

Best Effort.

The weekday briefing on Australian telecommunications, data centres and AI infrastructure.

TODAY'S BRIEFING

Thursday 29 October 2026

- AirTrunk has secured A\$4.25 billion in green debt from 32 lenders to keep building its SYD3 campus in Western Sydney, due for completion by mid-2028.
- Energy minister Chris Bowen has lodged a rule change request with the AEMC that would require qualifying data centres to contract firm energy supply.
- SHAPE Australia also says it won a contract of about \$800 million from DigiCo for the next stage of SYD1.

10 stories · 16 min reading · 17 sources · Online at besteffort.au/editions/2026-10-29

IN THIS EDITION

- DATA CENTRES**
AirTrunk lands A\$4.25bn green loan from 32 lenders for Sydney SYD3 campus
AirTrunk has raised A\$4.25 billion in green debt from 32 financial institutions to...
- POLICY & REGULATION**
Bowen seeks AEMC rule requiring data centres to contract firm energy
Energy minister Chris Bowen has lodged a rule change request that would force...
- DATA CENTRES**
SHAPE Australia wins roughly \$800m DigiCo contract for SYD1 expansion
SHAPE Australia says its backlog has passed \$1.5 billion after DigiCo Infrastructure...
- DATA CENTRES**
Blackstone quietly builds Australian energy platform to supply its data centres
Blackstone is assembling an Australian energy platform, with small land and asset...
- CARRIERS & NETWORKS**
Telstra uses Microsoft AI agent to reconcile billing across 272,000 migrations
Telstra is a customer of Microsoft Frontier Company and has built an AI agent that...

- 6 **FIBRE, SUBSEA & INTERCONNECT**
Darwin cable hub needs clearer landing rules and route diversity, analysis argues
With Google applying to land its Bosun cable at Fannie Bay and Darwin heading for...
-

- 7 **CARRIERS & NETWORKS**
Telstra and Ericsson to co-lead industry group on network knowledge and trust
Telstra and Ericsson will co-lead a new working group on how vendors' systems...
-

- 8 **POLICY & REGULATION**
Academy of Science urges 2.5% levy on data centre and AI revenues
The Australian Academy of Science told a parliamentary inquiry that Australia risks...
-

- 9 **SATELLITE & SPACE**
NTT Docomo extends Starlink satellite roaming to Australia and New Zealand
NTT Docomo has added Australia and New Zealand to docomo Starlink Direct, taking the...
-

- 10 **POLICY & REGULATION**
DTA issues cloud guidance to help agencies apply the government's Cloud Computing Policy
The Digital Transformation Agency has published Whole-of-Government Cloud Computing...
-

AirTrunk lands A\$4.25bn green loan from 32 lenders for Sydney SYD3 campus

AirTrunk has raised A\$4.25 billion in green debt from 32 financial institutions to keep building SYD3 in Western Sydney, due for completion by mid-2028. The loan lifts its committed debt to about A\$38.4 billion.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 6 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Lenders are still committing large sums to a campus that already has a power feed and a build program, while NEXTDC's grid delay and AirTrunk's postponed REIT show how exposed the sector is to power timing and equity-market sentiment.

AirTrunk announced on Tuesday 27 October 2026 that it had closed a A\$4.25 billion green loan to keep developing SYD3, its hyperscale campus in Western Sydney. The company said 32 local and international institutions joined the lending group, which it called one of the biggest put together for an Australian data centre financing. Fourteen banks underwrote the debt, among them National Australia Bank, ING and Deutsche Bank. Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, HSBC and United Overseas Bank coordinated the green elements.

The loan carries margin adjustments tied to its green structure. AirTrunk said any money saved through those adjustments will be channelled to its social impact program, which backs local charities. Second Order by TKN noted that the announcement gave no tenor, interest rate or drawing schedule, and did not name SYD3's tenants.

