COLLABORATION
A Tasmanian Government Approach

LEADERSHIP

SHARED AIMS

TRUST

MEMBERSHIP

INFORMATION SHARING

Accountability
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The challenges we are facing, both in terms of economics and policy, provide us with an opportunity to look for innovative ways to deliver on the Government’s key policies, priorities and responsibilities in an a more efficient and effective way.

To increase productivity across the State Service we need to encourage a cultural shift, a move away from our siloed approach to addressing policy issues, and instead work together across the traditional agency boundaries, to solve the toughest problems faced by this Government.

I am pleased to endorse the Tasmanian Government’s Approach to Collaboration, as it provides a practical framework for agencies to work together to deliver better policy and service outcomes to all Tasmanians.

The paper sets out the critical factors for successful collaboration, including leadership, trust, shared aims, clear membership and accountability structures. I would encourage all State Servants to adopt the approach outlined in the paper and consider applying it to new and existing initiatives.

Service Tasmania is an excellent example of what true collaboration can achieve. It has been providing one-stop access to government transactions, services and information for 12 years and its ongoing success relies on willing cooperation among a wide range of stakeholders.

In a small jurisdiction like Tasmania, there is a real opportunity to embrace more efficient and effective ways of working together, utilising our existing networks, to achieve results.

Lara Giddings
Premier
In 2009-10, one of the strategic priorities for the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) was to develop a strategy to encourage Tasmanian Government agencies to work more collaboratively in the development and implementation of policy initiatives.

While there are currently some excellent examples of collaboration across Government, improvements can always be made. With greater budget constraints and service needs becoming increasingly complex, agencies must work together to meet the requirements of our stakeholders, and deliver better policy and service outcomes for all Tasmanians.

Issues such as climate change, social inclusion, reducing health inequalities, homelessness, overcoming Indigenous disadvantage and the integration of information and communications technology cannot be addressed by any one agency acting alone. A greater joint focus across Government on these issues and other Government priorities is critical to achieving successful outcomes.

The Policy Division of DPAC has developed this paper, based on a review of literature and approaches in other jurisdictions. It provides guidance on the types of situations where a collaborative approach would be beneficial to addressing policy issues and the critical factors for success. It is intended to be used as a guide to promote best practice collaboration across Government. For this reason, there has been broad consultation across Government in developing the approach.

In preparing this paper and the associated materials, DPAC is seeking to encourage a culture of cooperation across Government. We need to build a culture in the public service that supports, models, understands and aspires to whole-of-government solutions. This will require leadership at all levels, including Heads of Agency, Deputy Secretaries, Directors, and Managers, who should champion collaborative projects and consistently model critical behaviours such as collegiality. It also requires all public servants, whatever their job, to think about how they can work with others to improve outcomes for the community. Coordination, cooperation, negotiation and openness need to be truly valued in a collaborative environment.

I hope the approach outlined in this paper fosters discussion and leads to improved collaborative relationships across Government.
Many complex public policy issues are cross cutting in nature and do not fit neatly into departmental boundaries and portfolios. Public policy issues such as climate change, social inclusion, reducing health inequalities, workforce participation, homelessness, literacy and numeracy and overcoming Indigenous disadvantage are difficult to address through the actions of a single government agency.

Improving collaboration and integration to address these issues has been a priority for governments in Australia and overseas over the last decade and has generated a range of reforms. Essentially there is a recognition that the basic structure of government is not going to change so there needs to be better collaboration to achieve results.

In pursuing collaborative governance, the focus is to better integrate and coordinate government policy and service delivery to achieve common goals and respond to an identified high priority issue or need within the community. Collaborative governance is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Ultimately, the benefit of collaborative governance is to improve policy and service delivery outcomes for citizens.

Working together effectively across Tasmanian Government agencies is a key internal challenge faced by the Tasmanian State Service. Like other jurisdictions, Tasmania must adopt a more collaborative approach to solving complex policy problems, or face the risk of not being able to respond to difficult issues, such as those identified above. The aim of this paper is to promote better collaboration across agencies.

It provides an overview of:

• the drivers, potential benefits and costs of collaboration;
• when collaboration is necessary;
• critical factors for successful collaboration, including leadership, trust, shared aims, clear membership, and accountability structures;
• formal mechanisms for collaboration, such as interdepartmental committees;
• the challenges that might be faced when collaborating; and
• areas of further work to be undertaken.

