



## **ARNECC Statement on the recent Ministerial Forum: The Future of Competition Reforms in eConveyancing**

The Australian Registrars' National Electronic Conveyancing Council (ARNECC) welcomes the recent consideration on the future of competition reforms in Australia's eConveyancing system by State and Territory Ministers at the Ministerial Forum on 24 March 2026. The endorsed Ministerial Statement from the Forum is [here](#).

The Ministerial Forum followed the ARNECC publication in late 2025 of two independent reports ARNECC had commissioned to assist it in determining the future of its interoperability program and competition policy reform within the eConveyancing industry more generally. These two reports were the Functional Requirements review (FRR) of the direct connect model of interoperability and a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) of different competition models (including interoperability).

Ministers and their representatives noted some key conclusions drawn from ARNECC's analysis of these reports:

- The time, cost and complexity of implementing interoperability, regardless of the model.
- The high level of uncertainty that interoperability (regardless of the model) can deliver significant long-term benefits (including competition outcome benefits).
- The absence of an incentive for participation, active leadership, support and cooperation by the banks.
- The need for leadership, participation, full support, and cooperation of the Commonwealth Government and its regulatory authorities as responsible entities, for the interoperability program (or any model) to succeed, including mandating bank participation in any reform (where appropriate).

Ministers further noted that the reports are consistent in highlighting the need for Commonwealth involvement if the challenges faced by interoperability are to be addressed.

On the basis of the outcomes of the FRR and CBA reports, and noting the criticality of Commonwealth Government and agency involvement in any reform, Ministers endorsed two actions recommended by ARNECC:

1. Without Commonwealth Government support, ARNECC will not proceed with the Interoperability Program at this time, including not proceeding with implementing direct connect interoperability, the practitioner choice interoperability model or the other models for competition considered in the CBA (Cost Benefit Analysis) report.
2. ARNECC will continue to strengthen the eConveyancing regulatory regime to deliver better outcomes for industry, and work with other regulatory authorities and market participants to close any gaps in the regime.

### **ARNECC's position on the interoperability program and next steps**

As endorsed by Ministers, ARNECC will not be proceeding with the interoperability reform program at this time.

Rather, ARNECC will strengthen the existing eConveyancing national regulatory framework to protect consumers, improve resilience and provide greater certainty for industry participants, building on work that is already underway.

This includes strengthening and enhancing its regulatory oversight of Electronic Lodgment Network Operators (ELNOs), including in relation to resilience; monitoring ELNOs' compliance; strengthening the enforcement framework and taking enforcement action, where appropriate, and continuing to promote national regulatory consistency across State and Territory jurisdictions.

### **ARNECC's position on engagement with the Commonwealth Government's regulatory authorities**

Ministers recognised that critical aspects of interoperability, including financial settlement and banking integration, fall within the regulatory jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, as States and Territories do not directly regulate banks and other financial institutions. ARNECC greatly appreciates the support of Ministers to again formally request the Commonwealth Government and its agencies engagement and involvement to deliver improved competition and more effective regulation of the national eConveyancing industry.

ARNECC re-confirms its commitment to work with the Commonwealth Government and its regulatory authorities to address identified regulatory gaps in the national eConveyancing regulatory regime including in the areas of bank financial settlements processes and national competition oversight, and to support future reform where conditions allow.

ARNECC remains committed to competition, resilience and consumer protection in Australia's eConveyancing system.

ARNECC extends its thanks to all industry stakeholders who have contributed to the interoperability reform program over the past five years. It looks forward to their continued contributions to ensure a robust, safe, stable, reliable and efficient national eConveyancing industry.

Dated: 31 March 2026