



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Communications**



Bureau of  
Communications  
Research

# Bureau of Communications Research

**Dr Paul Paterson**  
24 July 2015

# About the BCR



- > We are an independent, economic and statistical research unit in the Department of Communications
- > Established in 2014 to support the development of good public policy
- > We cover the breadth of the converged portfolio – telecoms, media, post, ICT and applications
- > BCR has its own research program and QA processes

# BCR objectives



---

strengthen the department's capacity for fact-based policy development and advice

---

stimulate informed public discussion and debate on emerging policy issues

---

deepen the department's stakeholder engagement

# 2015–16 forward work program



Five  
streams  
of work

---

Ongoing strategic research program

---

Commissioned projects

---

Research and analysis capability building

---

Publications program

---

Stakeholder engagement

---

# Strategic research program



## > Four key projects

1. digital productivity
2. barriers and enablers
3. policy options and priorities
  - arising out of work on barriers and enablers and other BCR analysis
4. open government data



# Digital productivity project



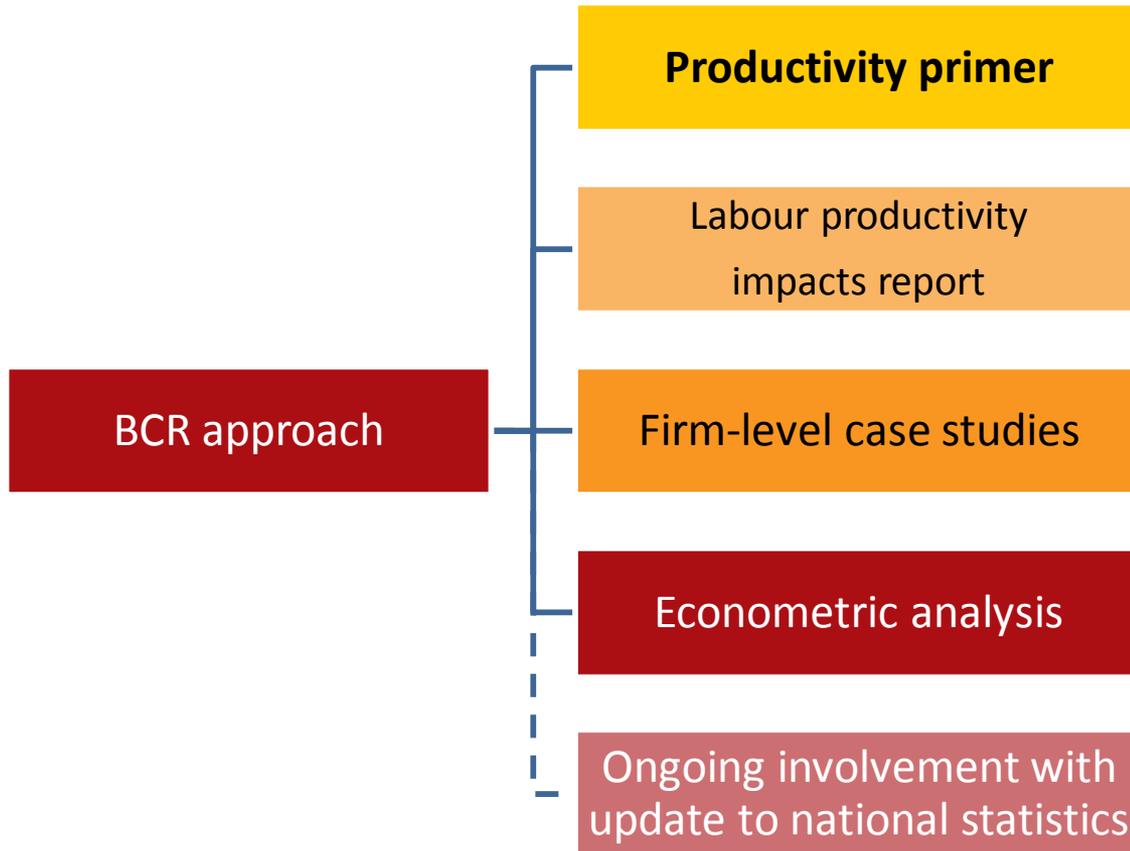
## > Purpose

- improve and broaden measurement and understanding of the effects of digitisation on Australia's productivity performance
- add to the current widespread economic debate on productivity

