



CONNECTING
GOVERNMENT

Whole of Government Responses
to Australia's Priority Challenges

MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

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>> PREFACE

I am pleased to present this important Management Advisory Committee Report on *Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia's Priority Challenges*.

My strong perception is that the Australian Public Service (APS) performs well, compared to other public sectors around the world, in working across the organisational boundaries of bureaucracy. Every day, in many ways, we bridge successfully the demarcations of officialdom that can undermine successful policy development and delivery. But we cannot be lulled into a self-satisfied complacency. Challenges remain. More than ever before, agencies must continue to find new and better ways to work together to deliver results for the Australian Government and the community.

There are many reasons that we should work in a whole of government way. Not least is the fact that every major challenge of public administration—ensuring security, building a strong economy, coping with demographic change and crafting social policy—necessarily requires the active participation of a range or central and line agencies.

Australians rightly demand the delivery of government programs and services in a seamless way. They should also expect that, behind the scenes, all the resources of government will be brought to bear in the search for innovative solutions to the complex challenges of developing public policy.

It is important that commitment to a whole of government perspective is not misinterpreted as a call for 'group think'. Governance has been improved by the fact that public policy is an increasingly contested terrain. The challenge is to ensure that the collective decision-making of the Australian government is based upon the best informed articulation of the challenges faced and a strategic assessment of the relative merits of different approaches to how they might be addressed. For this, a comprehensive whole of government approach is required.

Connecting Government goes beneath the surface of the 'coordination' that the APS strives to achieve. It examines the many different and sometimes competing imperatives that contribute to successful whole of government work and seeks to learn from our successes and failures.

The report does not believe that effective solutions lie in moving around the deckchairs of bureaucratic endeavour. Rather it reinforces the need to continue to build an APS culture that supports, models, understands and aspires to whole of government solutions. Collegiality at the most senior levels of the service is a key part of this culture.

Portfolio secretaries and agency heads will be responsible for driving cooperative behaviours and monitoring the success of whole of government approaches. This has many elements. They will be required to ensure that their staff understand that their role on interdepartmental committees or task forces is not to defend territory but to seek

solutions in the national interest. They will be expected actively to champion whole of government projects and to model critical behaviours such as collegiality.

The report also highlights the need for agencies to recruit and develop people with the right skills. Relevant topics should be included in induction and training so that coordination, cooperation, negotiation and openness are truly valued. Agencies will be encouraged to give their high performing staff experience on whole of government projects and to support their participation with other agencies in such projects.

Commitment needs to be recognised. New service-wide awards will be offered to celebrate the best whole of government work. The success or failure of the APS in taking whole of government approaches will be reported through the State of the Service report.

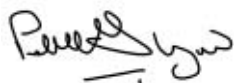
Knowledge is a key to cultural change. A web presence will be established to encourage agencies to share information, expertise and ideas so that the increasing volume of research on the organisation of whole of government approaches can be collected once but used many times.

MAC will fail if its reports are quietly filed away under the heading 'Read on a Wet Sunday'. There are many more initiatives in this report which offer practical help to Australian government agencies in their efforts to continually improve the way they work across boundaries. The objective is to implement many more.

Whole of government is the public administration of the future. It offers links and connections to the global community of ideas, knowledge and understanding essential for the APS to face the governance challenges of the 21st century. It extols team-based approaches to solving the wicked problems that are endemic to public policy.

Connecting Government: Whole of Government Responses to Australia's Priority Challenges is a valuable guide to participating effectively in that future.

I hope it makes a difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Shergold', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Peter Shergold AM

THE SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES

Objective

The Olympic Games have been held every four years since 1896 and are now the largest, and arguably the most important, sporting event in the world. The choice of Sydney as the site for the 2000 Olympic Games gave Australia a unique opportunity to reinforce its international standing as a leading sporting nation, promote its image as a free and cosmopolitan society, and develop new trade, business and tourism links with the world.

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games were planned and run through a cooperative arrangement between federal, state and local governments, Australian business, and sporting communities, and featured a formal and explicit relationship between the Organising Committee, the NSW Government and the Australian Government.

The Games embraced multiple objectives—sporting, social and economic—and many (if not all) of them had a whole of government flavour.

