

# The National Policy Officers'

## Conference 2009

Emerging Tools and Frameworks for Effective Policy Development, Implementation and Evaluation in a Changing Environment

Liquid Learning is delighted to present this highly informative conference which will provide practical advice on how Policy Officers can become more effective in all aspects of their role.

### FEATURED SPEAKERS



**Group Captain Mike Bennett** A/g Director General, Strategy and Planning, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)  
**Department of Defence**



**Peter Bridgman** Co-author, Australian Policy Handbook; Director Decisive Consultants



**Dr Wendy Southern** First Assistant Secretary, Cabinet Division  
**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**



**Emeritus Professor Meredith Edwards** School of Management and Policy  
**University of Canberra**



**Jacqueline Steel** Project Leader, Strategic Policy Unit  
**Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, Queensland**



**Sean Innis** Group Manager, Social Policy Group  
**Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)**



**Vladimir Williams** Indigenous Employment Program Manager  
**University of Sydney**



**Michael Hopkins** Executive Director, Policy and Communications Division  
**Department of Transport, Victoria**



**Mark Hatwell** Manager, Admissions  
**Monash University**



**Kai Jensen** Change Manager  
**Monash University**



**Andrew Leigh** Associate Professor  
**Australian National University (ANU)**



**Dr Delwyn Goodrick** Independent Evaluation Specialist



**Dr Geoffrey Hawker** Head of Department, Department of Politics and International Relations  
**Macquarie University**



**Meiron Lees** Executive Director  
**InnerCents**

**Barbara Poland** Director, Cabinet Secretariat Branch  
**Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria**

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10 & 11 March 2009  
The Hotel Realm, Canberra

### EXPLORE

- The Evolving Skill Set of Effective Policy Officers
- Applying Leading Edge Tools for Improved Policy Outcomes
- Inter-Agency Collaboration on Policy Projects and Programs
- Targeting Stakeholder Needs and Resolving Conflict

### PRE CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

A Separately Bookable One-Day Workshop on 9 March 2009

### PLUS POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Two Separately Bookable, Half-Day Workshops on 12 March 2009

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**9.00 - 4.30 WORKSHOP A****A Practical Guide to Policy Development**

This practical workshop will explore the fundamentals of effective policy development. If you are new to public policy, you will learn the crucial steps in the process. More experienced Policy Officers will learn how to carry out these steps more effectively. Facilitated by Peter Bridgman, one of Australia's leading public policy experts and co-author of 'The Australian Policy Handbook', this workshop will provide you with the skills and knowledge you need for successful and sustainable policy advice and implementation.

**9.00 - 10.30 Setting the Scene for Policy Development**

- The role of public policy in government and society
- An overview of the institutional settings in which policy development occurs
- The importance of effective policy development and overcoming
- The stages of policy development obstacles

**10.30 - 10.45 Morning Tea****10.45 - 12.15 Identifying Issues Developing Policy Responses**

- Policy, politics and preference
- Social and environmental conditions versus policy problems

**12.15 - 1.15 Networking Lunch****1.15 - 2.45 Policy Instruments and Frameworks for Analysis**

- Understanding policy instrument choice
- Problem and solution analysis
- Economic policy frameworks
- Social policy frameworks
- Legal policy frameworks
- Environmental policy frameworks
- Demographic, race and gender analysis

**2.45 - 3.00 Afternoon Tea****3.00 - 4.30 Carrying out Effective Consultation and Coordination**

- The role of consultation
- Methods of consultation
- Weighing differing / competing viewpoints
- Routines and structures used to ensure bureaucratic coordination

**Expert Facilitator:**

**Peter Bridgman** Co Author of the 'Australian Policy Handbook' and Director

**Decisive Consultants**

Peter has 25 years experience designing real, workable solutions for government and business. He has a track record tackling tough problems and making ideas into reality. He is a barrister and psychologist with unique experiences at the highest levels of major organisations. Peter has an unparalleled record in complex decision making, policy development and implementation, legislative drafting, organisational development legal advice, ethics and integrity advice and executive management. Peter wrote The Australian Policy Handbook, Australia's leading textbook on public policy, with Catherine Althaus and Glyn Davis, now in its fourth edition.

