

# Technology program

**Infrastructure Technology Asset  
Management (TAM – Infra)**

**PUBLIC**

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**Program Brief**

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# 1 Document Background

## 1.1 Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to outline a business case for a proposed program of work that will form part of AusNet Services' Technology EDPR submission.

## 1.2 References

Document	Version	Author
AusNet Services FY19-FY23 Technology Plan	V1.00	AusNet Services
HX-0007526-BC-01 CLCOE FY18 Business Case	V1.00	AusNet Services
HX-0007768 AHI Weekly Status Report 20180706	V1.00	AusNet Services
EDPR - Project Justifications Master Document	V3.2	AusNet Services
AHI Estimates Summary	V7	AusNet Services
Infrastructure_Roadmap_Initiatives	V1	AusNet Services

## 1.3 Document History

Date	Version	Comment	Person
1/07/ 2018	V0.1	Initial document	Yuanyuan Zhao
7/07/2018	V1.0	Issued for Cycle 1 review	Yuanyuan Zhao
27/08/2018	V2.0	Issued for Cycle 2 review	Yuanyuan Zhao
12/09/2018	V3.0	2 <sup>nd</sup> Cut Final Issue	Yuanyuan Zhao
20/02/2019	V4.2	Risk and benefit updates	Geoff Bethune
8/03/2019	V5.0	Minor updates	Janine Perri
11/03/2019	V5.1	Consistency review	John Hancock
18/03/2019	V5.2	Consistency workshop	John Hancock, Rangana Perera, Janine Perri
19/07/2019	V6.0	Cost updates & Customer benefits	Jackson Shen, Emily Pong
15/10/2019	V9.0	Reviewed for FY Change CLCOE to TAM	Yargi Kilinc
22/10/2019	V10.0	Draft issued to Regulatory team	Samantha Scanlon
20/11/2019	V10.1	Feedback incorporated	Samantha Scanlon

## 1.4 Approvals

Position	Date
Technology Leadership Team	

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## 2 Executive summary

### 2.1 Program summary

The table below provides a summary of the program discussed in this brief. Additional information is provided throughout the brief.

**Table 2-1 Summary table**

Key objective(s) of the program	The objectives of the Technology Asset Management (TAM) program is to mitigate operational and security risks by ensuring AusNet Services meets lifecycle and capacity obligations, and optimises Data Centre (DC) infrastructure assets, including platforms, hardware and licenses, so that they remain up to date, robust, scalable and continue to meet customer expectations, service obligations of business and regulatory requirements.						
Key benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enables continued to delivery of safe &amp; reliable electrical services to customers with the least possible disruption, also meeting regulatory compliance and strategic business objectives</li><li>Prudent mitigation of key operational risks by ensuring systems are up to date and supported by vendors</li><li>Value for customers through controlled capex expenditure through effective lifecycle management to manage a growing asset base</li><li>Appropriate risk management over the life of assets to ensure costs of delivering technology services are managed</li><li>Removes potential security vulnerabilities through ensuring security patching is up to date, thereby reducing the risk of unauthorised access leading to data loss or loss of service to customers</li></ul>						
Cost allocation	Electricity Distribution	49%		Electricity Transmission		30%	
	Gas Distribution	21%					
Program type	Recurrent					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Non-Recurrent					<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Client Devices					<input type="checkbox"/>	
Program timings	Program duration:	5 years					
Expenditure forecast	(\$m)	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Total
	CAPEX	[C-I-C]					
	OPEX						
	Electricity Distribution Cost						
	Total program cost						
Estimated life of system	The expected life of systems are three to seven years, including servers, software & license, hardware compliance.						

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<b>Customer Engagement</b>	<p>As the first DNSP in Australia to trial the New Reg process, we held deep dive workshops with stakeholders, including the Customer Panel, on ICT. In that engagement we described the importance and need for ICT expenditure to meet our customers' evolving needs and to support compliance with regulatory and legal obligations. Material associated with all our deep-dives is available on AusNet Services' website.</p> <p>A key theme of our engagement with the Customer Forum was the need for us to provide clarity on what we were proposing and what the expected customer benefits were. We acknowledge this feedback and have taken it into consideration when proposing the most appropriate option for this business case.</p>
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AusNet Services is required to deliver safe and reliable electricity distribution services with the least possible disruptions to customers. IT infrastructure assets and systems underpin all operations at AusNet Services. To ensure the continued reliability of operations and in turn the delivery of electricity to customers, AusNet Services' infrastructure must remain up to date, be robust, scalable and agile to the changing demands of the business, regulatory and customer requirements.

