

IPAA (WA) Integrity and Accountability Conference, 30 April 2024

Let the Sunshine In

Emeritus Professor Peter Coaldrake AO

The West Australian

Jetsetter 'mindful' of squeeze

WA Ombudsman insists travel not 'cavalier' amid cost-of-living pressures

20 March 2024

THE  AGE

'Battle for my independence': Ombudsman slams Daniel Andrews' 'legacy of fear'

March 25, 2024

FINANCIAL REVIEW

NSW 'doesn't know how to hire, manage' consultants

Mar 2, 2023

The **Courier**  **Mail**
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June 28, 2022

Challenges facing the contemporary public sector

- Shortages of funding
- Compressions on staff
- Ubiquitous influence of technology
- Demands of the community as consumers
- Finding reconciliation pathways with First Nations people
- Major disruptions and existential threats, including climate change and weather events, pandemics, demographic dislocations and industry change
- Seemingly intractable issues around mental health and homelessness

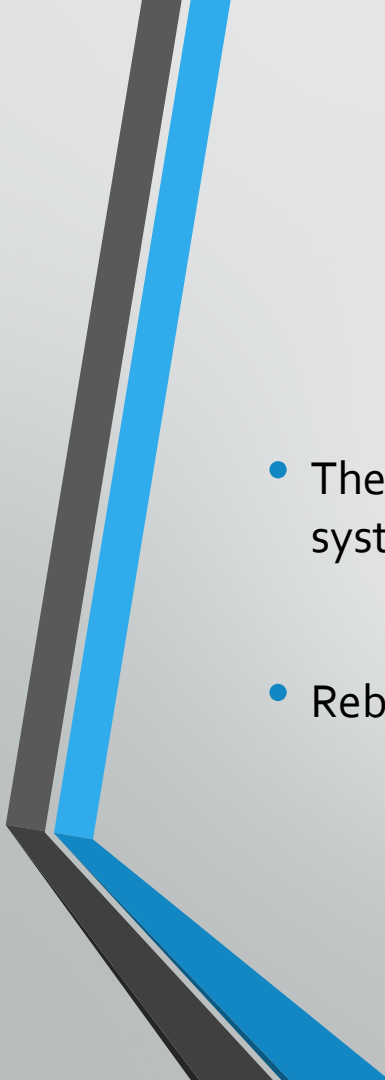


Keep it simple – we develop complex language around simple concepts

- TRANSPARENCY – open
- IMPARTIALITY – objective and fair
- ACCOUNTABILITY – being answerable
- INTEGRITY – honest and fair
- MERIT
- EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Features and vulnerabilities of the contemporary public sector, including those highlighted in Queensland in 'Let the Sunshine In'

- the perceived over-reach of ministerial staff
- the 'dual hatting' of some lobbyists
- consultants performing core tasks hitherto undertaken by government departments
- the impact of frequent machinery of government changes, especially their impact on smaller agencies and in regions
- the disappointingly slow progress of women to advance in numbers to the top tanks of the public sector
- a lack of coordination among Integrity agencies
- the perils of continual restructuring of agencies. Restructuring is not a substitute for strategy
- the impermanence of Director-General/Secretary
- the need to strengthen the leadership role of the Public Service Commission



Rebuilding trust and expertise

- The purpose of a network of integrity agencies is to act as a traffic control system
- Rebuilding expertise and reconsidering the concept of career



Summary Recommendations

1. The independence of the position of the Auditor-General be strengthened, extending its scope and according it status as an Officer of the Parliament.
2. Cabinet submissions (and their attachments), agendas, and decisions papers be proactively released and published online within 30 business days of such decisions.
3. Lobbying regulation be strengthened through a requirement to register all professionals offering paid lobbying services for third parties, more transparent description of meeting purposes, extension of ministerial diaries to include staff meetings with lobbyists and explicit prohibition of lobbyists “dual hatting” as political campaigners.
4. Development and continual reinforcement of a common framework to determine appropriate relationships among ministers, their staff and senior public service officers. The tone set at the top is essential.
5. The rejuvenation of the capability and capacity of the Queensland public sector be a major and concerted focus. This should emphasise a culture of performance and integrity. The Public Service Commission must accept its key role.
6. Establishment of a single clearing house for complaints, with capacity for the complainants and agencies to track progress and outcomes. Technology enablement and proper training of staff will be critical.

Summary Recommendations (Continued)

7. The Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) to avail itself of the opportunity provided by the clearing house and the other cultural changes prompted by this Review to redouble its attention on serious corruption and major crime.
8. Those complaints against senior public sector employees which the CCC devolves must include ongoing oversight by the Public Service Commission and an independent Director-General.
9. Departments more robustly account for the benefits derived from engaging consultants and contractors, with regular monitoring by the Auditor-General.
10. Citizens' privacy rights be protected by implementation of mandatory reporting of data breaches.
11. Whistleblowers be protected by the Government immediately activating its promised review of Public Interest Disclosure legislation.
12. Integrity bodies' independence be enhanced by involvement of parliamentary committees in setting their budgets and contributing to key appointments.
13. The Ombudsman be provided with the authority to investigate complaints against private organisations carrying out functions on behalf of the government
14. Stability of government and performance of public service be strengthened by appointment of agency CEOs (including Directors-General) on fixed term, five year contracts, unaligned to the electoral cycle.