SYD3 is planned at more than 400 MW, with 42 data halls and 70,000 square metres of technical floor on 8.3 hectares. Forbes Australia reported that AirTrunk first announced it in 2021 at more than 320 MW before adding about 80 MW. A W Edwards is leading construction, which is under way, and AirTrunk expects completion by mid-2028. The company expects the project to support more than 10,000 jobs. It is staging and pre-commissioning equipment in a 25,000 square metre buffer zone in Western Sydney and has chartered vessels to deliver gear to Port Botany and Port Kembla.

AirTrunk put its total committed debt at about A\$38.4 billion worldwide after the deal, with more than A\$19.8 billion of that for Australian projects. It runs five Australian campuses with more than 1.2 GW of capacity, has invested over A\$12 billion locally and plans a further A\$75 billion across the next decade. Blackstone has owned the company since 2024. Forbes Australia said the new

debt is just over five per cent of that planned spend.

The raising follows a rough stretch for the sector. Forbes Australia reported that Jemena delayed grid upgrades needed for NEXTDC's M3 data centre in West Footscray, that NEXTDC cut its revenue outlook as a result, and that the company warned it may not be able to draw all of its \$8.75 billion debt facility. Forbes also said Goodman Group recently cancelled a \$1.2 billion facility at Lane Cove. W.Media reported that AirTrunk put off a Singapore REIT listing that could raise around US\$1.5 billion as technology and AI shares sold off, with reports pointing to early 2027. The Rent and Yield reported the final amount came in just under the A\$4.3 billion facility AirTrunk was reported to be negotiating in June.

AirTrunk's Tom Mackellar said SYD3 is "a long-term investment in Western Sydney and Australia's digital capability, backed by the confidence of leading Australian and international banks". Founder and CEO Robin Khuda, according to The Rent and Yield, framed the raising as evidence of "a flight to quality in an increasingly selective capital market."

REPORTING FROM

- 1 **Second Order by TKN** · AirTrunk's A\$4.25bn Loan: Who Gets Paid Before Power-On
- 2 **AirTrunk** · AirTrunk Secures A\$4.25B Green Loan For SYD3 Western Sydney Expansion: Supporting Australia's Digital Economy
- 3 **Forbes Australia** · AirTrunk secures \$4.25 billion loan amid \$75 billion splurge
- 4 **The Rent and Yield** · AirTrunk Secures \$3 Billion Green Loan for SYD3 Campus
- 5 **techpartner.news** · AirTrunk secures A\$4.25b for data centre expansion
- 6 **W.Media** · AirTrunk secures AU\$4.25bn green loan for Sydney data centre campus

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

Bowen seeks AEMC rule requiring data centres to contract firmed energy

Energy minister Chris Bowen has lodged a rule change request that would force qualifying data centres to secure firmed supply from new generation, storage or demand response. The AEMC received it on 20 October and has not yet started its process.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

If adopted, data centre operators in the NEM could face new contracting costs and a preference for newly built firming capacity, while thresholds and alignment with the renewable obligation remain unresolved.

Chris Bowen, the energy minister, has asked the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) to consider a new rule obliging qualifying data centres to cover their electricity use with firmed supply. The request reached the AEMC on 20 October. It envisages mandatory contracts backed by new generation, storage and dependable demand flexibility located in the same NEM region as the facility concerned. The commission has yet to open its process, and a consultation paper is due once it does.

The request draws on the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2026 Electricity Statement of Opportunities, which projects data centres using about 15TWh a year by 2029-30, equal to 7.8 per cent of operational consumption in the National Electricity Market. The projection for 2035-36 is roughly 34TWh, or 13 per cent. The government argues that data centre load could outpace the delivery of new generation, storage and network capacity, especially as coal plants close and variable renewables take a bigger share. The stated purpose is to keep the cost and reliability risks of that new load from falling on other electricity users.

Operators would have to demonstrate that their contract portfolios supply enough firm capacity to fit when, for how long and how much power they draw. Contract types that could qualify include power purchase agreements, cap contracts, tolling agreements, storage and dependable demand response. The backing capacity would have to come from new investment. The request floats a high default standard of newness, possibly meaning every eligible firming resource must be new, with ministers potentially able to vary that between jurisdictions.

