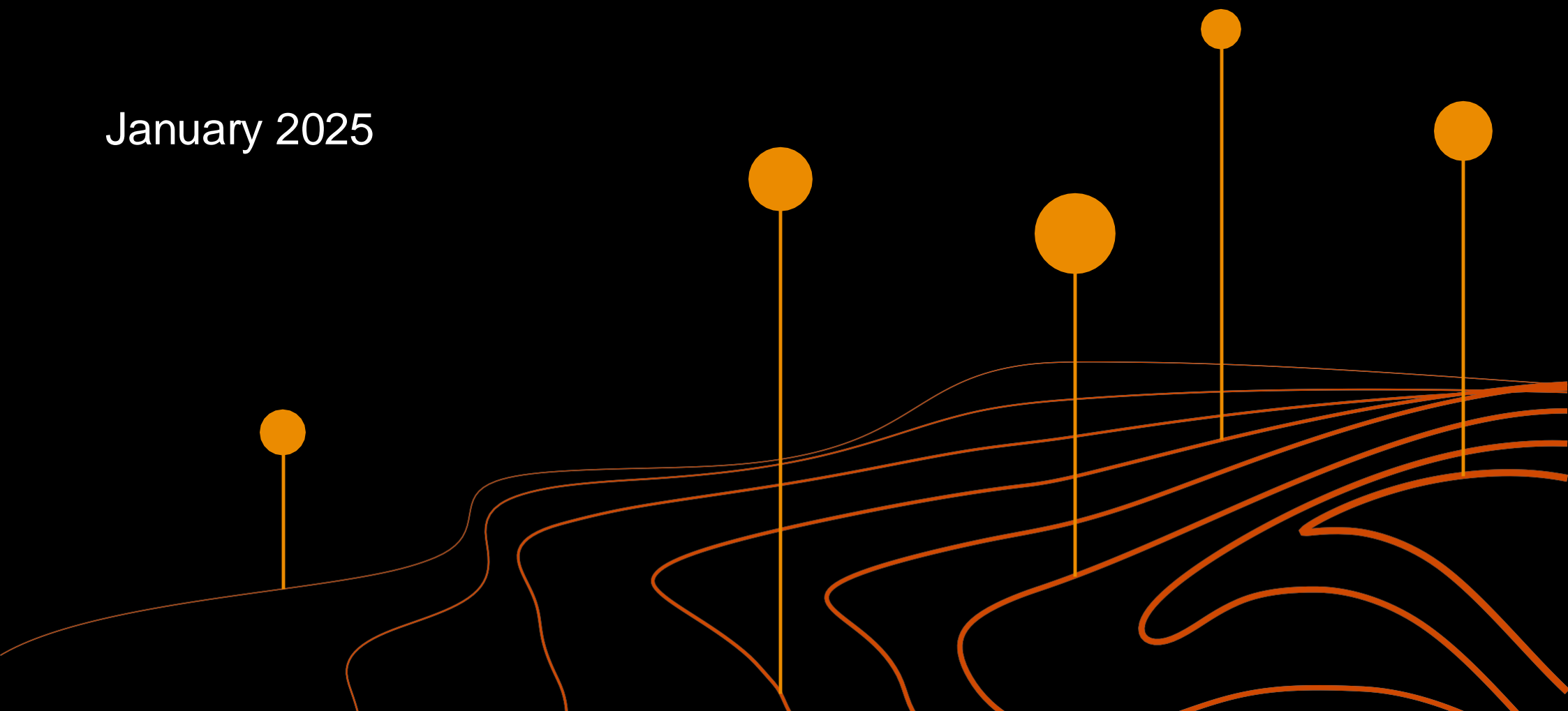# Digitisation guidelines for the **Centre of Government** in the Middle East

January 2025

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01

Centre of government (CoG) overview

Overview

The Centre of Government (CoG) refers to the key entities supporting the head of government, such as the president or prime minister. This includes offices of the head of government, cabinet offices, legislative bodies and high-level committees overseeing national strategic, economic, political, crises and safety matters.
While CoG entities and functions vary depending on the country's political and administrative system, they collectively share common responsibilities, such as:

Strategic planning and agenda-setting: A CoG helps set the overall strategic direction of government by defining long-term priorities and ensuring the administration's actions align with its strategic goals.

