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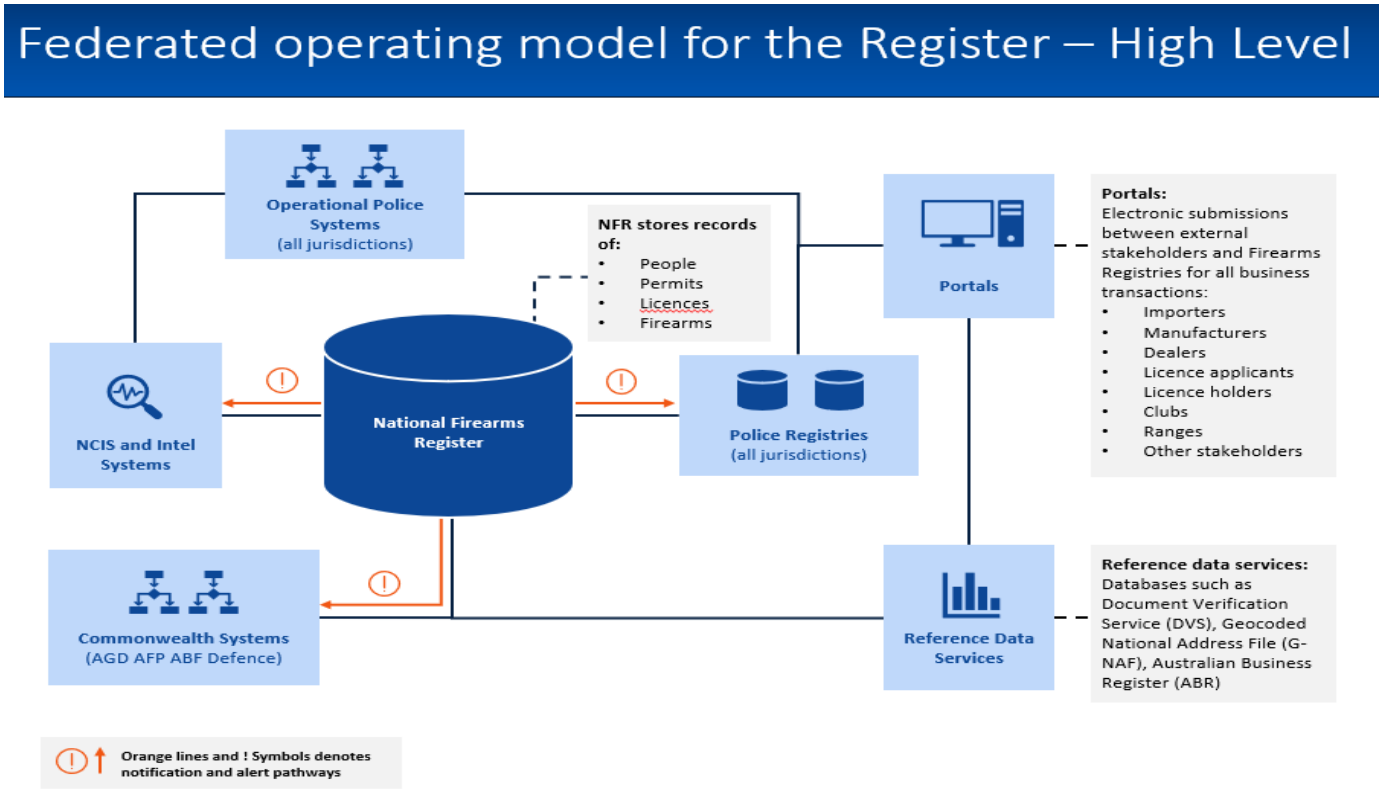
NATIONAL CABINET

National Firearms Register – Model, Policy Objectives and Implementation

Model

On 9 June 2023, the Police Ministers Council agreed a federated operating model for the National Firearms Register (NFR), to be implemented over four years. Under the federated operating model, the NFR will be a central Register developed and managed by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) that will:

- receive information from existing jurisdictional registries and Commonwealth systems
- provision information and connect with the National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS) to integrate firearms information with other relevant risk factors (such as criminal history, court orders etc.)
- include a national licence verification function for firearms dealers to check a person's status in near-real time to ensure that firearms, parts and ammunition are not sold to unauthorised people, and
- enable firearms dealer integration with state and territory registries, to provide near-real time information on firearms movements.



Policy Objectives

On 3 February 2023, National Cabinet tasked Police Ministers to report back with costed options, and associated timeframes, to implement the NFR. National Cabinet agreed the overriding objective of the NFR is to provide timely and accurate information on firearms and owners across all jurisdictions to improve police and community safety. To deliver on this objective, Police Ministers agreed (3 April and 9 June 2023) the NFR should aim to: reduce illicit diversion and manufacturing; improve compliance and enforcement functions; and improve understanding and analysis of firearms ownership and risks.

Key Capabilities

To achieve this, Police Ministers agreed the NFR should provide near real time:

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- nationwide tracing of firearms, frames, receivers and suppressors
- nationwide sharing of information on firearms owners and licences
- national licence verification service
- national alert and notification function for high-risk information or events
- reporting and analysis function that provides a national view of firearms trends.

Police Ministers also acknowledged that the Register would need to draw on, and contribute to, existing sets of information to improve law enforcement understanding of risk. This includes linking firearms data with the National Criminal Intelligence System and information such as prohibition orders, apprehended violence orders, criminal records, court information and death notices.