Much of the detail is left open, including whether the obligation should start above a size threshold and whether bigger facilities should face tougher requirements. The request also asks whether the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) should look at a facility's whole 24-hour demand profile instead of only peak periods. Which technologies are eligible, and how high-emissions generation is treated, remain to be decided.

Compliance could be checked before a facility connects, then at scheduled reviews or after a material rise in demand. The AER could examine contract portfolios and demand independent audits. Financial penalties are proposed for breaches, and the AEMC is asked whether non-compliant facilities could be made to reduce consumption until they meet their obligations.

The proposal follows AEMC advice that fed into a reform package agreed on 28 July by energy ministers, excluding Queensland and the Northern Territory. A second rule change request, on connection agreements for large energy users, was lodged with it. Other separate rule changes cover recovery of network augmentation costs and the operational visibility of large inverter-based loads. The contracting obligation must be coordinated with the government's renewable electricity obligation for data centres, and the request warns of duplicated requirements, administrative burden and added cost if the two are misaligned. In its assessment the AEMC will weigh gains in reliability, wholesale prices and new capacity against compliance costs, the availability of firming contracts and the risk of requiring more capacity than facilities use while ramping up. No final requirements or implementation timetable have been set.

REPORTING FROM

- 1 **W.Media** · Australia proposes firm energy contracting obligation for data centres
- 2 **ETDatacenters.com** · Australia proposes firmed energy obligation for data centers, ETDatacenters

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

SHAPE Australia wins roughly \$800m DigiCo contract for SYD1 expansion

SHAPE Australia says its backlog has passed \$1.5 billion after DigiCo Infrastructure REIT handed it an approximately \$800 million contract for the next stage of its SYD1 data centre in Sydney.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The deal shows a contractor and a listed data centre owner agreeing a fixed-cost expansion in Sydney, with grid capacity, water access and planning approval secured before construction.

SHAPE Australia (ASX: SHA) said its backlog of contracted work was above \$1.5 billion as at 19 October, after DigiCo Infrastructure REIT (ASX: DGT) awarded it a contract of about \$800m in October. The award took SHAPE's project wins past \$1.4 billion.

The work is the next phase of DigiCo's SYD1 data centre project, which follows SHAPE's earlier delivery of a 20-megawatt Stage 1 upgrade at the same site. Both sides ran an early contractor involvement process to define scope, design and pricing, and then settled on a fixed-cost deal. SHAPE expects the job to add about \$200m of revenue in each of FY27 and FY28, on top of its earlier forecasts.

DigiCo has confirmed the customer contract is executed, and that grid capacity, water access and State Significant Development Approval are all in place. The REIT said funding comes from existing liquidity, debt facilities and proceeds from selling its US assets.

SHAPE has put together a delivery team of more than 50 specialists, and has agreed pricing and terms with major subcontractors that line up with its head contract obligations. James Fitzgerald, general manager for New South Wales, is responsible for delivery, with executive reviews covering progress, cost, cash flow and risk. Management is keeping separate resources for the core business. Chief executive Peter Marix-Evans said the contract was "an important milestone for the Company, building on our successful Stage 1 delivery and detailed planning with the client".

In the September quarter SHAPE won \$504.6 million of projects, compared with \$336m a year earlier. Its order backlog at 30 September was \$762.7m, 21 per cent above the \$628.4m recorded at the end of June.

