



A digital solution for Working with Children Checks

With the number of applications almost doubling, the new omni-channel solution is saving the department an estimated 40% on processing costs, and also saving applicants time and money.



Justice
and Regulation

Snapshot

Customer

Department of Justice and Regulation, Victoria

Industry

Government

Website

workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Product

Working with Children Check

Challenges

- Improve the Working with Children Check experience with a streamlined, efficient omni-channel solution
- Reduce application processing costs for the department and turnaround time for applicants
- Maintain Level of Assurance
- Improve application compliance rate
- Provide a robust, scalable digital platform to meet growing demand for checks due to regulation changes.

Solution

The new omni-channel application process for Victoria's Working with Children (WWC) Checks, combines digital and physical transaction platforms to achieve a Level 3 Assurance (LOA) requirement (under the Australian National Identity Proofing Guidelines).

Australia Post developed the solution for the Department of Justice and Regulation in a highly collaborative partnership, utilising expertise in electronic verification as well as Enhanced Identity Services and digital camera capabilities. Now only one small step needs to be done in person – minimising paper handling and risk of manual error, and providing the convenience and choice citizens expect.

The new solution has reduced processing and turnaround times of a WWC Check, and can easily scale with the expected increased demand – Australia Post currently processes more than 250,000 new applications each year.

Results

For the applicant

- Reduced over-the-counter processing time – from an average of 7 minutes to 3 minutes
- 2–5 days faster turnaround time of WWC Checks
- No cost for a compliant digital photo – which saves time and money
- More convenience and choice.

For the Working with Children Check Unit

- Overall annual processing cost savings of up to 40%
- Reduced compliance issues, as photos and signatures are no longer manually scanned
- Reduced end-to-end processing time
- Faster data transfer between application lodgement and fulfilment
- Co-design sessions and weekly collaboration meetings, meant deployment went smoothly, and the new solution was launched on time.



“The Department of Justice and Regulation and Australia Post were willing to invest in their systems, processes and infrastructure to improve the experience for applicants. Both organisations were also committed to launching the new system in a compressed timeframe. As a result, it's now easier, quicker and cheaper for people to apply for a Working with Children Check.”

Brian Westbrook
Deputy Director – Working with Children Check, DJR



“We worked tirelessly to ensure any problems were resolved and demonstrated senior leadership commitment and dedication, which the department appreciated. We're now receiving double the number of applications – so this robust solution was a good outcome for everyone.”

Magda Hall
Australia Post Account Director – Victorian Government

Background

Australia Post has provided Working with Children Check services to the Department of Justice and Regulation since 2006 – when people who work with children were required to have a specific licence. It currently processes more than 250,000 new applications each year.

In the past, applicants had to complete an online form (hosted by WWC), print it and take it to an Australia Post outlet with a pre-purchased photo. After the operator confirmed the applicant's identity, applications were sent to another Australia Post facility for scanning and processing before being transmitted to the WWC unit.

From August 1 2017, the definition of 'working with children' extended to community groups and sporting clubs, and to those with verbal or online contact with children. This meant the number of applications would surge – and a more efficient digital solution would be needed to make it easier for applicants, and more cost-effective for the department.

In early 2015, the department began discussions with Australia Post (as its current provider), to understand how the process could be digitised, to:

- Provide an easier, more cost-effective and streamlined solutions for applicants
- Reduce processing costs and turnaround time, and
- Improve the application compliance rate.

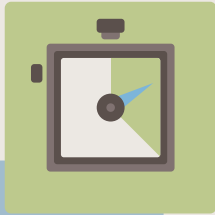
With co-design sessions and weekly meetings, the collaborative approach meant deployment went smoothly, and the new solution was launched on time.

"The process was effective; there was transparency and agreement on both sides as to the overall objectives. In addition, we were both willing and able to resource to the correct level to achieve these objectives," says Brian Westbrook, Deputy Director, Contracts and Operational Support at Working with Children Check, Department of Justice and Regulation.

As WWC requires Level 3 Assurance, applicants still need to present in person to complete the transaction. But the new digital solution is a more streamlined two-step application process: they can commence the process with electronic verification (online on any device), and then visit one of 400 Victorian post offices for a compliant digital photo and streamlined identity verification. Data is securely transmitted at the end of each day for processing by Victoria WWC, and printed licences are sent to successful applicants.