Decision-making: Acts as the head of government to shape national laws and regulations by reviewing and assessing legislative proposals from various government entities. A CoG sets strategic policy directions and ensures an informed and coordinated decision-making process.

Policy coordination: Ensures that there is policy coherence across ministries. It helps to avoid conflicting or overlapping initiatives and ensures alignment with government priorities.

Monitoring and evaluation: Responsible for tracking the progress of key policies and government initiatives. It oversees the implementation of cabinet decisions and monitors the performance of various ministries.

Crisis management: In times of crisis, it plays a central role in coordinating governmental responses, ensuring the necessary information and resources are properly mobilised and managed.

Communications and public engagement: Oversees government communication strategies, ensuring that messaging is clear, coordinated and consistent with policy decisions and priorities.

International agreements: Plays a role in coordinating the government's international relationships and agreements, ensuring alignment between domestic policy and international commitments.

02

Key CoG challenges:
Efficiency, communication
and modernisation

Key CoG challenges: Efficiency, communication and modernisation

Since the Centre of Government (CoG) is the hub of government operations, it faces several challenges that might hinder its efficiency. These include:

Fragmented information: Critical and historical data, documents and correspondence may be scattered across various CoG entities and government agencies. They are poorly stored, disorganised and difficult to retrieve, resulting in the loss of institutional memory, operational inefficiencies, bottlenecks and limited decision support.

Inefficient formal communication: Communication between CoG entities and other government agencies is often slow and cumbersome, hindered by the absence of automated integration and collaboration tools.

Security and confidentiality: The sensitive and classified nature of information handled by CoG entities requires strict security protocols to ensure confidentiality and prevent unauthorised access.
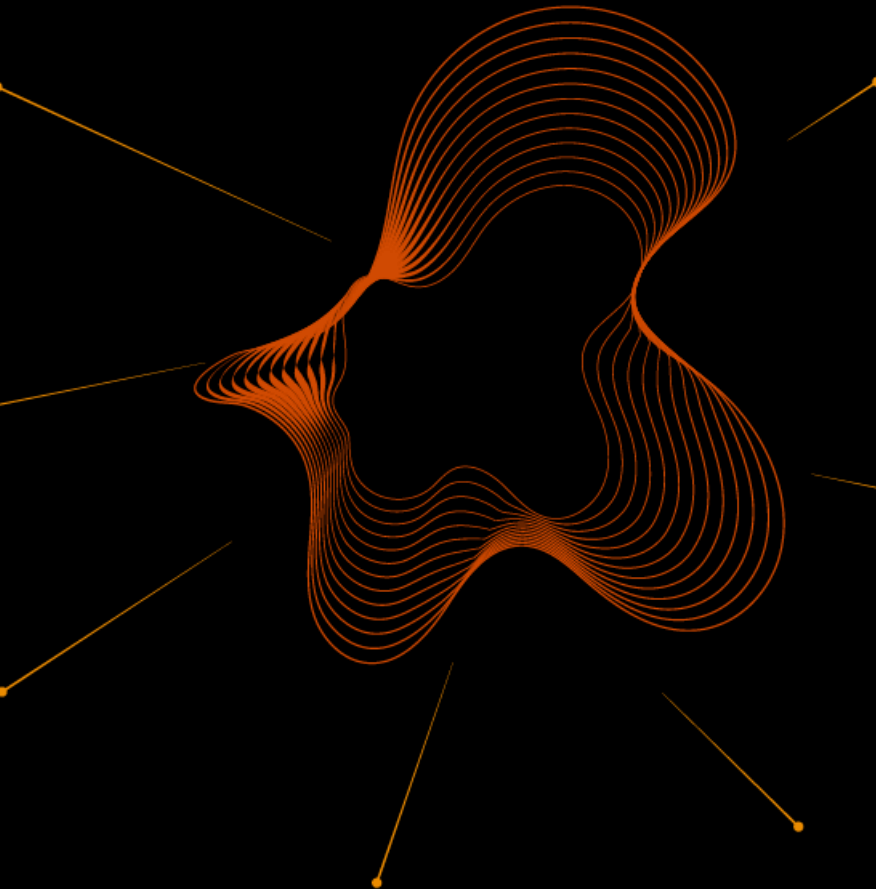
Zero tolerance for errors: Operating in a high-stakes environment, the CoG frequently interacts with heads of government to present sensitive, confidential information for decision-making. This environment demands utmost accuracy, leaving little to no room for errors.