Modular construction brought in \$20.6m of first-quarter revenue, against \$14.5m in the prior corresponding period. Modular by SHAPE opened a manufacturing facility and branch in Perth during October, its third nationally, and has since won an education project after securing a place on a WA government modular building panel. SHAPE also reported more than \$1.7 billion of known opportunities over the following 120 days, and a wider pipeline above \$4.5 billion as at 19 October.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Small Caps** · SHAPE Australia Continues FY27 Sales Momentum with DigiCo Data Centre Award

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

DATA CENTRES 4 OF 10

Blackstone quietly builds Australian energy platform to supply its data centres

Blackstone is assembling an Australian energy platform, with small land and asset purchases so far, to supply power to its data centres, sources told NPM. Governments are meanwhile drafting national standards for large facilities that include self-supplied power.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

If Blackstone builds its own generation, the owner of AirTrunk would be positioned for proposed national standards that cover large data centres supplying their own power.

Blackstone is looking at developing its own renewable generation to supply data centres in Australia, according to sources quoted by NPM on Tuesday 27 October 2026. Those sources said the platform is being set up from scratch and has made a few small purchases of land and assets without publicity. Neither Blackstone nor AirTrunk would comment.

The Australian data centre exposure comes through AirTrunk, which Blackstone and the Canadian pension fund CPPIB bought in 2024 for A\$24bn (US\$16.7bn). NPM described the deal as the largest data centre acquisition anywhere at that time. AirTrunk now operates more than 755 MW across five assets in Melbourne and Sydney. It also runs or is developing facilities in Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Saudi Arabia.

Government policy is heading in a related direction. State and federal ministers agreed in August to develop national standards for large data centres under the planned AI laws, which Canberra intends to legislate in early 2027. The proposed rules would set minimum requirements on energy use, including self-supplied power, along with water consumption, land use, skills and workforce training.

AirTrunk has already linked some renewable supply to its operations by contract. The 25 MW Mulwala solar farm in the Riverina region of New South Wales was due to connect to the grid in June, after developer European Energy signed a PPA with Google and AirTrunk.

Globally, Blackstone has committed tens of billions of dollars to data centres. It paid US\$10bn for QTS in 2021, and NPM data puts the business at 4.4 GW across 56 facilities in the US and Europe. On 7 October, AirTrunk founder and chief executive Robin Khuda told Nikkei the company plans to raise its total Japanese investment to between US\$27bn and US\$30bn over five years.

REPORTING FROM

- 1 **NPM** · NPM - AUSTRALIA: Blackstone seeks sites for Australian energy platform to power data centres

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 5 OF 10

Telstra uses Microsoft AI agent to reconcile billing across 272,000 migrations

Telstra is a customer of Microsoft Frontier Company and has built an AI agent that untangles billing and payment mismatches when customers move between old and new platforms. Microsoft says the agent supports more than 272,000 service migrations at 95 per cent-plus accuracy in production.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The migration agent shows Telstra applying agentic AI to back-office work at production scale, with people reviewing flagged cases and a control plane monitoring AI cost and governance.

Telstra has worked with Microsoft's new AI implementation and consulting unit to build an agent that handles billing and payment reconciliation during customer migrations, iTnews reported on Wednesday 28 October 2026. Microsoft says the agent already supports more than 272,000 service migrations and gives recommendations at 95 per cent-plus accuracy in production.

Microsoft calls the unit Microsoft Frontier Company and launched it at the start of July. A Microsoft blog post presented the agent as a response to one of the hardest parts of migrating customers: lining up billing and payments between legacy and new platforms.

According to Microsoft, the agent draws on information from both sets of systems to flag inconsistencies early, suggest fixes and assemble enriched cases for people to review. Microsoft also framed the agent as evidence of Telstra's commitment to run agentic AI and to "build reusable AI capabilities".

Around the time the Microsoft unit launched, Telstra set up a company-wide AI leadership position, which Dayle Stevens holds. Telstra has also put in place a real-time monitoring tool for AI cost and governance, called an "AI control plane", to keep closer watch on deployments. iTnews said it was recently revealed that Accenture helped build the control plane.

iTnews noted that Telstra is publicising more of the AI uses that deliver operational value. Those include agentic AI that searches customer data to take load off frontline call centres, and Salesforce-powered AI agents that help it meet customer service guarantee obligations.