The numerous objectives articulated by various organisations are encapsulated by statements such as: ‘the best Games ever’ and ‘to derive maximum benefit for Australia’. These umbrella objectives reflect the whole of community support for the Games that gave unity of purpose to overall planning and delivery.

While the Games were primarily a NSW event, they could not have been staged without the support of some 30 Australian government departments and agencies. Assistance covered a wide range of areas including national security, protective security, communications, training in sports doping controls, drug research, quarantine, tourism and trade promotion, border controls and weather forecasting. On a full cost basis, the Australian Government contributed over \$1.1 billion in support of the Games. Approximately \$494 million of this was additional funding allocated through the Australian government budget.

This case study focuses on the whole of government challenges of the Games for the Australian Government.

Key players

Australian government agencies, including:

- Attorney-General’s Department (including the Protective Security Coordination Centre)
- Austrade
- Australian Communications Authority
- Australian Customs Service
- Australian Defence Force
- Australian Protective Service
- Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
- Australian Sports Commission
- Australian Sports Drug Agency
- Department of Defence
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Department of Industry, Science and Tourism
- Sydney Airports Corporation Limited

New South Wales government agencies, including:

- Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Department of State and Regional Development
- Department of Transport
- Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games
- Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee
- Olympic Roads and Transport Authority
- NSW Police Service
- Olympic Coordination Authority

Olympic organisations

- Australian Olympic Committee
- International Olympic Committee
- National Olympic Committees
- Australian Paralympic Committee
- International Paralympic Committee

Other stakeholders

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Athletes
- Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Media
- Viewing public
- Airlines
- Private sector partners

Overview of learnings

From the Australian Government's point of view, the early involvement of ministers in setting policy parameters, central coordination and regular reporting to government were a critical part of the success of the Sydney 2000 Games.

Other key lessons are:

- Stakeholders (i.e. all the people with a direct interest in the Games) have a wide range of interests and business reasons for being involved in a project. It is important to allocate time and energy to understanding stakeholder business drivers to achieve maximum cooperation and joint outcomes. There is a good chance that the reluctance of a stakeholder to engage with a project has a business rationale at its roots.
- Do not underestimate the importance of good personal relationships with stakeholders. Differences in organisational culture, as well as handling urgent issues, can be resolved much more readily if people, including senior officials, are able to talk to each other informally.
- It is important to start planning as early as possible, and not lose sight of longer-term priorities.
- With a project as complex as the Olympic Games, the early decision to lock in central agency coordination was extremely beneficial. Importantly, the central coordination did not interfere with line agencies doing their work.
- While the Olympics was a whole of government exercise from the beginning to the end, most Australian government agencies managed their Olympics responsibilities within normal business processes. Using existing processes that have stood the test of time as much as possible, proved to be most beneficial, even when dealing with new stakeholders or circumstances.
- The Olympic Games created numerous opportunities to leverage off the goodwill associated with a high degree of agreement about overall objectives. This can be seen in the development of security arrangements and in the innovative business development programs.

Key findings of the areas of investigation

1. Structures and processes

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
1	<p>A major challenge was ensuring a safe Games through the efforts of security agencies. This required new ways of working between agencies.</p>	<p>The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) saw the need for a top-down approach to achieve more effective coordination.</p> <p>The Australian Government established a ministerial subcommittee on security for the 2000 Games in late 1996. From 1998, all security was managed through standing arrangements, with some issues referred to the Secretaries' Committee on National Security from time to time.</p> <p>The Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Task Force received advice on security matters from an Olympic Security Reference Group comprising representatives from agencies with a security involvement in the Games.</p> <p>The Australian Government's Protective Security Coordination Centre worked closely with the NSW government and assisted with the drafting of a strategic plan for Olympic security.</p>	<p>When faced with a national security imperative, a centrally coordinated planning structure may be needed to bring about effective coordination of players who traditionally have limited need to come together.</p>
2	<p>The need for an agreed position on border management.</p>	<p>A recommendation by the Australian National Audit Office that relevant agencies 'consider the development of a border security purpose statement' was agreed and implemented.</p> <p>The Australian Customs Service and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs both seconded employees to SOCOG.</p>	<p>Timely external reviews can add value to complex planning processes.</p> <p>Using normal agency operations as much as possible is a sound approach to planning for major events involving non-regular stakeholders.</p>