Therefore, the objectives of the program are to serve these needs, including:

- Mandatory regulatory requirements, including safety, legal, and technical compliance;
- Business improvements that will enhance efficiency and reduce opex; and
- Replacement of End-of-Life and Out-of-Support Hardware and Software to avoid infrastructure failure, disruption to customers, and increased opex.

This TAM Infrastructure technology program related to electricity distribution includes an investment of \$23.75M over the FY2022-2026 period to ensure that AusNet Services' data centre operates more efficiently and effectively.

Key initiatives to enable this outcome in the recommended option are:

- Operating system version and license refresh;
- Hardware Assets Lifecycle Refresh, including servers, field mobility iPads etc.;
- Application Hosting Initiatives (AHI) Server Refresh; and
- AusNet On Demand Platform (AoD) Refresh.

This investment enables AusNet Services to:

- Avoid failure in AusNet Services' technology environment;
- Ensure AusNet Services meets its Lifecycle and Capacity obligations throughout FY2022-2026;
- Mitigate known operational risks and issues;
- Reduce effort for supportability of legacy infrastructure and applications; and
- Maintain the technology environment in a supported state.

### Alignment with AER ICT expenditure assessment framework

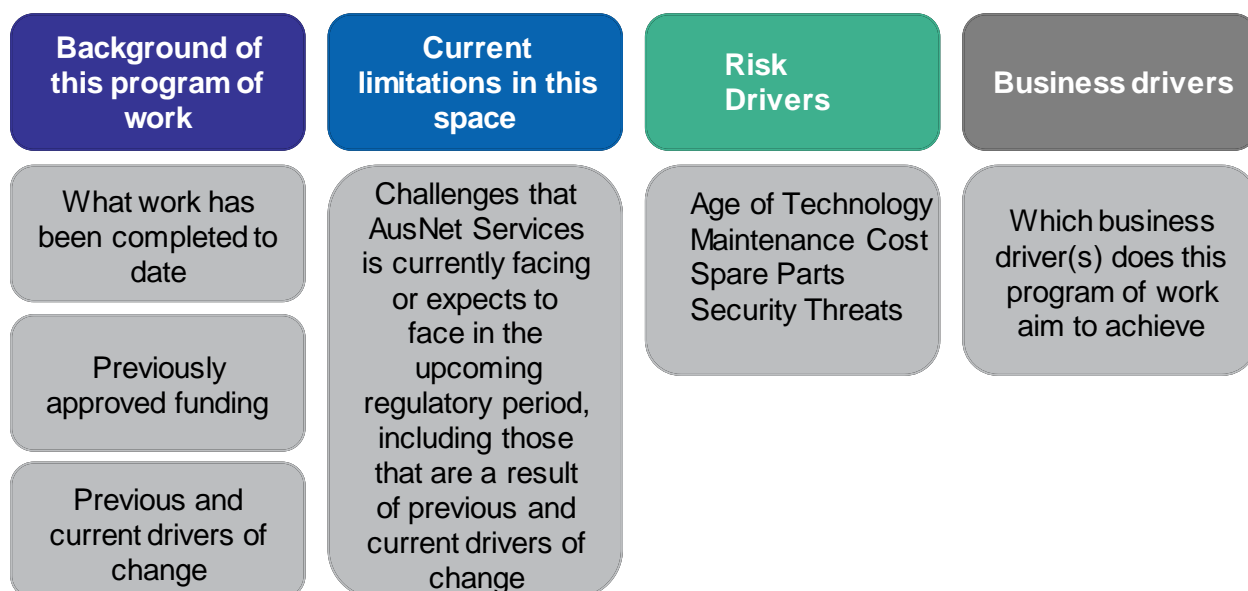
In accordance with the draft framework outlined in the AER's Consultation paper – ICT Expenditure Assessment of May 2019, we have categorised this program as recurrent expenditure, on the basis that it relates to ongoing refresh of AusNet Services' Data Centre (DC) infrastructure assets, including platform, hardware and licenses, so that they remain up to date, robust, scalable and continue to meet service obligations of business and regulatory requirements. This is a cost that must be incurred periodically. As such, we have not undertaken NPV analysis in support of the project. However, consistent with AusNet Services' internal practices, we have developed a detailed business case for the chosen option.

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### 3 Context

This chapter provides an overview of the context in which this program of work is operating within, and the figure below lists out key areas to be discussed.

