



Australian Government
Department of Immigration
and Citizenship

Whole of Government Issues in Public Policy Formulation

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Introduction

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship

- About 8000 staff in around 80 offices throughout the world
- Wide range of programs and policy responsibility
- Many opportunities for whole-of-government approach



The Big Picture

Complex problems require collaboration

- In solving complex policy issues agencies must look broadly at an issue
- They should not close their “organisational minds” to collaborating with other organisations

Collaboration Between Agencies

Vertical vs horizontal

- A horizontal, cross-agency solution may be needed to solve a problem
- Challenge: how we overcome the constraints of a vertical accountability structure.
- The best resolution for the government will be achieved by using all of the available resources of the government

Policy Development and Implementation

Development of policy

- For the successful involvement of a range of agencies in implementation and service delivery, it is important to involve those agencies in the initial policy development

Whole-of-Government

The whole-of-government approach

- Taking a whole-of-government approach to public policy formulation recognises that public policy has implications for a wide range of organisations and social structures
- These implications go beyond the boundaries of the organisation with the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the policy

Whole-of-Government

Issues involved in development of public policy

- Domestic politics
- International obligations
- The nature of government platforms on the issue
- Domestic social and economic implications
- Protection of national sovereignty
- Maintenance and development of existing and the creation of new social structures
- Protection of national security

Whole-of-Government

Implementing a whole-of-government model for policy formulation

- Challenge for a whole-of-government model of public policy formulation is collaborating across institutional boundaries
- Need to reconcile the limitations imposed by the vertical structures of individual departments and agencies

DIAC and whole-of-government approaches

- DIAC has become very adept at dealing with complex issues and public policy questions on a whole-of-government basis

Risks associated with not using whole-of-government approach where one is needed

- Full range of experience and skills available to the government may not be used
- Risks known to other agencies may not be dealt with
- All relevant information and data may not be included in development of policy
- Parties and organisations required to implement the policy may have no sense of ownership or responsibility
- Parties and organisations essential for implementation may be less cooperative, or unable to facilitate the implementation
- Policy may fail to take account of key sensitivities
- Policy may thus be ill conceived

Example 1

Border Security: “Smartgate”

- Example of cross-agency collaboration
- Automated border processing system at Australia’s international airports
- Provides eligible travellers with the option to “self-process”.
- Uses data in ePassports and facial recognition technology to perform customs and immigration checks
- Collects information on health and character electronically
- Automatically grants eligible New Zealand citizens a Special Category visa

Example 2

Irregular maritime arrivals

- Involves collaboration between range of government agencies at both policy and operational levels
- Domestic and international implications
- Engagement with regional and international partners, and with a range of government and non-government organisations

Conclusion

Benefits of whole-of-government approach

- Enables new and innovative public policy solutions to complex problems
- Can result in more integrated solutions and better outcomes

Questions and discussion