**\*Participants in this Workshop Will Receive a Free Copy of the Australian Policy Handbook, 4th Edition**

**8.30 - 8.55 Registration and Morning Coffee****8.55 - 9.00 Official Welcome & Opening Remarks from the Chair****9.00 - 9.45 OPENING EXPERT COMMENTARY****Emerging Tools and Techniques to Help You Become More Effective as a Policy Officer**

In this opening presentation, Peter Bridgman one of Australia's leading policy experts and co-author of 'The Australian Policy Handbook', will explore what you, as a Policy Officer can do to become more effective in your role. Peter will explore:

- The role Policy Officers play throughout the policy cycle
- The meaning of professionalism in public policy
- The nature of frank and fearless advice to government

**Peter Bridgman** Co Author Australian Policy Handbook; Director

**Decisive Consultants****9.45 - 10.00 Questions and Discussion****10.00 - 10.45 CASE STUDY****Mastering the Cabinet Process**

The Cabinet Division of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet supports the Cabinet and its Committees to facilitate effective and well-informed decision-making. Cabinet processes, which encompass long-standing principles and conventions, as well as the preferences of the incumbent government, underpin the central decision-making role of the Cabinet. Dr Wendy Southern is head of the Cabinet Division and in this presentation she will draw on the knowledge she has gained in this role to provide you with advice on Cabinet rules and routines and what you, as a Policy Officer, can do to ensure you are giving Cabinet what it needs to make good policy decisions.

**Dr Wendy Southern** First Assistant Secretary, Cabinet Division Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**10.45 - 11.00 Questions and Discussion****11.00 - 11.15 Morning Tea****11.15 - 12.00 CASE STUDY****The Mechanics of Government - Some Key Insights for Policy Officers**

Cabinet is the key decision making body in the development of major policy. As a policy practitioner, your understanding of what Cabinet needs and how the various roles and structures of government interact is critical. Barbara will begin her discussion by focusing on the Cabinet's role in government decision making, and provide a different perspective on how policy officers can inform decision making. She will discuss:

- Understanding the various roles and structures within government
- The importance of stakeholder engagement, effective communication and networking

**Barbara Poland** Director, Cabinet Secretariat Branch Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria

**12.00 - 12.15 Questions and Discussion****12.15 - 1.15 Networking Lunch****1.15 - 2.00 CASE STUDY****Know Your Product - Practical Approaches to Policy Development and Implementation**

In mid 2008 the University of Sydney chose to remodel its Indigenous employment program to diversify and thus create broader employment opportunities for prospective employees.

**PLUS WORKSHOPS!**

A selection of Pre-Conference One Day Workshop on 9 March 2009 and Two Separately Bookable Post-Conference Workshops on 12 March 2009

Considerable gains have been made by recognising and building on the lessons learned from the implementation of the remodelled program. Strategically one of the most valuable outcomes is establishing formal linkages of Indigenous student cadetships to the broader University of Sydney Indigenous employment policy and programs. This session will explore:

- Translation of policy into practice (were there challenges?)
- Knowing your product
- Achieving results
- Next steps (reviewing and building on results)

**Vladimir Williams** Indigenous Employment Program Manager  
**University of Sydney**

2.00 - 2.15 **Questions and Discussion**

2.15 - 3.00 **CASE STUDY**

### **Consultation - The Key to Sustainable Policy**

Consultation is crucial to the development of successful and sustainable policy. However, while the benefits of consultation are clear, it also poses numerous challenges. In this presentation, Jacqueline Steel of Queensland's Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, will draw on her experience to provide you with advice on how to better manage the consultation process, covering:

- Selecting the right approach for consultation
- Tools and strategies for undertaking effective consultation
- Engaging internal and external stakeholders and balancing differing / competing voices

**Jacqueline Steel** Project Leader, Strategic Policy Unit  
**Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, Queensland**

3.00 - 3.15 **Questions and Discussion**

3.15 - 3.30 **Afternoon Tea**

3.30 - 4.15 **KEYNOTE CASE STUDY**

### **Thinking Strategically in the Public Sector - Integrating Strategy, Policy, Business and Risk**

In our increasingly complex and dynamic environment, the development of strategic frameworks, policies and systems that link strategy to business and risk will be a theme that will factor more into strategic planning at all levels in organisations in Australia. Policy officers should consider a much broader context in terms of risk and carefully consider the far reaching impacts that their outputs can have on stakeholders. This session will draw on some new thinking in terms of adapting and broadening our consideration of our strategic context. Explore:

- Dealing with complexity and uncertainty
- The power of influence and strategic partnerships
- Adapting policy to new and changing contexts
- Examining the business side of policy

**Group Captain Mike Bennett** A/g Director General, Strategy and Planning, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)  
**Department of Defence**

4.15 - 4.30 **Questions and Discussion**

4.30 - 5.15 **EXPERT COMMENTARY**

### **Building Bridges - Tools for Working More Effectively with Researchers**

When it comes to working with researchers, policy practitioners face many challenges. Most of these challenges and tensions come from a lack of understanding by both parties, of the others priorities and constraints. This session aims to bridge that gap by providing you with the tools to work more effectively with researchers and get the most out of the information they provide.

You will learn how to:

- Understand the researcher's mindset - Their constraints priorities and how to speak their language
- Establish effective communication mechanisms and methods to foster a collaborative approach
- Translate research findings as opposed to transferring information

**Emeritus Professor Meredith Edwards**  
School of Management and Policy  
**University of Canberra**

5.15 - 5.30 **Questions and Discussion**

5.30 - 6.30 **Networking Drinks**

## Day Two 11 March 2009

8.30 - 8.55 **Morning Coffee**

8.55 - 9.00 **Opening Remarks from the Chair**

9.00 - 9.45 **CASE STUDY**

### **Managing Change and Reform in a Diverse Policy Portfolio**

The 2007 - 2008 financial year was a time of substantial change and reform for FaHCSIA. After the Federal Election in November 2007, the change of government required the Department to move quickly to implement the Government's key election commitments, and focus on major areas of reform, such as Commonwealth-state relations, the social inclusion agenda and a range of other key policy themes. A key challenge has been adapting internally to the new challenges of integrating new portfolios that have been handled by the former DEWR. This session will outline the evolving themes for policy development in FaHCSIA, and indicates emerging priorities as the agency progresses in 2009.

**Sean Innis** Group Manager, Social Policy Group  
**Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)**

9.45 - 10.00 **Questions and Discussion**

10.00 - 10.45 **EXPERT COMMENTARY**

### **Randomised Policy Trials - The Future of Policy Evaluation?**

Policymakers in other countries are embarking upon a wide range of randomised policy trials, but these remain rare in Australia in the mainstream. In this presentation, Andrew Leigh will argue that policymakers should learn from medical researchers, and be willing to subject their policy ideas to the

## EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT

Receive \$100 off registration if you register and pay by 30 January 2009

# Overcoming Barriers to Successful Policy Development

gold standard in evaluation - a randomised policy trial.

Key focuses of the session:

- Trends and experiences from the international scene
- Key insights on their possible application in Australia
- What implications exist for policy officers?