**Figure 3-1 Key areas of the context to be discussed**



#### 3.1 Background

The TAM Infrastructure program provides lifecycle refresh of infrastructure assets, end user assets and shared platforms (e.g. data centre facilities and IT equipment). It is made up of specific assets requiring replacement during the regulatory period.

The proposed expenditure on lifecycle refreshes secure the platform's support and technology spending in a controlled manner so that capacity, performance and service levels can be maintained through the next period. By ensuring these systems continue to be supported by suppliers, AusNet Services gains access to the expertise required to resolve incidents, as well as patches for security vulnerabilities and bug fixes as they are available.

Critical assets (i.e. SCADA) will need to remain on premise through the 2022-26 period; hence, AusNet Services needs to maintain current DC assets.

The TAM program forms AusNet Services' recurrent Technology investment to ensure lifecycle currency and capacity management.

#### 3.2 Current limitations

Specific assets replaced during the regulatory period are driven by the application demand (i.e. capacity, performance, etc.) and volume demands of the business at the point in time (e.g. number of employees).

Within any year, capacity, lifecycle and operational enhancement changes are required for business systems to meet the following needs:

1. Probabilistic risk avoidance, mitigating the following risk category types:
  - a. Legal & compliance
  - b. Regulation
  - c. Health & Safety
  - d. Reputation;

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2. Identification of business improvements which will allow us to manage the cost of delivering technology services at an acceptable level of risk over the life of the assets;
3. Minimise the risk of system failure and disruption to customer services;
4. Minimise security threats of unauthorised access.

Therefore, lifecycle refreshes and enhancements in the FY2022–26 period will be of particular importance as they will provide stability and dependability of the infrastructure and compliance with regulatory and vendor support requirements. If lifecycle refreshes are not carried out, AusNet Services could be impacted by service failures in an unsupported environment, representing a critical risk to the distribution of electricity to customers. To ensure this does not occur, lifecycle initiatives have to be implemented in a timely manner.

The infrastructure requirements for additional and new demand (i.e. new applications hosted in the data centre) is not part of the TAM infrastructure lifecycle refreshment. As noted above, this aligns with the definition of recurrent expenditure in the AER's Consultation paper – ICT Expenditure Assessment.

### 3.3 Technology risk drivers

All TAM expenditure initiatives identified and proposed by AusNet Services reflect the least cost service delivery strategy for technology infrastructure over time at the maximum level of risk that the business and customer services they support can reasonably tolerate:

1. **Technology risk increases over time.** Hardware failures follow a pattern of fail in the first months of operation, stable operation for a number of years, and exponential increase in failures after the end of life as defined by the manufacturer. This failure curve is known as the 'bathtub curve'<sup>1</sup>. Extending the life of technology after the vendor end of life date increases business and service performance risk as the likelihood of failure increases.
2. **As technology ages the cost of maintenance increases.** Equipment vendors will provide cost effective support until a point is reached where their costs increase. Vendors need to provide internal capability to support both old and new products, where the old products are used by a decreasing customer base. This cost is passed on to the customer and often exceeds the cost of deploying and maintaining new technology.
3. **Spare parts become unavailable.** Technology relies on a supply chain of components and suppliers, which are subject to component lifecycle management. After a number of years, a manufacturer will be unable to source component parts making it impossible to produce spare parts. Reliable access to spare parts is then compromised and the risk of unserviceable outages increases.
4. **The price-performance of technology infrastructure continues to improve over time,** lowering the total cost of delivering like-for-like services. Failing to refresh infrastructure locks in higher costs and lower service capabilities.
5. **Security.** AusNet Services' DC assets need to be protected against cyber security threats. Ongoing patching is required to remove vulnerabilities which allow for unauthorised access leading to major business disruption or loss of critical information. When technology is no longer supported by a manufacturer no new patches are made available to address security

<sup>1</sup> *Basic terms and models used for reliability evaluation*, National Institute of Standards and Technology at <https://itl.nist.gov/div898/handbook/apr/section1/apr124.htm> and *Software Reliability*, Jiantao Pan (Carnegie Mellon University) at [https://users.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/des\\_s99/sw\\_reliability/](https://users.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/des_s99/sw_reliability/)

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vulnerabilities. The risk of unauthorised access leading to data loss, loss of service, or non-compliance with regulatory requirements, increases over time.

### 3.4 Business drivers

In the face of significant industry disruption, resulting in a period of substantial uncertainty and increasing complexity across the industry, AusNet Services has selected three key business drivers which set the direction for the business.