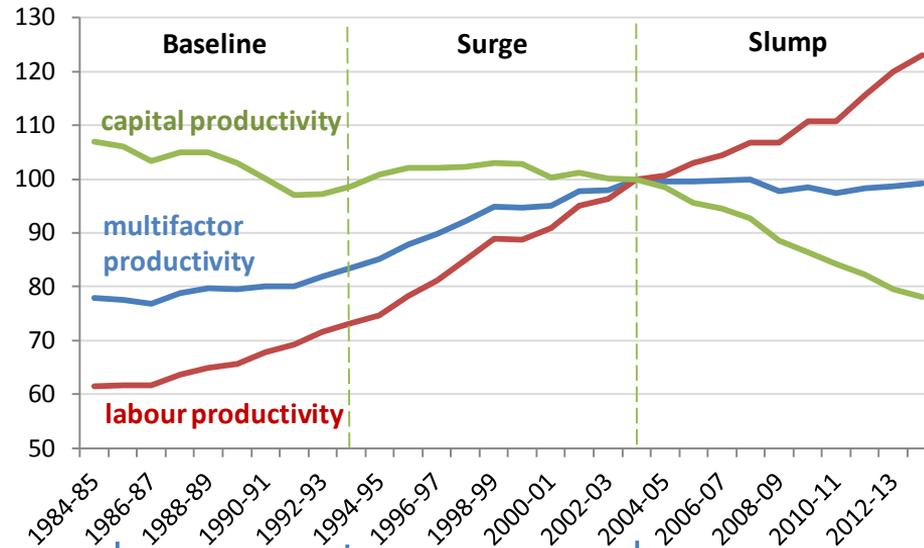
## > Project goals

- improve understanding of the role of digitisation in influencing productivity growth
- assess any impediments to the full realisation of the benefits of digitisation
- provide the evidence base for what (if any) policy options that would enhance digital productivity
- support appropriate consideration of the sector in national economic policy discussions

# Digital productivity project outline



# Productivity trends



	Average annual rates of growth (per cent per year)		
Capital productivity	-0.9	0.1	-2.4
MFP	0.8	1.8	-0.1
Labour productivity	1.9	3.2	2.1

# Digital productivity project cont.



- > Preliminary results from labour productivity analysis of wholesale and retail trade sectors:
  - Fairly strong association between ICT and labour productivity
  - Less strong association between ICT use and multi-factor productivity
- > Further work on quantitative analysis is required
- > Final results from labour productivity analysis of sectors expected by end Aug 2015

# Barriers and enablers project



## > Analytical framework

- for the assessment of barriers and enablers in the sector
- to be applied to selected topics, including online intermediaries, social media and the internet of things (IoT)
- identify potential areas for policy reform

## > International benchmarking

- a key step in the detection of potential enablers or barriers is a comparison between market outcomes in Australia and overseas

# Barriers and enablers project cont.



- > A current area of interest is the internet of things (IoT)
  - a network of objects that remotely interact with each other to achieve a common objective
- > Conducting a case study on the IoT as part of our enablers and barriers project
- > Active observer in the Communications Alliance think-tank on the IoT



# Open government data project



## Report on the economic impact of open government data policies

Analysis comprises a critical literature review

approx. 40 published papers and reports on the economic impact of open government data policies

---

consultations with Google, Lateral Economics (Nicholas Gruen) and Sirca

Analysis focuses on

economic theories and methodologies

---

quantitative estimates of the economic value of open government data in Australia and other countries

---

challenges for the government and recommendations for further work

# Open government data project cont.



## > Key findings

- open government data is consistently found to provide a net welfare gain to society from the investment made by the government
- estimates show a potential economic benefit of **up to \$25 billion** in Australia (~2% of Australia's GDP) enabled through open government data
- raw and basic government data, including spatial data are considered 'high-value' by some industry players
- generally economic benefits in government data being priced at the incremental cost of provision rather than a full cost recovery price
- significant benefits from making government data available in machine-readable form and having appropriate licencing agreements

# Commissioned projects



## Strategic issues framework

- Identify future trends and issues
- Impact on policy

## Review of NBN non-commercial services

- Magnitude of cross-subsidy
- Funding options

## Reducing regulatory burden

- Investigate opportunities to reduce burden imposed on business through government collecting data

## Joint review of ICT statistics with the ABS

- Improve data available for policy development and decision-makers in the digital economy

# Strategic issues framework



## Purpose



To develop improved capacity to identify and analyse emerging issues and trends in the sector

## Project goals



Present a regularly revised schematic of future trends and issues, and key change dynamics within the communications sector, and how these may impact on the department's current planning and priorities

