

## Quick Motor Vehicle Search

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**Organisation:** Australian Financial Security Authority

**Country:** Australia

**Level of government:** Central government

**Sector:** Economic affairs

**Type:** Digital, Public Service

**Launched in:** 2013

**Link to the innovation's website**

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# Description

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The Australian Financial Security Authority (AFSA) administers the national online Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR), used by businesses and individuals to search for any security interest over property they may wish to purchase or deal with. Searches by a property's serial number represent 57% of total searches and of these, motor vehicle serial number searches represent the main search type — approximately 99% of total serial number searches. The motor vehicle industry is significant to Australia's economy—and it's estimated that the PPSR now supports about a quarter of Australia's GDP. The Quick Motor Vehicle Search enables people who are interested in buying a second-hand car, to quickly check whether the car is being used as security for a debt or other obligation—as well as other information such as whether the vehicle is stolen or has been written off. The Quick Motor Vehicle Search was designed to directly address feedback by our clients. It is a product that is simple enough for users to succeed the first time unaided. It is a departure from highly technical and legal language to plain English making it easier for our users and providing a number of benefits.

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## Why the innovation was developed

- Prior to developing the Quick Motor Vehicle Search (QMVS), users told us that conducting a search was difficult due to the legal terminology used, the variety of search options available and the number of steps involved. Users were failing to record their search reference number and/or download a copy of their search certificate. This led to some clients having to conduct a new search for a further fee. Some clients also found it difficult to understand the terminology on the search certificate. In response we developed the Quick Motor Vehicle Search which transformed one of the most common searches conducted from a confusing & complex process, to a streamlined, comprehensive and quick product available anywhere, any time. We now have significantly reduced customer complaints and call handling times, a higher level of satisfaction, positive feedback and efficiencies. Consumer protection outcomes are achieved with results including the vehicle's written off or stolen status.
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## Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction

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## Main beneficiaries

Businesses, General population

# Results

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## Efficiency

- We receive an average of 4,600 calls per month, totalling 55,200 per year. As a result of this innovation, we've achieved a 19.47% decrease in our Average Handling Time (AHT). This equates to a 1 minute and 15 second decrease per call, allowing us to provide a more efficient service through increased availability. The process for an internal user to conduct a QMVS is simpler and more time efficient than the old 'motor vehicle search by serial number search'. This is due to the innovation which now displays all the relevant information on one page and automatically emails the client a copy of their search certificate, search number, receipt and fact sheet, 'How to interpret a motor vehicle search result and certificate.' Our internal users are able to process client searches faster, resulting in higher levels of client and staff satisfaction.
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## Effectiveness

- The simplified search process prompts the user to enter their email address in order to receive a copy of their search results. This change has eliminated many of the problems previously experienced by users. The email contains a copy of their search certificate, search number, a receipt and a fact sheet titled 'How to interpret a motor vehicle search result and certificate.' This automated process provides the user with essential details and ensures that they have a copy of the information for their own records and future use. A simplified layout, automatic emailing of the search results, a help sheet and clear guidelines on what the client can expect from their search has provided our internal and external clients with an improved and easy to use service.
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## Service quality

### Accessibility:

- Full mobile functionality was introduced in December 2015. Mobile functionality is particularly important as QMVS is mostly conducted this way (over 50% via a mobile or tablet), in comparison to general PPSR use which is still predominantly via desktop.

### Responsiveness:

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### Reliability:

- To improve the process for conducting a motor vehicle search and to make it easier for our clients to navigate the system, the search option and credit card fields are now displayed on one page. Instead of presenting the user with different vehicle serial number search options, the system now displays the question, 'Was the motor vehicle manufactured in or after 1989?' If the client selects 'Yes,' the client is prompted to enter the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). If the client selects 'No,' the client is advised to search on a chassis number instead. This addresses confusion about which vehicle serial number to use and provides the user with an easy, one-step search and payment process.
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## User satisfaction

- We have recorded an 84% decrease in complaints relating to motor vehicle searches from the time the new functionality was implemented. As these are generally managed by APS5 or APS6 staff, this has also delivered significant cost savings. The reduced AHT means we can confidently forecast a reduced number of staff to manage the PPSR search call queue. The decreased processing time equates to 1000 staff hours per year that we can now utilise for other service delivery tasks and functions. This has provided an opportunity to multi-skill staff in a range of different business processes to increase our versatility and reduce our cost of service. Feedback from staff and clients has been overwhelmingly positive. Two themes have emerged: • staff reported it is now much easier to complete their job • there was a noticeable reduction in complaints.

# Development

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## Design

The motivation for the innovation came directly from user feedback, which indicated that the search function was confusing, complex and time consuming.

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## Testing

- The Quick Motor Vehicle Search was tested internally and externally prior to release. Internally, our ICT specialists tested the product to ensure full functionality in line with the design. We also made the product available to industry representatives to ensure the process worked efficiently and effectively from the user perspective.
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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- The Quick Motor Vehicle Search was developed using a project management methodology, with a multi-disciplinary team consisting of ICT, legal, finance, client service and communications expertise.

### Resources used:

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## Challenges and solutions

- One challenge was the interplay—and potential conflict—between business requirements and optimising usability. The information we need, the risks we need to manage and the business processes that work well for us internally are not necessarily conducive to what will work best for the end user. This required a willingness on our part to explore and understand the user experience and a conscious decision to adopt a user-focussed approach, in order to create a service that was simpler, clearer and faster for the public, first and foremost. To do so required us to take a more flexible approach to meeting our internal requirements without jeopardising this outcome. Another challenge was being able to support ever changing technology to ensure the QMVS could be accessed on all common browsers and devices. Mobiles in particular, can be difficult to build for and this had to be supported in an iterative process with full mobile functionality rolled out in a further release.

# Lessons Learned

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## Lessons Learned

- A number of usability issues were discovered late in the development process and required another code release to be updated. Consequently, we now recognise the importance of planning for sufficient usability testing early in the development process to allow for changes. We have also changed our release processes to provide improved visibility of solutions in design stage, allowing usability issues to be resolved prior to release.
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## Conditions for success

- Need to have required expertise (multi-disciplinary) to effectively develop and implement the innovation. Need to be flexible in the approach to the innovation and be willing to change design or functionality, based on client feedback. Need to listen to user feedback external and internal. Need to adequately test the innovation prior to release. Need to take benchmark measurements before implementation to allow the organisation to adequately capture improvements / benefits. Need to work closely with stakeholders preferably in a co-design approach, so they are effectively partners in the process and in the results. Need to focus on the user's experience not what works best for us.
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