Structures and processes (continued)

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
3	<p>Early disagreement, then full cooperation, between the Australian Government and the NSW Government, on addressing workforce shortages in the lead-up to the Games.</p>	<p>In early 1996 NSW authorities turned down Australian government offers of assistance with workforce planning.</p> <p>In February 2000 the Australian Government and SOCOG launched the <i>Sydney Jobs in 2000</i> initiative, designed to promote the availability of employment opportunities associated with the Games. The initiative included Jobs Expos, a dedicated 'Jobs in 2000' site within the Olympics internet site, and a promotion strategy for job seekers and employers.</p>	<p>Cross-agency or cross-jurisdictional turf protection can occur even when there is overwhelming agreement on overall objectives.</p>
4	<p>When the NSW transport system became overloaded following the Opening Ceremony of the Games, organisers faced the prospect of ongoing transport difficulties, and no obvious way to find additional bus drivers.</p>	<p>The Head of the Olympic Coordination Authority rang the Games Coordination Task Force directly to say they needed bus drivers urgently. PM&C contacted the Australian Defence Force, which recalled every available service person with an appropriate licence, and had around 150 qualified drivers in Sydney within 48 hours. Because these drivers were not necessarily familiar with Sydney, the NSW authorities provided volunteers to act as guides for the drivers.</p>	<p>Informal networks can be a critical part of finding a cross-jurisdictional solution to an unexpected problem.</p> <p>Strong personal relationships can facilitate unconventional cross-agency solutions, provided there is sufficient trust and agreement on goals.</p>

2. Culture and capability

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
1	<p>Part of the culture of security and law enforcement organisations is that their training teaches them to be wary. This can present as a lack of trust between security agencies.</p>	<p>The Australian Government's overall objective for the Games was to derive maximum benefit for Australia. This common objective was widely understood, and the Games Coordination Task Force used this to help overcome blockages stemming from organisational culture.</p> <p>The Task Force recognised the tensions within security and law enforcement agencies within the Australian Government and states, and convened a meeting of senior officials. This built trust and a culture of collaboration.</p>	<p>A constant message from numerous people involved in Olympics planning is: 'Don't underestimate the importance of personal relations'.</p>

3. Information management and infrastructure

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
1	<p>The need for an identified and authoritative Australian government media voice, and a coordinated approach to media management in Sydney to minimise negative publicity and maximise positive media exposure.</p>	<p>The Australian Government’s media strategy was approved by ministers in 1999.</p> <p>The Games 2000 Media Unit was established in the Games Coordination Task Force in October 1999.</p> <p>The director of the Games Media Unit also acted as the Australian Government’s Games spokesperson.</p> <p>A Games media website was established in 2000.</p> <p>A key element of the Australian Government’s collaborative relationship with the NSW Government was the joint sponsorship of the Sydney Media Centre at Darling Harbour for the unaccredited media.</p>	<p>With hindsight, PM&C considers the Games Media Unit was created too late. It suggests creating such a unit 2–3 years before the event, and building a media strategy into the planning process.</p>
2	<p>The need for a contingency communication strategy in the event of a disaster or crisis.</p>	<p>The Games media website was to be used as a crisis information site.</p>	<p>If a website is to be used for crisis management, rigorously test its capacity to handle a high volume of public and media inquiries, as well as the necessary official information.</p>

4. Budget and accountability framework

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
1	<p>The need for a whole of government approach to Australian government funding for the Games, covering Australian government agency expenses and support for the NSW Government and SOCOG.</p>	<p>The 1997–98 and 1998–99 Budgets included coordinated bids for Olympic-related expenditure. All bids were vetted by the Secretaries’ High Level Reference Group, chaired by the Secretary of PM&C.</p> <p>A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Australian Government and NSW was signed on 23 December 1998. It set out the cost recovery parameters for Australian government services. Under the MOU, SOCOG was required to purchase customs, immigration, quarantine and communications services from the Australian Government using \$32 million provided to it by the Australian Government. Some services were provided free of charge; others were provided at partial or full cost recovery.</p>	<p>Existing financial coordination processes within the Australian Government are sufficiently robust to manage complex whole of government matters.</p> <p>Where Australian government services are required for a major event organised principally by another jurisdiction, a detailed purchasing and cost recovery plan is essential.</p>

