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

Wednesday 16 Feb 2011
Olivia Wenholz, T 02 6125 7067
E events.coombs.forum@anu.edu.au

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
Professor Andrew Podger
Professor of Public Policy
Australian National Institute for Public Policy (ANIPP)
The Australian National University
Level 2, Beryl Rawson Building #13
Ellery Crescent, ANU
Canberra ACT 0200
T 02 6125 2449
E andrew@podger.com.au