Annex I is a flow chart of how to achieve successful collaboration.

It is expected that the approach outlined in this paper will be useful in developing collaborative relationships within agencies as a pre-requisite for successful collaboration across Government.

It is important to note upfront that this paper focuses on improving collaborative relationships between and within Tasmanian Government agencies as a priority, but is not intended to limit policy and service development to the sphere of Government agencies only. The necessity of engaging appropriate external stakeholders, including non-government organisations (NGOs), business and other levels of government is acknowledged, and should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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2. What is collaboration?

There is no universally accepted definition of collaboration and a range of terms, such as whole-of-government, joined up government, cross-cutting or integrated government have all been used to refer to this work. These terms are often used interchangeably.

The Australian Government uses the term ‘whole-of-government’, which was defined for the Australian Public Service in 2004 as:

“… public service agencies working across portfolio boundaries to achieve a shared goal and an integrated government response to particular issues. Approaches can be formal and informal. They can focus on policy development, program management and service delivery.”

Whatever the term used, the essential features of collaboration include:

- agencies working across traditional portfolio boundaries;
- developing an integrated approach to a complex or cross-cutting issue; and
- sharing responsibility for an outcome, including the risks and rewards associated with the project.

Two concepts have been described which are useful in considering collaboration. These are ‘collaborative advantage’ and ‘collaborative inertia’. To gain real advantage from collaboration, something has to be achieved that could not have been achieved by one agency. This concept provides a useful ‘guiding light’ for the purpose of collaboration. The second concept, collaborative inertia, captures what happens very frequently in practice: the output from a collaborative arrangement is negligible, the rate of output is extremely slow, or stories of hard grind are integral to successes achieved. The critical factors outlined in section 7 of this paper can be used to avoid collaborative inertia.

Collaboration can involve different tiers of government (local, state, Commonwealth) and external stakeholders (eg NGOs). This paper focuses primarily on collaboration between State Service agencies as a priority, but the critical factors identified in section 7 of this paper apply to all collaborative situations including working with Government Business Enterprises, statutory authorities, ministerial staff and the Commonwealth Government.

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3. Drivers for collaboration

Collaboration is necessary to generate creative solutions to challenges and to share the work of oversight and accountability. The idea of developing and implementing whole-of-government solutions to policy problems has many recognised long-term drivers, across multiple policy areas, both in Australia and overseas.

In 1997 the British New Labour Government gave prominence to the concept of joined up or collaborative government through its modernisation of public administration in the United Kingdom. Since then countries such as Canada, the United States and Ireland, along with other Australian jurisdictions have also moved to more collaborative working arrangements to solve difficult policy issues.

The Tasmanian State Service is facing a range of new pressures requiring it to be more adaptable, innovative and flexible in its approach to solving policy problems. These include:

• technological advancement, which is creating new opportunities and threats and allowing greater integration across organisational boundaries;
• increased stakeholder expectations of service delivery including pressure for seamless services that meet the needs of the user, rather than the organisational convenience of service deliverers;
• an increasing expectation that the public sector will solve intractable issues;
• far greater pressures for continued improvement, innovation and learning; and
• the challenge of coping with a more complex political and institutional architecture.

In order for the Tasmanian State Service to continue to deliver high quality advice, programs and services that are tailored to community and political needs, greater reliance on collaborative approaches to problem solving is required. Ministers and Government expect the State Service to work across organisational boundaries to develop well informed, comprehensive policy advice and implement Government policies in an integrated way. This is particularly true when addressing ‘wicked problems’ that are highly resistant to resolution, such as: social inclusion; reducing health inequalities; homelessness; workforce participation; climate change and the environment, which require responses that cross organisational and state and local government boundaries, and involve groups outside government.

Annex 2 sets out three existing examples of collaborative Tasmanian Government projects.

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5 Noveck, B S 2009, Wiki Government: How technology can make government better, democracy stronger and citizens more powerful page xii.
4. When is collaboration necessary?

Collaborative approaches to complex problems should only be undertaken when necessary. Although there is a conviction about the effectiveness of collaboration, there is also a warning about its selective use.  

