

Advancing Excellence in the Public Sector

...yes, but who is accountable?

Sven Bluemmel

Information Commissioner

Office of the Information Commissioner

Institute of Public Administration Australia WA

Someone has to be boring…

Citizens aren't just "customers" – Paying taxes is not optional (at least not legally)

Governments aren't just "service providers" – They can take your land, put you in jail or make you Australian of the Year

Power must come with accountability and transparency

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So what's the problem?

There may be a conflict between the public interest and the interest of the "partner" (or its shareholders)

The public may not be able to get access to the facts, let alone hold anyone to account

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Easy: Just put the risk onto the partner

Surely we can pay some lawyers in really nice suits $5,000 per day to make sure the contract transfers all the risk to the partner?

…well, you can try, but it won't work.

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So partnerships are bad, right?

Absolutely not – the private and not-for-profit sectors can inject tremendous benefit into service delivery, including:

- Innovation
- Closeness
- Nimbleness

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So how do we get it right?

Plan and execute with rigour

Be aware of misalignment of interests

Acknowledge limitations on outsourcing of risk

Address accountability and transparency *in advance*

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Thank You

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