Digital transformation resistance: The CoG often faces significant bureaucratic resistance to transitioning from traditional paper-based methods to digital solutions, slowing modernisation efforts.

Complex executive meetings management: Organising and managing CoG meetings and cabinet sessions is a time-consuming and complicated process that requires extensive coordination for pre-meeting, in-meeting and post-meeting actions.

Time constraints on government proposals: The rapid pace of government sector development in many countries frequently leaves CoG entities with insufficient time to prepare, review and respond to an increasing volume of proposals.

03 Digitisation:
A catalyst for
modernising CoG operations

Digitisation: A catalyst for modernising CoG operations

Digitisation is crucial for modernising Centre of Government (CoG) operations, enabling them to meet the demands of today's complex governmental landscape. In PwC Middle East's two-part Journey to Digital Government 5.0 report[1] we explored the benefits of digital government maturity. In this report, we focus on how digitisation empowers GoCs entities, the highest level of government.

In today's complex governmental environment, moving from traditional methods to digital solutions allows GoC entities to operate more efficiently, securely and better equipped to address their challenges. The digitisation of CoG operations delivers several key benefits, positioning governments to operate with greater agility, accuracy, and effectiveness.:

Supports decision-making: Digital systems provide accurate, timely data that can be analysed and used to inform more strategic and data-driven decisions that shape national policies, laws and legislations

Streamlines operational efficiency: Digitisation simplifies legislative study and correspondence management workflows and collaboration, enabling CoG entities to operate more efficiently and allocate resources more effectively.

Transforms paper-based workflows to digital solutions: Shifting from traditional, paper-based methods to digital solutions allows CoG entities to manage and access critical legislative information more efficiently, reducing the time spent for searching and handling legislative documents, data and historical records.

Facilitates real-time communication and collaboration: Digital solutions enable instant communication and collaboration across CoG entities, eliminating delays in information exchange and streamlining review and approval processes while drafting national laws and policies, decrees and initiatives.

Strengthens protection of sensitive information: Adoption of secure digital solutions enhances the confidentiality of sensitive government information and ensures compliance with security protocols, reducing the risk of breaches.

04 Key **CoG** digitisation initiatives

Key **CoG** digitisation initiatives (1/3)

Effective digital transformation, driven by proven initiatives and a clear execution roadmap, is essential for a CoG. Leveraging our extensive experience with CoG entities across various countries and regions, we have identified key digital initiatives to enable successful CoG digitisation.

1 **Integrated digital management of CoG correspondences, workflows and meetings**

Implement a solution to digitise the entire correspondence cycle, from receiving government requests to distributing correspondence and tasks to the respective teams and preparing for executive meetings. For example, the system can automatically record, sort and prioritise incoming correspondence – including assigning a title, summary and security level, while tracking progress to ensure timely responses.

Key features include search engines, task management, reminders and notifications, text editors, translation, notes and comments tracking, and version control.