**Andrew Leigh** Associate Professor  
**Australian National University (ANU)**

10.45 - 11.00 **Questions and Discussion**

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11.00 - 11.15 **Morning Tea**

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11.15 - 12.00 **CASE STUDY**

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## **Evidence Based Policy - Developing Policies that 'Stick'**

The Victorian Department of Infrastructure recently became the Department of Transport to focus its activity on transport improvements. In order to develop sustainable transport policy the Department has taken an evidence-based approach, focusing in particular on research data and consultations. This presentation will explore the Department's evidence-based approach in order to provide you with tools for collecting and analysing research and undertaking effective consultations in your own organisations. It will cover:

- Gathering the evidence - Advice on liaising with researchers and weighing competing evidence
- Conducting effective consultations - Ensuring consultations are conducted in a timely and impartial manner
- Collaborating to ensure the development of robust and sustainable policy - Harnessing and communicating Departmental knowledge through the Research and Policy Analysis Bulletin

**Michael Hopkins** Executive Director, Policy and Communications

**Department of Transport, Victoria**

12.00 - 12.15 **Questions and Discussion**

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12.15 - 1.15 **Networking Lunch**

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1.15 - 2.00 **INTERACTIVE SESSION**

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## **Program Logic for Policy Officers - Key Insights into Design, Implementation and Evaluation**

Program logic is a unique framework used to assist policy and program managers in the planning, monitoring, evaluating and reporting of processes and outcomes of interventions.

Logic maps (the product of program logic) helps by elaborating the connections between activities and short, intermediate and longer term outcomes. This presentation will examine the program logic framework and will look at how it can assist you in your role. Explore:

- The varieties of program logics and how to shape models to suit your work
- Understand when and when not to use program logic
- How program logic can help you tell your program's story
- Ways to build bridges between policy and program implementation - Avoiding un-implementable policy

**Dr Delwyn Goodrick** Independent Evaluation Specialist

2.00 - 2.15 **Questions and Discussion**

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2.15 - 3.00 **CASE STUDY**

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## **Incorporating Policy Development Best Practices within Training - A View from the Education Sector**

Policy is no different from other professions - it makes sense to look for opportunities to draw on the vast pool of knowledge and experience that exists in your field. Mark Hatwell and Kai Jensen will present insights, challenges and ideas on best practices in

university policy development, arising from their establishment and refinement of a policy development training workshop for university administrators in Victoria, and subsequent formation of an Australasian network of university policy developers. This session will cover:

- The core components of the training program
- The establishment of a professional network of policy professionals

**Mark Hatwell** Manager, Admissions

**Kai Jensen** Change Manager

**Monash University**

3.00 - 3.15 **Questions and Discussion**

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3.15 - 3.30 **Afternoon Tea**

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3.30 - 4.15 **EXPERT COMMENTARY**

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## **The Policy Lifecycle Revisited - Critical Focus on Implementation**

Policy without a plan of implementation or application is of no practical use. Policy Officers often work on the development side of the policy lifecycle, handing their work on to other groups to implement in a program or by other means. It is essential that policy officers are aware of the entire policy cycle - especially that their work will be implemented. Within the policy life-cycle, policy implementation has proven to be one of the most difficult stages to complete effectively. The process is often mismanaged and the topic often under-theorised. Why is this so and how can organisations successfully overcome this challenge? Drawing on relevant examples, this session will assess how policy implementation can be effectively monitored and managed to demonstrate how organisations can overcome the missing link in their policy lifecycle. Areas to be covered include:

- How to address implementation formally within the policy cycle
- Practical key steps for successful implementation
- Practices - Linking phases of the policy cycle

**Dr Geoffrey Hawker** Head of Department,  
Department of Politics and International Relations  
**Macquarie University**

4.15 - 4.30 **Questions and Discussion**

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4.30 **Concluding Remarks from the Chair and Close of the Conference**

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## ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The policy environment is changing which is creating new challenges for policy officers as they must explore new tools and frameworks to meet their stakeholder's needs. The National Policy Officers' Conference has been designed specifically for Policy Officers, Analysts and people working in related policy management and evaluation roles. The aim of this unique event is to provide participants with practical advice and ideas on how they can become more effective and successful in their roles. The ultimate outcome will be that participants will be better equipped to meet their stakeholder's needs.

