

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA
AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA
ON A COMPREHENSIVE DIGITAL, CRITICAL TECHNOLOGY AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS PARTNERSHIP

The Government of Australia (Australia) and the Government of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea (Papua New Guinea), hereinafter referred to as "the Participants", have reached the following understanding:

1. RELEVANT AGENCIES

1.1 This MoU will engage the following agencies:

For Australia:

- The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), as the lead agency responsible for overseeing implementation and supporting the success of this MoU;
- The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (DITRDCA);
- The Department of Home Affairs;
- The Department of Defence;
- The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA); and
- other Australian Government agencies as mutually determined.

For Papua New Guinea:

- The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), as the lead agency responsible for supporting the success of this MoU;
- The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA);
- The Department of Defence;
- PNG Defence Force;
- The National ICT Authority (NICTA); and
- other Papua New Guinean Government entities as mutually determined.

2. DEFINITIONS AND COMMON TERMS

2.1 This MoU is entered into pursuant to paragraph 2 of Article 10 of the *Treaty on Development Cooperation between the Government of Australia and the Government of Papua New Guinea*, signed

at Port Moresby on 7 October 1999 ("the Treaty"), which permits the conclusion of arrangements relating to the implementation of activities provided for by the Treaty.

2.2 Activities undertaken pursuant to this MoU are subject to the terms of the Treaty and its Annex. In the event of any inconsistency between this MoU and the Treaty, the terms of the Treaty will prevail.

2.3 This MoU acknowledges and supersedes the Memorandum of Understanding on Cyber Cooperation, signed on 30 March 2022 and updated in 2023, and the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Information and Communications Technology, signed on 8 December 2023, together with any other arrangements between the Participants relating to the same subject matter.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Pursuant to the prevailing laws, policies and regulations of their respective countries, the Participants have reached the following understandings regarding the purpose and objectives of this MoU.

3.2 The Participants enter into this overarching MoU to establish a shared strategic framework for a comprehensive digital, critical technology and telecommunications partnership, with the aim of supporting Papua New Guinea's digital transformation, affirming Australia as Papua New Guinea's ICT partner of choice and strengthening bilateral cooperation.

3.3 The objectives of this MoU are to:

- Support Papua New Guinea's digital development aspirations through the advancement of affordable, resilient, trusted and secure digital connectivity and communications infrastructure, consistent with the Government of Papua New Guinea's priorities, including Papua New Guinea's Digital Government Act 2022 and NICTA's regulatory mandates;
- Pursue and strengthen the framework for cooperation on cyber affairs and the digital economy established under existing agreements between the Participants, including the Australia–Papua New Guinea Bilateral Security Agreement, the Papua New Guinea–Australia Comprehensive Strategic and Economic Partnership and the Papua New Guinea–Australia Mutual Defence Treaty (also known as the Pukpuk Treaty) which entered into force on 8 July 2026;
- Promote cooperation on the development and implementation of digital government transformation initiatives and services that improve accessibility, efficiency and public service delivery;
- Improve the enabling environment, collective security and regulatory arrangements for critical digital infrastructure, ensuring that essential assets, systems and data are resilient, trusted and secure, with effective sovereign controls;

- Enhance cooperation in cyber security to build capability and partnerships that protect critical infrastructure and sensitive information and help counter malicious cyber activity;
- Support the development of laws, policies, regulations and initiatives that promote inclusive, meaningful and affordable digital connectivity, enable a competitive digital economy, strengthen digital safety, and improve governance arrangements for the telecommunications and ICT sector;
- Promote training, information exchange and capacity building, including in legislative, regulatory and policy development, to address the security and economic implications of digital infrastructure and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, blockchain, cloud computing, 5G and the Internet of Things; and
- Enhance partnership and collaboration through jointly determined work plans and activities, including the deployment of strategic and technical advisers, infrastructure support and development, secondments, exchanges and targeted capability-building initiatives.
- Advance ICT cooperation and digital transformation in the Pacific, noting PNG's leadership in this space, in accordance with the *Lagatoi Declaration on Digital Transformation of the Pacific* (2023), the Pacific ICT and Digital Transformation Action Plan 2024-2030 and the *Pacific Digital and AI Technology Principles* (2026).

4. SUBSIDIARY ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 To give effect to the objectives set out in Section 3, the Participants intend to cooperate through jointly determined operational lines of effort, which may be set out in Subsidiary Arrangements under this MoU.

4.2 Subsidiary Arrangements developed under this MoU form part of the overall cooperation framework but are not intended to create legally binding rights or obligations.

4.3 Either Participant may provide to the other Participant a written proposal for a Subsidiary Arrangement.

4.4 The Participants recognise that operational priorities may evolve over time. Subsidiary Arrangements may be developed, updated, varied, refined or supplemented by mutual written consent of the Participants without the need to amend this MoU.

5. GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

5.1 The Participants intend to hold senior officials' talks twice per year, utilising existing elements of the bilateral architecture, and existing visits and exchanges. Talks will:

- (a) review progress under this MoU and any Subsidiary Arrangements;

- (b) assess implementation challenges and identify appropriate responses;
- (c) consider opportunities for future cooperation; and
- (d) review progress against jointly determined objectives and priorities.

6. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

6.1 Any differences arising from the interpretation or implementation of this MoU will be resolved amicably through consultation and discussions between the Participants, and will not be referred to any national or international tribunal or third party for settlement.

6.2 Pending the resolution of any difference, the Participants intend to continue implementation of this MoU to the greatest extent practicable.

7. AMENDMENT

7.1 This MoU may be amended at any time by mutual written consent of the Participants.

8. FINAL PROVISIONS

8.1 This MoU represents the mutual understandings of the Participants and is not intended to create legally binding rights or obligations under domestic or international law.

8.2 This MoU is drawn up in the English language. It may be translated into other languages for administrative purposes. In the event of any inconsistency between versions, the English text will prevail.

8.3 This MoU will commence on the date of signature by both Participants and will continue until terminated by either Participant upon providing six months' written notice to the other Participant. The Participants will consult to determine how any outstanding matters should be dealt with.

9. CONTACTS

9.1 Communications relating to this MoU should, wherever practicable, will be between the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Papua New Guinea's Department of Information and Communication Technology.

For the Government of Australia

NAME

SIGNED

DATE

P. WONG
P. Wong
20th October, 2016

For the Government of the Independent State of
Papua New Guinea

NAME

SIGNED

DATE

Hon. Justin Tkatchenko MP
Justin Tkatchenko
20th / 10 / 2016

NAME: P Conroy
SIGNED: P Conroy
DATE: 20th October 2026

NAME: Hon. Robert Nagai
SIGNED: [Signature]
DATE: 20/10/2026

WITNESS NAME: Ewen McDonald
SIGNED: [Signature]
DATE: 20 October 2026

WITNESS NAME: FLIEKL SHONWOL
SIGNED: [Signature]
DATE: 20/10/2026