In most cases, the solution supports preparing proposals for topics that need to be presented to the head of the government and cabinet for their direction and decision making, such as, laws, international agreements, national policies. Moreover, the solution facilitates executive meetings and sessions preparation, this includes meeting agenda and supporting material preparation, their review and approval, and meeting attendees' determination, confirmation, and seats selection. It also facilitates meeting documents printing, packaging and distribution, voting, minutes of meeting drafting, etc. Finally, the system generates and archives official responses, assigns outbound reference numbers and ensures copies are shared with relevant parties, enhancing accuracy, efficiency, and accountability.

2 **Implement a secure digital knowledge management system to store, search and manage access to legislative documents**

This system stores and manages access to legislative documents including laws, regulations, policies, decrees and records, ensuring they are organised and easily retrievable for CoG entity experts and officers. Users can quickly search for, retrieve and track changes to specific bills, regulations or amendments, streamlining the legislative process. Additionally, it tracks changes and amendments made to legislative documents, ensuring the most current version is accessible. It also provides advanced search tools based on document content, metadata, keywords or document type can help users locate specific legislative documents quickly.

3 **Use secure collaboration tools to streamline drafting, reviewing and sharing legislative documents across various teams**

These tools enhance the drafting, reviewing and secure sharing of sensitive documents. They allow multiple users to work on the same document in real time, with features such as version control and audit trails maintaining transparency and accountability by tracking changes and edits throughout the document life cycle. Since CoG documents often involve highly sensitive information, these tools come equipped with advanced security measures, including encryption, role-based access control and multi-factor authentication, ensuring that only authorised personnel can access or modify sensitive documents.

Key **CoG** digitisation initiatives (2/3)

4 **Provide a unified inquiry service**

This service allows CoG entities to track the status of correspondences, promoting transparency and accountability. By offering features like searching by correspondence reference number and showing correspondence progress and status, this centralised portal enhances communication and workflow efficiency between CoG entities. The unified inquiry service not only streamlines operations but also improves public service delivery by fostering better collaboration among government entities.

5 **Use data analytics to enhance decision-making and operational efficiency**

Dashboards aggregate and visualise data from various sources providing a real-time overview of workflows, response times and the status of pending actions. By displaying metrics, such as the volume of correspondence, classification trends and performance benchmarks through graphs and heat maps, government officials can quickly and easily interpret complex data, identify bottlenecks and make informed decisions. Dashboards can be customised to display Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relevant to specific departments or projects in a CoG entity – such as the average time taken to respond to inquiries – allowing for targeted analysis. Additionally, integrating AI-driven analytics into executive dashboards can provide predictive insights, helping leadership anticipate trends in correspondences, studies and workload volume and tailor their resources accordingly.

6 **Integrate advanced technologies to enhance overall executive meetings , committees and cabinet sessions**

Key technologies include meeting information screens that provide essential meeting details, such as schedules and participant lists, leading to a more organised environment, meeting room booking systems, which optimise room utilisation and scheduling, smart glass and shading adjust lighting to enhance visibility, while robotic cameras ensure automated, high-quality video capture. For executive committee meetings and cabinet sessions, interactive displays and smart devices allow audiences to engage with content and collaborate through real-time annotation, while video conferencing systems provide seamless communication between in-person and remote participants. Additional technologies, such as e-voting systems to support decision-making and voice-to-script technology to transcribe discussions, improve meeting efficiency and documentation.

7 **Adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI) for innovative digital solutions in complex operations**

AI significantly transforms the way CoG entities operate. One key application is auto content extraction using Optical Character Recognition (OCR), which automates the data entry process for incoming correspondence, reducing manual effort and minimising errors. OCR is further enhanced by auto correspondence classification and tagging through AI text analytics methods, making it easier for officials to retrieve and manage critical information while also considering sensitivity and security levels. Moreover, AI can analyse correspondence to automatically generate accurate summaries and titles, facilitating quick comprehension, while smart search functionalities provide useful suggestions for related searches, linking with related topics and documents to enhance overall accessibility to information. Additionally, document generation, validation and optimisation through generative AI ensures consistency with existing legislative documents.