REPORTING FROM

1 **iTnews** · Telstra deploys billing reconciliation AI agent

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

Darwin cable hub needs clearer landing rules and route diversity, analysis argues

With Google applying to land its Bosun cable at Fannie Bay and Darwin heading for five international systems, a People of Internet analysis says Australia's criminal penalties already rival the UK's proposals and the real gaps are approvals, open access and route diversity.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The analysis treats Darwin's build-out as a question of resilience and competition rather than sentencing, since cables sharing one bay share the same hazards. It argues that where cables leave Australia matters as much as their number, and that access terms at landing stations will determine whether smaller carriers benefit from the hub.

Google has filed to bring its Bosun cable ashore at Fannie Bay in Darwin, planning documents show, ABC News reported on 7 October 2026. The route would pass Christmas Island on its way to Singapore, with service expected from 2029.

Close by, Inligo Networks is constructing what it calls an open, multi-carrier landing station, billed as the first of its kind in Darwin. Its first planned tenant is the Asia Connect Cable (ACC-1), a 19,000 km system due in 2027 that would connect Darwin with Guam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste and California. The Northern Territory government is marketing Darwin as a regional digital hub, and the city is expected to end up with five international cables. According to SDxCentral, the only subsea cable now landing there is the domestic North-West system.

A People of Internet analysis published on 25 October 2026 argues that tougher criminal law is the wrong response. A UK government consultation dated 23 October 2026 proposes jail terms of up to 14 years and unlimited fines for deliberate damage to undersea cables, to replace the Submarine Telegraph Act 1885, under which fines are capped at £1,000. Australia already has protection zones under Schedule 3A of the Telecommunications Act 1997, which the ACMA can declare around cables of national significance, extending one nautical mile on each side. In the Perth zone, breaches can bring up to 10 years in prison, a fine of up to 600 penalty points, or both, and the analysis concludes that this is already comparable to what the UK is proposing.

The analysis says the gaps lie elsewhere. In its view approvals are scattered: the Fannie Bay applications surface through local planning documents, while security, environmental and competition issues fall to different bodies. It also points out that open access is voluntary, and that Google's Australia Connect announcement named NEXTDC as a Darwin landing-station partner. It warns that if one privately held station became the only practical landing point, smaller carriers would find it hard to negotiate access.

Its recommendations include a single published guide to landing approvals, and open access as a default encouraged through planning and funding conditions where public money is involved. It says the ACCC already has tools for bottlenecks and should intervene only if access is refused. It also urges government to assess how many routes and landing sites the corridor needs before the fifth cable arrives. On the UK's proposed security duties and directions powers, it says Australia should move only after consulting operators and showing a gap exists.

REPORTING FROM

- 1 **People of Internet** · Darwin's Cable Boom Needs Open-Access Landing Rules and Route Diversity, Not Heavier Criminal Law

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 7 OF 10

Telstra and Ericsson to co-lead industry group on network knowledge and trust

Telstra and Ericsson will co-lead a new working group on how vendors' systems exchange information about networks and how much confidence to place in it. Results are due to go to bodies such as TM Forum.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

As carriers give software and AI more of the monitoring and change work, agreed ways of describing network knowledge and rating its reliability may shape how far multi-vendor networks can be automated, and Telstra's co-lead role puts an Australian operator in that standards discussion.

Telstra and Ericsson will jointly lead a new industry working group on network knowledge and trust, IT Brief Australia reported, after the pair widened their autonomous networks collaboration on 21 October. Autonomous networks

hand monitoring, analysis and the execution of changes to software and AI, with people less directly involved. The group is meant to tackle a gap that opens as operators move that way: equipment and software from different vendors and network domains often cannot pass information to each other in a consistent form, so it is harder to judge how reliable that information is before anything is acted on.

Work will cover three areas. The first is a common taxonomy, meaning a shared way to structure descriptions of network knowledge. The second is how that knowledge might be exchanged and merged between systems and domains. The third is how autonomous AI agents can be tied to trusted knowledge and safety guardrails.