These business drivers are:

- Lead energy transformation, embracing change;
- Drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the portfolio; and
- Generate trust and respect with customers and partners.

All expenditure programs identified and proposed by AusNet Services will have regard to the business drivers and can be directly linked to at least one of these initiatives. This research has also been further validated through the ICT deep drive presented to the customer forum.

This program of work will be most relevant to the second driver – **‘drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the portfolio’**, as it contributes to increased effectiveness and capability in managing and maintaining a robust technology environment.



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### 4 Options

#### 4.1 Overview

This section provides an overview of a select number of options that may feasibly alleviate the current limitations as addressed in section 3.2. Each option represents a combination of initiatives within the program of work.

**Table 4-1 Brief overview of the options**

Brief overview of each of the options	
Option 1	<p>Minimise Capex Investment This option refers to “sweating the assets”, which does not adopt a proactive approach to ensure continued vendor support and mitigation of operational risks. Key initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operating Systems version and license refresh</li> <li>• Application Hosting Initiative Platform and Server Refresh</li> <li>• AoD Refresh</li> <li>• Service Now platform buildout &amp; GRC for security and IT</li> </ul>
Option 2 (Recommended)	<p>Business as Usual and tactically leverage existing on-premise infrastructure assets to mitigate operational and security risks. Key initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All option 1 capex initiatives during transition period</li> <li>• Hardware Lifecycle Refresh, including Air Conditioners (AC) for Data Centers, Backup storage, Network Attached Storage (NAS), field mobility iPads</li> </ul>
Option 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; width: 100%; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <p>[C-I-C]</p> </div>

#### 4.2 Option #1 Sweat Hardware Assets

This option involves extending the life of existing hardware assets and requires that AusNet Services does not adopt a proactive approach to improving infrastructure hardware assets impacted by capacity and lifecycle constraints when failing out of vendor support.

This option aligns with “affordable for me” and cost efficiency objectives in the short term. However, higher risk of system failure with critical consequences is likely to result in non-compliance with regulations or business objectives. Therefore, this option is not recommended.

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### Alignment to objectives

**Table 4-2 Objectives analysis of option 1**

Objective	Outcome	Comments
Mandatory requirements, including safety, legal, regulatory and technical compliance	Partial	Partially aligned as this option involves the adoption of significant risks and system failure could result in the following critical risk category types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Legal &amp; Compliance</li> <li>b. Reputation</li> <li>c. Regulation</li> <li>d. Health &amp; Safety</li> </ul>
Business improvements that will improve efficiency and manage costs and risk over time	Partial	Partially aligned as it may seem to be a lower upfront expenditure option. However, a higher risk environment would lead to an unsupported operating environment, potentially higher long-term support costs and lower productivity in business.
Replacement of End-of-Life and Out-of-Support Hardware and Software to avoid infrastructure failure, customer disruption and increased operational expenditure	✗	Not aligned as infrastructure assets failure will result in disruption to customers and increased operational expenditure.

### Costs

The direct cost of option 1 addresses platform and license maintenance requirements excluding hardware assets refresh.

**Table 4-3 Costs of option 1**

(\$m)	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Total
Capex	[C-I-C]					
Opex						
Electricity distribution cost						
Total program cost						

Importantly, the costs in the table above do not include the costs associated with critical system failure - either to AusNet Services or its customers. Such costs have not been modelled but are related to safety obligations/initiatives, regulatory, compliance and/or reputational costs. The risk of incurring these costs, which may be significant, is higher under this option than options 2 or 3.

### Benefits

Sweating assets can save AusNet Services investment expenditure, with a saving of \$5.7m compared to option 2.

However, this apparent saving can be easily offset by the risk of system failure and increased capex due to change of environment. For example, avoiding refreshes now would require greater investment

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in the future should an unsupported system failure occur. This will allow us to manage the cost of delivering technology services at an acceptable level of risk over the life of the assets.

### Risks

There are a number of risks associated with this particular option, as highlighted in the table below. Based on the consequence and likelihood of each risk, we have rated each of the individual risks blue, green, yellow, orange or red (order of severity). See Below in Table 5-2, we have identified techniques or actions to mitigate the risks identified for this option.

**Table 5-2 Option 2 risks and mitigation actions**

	Risk	Rating	Mitigation
R2.1	Lower operational risk due to system failure	D	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification.
R2.2	Increased cost and complexity of maintaining datacenter centric infrastructure assets.	E	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification Continue optimizing on premise data centre to move towards cloud based services
R2.3	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	D	This is a common risk across all business areas

Attachment 1 – Risk level matrix for additional information on this rating system.