The use of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) for correspondence assignment streamlines operations by allocating tasks based on relevance, expertise and workload, optimising resource utilisation within CoG entities. Chatbots provide users with real-time guidance and technical support, improving the user experience and alleviating the burden on human support staff.

Key CoG digitisation initiatives (3/3)

8 **Implement security solutions to protect sensitive information and ensure confidentiality.**

A comprehensive approach begins with access control. Identity and Access Management (IAM) solutions control who can access systems and data based on their role. Implementing Single Sign-On (SSO) simplifies the user experience by allowing personnel to log into multiple applications with a single set of credentials, reducing the risk of password fatigue. Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) adds a layer of security by requiring additional verification, while Mobile Device Management (MDM) ensures that mobile devices accessing government systems comply with security policies. Secured application usage is equally critical, employing measures such as blocking camera captures and screenshots on sensitive applications, allowing only authorised downloads and restricting access to specific devices. An private secured network adds an additional layer of security to data in transit, while digital signatures and encryption ensure the authenticity and confidentiality of documents. Features such as password protection, watermarks and audit trails help track document access and modifications, enhancing accountability. By integrating these security measures, CoG systems can significantly mitigate risks and enhance their overall security posture, fostering trust and transparency in government operations.

9 **Enable real-time integration for seamless communication and secure data exchange across CoG entities.**

Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) connects various systems across CoG entities to facilitate seamless, real-time information exchange. This connectivity significantly enhances operational efficiency and decision-making by ensuring accurate, timely data flow and reducing manual intervention. In CoG, real time integration eliminates the need for repetitive manual data entry in correspondence exchanges, minimizing errors and inconsistencies. This integration not only improves the quality and reliability of the data but also accelerates response times, enabling agencies to act more swiftly and effectively.

10 **Establish a centralised IT shared services center to unify investments and promote asset reusability**

