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### **AIIA Calls for a Dedicated Digital Economy Minister in its Pre-Election Statement**

The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) has today released its 2025 Pre-Election Statement, calling on the incoming government to appoint a dedicated Digital Economy Minister to drive Australia's productivity, technology innovation and adoption.

As Australia grapples with declining productivity and global competition in the digital and AI space, the AIIA is urging the incoming government to prioritise policies that secure Australia's future economic success.

"Our GDP per capital fell 0.7% through the year from December 2023 to December 2024. Without decisive action, we risk being left behind as our global allies and economic competitors move quickly to make significant investments in technologies like AI to drive productivity and economic competitiveness," said Simon Bush, CEO of the AIIA.

"A dedicated Digital Economy Minister working directly with the Prime Minister's Office would provide the supportive and coordinated whole-of-government leadership needed to achieve policy and regulatory outcomes that supports digital growth and investment."

"The AIIA successfully advocated for a Digital Economy Minister in 2020 and then Minister Hume stated that she wanted the Australian government to be a world-leading digital economy and society by 2030. We are now at risk of not meeting this ambition and require dedicated leadership and a minister in order to drive the right policy investments and positive signalling that Australia supports digital infrastructure and AI investments," Mr Bush added.

The AIIA emphasises that the role should focus on coordination and support across government, playing a crucial role in better technology investment and regulatory harmonisation, rather than taking core responsibilities from existing departments.

The Pre-Election Statement outlines key responsibilities for the proposed ministerial position, including:

- Driving the innovation perspective to balance regulation that provides certainty while encouraging technology adoption. The current delay in announcing the AI guardrails and regulations is hindering AI investment and adoption in Australia.
- Continued support for the technology policy development and regulation coordination role of the DTA.
- Harmonising existing and recently updated legislation to enable policy effectiveness.

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- Streamlining reporting compliance to minimise duplication across multiple departments.
- Providing stability through multi-year frameworks to allow stakeholders to plan effectively.
- Driving bolder government adoption of modern technology to improve service delivery.
- Ensuring prompt deployment of allocated budgets for AI, robotics, quantum computing and other technologies, assisting with business case development.

Mr Bush added, "With the right leadership and investment approach, AI could add \$115 billion to Australia's economy by 2030 and create up to 200,000 jobs. But we need to act now – the current timeline for delivery of the National AI Capability Plan at the end of 2025 risks Australia falling further behind as the global AI landscape evolves at breakneck speed."

The AIIA is also calling for removal of barriers and stopping any future regulations that impede the development of data centre infrastructure and renewable energy projects to support Australia's digital future.

## **Key recommendations from the AIIA's Pre-Election Statement include:**

1. Appointment of a dedicated Digital Economy Minister working with the Prime Minister's Office.
2. Fast-tracking the National AI Capability Plan to enable funding considerations in the 2026/27 budget.
3. Development of supporting infrastructure by streamlining the planning and approval processes for data centres and enabling further investment and accelerate the construction of renewable energy projects, energy storage projects, and transmission infrastructure.
4. Accelerated approval and construction of renewable energy projects to sustainably meet growing data centre energy demands.
5. Expediting the second tranche of Privacy Act reforms.
6. Inclusion of enabling ICT capabilities in the Future Made in Australia Act.
7. Investment in AI-driven cyber security and transition to zero-trust models in government IT systems.
8. Funding for digital cadetships and skills development.

The AIIA Pre-Election submission can be accessed [here](#).

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**ENDS**

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**About the AIIA**

The AIIA is Australia's peak representative body and advocacy group for those in the digital ecosystem. Since 1978, the AIIA has pursued activities to stimulate and grow the digital ecosystem, to create a favourable business environment for our members and to contribute to Australia's economic prosperity. We are a not-for-profit organisation to benefit members, which represents around 90% of the over one million employed in the technology sector in Australia. We are unique in that we represent the diversity of the technology ecosystem from small and medium businesses, start-ups, universities, and digital incubators through to large Australian companies, multinational software and hardware companies, data centres, telecommunications companies and technology consulting companies