**Table 4-4 Risks of option 1**

	Risks	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk rating
R1.1	Hardware that is out of support and has gone end of life places the business at risk in the event there is a hardware failure, firmware issue or BIOS issue.	Level 2. Business impact in the form of productivity loss.	Likely	C
R1.2	Unsupported systems may fail and no support or maintenance services will be available to call upon.	Level 2. Customer / community affected by loss of service.	Likely	C
R1.3	Increased cost and complexity of maintaining Data	Level 1. An impact that would have otherwise	Likely	D

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	Centre infrastructure assets.	required minor management attention.		
R1.4	Reduced or loss of employee productivity and business functions.	Level 1. Impact of event absorbed through normal activity.	Likely	D
R1.5	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	Level 1. An impact that would have otherwise required minor management attention.	Possible	E

Overall, we consider this option is rated medium risk.

### Alignment to mitigation of key risk drivers

As discussed in Section 3.3, there would be no alignment in respect of maintaining Vendor support of current assets with security benefits.

**Table 4-5 Alignment to key risk drivers of option 1**

Risk Driver		Achieved by
Technology risk increases over time	X	N/A
Cost of maintenance increases as technology ages	X	N/A
Spare parts unavailable	X	N/A
Availability of new technology	X	N/A
Security	X	N/A

### Alignment to business related drivers of expenditure

As discussed in Section 3.4, there are three business drivers that AusNet Services has identified and is focussing on over the next regulatory period. In summary, all the business drivers are not directly relevant to this option.

## 4.3 Option #2 Lifecycle Refresh (RECOMMENDED)

This option involves carrying out the TAM lifecycle refresh initiatives to ensure the AusNet Services' business environment is supported and industry and/or legal obligations are met. Costs, benefits, mitigated risks and customer related drivers of expenditure are explored further below.

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### Alignment to objectives

**Table 4-6 Objectives analysis of option 2**

Objective		Comments
Mandatory requirements, including safety, legal, regulatory and technical compliance; and	✓	Lifecycle maintenance, as per manufacturer's specification. Reliable and vendor supported system contributes to mitigate the operational and security risks
Business improvements that will improve efficiency and reduce Operational Expenditure; and	✓	1. Mitigate the risk of system failure and disruption to business operations.
Replacement of End-of-Life and Out-of-Support Hardware and Software to avoid infrastructure failure and increased operational expenditure	✓	2. Lifecycle maintenance delivers more efficient technology, so subsequent refreshes have lower capital costs

### Costs

Infrastructure assets that will be required to be refreshed within TAM include storage and compute appliances, security operational tools and licensing. Lifecycle refreshes include Database, Virtualisation Software, Environment Management and other shared platform based refreshes.

As business applications are retired and replaced, platform consolidation ensures that there is not a myriad of legacy environments being maintained and that available compute, storage and other capacities are leveraged efficiently to support demand. Platform consolidation provides for good management and maintenance of shared platforms and infrastructure and is not specific to a single EDPR period.

ServiceNow (SNOW) is a service management tool and central source of truth for infrastructure assets and shared platforms (i.e. the CMDB). This provides evidence on the level of capacity management, ensures that infrastructure has appropriate monitoring in place and is delivering data to capacity management.

**Table 4-7 Costs of option 2**

(\$m)	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Total
CAPEX	[C-I-C]					
OPEX						
Electricity Distribution Cost						
Total program cost						

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### Benefits

Lifecycle maintenance delivers more efficient, stable technology at lower risk. In addition, there are other benefits listed as below:

**Table 4-8 Benefits of option 2**

Benefits
Reduced likelihood and subsequently avoided cost of critical system failure and increase in support/maintenance costs.
Improved system and customer information security compared to option 1.
Conservatively future proofing against potential changes in adjacent systems that may require an up to date systems to function and ensuring that AusNet has the ability to adapt to alternative technologies can reduce the cost to serve and in doing so, lower prices for customers.

### Risks

There are risks associated with this particular option, as highlighted in the table below. Based on the consequence and likelihood of each risk, we have rated each of the individual risks blue, green, yellow, orange or red (order of severity). See Below in Table 5-2, we have identified techniques or actions to mitigate the risks identified for this option.