Leveraging a secured network and private cloud infrastructure, the centre delivers a comprehensive suite of IT services, including email, identity and access management, enterprise resource planning (ERP) and helpdesk services. Essential IT platforms and tools support CoG entities in building business applications, such as business intelligence, data warehousing, integration platforms and AI tools. The centre also supplies the necessary infrastructure to host, run and monitor IT services, including servers, storage, secure networks and monitoring applications. A centralised IT operations team will manage the centre, ensuring streamlined service delivery, enhanced security and operational efficiency across CoG entities.
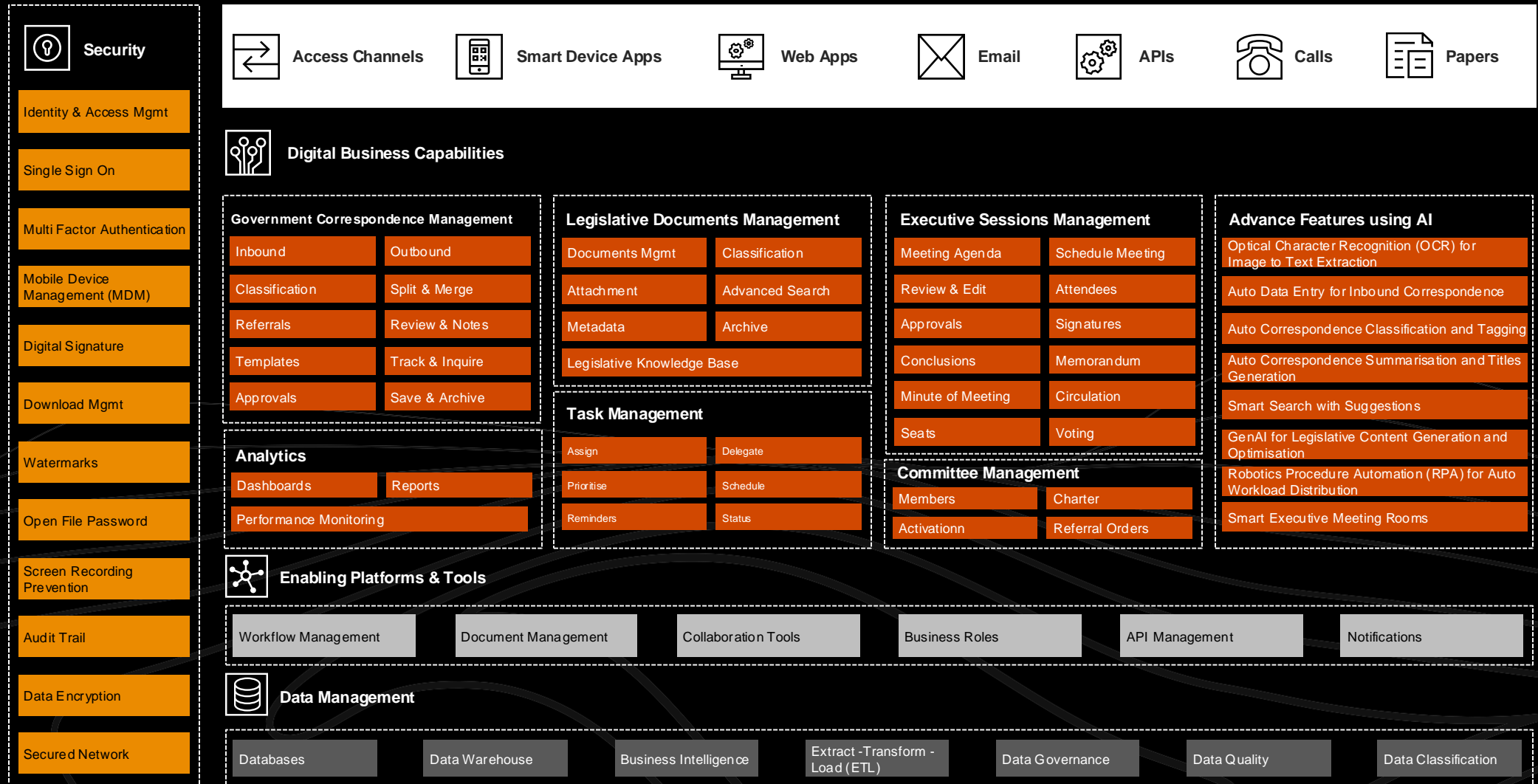
05 PwC Middle East
reference architecture
for digital CoG

PwC Middle East reference architecture for digital CoG

PwC Middle East's reference architecture is a robust digital capabilities blueprint, developed through our extensive experience in a wide range of CoG entities, providing proven solutions for effective digital transformation.

Security

- Identity & Access Mgmt
- Single Sign On
- Multi Factor Authentication
- Mobile Device Management (MDM)
- Digital Signature
- Download Mgmt
- Watermarks
- Open File Password
- Screen Recording Prevention
- Audit Trail
- Data Encryption
- Secured Network

Access Channels · **Smart Device Apps** · **Web Apps** · **Email** · **APIs** · **Calls** · **Papers**

Digital Business Capabilities

Government Correspondence Management

Inbound	Outbound
Classification	Split & Merge
Referrals	Review & Notes
Templates	Track & Inquire
Approvals	Save & Archive

Analytics

Dashboards	Reports
Performance Monitoring	

Legislative Documents Management

Documents Mgmt	Classification
Attachment	Advanced Search
Metadata	Archive
Legislative Knowledge Base	

Task Management

Assign	Delegate
Prioritise	Schedule
Reminders	Status

Executive Sessions Management

Meeting Agenda	Schedule Meeting
Review & Edit	Attendees
Approvals	Signatures
Conclusions	Memorandum
Minute of Meeting	Circulation
Seats	Voting

Committee Management

Members	Charter
Activationn	Referral Orders

Advance Features using AI

- Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for Image to Text Extraction
- Auto Data Entry for Inbound Correspondence
- Auto Correspondence Classification and Tagging
- Auto Correspondence Summarisation and Titles Generation
- Smart Search with Suggestions
- GenAI for Legislative Content Generation and Optimisation
- Robotics Procedure Automation (RPA) for Auto Workload Distribution
- Smart Executive Meeting Rooms