5. Managing connections outside the APS

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
1	Wide agreement among stakeholders that the Sydney Airport international terminal would not cope with the peak passenger loads following the Games gave rise to a range of interdependent business concerns that had to be addressed jointly by stakeholders.	<p>Numerous organisations, including airlines and border security agencies, jointly agreed to process athletes' baggage at the Olympic Village rather than at the airport.</p> <p>This eased airport congestion, but created security and transportation complexities requiring careful negotiation.</p>	<p>An innovative solution to a problem that requires multiple organisations to adopt non-routine procedures will be difficult to implement.</p> <p>Participants in joint teams need to understand the business drivers and rationales of all organisations involved.</p>
2	The development of cooperative relationships between Australian government and state agencies and the private sector to maximise the economic benefits of the Games required sustained effort, especially in states/territories not hosting Olympic events.	<p>In June 1995 the NSW Government established the Olympic Games Business Roundtable to use the Olympic Games to promote Australian business.</p> <p>Austrade and the NSW Department of State and Regional Development worked closely on several programs, including Investment 2000—a campaign to unite international business leaders with heads of Australian companies. Under the Australia Open for Business strategy, Austrade developed collaborative programs, including <i>Business Club Australia</i>, to forge links with Australian and international business leaders.</p>	<p>Do not underestimate the creative potential of joint government and private sector interaction, but be aware that the private sector, including industry associations, can be slow to buy into unproven concepts.</p> <p>It is difficult to get wider state/territory buy-in for a one-state event, and only the Australian Government's involvement can make these into national programs.</p>
3	The need for a united approach by NSW and the Australian Government in servicing the needs of dignitaries visiting Australia for the Games to ensure they received appropriate levels of hospitality.	<p>SOCOG met its contractual obligations in relation to servicing the International Olympic Committee and members and heads of International Sporting Federations.</p> <p>The Australian Government and NSW established a mechanism for joint handling of dignitaries.</p> <p>In 1997 the Australian Government established the Olympic Dignitary Program.</p>	<p>Whole of government planning for major international events should have a dignitary handling strategy as a discrete component of overall planning. Such a strategy should explicitly acknowledge the differing hospitality protocols of different stakeholders.</p>

6. Management crises and their consequences

	Issues	Response	Key learnings
1	<p>The high-security imperative for controlling the airspace in the vicinity of Games venues, but the absence of provisions in the <i>Air Services Act 1995</i> for controlling airspace on security grounds.</p>	<p>Although the Australian Government regulates airspace in Australia, it was agreed that NSW has a residual head of power to control airspace within NSW. The Australian Government used the incidental powers under the <i>Air Services Act 1995</i> to support the NSW airspace controls with fines of up to \$25 million.</p>	<p>Solutions to seemingly intractable problems can sometimes be found by linking powers or capabilities across jurisdictions.</p>
2	<p>Security contingency planning highlighted the need for different responses to biological, chemical or radiological incidents, depending on whether they were accidental or deliberate.</p>	<p>Fire authorities in all states were the designated emergency organisation for an overt attack using chemical or radiological material. For other types of attacks, lead agencies would have been health services or the police. The PSCC assisted the Games Coordination Task Force to develop arrangements for crisis and incident management so that all relevant Australian Government and NSW state security, military and law enforcement bodies had a role in planning and investigations.</p> <p>The same arrangements were negotiated for all states/territories hosting Olympic events, effectively providing Australia with a national security plan.</p>	<p>Innovative cross-jurisdictional solutions to managing security aspects of major events can open opportunities for developing and showcasing wider national security plans.</p>

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Interviews

Grahame Cook, about his then role as head, Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Task Force, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Brent Espeland, about his then role as specialist security adviser, Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Taskforce, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Ron Perry, about his then role as senior adviser, Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Task Force, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Victor Baskir, about his then role as Olympics coordinator, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, NSW.

Pru Goward, about her then role as media coordinator, Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Taskforce, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.