Follow up to questions on notice from the public hearing of the Select Committee on Adopting AI,

Proposal for an Australian AI Commissioner

The Committee asked Per Capita's Centre of the Public Square to elaborate on what the functions of a proposed **Australian AI Commissioner** could be:

The Australian AI Commissioner could be an independent statutory authority to advocate and promote AI initiatives that serves in the best interests of the Australian public and community.

This could be established as part of Australia's regulatory response to safe and responsible AI development in Australia, and any legislation and Act/s which result.

The Australian AI Commissioner could:

Champion and promote local development and capabilities

- Advocate government to develop laws and policy around safe and responsible AI, providing advice, review international best practice laws and standards and apply to local Australian considerations, make submissions and provide evidence and insights to parliamentary inquiries
- Act as a specialist technical resource for other government offices and commissions when it comes to AI-related matters. Provide advice, research and insights to other public offices
- Conduct up-to-date research and analysis on relevant AI issues in Australia, with particular focus on:
    o Local adoption and performance, including analysis on barries to entry, scale and maturation
    o Public service education and capabilities, building robust public infrastructure as it relates to AI
    o Technical capabilities and requirements for local AI building
    o Issues, risks and harms that result from AI initiatives
- Provide education and training on local AI matters, including hosting events and community forums, promoting awareness, developing programs to mitigate against harms and risks
- Develop special programs and initiatives to promote safe, accountable, local AI. For example, there could be program dedicated to developing AI initiatives for the public and not-for-profit sectors, recognising the capabilities gap in that area, acknowledging that most initiatives are geared towards commercial enterprises, and that AI will transform many areas of society including for critical national public infrastructure

Engage large technology companies developing AI on behalf of the Australian public

- Investigate and prosecute any harms or breaches done by AI companies, especially as it relates to medium to high-risk activities identified in AI legislation that affect Australians
- Engage technology companies in conversations around minimising harms and developing risk mitigation strategies for AI activities
- Champion local capability by negotiating with large, foreign AI companies on any value exchange, compensation, industry-wide partnerships, collective bargaining agreements and funding based on revenue generated from Australia from those AI companies.

The Centre of the Public Square's proposal is in recognition of the seriousness and complexity of the task of developing and regulating safe and responsible AI in Australia, and the current lack of resources, budget and skills dedicated to doing so.