The Conference will feature a series of case study presentations from experienced Policy Officers as well as the Managers and Directors of policy divisions from federal, state and local government as well as from the education sector. Presenters will draw on their own experiences to provide participants with practical advice on how they can become more effective in the various aspects of their role from policy development to implementation, analysis, evaluation and review - all facets of the policy making process will be explored.



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# Workshops 12 March 2009

## 9.00 - 12.30 WORKSHOP B

### Program Logic for Policy Officers - A Practical Toolkit

Do you ever feel that you are required to implement policy or programs, but you are not sure how they are supposed to work? Do you struggle with linking what you do with what results from what you do? Do you worry that program outcomes and commitments will not be realised within your program timeframe? If you answered yes to these three questions, then this workshop is for you. Program logic is widely used to assist policy makers in designing, implementing and evaluating the outcomes of their programs and policies. It primarily supports our work in helping us to link what we do (our actions or strategic activities) with intended short, intermediate and long term outcomes. Program logic maps are usually produced with a small group of key stakeholders, and represented by a one page diagram of the need or gap, the inputs and resources, activities and outputs, and short, intermediate and longer term outcomes. Logic maps also include assumptions and contextual factors that may influence our capacity to reach outcomes. They are therefore a useful tool for:

- Summarising policy and program intent to stakeholders
- Supporting effective implementation
- Focusing evaluation questions to key domains of interest, and
- Identifying the underpinning mechanisms that may be responsible for success (or failure!)

This interactive workshop will highlight the uses of program logic for project and policy officers. It will also provide case examples of successful use of logic mapping across a range of Government contexts.

#### Expert Facilitator: Dr Delwyn Goodrick Independent Evaluation Specialist

Dr Delwyn Goodrick is a psychologist with over fifteen years experience in research and program evaluation. After working as an academic for ten years, Delwyn joined the Department of Human Services and initiated the establishment of an Evaluation Support Unit to support organisational capability in evaluation. She currently provides consultancy and training services in program evaluation and strategic planning in Australia and overseas to a range of Public Sector and community agencies. Delwyn is also the current co-editor of the Evaluation Journal of Australasia.

## 12.30 - 1.30 NETWORKING LUNCH

## 1.30 - 5.00 WORKSHOP C

### Leadership Skills for Policy Officers'

Regardless of formal rank or designation, possessing strong leadership skills is a valuable asset. People with leadership capacity are generally more effective in relating with others, better able to adapt to change, and more resilient in times of challenge or difficulty. There has been a long standing debate about whether are lucky few are born with "it", or is it learned? But what exactly is "it". Leadership is difficult to define, but you know it when you see it. This not-to-be-missed session begins with the premise that we all have it within us to lead. It will provide you with a practical perspective on what you can do to build your own leadership capacity, and in doing so become more effective and versatile in your role. Explore:

- The characteristics of highly effective leaders - Charisma, magnetism and influence
- The behaviour styles of effective leaders
- The art of self management
- Thought attacks - Overcoming stress inhibitors that undermine our performance

#### Expert Facilitator: Meiron Lees Executive Director InnerCents

Meiron has spent most of his professional career dedicated to the study of behaviour change in the corporate sector. He incorporates the latest research and leading edge strategies in his training and coaching programs, and over 3000 leaders, managers, consultants and business owners have participated in his programs worldwide. Meiron holds a Bachelor of Commerce Honours degree and has worked with PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Harvey World Travel, IBM, MTV, Symantec, Laing and Simmons and Oporto to name a few.

## WHO WILL ATTEND

Senior managers, directors and specialists working in:

- Policy Officer
- Policy Developers
- Policy Analysts
- Policy Advisors
- Policy Coordinator
- Policy Manager
- Policy Director
- Program Managers
- Evaluation Managers
- Research Officers
- Stakeholder Engagement Managers

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