**Table 5-2 Option 2 risks and mitigation actions**

	Risk	Rating	Mitigation
R2.1	Lower operational risk due to system failure	D	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification.
R2.2	Increased cost and complexity of maintaining datacenter centric infrastructure assets.	E	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification Continue optimizing on premise data centre to move towards cloud based services
R2.3	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	D	This is a common risk across all business areas

Attachment 1 – Risk level matrix for additional information on this rating system.

**Table 4-9 Risks of option 2**

	Risks	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk rating
R2.1	Lower operational risk due to system failure	Level 2 business impact in the form of productivity loss.	Possible	D

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R2.2	Increased cost and complexity of maintaining datacenter centric infrastructure assets.	Level 1. An impact that would have otherwise required minor management attention.	Possible	E
R2.3	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	Level 2. An impact that would have otherwise required minor management attention over several days.	Possible	D

Overall, we consider this option is rated Low.

### Alignment to mitigation of key risk drivers

As discussed in Section 3.3, this option is fully aligned in respect to reducing technology risk and providing a stable environment.

**Table 4-9 Alignment to key risk drivers of option 2**

Risk Driver		Achieved by
Technology risk increases over time	✓	By maintaining critical systems in line with their supplier lifecycle maintenance requirements.
Cost of maintenance increases as technology ages	✓	Staying in Vendor support window is more efficient and cost effective than getting customised vendor support.
Spare parts unavailable	✓	Maintaining infrastructure assets in line with its lifecycle ensures spare parts availability reducing down time.
Availability of new technology	✓	Obtain efficiency by replacing obsolete technology
Security	✓	Critical lifecycle refresh remedies the vulnerabilities and ensure the security and reliability of the network

### Alignment to business related drivers of expenditure

As discussed in Section 3.4, there are three business drivers that AusNet Services has identified, and is focussing on over the next regulatory period. The table below highlights how this option is aligned where relevant. Where the business driver is not directly relevant to the option, 'N/A' is applied.

**Table 4-10 Business related drivers of option 2**

Business drivers	How this program achieves this
------------------	--------------------------------

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Lead energy transformation, embracing change	X	N/A
Drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the portfolio	✓	Maintaining infrastructure assets in line with its lifecycle allows the business to continue to operate efficiently and limit system outages. System outages cause delays and increase the cost of operating the business
Generate trust and respect with customers and partners	✓	Operation risks are mitigated. Therefore, continuity and reliability of supply is maintained, which contributes to brand and reputation.

### 4.4 Option #3 Strategic Migration to Cloud

Option 3 involves the capabilities enablement and migration of IT and OT workloads to Cloud services. This means that AusNet Services will exit the on-premise data centers to Cloud services. Opportunities, costs and benefits to the business associated with this option are explored further in below sections.

#### Alignment to objectives

**Table 4-11 Objectives analysis of option 3**

Objective		Comments
Mandatory requirements, including safety, legal, regulatory and technical compliance; and	✓	Cloud infrastructure provides a stable and reliable platform for business deployment. The cloud platform minimizes the frequency of application downtime and reduces risk based on downtime. Cloud infrastructure further reduces risk with built in security hardening of servers and databases.
Business improvements that will improve efficiency and reduce Operational Expenditure; and	✓	Cloud infrastructure allows for significant savings over on-premise data centers with utility based metering and pricing model. This allows business to right-size their resources based on demand and shifts businesses away from large upfront capex to opex spend on infrastructure.
Replacement of End-of-Life and Out-of-Support Hardware and Software to avoid infrastructure failure and increased operational expenditure	✓	Operational expenditure is optimised due to significantly reduced on premise requirements.

#### Costs

Migration to Cloud is considered to be a significant change. Necessary lifecycle refresh will still be included during the transition period, considering the implications for the continuity of operations during the transition period.



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Table 4-12 Costs of option 3

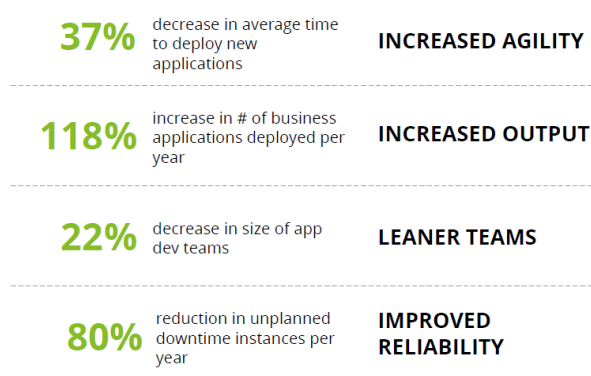
(\$m)	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Total
Capex	[C-I-C]					
Opex						
Electricity distribution cost						
Total program cost						

