    - Applicants should contact the issuing body, organising body or responsible entity that they submitted their application through if requesting a progress update.
- tell you before starting work if there is a fee for the services you have requested, and will give you an estimate of the total fee
- where we cannot assist, we do our best to refer you to the most appropriate agency.

5.2. Summary of recent engagements

5.2.1 General engagement

During the 2025-2026 financial year, AusCheck undertook a variety of engagement activities with industry including advisory group meetings and presentations at forums and conferences – including the commencement of the AusCheck Operational Forum for all ASIC/MSIC Issuing Bodies to discuss any operational issues. These engagements were conducted through a variety of formats such as in-person presentations, email and virtual meetings (small and large audiences).

5.2.2 Engagement on updated pricing

AusCheck engaged with impacted stakeholders on updated pricing arrangements. Stakeholder concerns included the:

- level of consultation prior to, and the timing of, the announcement of the commencement of the updated pricing arrangement and
- size of the increase in fees, the immediate effect of the increase, and whether the increase could be introduced through a phased approach.

5.3. Stakeholder views

AusCheck conducts regular meetings to share information and engage in a meaningful way with stakeholders. AusCheck also provides a dedicated service centre to respond for applicant and stakeholder queries, to support swift and accurate resolution of issues as they arise, and to receive feedback.
AusCheck's background checking partner agencies are regularly consulted. AusCheck also consults with ASIC and MSIC issuing bodies at industry forums.

6. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES

6.1. Current and forward estimates

Table 7 outlines the financial estimates of AusCheck providing background checking services. This table will be updated as required (see also Section 9: key forward dates and events).

Table 7: Estimated expenses and revenue

$ millions	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	(Budget)	(Forecast)	(Forecast)	(Forecast)	(Forecast)
Expenses (X)	$44.944	$61.987	$61.725	$62.349	**$186.061**
Revenue (Y)	$36.990	$58.977	$62.467	$64.610	**$186.054**
Balance (Y - X)	-$7.954	-$3.010	$0.743	$2.261	**-$0.007**
Explain material variance	The 2025-26 Budget variance of ($7.954) million is attributable to cost increases for background checking partner pass through costs (July 2024 increase), higher ICT maintenance and other minor support and overhead costs. The Government will cease implementation of the Single Issuing Body (SIB) and pursue industry engagement to modernise AusCheck's background checking framework. From 1 July 2026, the Government introduced full cost recovery of AusCheck's operational expenses. AusCheck updated fee-for-service arrangements to reflect the full and minimum efficient cost of delivering its services ensuring AusCheck operates on a sustainable, cost neutral basis. AusCheck will continue to perform periodic reviews of revenue against expenditure. If forecast projections indicate future under and or over recovery, AusCheck will review its fees accordingly and will liaise with stakeholders as appropriate. **Note:** This financial table includes expenses and revenue for current background checking Schemes: ASIC, MSIC, NHC, SOCI, Naval Ship Building, MNE and the Global Entry program.				

6.2 Potential impact on financial estimates

Changes to Government legislation, regulation or policy may introduce new schemes or alter existing demand and costs, affecting financial estimates and pricing. These may include, but not limited to:

- new schemes, which spread program overheads across a larger activity base
- procedural operational changes (e.g. updated or additional security checks, applicant requirements, ICT systems or processing standards), affecting demand and costs
- changes to scheme requirements, which may increase or decrease demand and impact pricing
- external financial factors, such as significant changes in economic parameters.

Other demand-driven changes may also impact scheme pricing such as:

- industry lead expansion of background checks to manage insider risks (e.g. Critical Infrastructure checks)
- adding or removing industry participants
- government declarations of significant MNE (e.g. future Olympics).

These changes may require AusCheck to review its charging approach to ensure fees remain fair and equitable in line with the AGCF. AusCheck will regularly review expenses, revenue and charging arrangements to maintain full cost recovery and alignment between costs and revenue. Based on these reviews, and in consultation with government, fees may be adjusted to ensure cost recovery and appropriate minimum efficient cost distribution across all schemes.

7. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (HISTORICAL)

7.1. Financial outcomes

Table 8 details AusCheck actual expenses and revenue for the background checking activity since 2021-22.

Table 8: Actual expenses and revenue ($)

$ millions	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Expenses (X)	$14.770	$26.649	$35.199	$44.483
Revenue (Y)	$11.798	$13.627	$14.528	$14.772
Balance (Y-X)	**-$2.972**	**-$13.022**	**-$20.671**	**-$29.711**
Material variances explained	AusCheck's recent under-recovery of revenue is primarily a result of delays in the ongoing work associated with the establishment of a government Single Issuing Body for issuing ASIC / MSICs compounded by rising operational costs driven by increases in background checking partners fees, ICT sustainment and inclusion of depreciation costs.			
	In addition, AusCheck's functions have expanded significantly since its implementation in 2007, these include support for new initiatives such as the Global Entry program, NHC scheme, MNEs, SOCI, and Naval Ship Building. These Schemes are in addition to the ASIC / MSICs schemes.			

8. NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

8.1. Metrics for non-financial performance

In addition to financial metrics, assessing AusCheck's non-financial performance is essential for ensuring operational efficiency and service quality. Non-financial performance metrics are included in the department's Annual Report to assess the effectiveness of AusCheck's background checking processes and the timely support for issuance of security identification cards. These metrics reflect the department's commitment to maintaining high standards in service delivery and operational performance.

AusCheck is responsible for one non-financial performance metric in the department's 2025-26 Annual Report:

- **Target 8**: 75% of AusCheck background checks are completed within
    - 20 business days for applicants with no disclosable court outcomes
    - 40 business days for applicants with disclosable court outcomes.

8.2. Performance against metrics

To evaluate performance in meeting the established non-financial metrics, AusCheck reports actual outcomes against the targets set as part of the department's Corporate Plan. The following analysis considers performance against the selected metrics in 2025-26, highlighting the efficiency and effectiveness of AusCheck's background checking processes. Full financial year results will be published in the department's 2025-26 Annual Report.

Target 8:

- **Metric:** 75% of AusCheck background checks with no disclosable outcomes completed within 20 days.
- **Details**: For the period 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026, 98.37% of background checks with no disclosable outcomes were completed within 20 days.
- **Metric:** 75% of AusCheck background checks with disclosable outcomes completed within 40 days.
- **Details:** For the period 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026, 96.91% of background checks with disclosable outcomes were completed within 40 days.

8.3. Date metrics were last reviewed

Regular reviews of performance metrics are essential to ensure their relevance and accuracy. AusCheck's non-financial performance metric is routinely assessed, with Target 8 introduced in the 2025-26 financial year to drive improvements in the overall efficiency of the ASIC and MSIC schemes administered by AusCheck.

9. KEY FORWARD DATES AND EVENTS

9.1 Schedule for updates to the CRIS

The CRIS is to be reviewed annually and updated as required.

9.2. Portfolio charging review date

Table 9 outlines the key dates concerning the scheduled portfolio charging review that AusCheck will be subject to. The review will assess portfolio charging practices to ensure alignment with government policies and budgetary considerations.

Table 9: Portfolio charging review schedule

Date	Event
2030	Department of Home Affairs Portfolio Charging Review
May 2031	Portfolio Charging Review outcomes considered through Budget 2031-32.

10. CRIS APPROVAL AND CHANGE REGISTER

Table 10 details the approval and certification history of the AusCheck CRIS, documenting key dates and authorities involved in its validation and agreement.

Table 10: CRIS approval and change register

Date	Description	Approved by
June 2026	Approval for CRIS Release	Minister for Finance
June 2026	Approval of CRIS	Minister for Home Affairs
May 2026	Financial information	Assistant Secretary, External Budgets and Revenue
May 2025	Update CRIS to June 2024	First Assistant Secretary, Cyber and Infrastructure Security
June 2015	Ministerial Agreement to the previous AusCheck CRIS	Minister for Justice
May 2015	Certification of the previous AusCheck CRIS	Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department