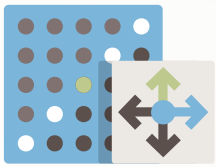
The new omni-channel application process for Victoria's Working with Children (WWC) Checks, combines digital and physical transaction platforms to achieve a Level 3 Assurance



Reduced
over-the-counter
processing time



Data securely
transmitted

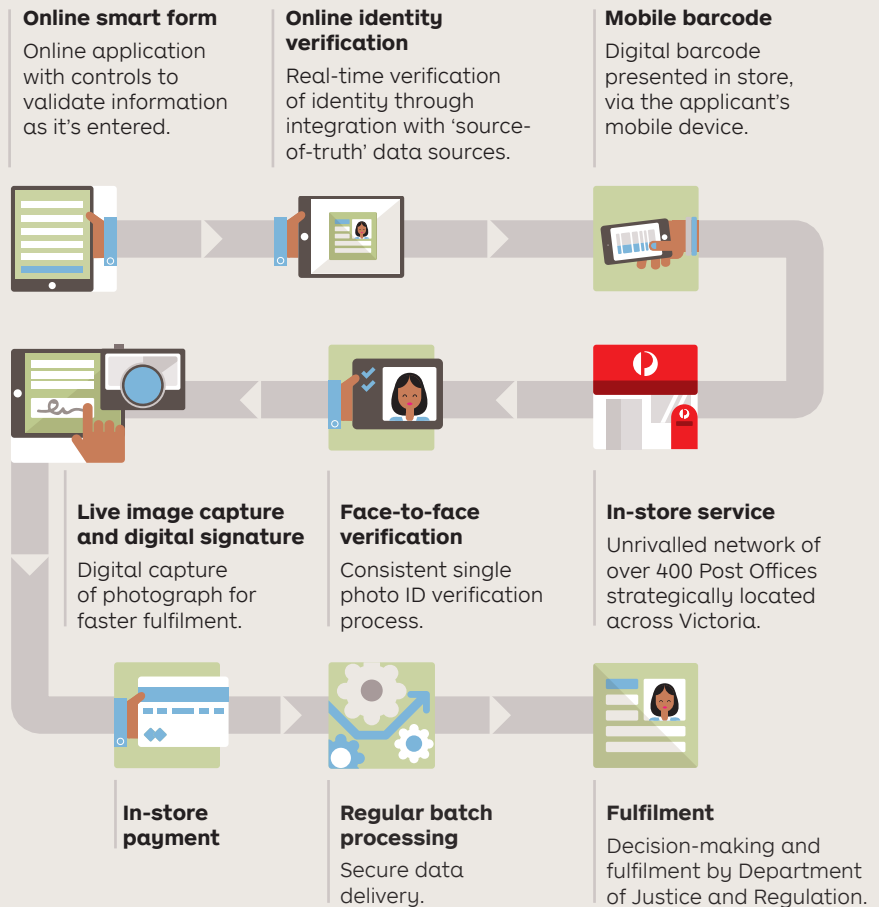


Challenge

Working with Children Checks require a Level 3 Assurance – with a photo of the applicant taken at the time of finalising the application process. Which meant the entire process couldn't be digitised (as we have done with Police Checks). However, it could be streamlined – and by digitising paper forms and physical photos, we could reduce the risk of non-compliant applications, and the additional processing time they created.

The Department also needed to be confident data would be stored and transmitted securely. Initially, Australia Post's Enhanced Identity Services network was only available in 120 outlets in Victoria – so we invested in rolling it out to an additional 280 outlets to ensure the new solution was accessible for remote and rural citizens. This enables outlets to capture customers' photos and signatures, scan documents and conduct secure electronic data transfers in store.

Working with Children Check – process



Results

The new omni-channel service is more convenient, accessible and affordable for the increasing number of citizens who require a WWC Check. It is also more efficient and cost-effective for the DJR to administer – and for Australia Post to process.

For the Department of Justice and Regulation, the new service removes the need for paper-handling. End-to-end processing time has been cut by two to five days and costs have reduced by an estimated 40%, while the number of applications has almost doubled. This is due to the faster data transfer between application lodgement and fulfilment, and reduced compliance issues.

It saves applicants time and money, (with no cost for the digital photo) and counter processing time has reduced from an average of 7 minutes to 3.

The director of the Working with Children Check Unit, Alby Bentincontri, described this as “an extremely successful and well-run project.” The Department now has a sustainable, cost-effective and convenient solution that will continue to manage this important responsibility for many years to come.