The Knowledge Plane sits at the centre of the effort, and the companies describe it as a formal statement of what a network is, what it ought to be and what it is expected to do. It holds engineering rules, policies and guardrails that can be read by both staff and automated systems. Operators and suppliers are each building their own versions, and mismatched terminology, structure and trust levels can produce silos. Those silos make it harder to blend sources, keep track of where knowledge came from and assess its reliability.

On confidence, the group will examine how users and systems can set the weight given to specific knowledge, along with ways of combining knowledge from different vendors, formats and points in time without losing lineage or trust. The companies call the third strand knowledge-grounded agency, and it looks at how agents can draw on trusted knowledge through intent, awareness, analysis, decision and execution. The project follows an earlier framework that dealt with business-led use cases, proposed solutions and practical lessons for telecoms, and the new phase turns to the governance, trust and knowledge structures that higher levels of autonomy require.

Results will be passed to industry bodies including TM Forum, with the intent of informing wider standards discussions and uptake of shared approaches. Mark Sanders, Telstra's Chief Architect, said the aim is to help address foundational challenges and contribute to "more interoperable and dependable network autonomy". Mats Karlsson, head of Solution Area Business & Operations Support Systems at Ericsson, said the expanded collaboration is a chance to "share outcomes with the industry".

REPORTING FROM

- 1 **The Lookout** · Telstra and Ericsson to co-lead industry group on sharing network knowledge and trust

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

Academy of Science urges 2.5% levy on data centre and AI revenues

The Australian Academy of Science told a parliamentary inquiry that Australia risks hosting AI infrastructure without capturing the returns, and proposed a 2.5 per cent levy on AI providers, hyperscalers and data centre operators to fund national computing.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

A revenue levy on data centre operators and hyperscalers is now before a committee that has already leaned towards a national supercomputing policy and mandatory AI safety rules. Operators with Australian infrastructure could face new costs and safety obligations if the committee adopts the Academy's positions.

The Australian Academy of Science wants a 2.5 per cent levy on revenues earned by AI providers, hyperscalers and data centre operators, with the money going to national computing infrastructure and AI research. The idea sits in the Academy's submission to the Joint Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence, which is weighing the technology's opportunities and risks for Australia.

The Academy cautions that, absent investment, Australia could become home to the world's AI infrastructure and capture none of the benefit, as research, intellectual property and commercial income move overseas. It points to Australia's rural research and development levies as the model for the charge. Academy Fellow Sally-Ann Williams told the inquiry on the Academy's behalf that a levy would "turn demand from a resource hungry sector into national capability and potentially the most consequential productivity solution we have". Williams said Australia would "either be a creator of AI or merely a consumer who hosts infrastructure for others".

The submission observes that data centres make heavy use of Australian energy, water and land. The Academy also calls for facilities to meet the country's best-practice standards and to leave lasting community benefits.

The Academy supports compulsory AI safety requirements, which the committee's early advice has recommended. In its view, companies that train high-risk AI agents in Australia, or run them on Australian infrastructure, should have to demonstrate safety and disclose serious incidents. Dr Hayley Teasdale, the Academy's Head of Science Policy and Advice, said robust controls must remain in force even when developers intentionally weaken a model's safeguards for testing.

On computing, the Academy welcomed the committee's early advice calling for a coordinated national policy to encourage investment in domestic supercomputers. It has earlier put forward funding of \$200 million a year for 10 years for high-performance computing and data. Teasdale said delay would cost the country, arguing that "Not investing now will not only stall productivity but lead to the Australian Government paying significantly more to access this infrastructure over the decades to come".

REPORTING FROM

1 [science.org.au](https://www.science.org.au) · Data centres alone won't make Australia an AI nation

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

SATELLITE & SPACE 9 OF 10

NTT Docomo extends Starlink satellite roaming to Australia and New Zealand

NTT Docomo has added Australia and New Zealand to docomo Starlink Direct, taking the direct-to-device roaming service to five countries. It works only outdoors where there is no terrestrial mobile or active Wi-Fi connection, and it carries data but not voice.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The expansion adds a foreign carrier's satellite-to-phone roaming offer in Australia and New Zealand, with One New Zealand named as the partner on the New Zealand side, extending data coverage for visiting Docomo customers outside terrestrial networks.