Required Improvements

Police Ministers also recognised that the central NFR system itself is only part of the challenge. The effectiveness of the NFR will be dependent on its ability to automate information-sharing, which can only occur if it receives accurate, timely and consistent data from agencies. All jurisdictions agreed to extensive improvements to firearms systems, data management and changes to business practices and legislation. This includes:

- Uniquely identifying firearms, frames, receivers and suppressors through serialisation and using the National Firearms Identification Database in describing their make, model, manufacturer, firearm type and action type.
- Cleansing existing data sets and changing data capture practices to ensure that all descriptions of firearms, frames, receivers and suppressors align with the above standards.
- Replacing some jurisdictions' existing paper-based registry systems with digital alternatives.
- Requiring real-time reporting of article location and movement through mandatory use of digital portals maintained by registries.
- Verifying data through enhanced independent auditing activity – including active tracking and auditing of export movements.
- Changing legislation to: adopt common serialisation standards, require dealers to report firearms information (including movements) and use the national licence verification service before selling articles, share information automatically with authorised end users and move registries from paper based to digital systems.
- Enhancing privacy and cybersecurity protections for information shared through the Register.

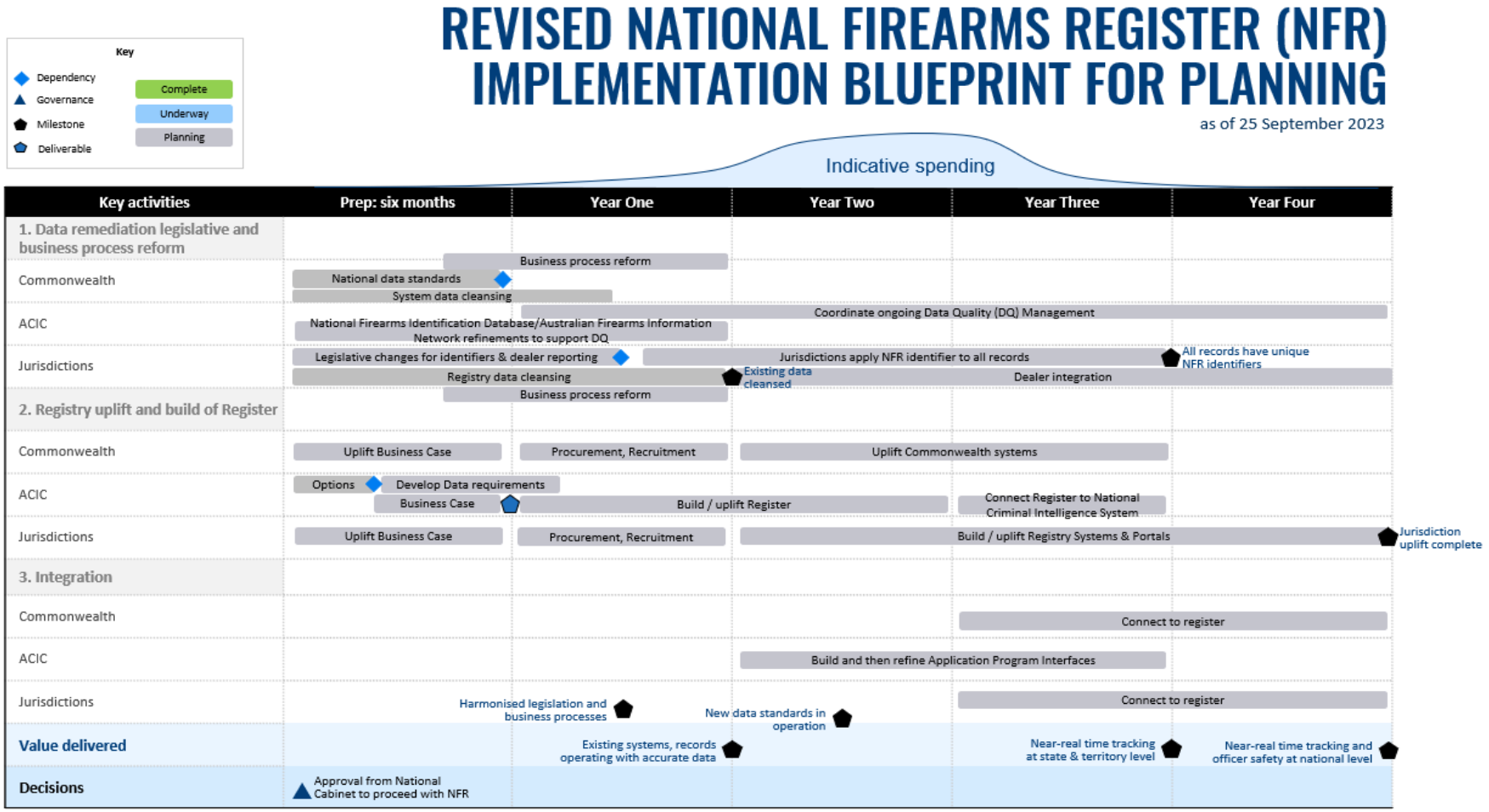
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Timeline

Police Ministers agreed a timeline of four-years, balancing the time required for extensive remediation work to firearms systems with delivering police and community safety as soon as possible. Until the NFR is delivered, existing risks to police officers and community members will remain due to information gaps, delaying in locating firearms, sharing information on risks posed by owners and diversion of firearms to the illicit market. The implementation blueprint below outlines the key streams of work required to deliver an operational NFR, with all the expected benefits, in year 4.



N.B The above timeline is an indicative draft. If agreed by National Cabinet, governance and project teams will further refine according to procurement, legislation change timeframes, recruitment, IT technical build and uplift and implementation.