## Benefits

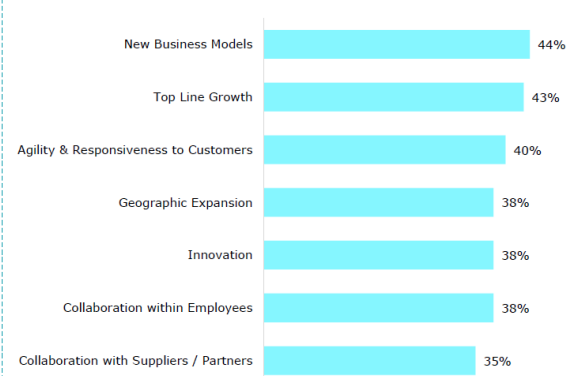
While infrastructure optimisation is the immediate benefit of Cloud Adoption, greater opportunities can be realised through adopting modern ways of working with increased agility and productivity. Efficiencies gained from cloud infrastructure have a significant impact beyond cost savings that enable businesses to respond quickly to market changes.

In addition, Cloud can enable improved effectiveness as shown in the diagram below.

### Cloud is improving effectiveness



### % of companies seeing impact of Cloud adoption



Note: The results above are representative of AWS  
Source: IDC Whitepaper | Quantifying the business value of AWS, 2015

The table below summarises the benefits associated with this option and quantifies them where appropriate data is available or reasonable assumptions can be applied over the 2022-2026 period.

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**Table 4-13 Benefits of option 3**

Benefits
<p><b>Reduced on premise Data centre requirements</b>, including: [C-I-C]</p>
<p><b>Risk Mitigation</b> Cloud infrastructure provides a stable and reliable platform for business deployment. The cloud platform minimizes the frequency of application downtime and reduces risk based on downtime. Cloud infrastructure further reduces risk with built in security hardening of servers and databases.</p>
<p><b>IT Staff Productivity</b> Less downtime and higher levels of automation increase overall business productivity. Cloud infrastructure requires less time to manage, administer, and update, increasing employee productivity by allowing employees to focus on adding business value. As a result, this can introduce a reduction in head-count due to efficiencies in Cloud.</p>
<p><b>Agility</b> Businesses can leverage the flexible and fast provisioning that Cloud infrastructure provides to be able to spin up and down infrastructure without incurring high setup costs to enable businesses to respond business needs and drastically increase their procurement efficiency.</p>
<p><b>Scale</b> Scalability is a key feature of Cloud infrastructure that dramatically impacts business's ability to respond to market demand to support their core business. Capacity requirements are handled automatically to allow for seamless change in resources based on demand.</p>

## Risks

There are a number of risks associated with this particular option, as highlighted in the table below. Based on the consequence and likelihood of each risk, we have rated each of the individual risks blue, green, yellow, orange or red (order of severity). See Below in Table 5-2, we have identified techniques or actions to mitigate the risks identified for this option.

**Table 5-2 Option 2 risks and mitigation actions**

	Risk	Rating	Mitigation
R2.1	Lower operational risk due to system failure	D	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification.

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R2.2	Increased cost and complexity of maintaining datacenter centric infrastructure assets.	E	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification Continue optimizing on premise data centre to move towards cloud based services
R2.3	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	D	This is a common risk across all business areas

Attachment 1 – Risk level matrix for additional information on this rating system.

Table 4-14 Risks of option 3

	Risks	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk rating
R3.1	The investments in Cloud is perceived not directly beneficial to the customers in terms of costs	Level 2. Minor impact on the level of service that would have resulted in a less 10% increase in customer complaints	Possible	D
R3.2	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	Level 2. An impact that would have otherwise required minor management attention over several days.	Possible	D
R3.3	A large component of risk associated with infrastructure is outsourced to the cloud provider.	Level 2. 3rd party risk Breach of law with investigation or report to authority with prosecution and/or moderate fine possible	Possible	D

Overall, this option is rated Low risk. Unlike option 2 however migration to the cloud in option 3 comes with transition risks. Attempting to migrate AusNet Services entire infrastructure portfolio into the cloud in a five-year period would concentrate these transition risks.

### Alignment to mitigation of key risk drivers

As discussed in Section 3.3, this option is fully aligned in respect to reducing technology risk and providing a stable environment.