Japanese operator NTT Docomo has extended its satellite service docomo Starlink Direct to international roaming in Australia and New Zealand, BornCity reported. The two additions bring the number of supported countries to five, after the United States, Canada and the Philippines.

In New Zealand, Docomo works with partner operator One New Zealand Group Limited, which allows nationwide availability. In Australia, use is possible across all areas except certain regions. In both countries, areas where the WORLD WING service is offered are excluded.

The service connects only where neither a conventional terrestrial mobile network nor an active Wi-Fi connection is available. A connection also requires the user to be outdoors with an unobstructed view of the sky. The satellite link supports data communication, but voice calls are not possible over it.

Docomo says 48 device models are currently supported, including Samsung Galaxy models, the Apple iPhone 13 series and newer, and the Google Pixel 9 to 11 series. A gradual expansion of the device list is planned from November. Apple users need iOS 27.0 or later. Users must update to the latest software and manually enable both the docomo Starlink Direct setting and data roaming on the handset.

The service is available on all regular Docomo plans, including ahamo, with no separate sign-up and no extra usage charge. The LTE in-flight usage plan is the only exception. SMS messages are free of charge domestically and internationally and do not use contract data allowance.

REPORTING FROM

1 **BornCity** · docomo Starlink Direct: NTT Docomo erweitert Roaming auf Australien und Neuseeland

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

POLICY & REGULATION 10 OF 10

DTA issues cloud guidance to help agencies apply the government's Cloud Computing Policy

The Digital Transformation Agency has published Whole-of-Government Cloud Computing Guidance covering strategy, security, procurement, cost control and AI-enabled services. It supports agencies applying the Cloud Computing Policy, in effect since 1 July 2026.

Best Effort desk · Thu 29 Oct 2026 · 2 sources · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The guidance shows how federal agencies are expected to handle cloud security responsibilities, spending controls and legacy retirement under the policy, which bears on the providers and integrators that supply government cloud and AI services.

The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) has published Whole-of-Government Cloud Computing Guidance to assist Australian Government agencies in applying the Cloud Computing Policy. That policy took effect on 1

July 2026. The document is intended to convert policy requirements into practical steps and help agencies deal with common hurdles.

It spans the whole cloud lifecycle, from strategy and security through to procurement, cost management, workforce capability and the retirement of legacy systems. ARN reported that it also addresses managing dependency on providers. The policy itself puts cloud first for new digital and ICT initiatives and upgrades, while accepting that each agency will need to adapt its approach.

On migration, the DTA said considering migration and legacy systems together supports deliberate choices about what happens to existing systems, instead of treating a cloud move as a stand-alone exercise. On security, the guidance says providers look after their own environments, but responsibility for protecting an agency's information, systems and services stays with the agency. It describes clear divisions of responsibility between agencies and providers as central to handling shared risk.

The guidance also backs FinOps practices as a way of tying cloud spending to business value. It offers advice on costing AI-enabled cloud services, noting that spending can swing widely with usage. The DTA said that understanding consumption patterns early helps agencies introduce controls, and to "manage costs proactively and ensure expenditure on AI services delivers the intended outcomes".

Ramsey Beydoun, the DTA's acting deputy chief executive officer of strategy, planning and performance, said, "Cloud is fundamental to how government operates and delivers services," and that getting it right meant looking beyond the technology. Beydoun said, "There is no single pathway to successful cloud adoption." He said the guidance gives agencies practical advice on trade-offs and informed decisions at each stage.

REPORTING FROM

- 1 **techpartner.news** · DTA releases cloud computing guidance for government agencies
- 2 **ARN** · DTA launches whole-of-government cloud computing guidance

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.