

Managing public services commercially

It is increasingly important that the public service be modernised in the context of improving productivity and reconnecting the sector with best commercial practice. There is ample evidence of financial waste and damage including loss of life as a result of poor bureaucratic process with little or no accountability.

Increasingly the public service has become over administrated. It appears that the emphasis within the public service has increasingly moved away from a performance based culture and there are few if any meaningful parameters to review performance collectively or individually.

Since the Liberal National Government took office in Queensland, there have been 14,000 front line jobs cut, but at the same time we have seen more than a 10% increase in the number of senior bureaucrats who earn over \$100,000 per annum. This highlights the cultural shift away from delivery of services to tax payers in a meaningful or commercially relevant way by Government and is indicative of an increasingly disconnected Government culture nationally.

The provision of health, education, defence and social security services are the most important sectors of public service interaction with the community where administration is overshadowing front line delivery. This overly bureaucratic culture is out of step with the broader private sector.

The subsequent culture of self-assessment by Government has in effect created a feedback loop that reinforces the bureaucratic system to amplify it's disconnect from the expectations and needs of the non-government sector.

In addition there appears to be an increasing trend to politicise investment strategies that severely curtail necessary rigour in costing and assessing impacts of public investment programs. The political hype around the NBN is an excellent example of the politicisation of public investment with overstated benefits of fibre to home infrastructure and gross incompetence with underestimated costs and a subsequent blowout of over fifty billion dollars.

KAP is committed to holding the public service sector to account in regards the delivery of services in the same way any successful private sector business operates. KAP is committed to reforming the culture of senior levels of bureaucracy to ensure they are connected to and focussed on the needs of the tax payers they serve.

KAP is very conscious of the need to support individuals in the system and condemns the failure of Government to instil the necessary culture in the service. KAP is not intending to erode pay and salaries for the public service sector of the economy. KAP is committed to improving the productivity of the public service in terms of service delivery.

KAP will seek reform policies that:

- introduce and apply the right Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the performance assessment of all bureaucrat managers;
- review the APS or EL remuneration pay scale of all bureaucrat managers based on their performance and achievement against meaningful KPIs;
- curtail the cost blowout of the NBN and restrict the rollout of fibre to the node rather than to the home;
- encourage and protect whistle blowers as an important method of discovery of the real health and performance of the public sector; and
- implement regular, random, independent and external professional audits of the public service sector.