Enabling Platforms & Tools

Workflow Management	Document Management	Collaboration Tools	Business Roles	API Management	Notifications

Data Management

Databases	Data Warehouse	Business Intelligence	Extract -Transform - Load (ETL)	Data Governance	Data Quality	Data Classification

06

Key success factors

Key **success factors**

Successful digital transformation in the CoG relies on several key actions that collectively ensures effective modernisation, efficiency and long-term impact to meet the evolving needs of governments. The following key success factors, derived from our wide experience in digital transformation programmes, highlight crucial points to take into consideration for a successful digital transformation in CoG entities:

01
Implement **digital transformation in waves**, aligned with business priorities and considerations. For example, digitising correspondence and executive meetings should precede the digitisation of cabinet sessions due to security concerns. Proper planning ensures a smooth and seamless transformation journey.

02
Design digital business solutions to **reflect the redesigned journey** that puts the beneficiary at the centre. For example, e-correspondence files can maintain the same colours, structure and order as paper-based equivalents to ease the transition and minimise digital adoption resistance.

03
Provide **multiple options for exchanging information** between the CoG and other government entities. While API integration might be challenging for some, offering alternatives such as secure file uploads with predefined structures makes the transition easier.

04
Ensure digital solutions comprehensively **address cybersecurity controls** across all levels, including applications, data, infrastructure and governance, due to the sensitive and confidential nature of CoG operations.

05
Redesign the business operating model where necessary to accommodate digital transformation. This may involve changing or re-engineering organisational structures, policies and processes. Digital transformation should aim to make radical changes by integrating technology into business operations, focusing on beneficiary needs.

06
Conduct a **comprehensive change management programme** to promote the value of digital transformation and reduce resistance. This should involve developing robust plans, conducting awareness sessions and training, engaging stakeholders and disseminating messages through methods such as emails, internal portals, videos and screensavers.

07
Secure **leadership and top management support** by establishing a steering committee, led by the head of the CoG entity, to oversee and guide the digital transformation programme, ensuring strong commitment and alignment with strategic goals.

08
Facilitate ongoing **coordination across CoG entities** by establishing cross-entity working groups, holding regular meetings and implementing collaboration platforms to ensure alignment, share progress and address challenges collectively, fostering a unified approach to digital transformation within the CoG's ecosystem.

09
Build effective **partnerships with technology vendors** by developing strategic alliances, establishing clear contracts and creating joint innovation initiatives to leverage external expertise. This ensures access to cutting-edge, solutions tailored to the specific needs of the CoG's digital transformation efforts.

10
Prototype disruptive solutions by conducting pilot projects, gathering feedback from key stakeholders and iterating on the design to demonstrate value and impact early, mitigate risks and build confidence in the scalability of innovative technologies.

16

Looking **Ahead**

The successful digitisation of Centres of Government (CoGs) requires a balanced focus on technology, people, and process aspects. Future efforts should leverage advanced technologies like AI, RPA, and real-time data exchange to enhance operational efficiency, decision-making, and transparency. Robust cybersecurity and centralised IT services will be essential to safeguard sensitive information and maintain trust in government systems

Equally important is investing in people. Developing digital literacy, upskilling staff, and fostering a culture of innovation will ensure that teams can effectively adopt and use new technologies. Leadership support, structured training programs, and cross-entity collaboration will be critical for empowering employees and driving sustainable change.

Processes must also evolve to align with digital transformation goals. Redesigning workflows, adopting flexible operating models and embedding change management practices will help streamline operations and ensure seamless integration of new systems. Pilot programs and phased implementation will mitigate risks and provide a clear roadmap for scaling successful initiatives.

By harmonising technology, people, and processes, CoGs can build a resilient, efficient, and future-ready governance framework capable of addressing complex challenges and delivering high-impact services to the government.

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Thank **you!**