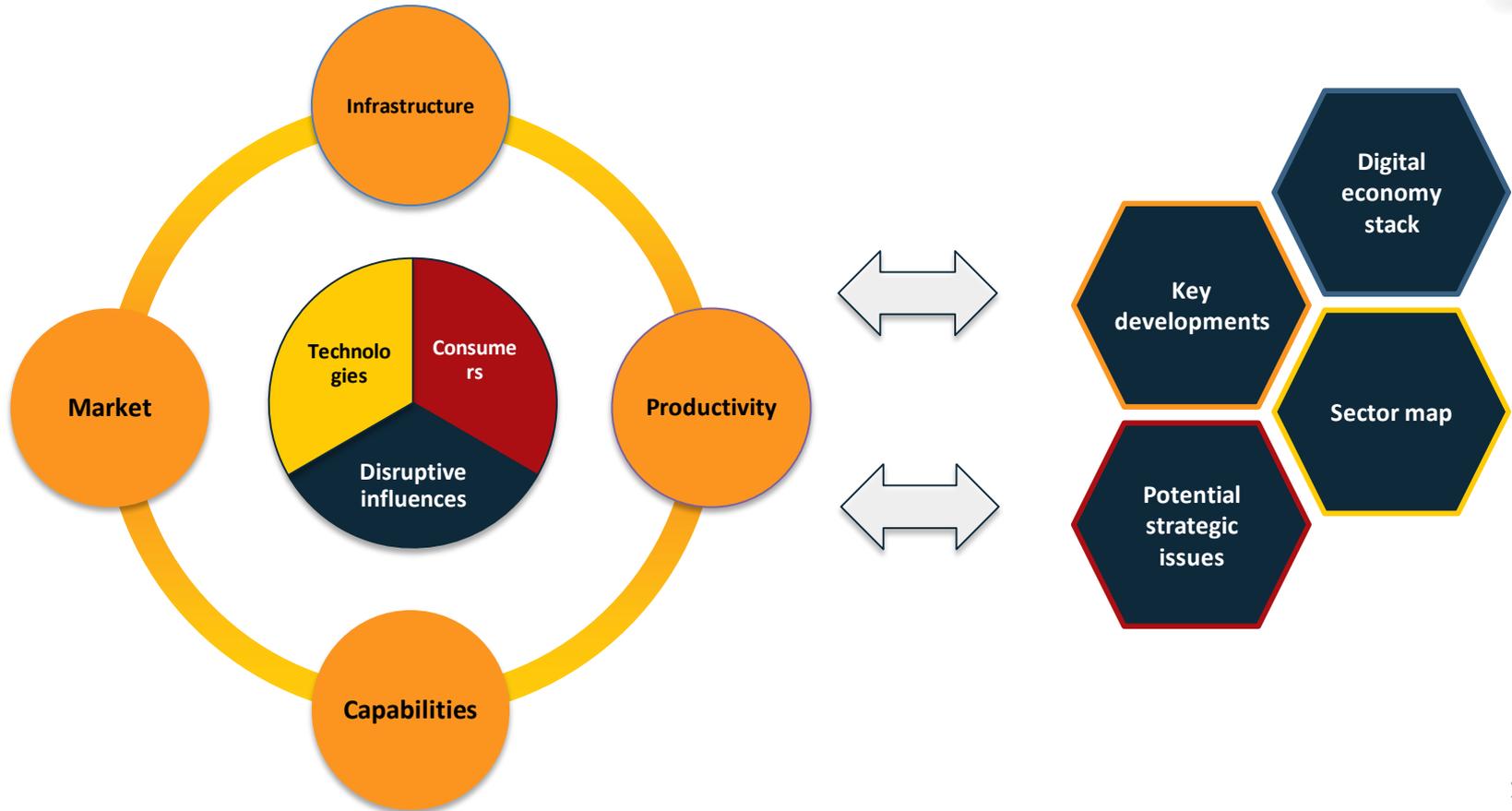


Act as a reference point for future policy development and research priorities, and provide context on the state of the sector



Receive active engagement from stakeholders on key emerging issues and trends that ensures policy priorities remain relevant

# Strategic issues framework



# NBN non-commercial services review



- > the BCR has been tasked with:
  - quantifying the losses arising from the delivery of NBN fixed wireless and satellite services
  - developing economically-sound industry based funding options
- > consultation with interested stakeholders is ongoing
- > next consultation paper to be release in late July–early August

# Reducing regulatory burden of government data collection requirements



- > Data collection requirements include:
  - industry data gathered under record keeping rules made by the ACCC under s.151 of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*, and
  - enduring information requests by ACMA under s.105 of the *Telecommunications Act 1997*
- > BCR has consulted with:
  - Communications data working group (CDWG) members, including Dept of Communications, ACMA, BITRE, ABS, ACCC and TIO
  - other entities including Optus, Vodafone, Telstra and the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network
- > Feedback identified areas of regulatory inefficiency such as communications data collection and dissemination
- > Report to government is expected by end–August 2015



# Joint review of ICT statistics



- > extensive public consultations and review submissions
- > review team is currently in the process of writing the final report
- > final review report to the government to be delivered in late August 2015

# Research and analysis capability building



## **A centralised research hub**

To make readily available key data, research reports and other useful information including the results of the BCR's own research

Data and information will be sourced from internal and external sources

Statistical and analytical tools and software will be available

Beta version to be made available to staff

Outputs of the analysis made publicly available on the BCR website

# Publications program



<b>Key facts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Release date – August 2015</li></ul>
<b>Leading indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Release date – August 2015</li></ul>
<b>Statistical snapshots</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planned release date – September 2015</li></ul>
<b>Global competitiveness report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planned release date – September 2015</li></ul>
<b>Communications investment pipeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planned release date – November 2015</li></ul>
<b>State of the industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planned release date – 2016</li></ul>

# Stakeholder engagement



To provide high level input on the BCR's work plan, help the BCR to raise its profile across the sector, and assist in establishing strategic partnerships and collaborations

Ideas and information

Leveraging

Secondments

# Let's talk



Collaborate with us



Send us feedback



Contact us  
[communications.gov.au/bcr](https://communications.gov.au/bcr)  
[bcr@communications.gov.au](mailto:bcr@communications.gov.au)



Bureau of  
Communications  
Research



# Questions?

**Don't forget to follow and retweet #CommsAuBCR**