



HC Coombs Policy Forum

Accountability structures for citizen-centred public services

Monday 28 Feb 2011, 9am – 4.30pm

Canberry and Springbank Rooms, JG Crawford Building #132,

Lennox Crossing, The Australian National University

(Coffee available from 8.30am, Meals provided)

The HC Coombs Policy Forum at the ANU is organising a small high-level workshop to discuss issues and options concerning organisational structure and accountability arrangements that might best promote the delivery of 'citizen-centred services'. The issues include:

- how best to ensure responsiveness to citizens/clients and to local community needs and preferences
- how to achieve integration of service delivery around clients and local communities
- how to promote professional management of services
- how to maintain close links between policy and administration in each of the relevant policy spheres
- and how to ensure responsiveness to government and accountability to parliament

Purpose

- To explore options for public sector organisational structures which promote accountability and high quality, citizens-centred services.
- To contribute to the Government's review of financial accountability frameworks

Format

Roundtable of 30-35 people, 20+ being senior practitioners from central and line agencies and another 10-15 being academic experts or retired practitioners with relevant expertise and experience. Chatham House Rule to apply.

Structure

Four sessions of 90 minutes each led by a practitioner and an academic speaking for 5-7 minutes.

9-10.30	Session 1. Sign-posting the zoo
10.45-12.15	Session 2. Citizen-centred services
1-2.30	Session 3. Current reform directions
2.45-4.15	Session 4. Lessons and options

Prior Reading

Summary material on current policy directions to be provided by DoFD and DHS, along with a short paper by Andrew Podger.

Outputs

To be discussed at end of workshop. Rapporteurs to draft summary of discussion (without attribution of individual contributions) for participants only at this stage.

HC Coombs
Policy Forum

Australian National
Institute for Public Policy

RSVP

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The Australian National Institute for Public Policy and the HC Coombs Policy Forum receive Australian Government funding under the 'Enhancing Public Policy Initiative.'

AGENDA

9-10.30

Session 1. Sign-posting the zoo

Chair: Mr Ian McPhee PSM (ANAO)

Discussants: Mr Stein Helgeby (DoFD)
Professor Andrew Podger (ANIPP)

Opening discussion about types of structures and underlying accountability principles and issues; including use of FMA and CAC Acts, PS Act, Uhrig Report templates and related DOFD guidance; experience under NPM reforms and 'governance' agendas (such as 'downwards and outwards' accountability as well as traditional 'upwards' accountability).

10.45-12.15

Session 2. Citizen-centred services

Chair: Ms Wendy Southern PSM (DIAC)

Discussants: Ms Peta Winzar (FaHCSIA)
Mr Eddie Bartnik (Mental Health Commissioner, WA)

Discussion of the goals and implications of 'citizen-centred services'; the different aspects involved including integrated access to benefits and subsidies, locality-responsive place-based services, individual- and family-based case management; identification of some key principles such as what should or should not be devolved; and the implications (and options) for organisational structures.

1-2.30

Session 3. Current reform directions

Chair: Ms Carmel McGregor (APSC)

Discussants: Ms Kerri Hartland (Human Services)
Mr Tony Sherbon (Health)
Mr Todd Frew (Immigration)

Discussion of some of the key reforms now underway including health, human services and immigration. Participants from other departments and agencies to contribute also to help identify design principles including integration, local management, performance measurement and accountability, links between policy and administration.

2.45-4.15

Session 4. Lessons and options

Chair: Professor Andrew Podger (ANIPP)

Discussants: Professor John Wanna (ANU and ANZSOG)
Professor John Phillimore (Curtin University)
Ms Sue Vardon AO

General discussion of possible implications for accountability legislation, possible new post-Uhrig guidance on degrees of independence of administration from politics and associated organisational structures, and possible new approaches to linking policy and administration when integrated service delivery is required.

CONTACT

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