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**Table 4-15 Alignment to key risk drivers of option 3**

Risk Driver		Achieved by
Technology risk increases over time	✓	By maintaining critical systems in line with their supplier lifecycle maintenance requirements.
Cost of maintenance increases as technology ages	✓	Staying in vendor support is more efficient and cost effective than requiring customised vendor support.
Spare parts unavailable	✓	N/A for cloud whereby assets are not maintained on premise.
Availability of new technology	✓	Obtain efficiency by replacing obsolete technology.
Security	✓	N/A for cloud whereby assets are not maintained on premise as long as the connectivity tunnels are secured.

### Alignment to business related drivers of expenditure

As discussed in Section 3.4, there are three business drivers that AusNet Services has identified, and is focussing on over the next regulatory period. The table below highlights how this option will input into the initiatives where relevant. Where we consider that a business driver is not directly relevant to the option, 'N/A' is applied.

**Table 4-16 Business related drivers of option 3**

Business drivers		How this program achieves this
Lead energy transformation, embracing change	✓	Taking the advantage of Cloud platform, will enable AusNet Services having the capability and capacity to move towards real time monitoring and analytics capabilities positions.
Drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the portfolio	✓	Cloud hosting to enable speed to market of solutions through fast access to required compute resources. New devices to provide broader mobility capabilities and improved network connectivity
Generate trust and respect with customers and partners	✓	More reliable services and adoptable organizations can accumulate trust and improve satisfaction.

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## 5 Assessment and recommended option

### 5.1 Assessment of the options

To identify a recommended option for this program of work, we have selected a number of criteria to assess each of the options. We consider that these criteria represent a comprehensive view of each option, in achieving AusNet Services' customer and business objectives as well as requirements of the AER in ensuring that any expenditure is both prudent and efficient.

The table below summarises our assessment of each of the options against the criteria.

**Table 5-1 Summary table of the assessment of the options**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<b>Alignment to objectives</b>	[C-I-C]		
<b>Costs</b>			
<b>Overall risk rating</b>			
<b>Alignment to technology risk drivers</b>			
<b>Alignment to business related drivers of expenditure</b>			

### 5.2 Recommended Option – Risk Mitigation

Based on this assessment, Option 2 is the recommended option, as it reflects a prudent level of expenditure that will progress AusNet Services towards its objective of efficient and effective operations while maintaining current reliability levels and reducing potential opex costs relating to system failures if no action taken.

However, the implications for the continuity of operations while moving towards cloud-based services should be a key consideration in future design decisions.

Because option 2 and option 3 meet the objectives at a similar level of risk but option 3 comes with a substantially higher transition risk, option 2 represents a more prudent transitional approach as AusNet Services pursues a long term migration from on-premise infrastructure to the cloud.

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**Table 5-1 Confirmation of scope of recommended option**

In scope	Out of scope	Dependencies
Operating system version and license refresh;	Migrating Data Center to Cloud	TAM Applications (separate program)
Hardware Assets Refresh, including network storage, servers and field mobility hardware,		Corporate Communications (separate program)
Application Hosting Initiatives (AHI) Server Refresh;		Broader business decisions on Cloud strategy
AusNet On Demand Platform (AoD) Refresh		

Below in

Table 5-2, we have identified techniques or actions to mitigate the risks identified for this option.

**Table 5-2 Option 2 risks and mitigation actions**

	Risk	Rating	Mitigation
R2.1	Lower operational risk due to system failure	D	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification.
R2.2	Increased cost and complexity of maintaining datacenter centric infrastructure assets.	E	Lifecycle maintenance as per manufacturer's specification Continue optimizing on premise data centre to move towards cloud based services
R2.3	Risks associated with solution design, implementation, budgeting, planning, integration, future maintenance, refreshes and support.	D	This is a common risk across all business areas

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### 6 Attachment 1 – Risk level matrix

The figure below shows the risk level matrix to which we have assessed each of risks within the options. Risks of highest concern are rated red, whereas those of lowest concern are rated blue.

Figure 6-1

		Consequence				
		1	2	3	4	5
L i k e l i h o o d	Almost Certain	C	C	B	A	A
	Likely	D	C	B	B	A
	Possible	E	D	C	B	A
	Unlikely	E	D	D	C	B
	Rare	E	E	D	C	C

Consequence Rating	
5	Catastrophic
4	Major
3	Moderate
2	Minor
1	Insignificant

Overall Risk Rating	
A	Extreme
B	High
C	Medium
D	Low
E	Very Low