Making collaboration work effectively can be resource intensive, costly and time consuming, and a long term view may be required to obtain positive results. Competing political and community agendas can undermine its objectives. It is not the preferred approach for dealing with issues that can be handled effectively by one agency. It can, however, be particularly suitable for complex and/or longstanding policy issues which defy traditional agency boundaries.  

There is no strict formula for deciding when to involve other Government agencies and each situation should be examined on a case by case basis, weighing up the costs, benefits and risks. The following questions may assist in making an informed decision:

a. What is the policy/service delivery problem?

b. Policy development/planning: Would planning benefit from input from other agencies, or their core stakeholders?
   - Are you dependent on other agencies for key information or complementary action?
   - Will you need to demonstrate later that you consulted adequately?
   - Would representatives of affected groups be useful partners?
   - Are there disagreements on how best to address this issue?
   - Can your preferred policy approaches be offset by existing or proposed action by other agencies?

c. Implementation/delivery: Will you need help from other agencies with program or service delivery?
   - Does another agency service the same demographic group?
   - Would shared delivery produce economies of scale?
   - Would coordination with other agencies be appreciated by clients?

d. Accountability/reporting: Will more than one agency be required to report on results achieved?
   - Will reporting require information sharing?
   - Would positive or negative media interest affect more than one agency?  

The more ‘yes’ answers you give to these questions, the more likely it is that you have a whole-of-government project to manage, and other Tasmanian Government agencies and potentially other external stakeholders will need to be involved.
In order to determine whether a collaborative arrangement is suitable and/or necessary to solve your particular issue you may wish to consider the following benefits and costs of collaboration.\textsuperscript{15}

### Benefits of collaboration

- **better policy development and service delivery:** having all relevant stakeholders present to combine skills, capacities and expertise enables better resolutions to policy issues. Collaboration provides an opportunity to assess an issue from multiple perspectives and develop informed policy solutions that might not have been reached by one agency acting alone;
- **greater support for policy implementation:** engaging relevant stakeholders early in the development of solutions to policy problems ensures greater support and traction across Government and the community;
- **mutual learning and capacity building within agencies:** through the development of networks and supportive relationships, inter-agency secondments, and recruitment of different profiles and skills; \textsuperscript{16}
- **exploiting economies of scale:** sharing of information and communications technology, data, information and property.

### Costs of collaboration

- **accountability:** where a policy issue crosses multiple agencies or portfolios there is often difficulty in ensuring political or ministerial buy-in and accountability for arrangements as it is unclear who is responsible for what;
- **resources:** working collaboratively can be time consuming, expensive and it may be difficult in some cases to reach a resolution that is supported by all parties, delaying implementation;
- **a collaborative ‘ruse’:** arrangements may be used to ‘sell’ decisions that have been made elsewhere or previously by agencies, so that the outcomes may not be truly collaborative.\textsuperscript{17}

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\textsuperscript{16} ibid, p 9.
\textsuperscript{17} ibid, p10.
6. A continuum of collaboration

In practice, there are a wide range of relationships between agencies. The breadth of these relationships is captured in the continuum below. 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Networking</th>
<th>Coordinating</th>
<th>Cooperating</th>
<th>Collaborating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exchange of information for mutual benefit</td>
<td>Exchange of information for mutual benefit</td>
<td>Exchange information</td>
<td>Exchange information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal relationship</td>
<td>Alter activities</td>
<td>Alter activities</td>
<td>Share resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal time and trust</td>
<td>Formal relationship</td>
<td>Sharing resources to achieve a common purpose</td>
<td>Enhance capacity of another to achieve a common purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No sharing of resources</td>
<td>Requires moderate time and trust</td>
<td>Formal relationships</td>
<td>Formal relationship and structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal sharing of resources</td>
<td>Substantial time and trust required</td>
<td>Joint planning, implementation and evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some sharing of risks and rewards</td>
<td>Extensive time and trust required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Share risks, responsibilities, rewards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The continuum demonstrates that not all inter-agency relationships require formal arrangements. The extent to which goals, power, resources, risks, successes and accountabilities are shared across the continuum varies.

At one end of the scale are informal networks through which information is exchanged for mutual benefit. It requires a minimal level of time and trust and does not require sharing resources. Coordination and cooperation can involve varying levels of time and resources, and is where a lot of Tasmanian inter-agency work probably fits in the scale. Collaborative relationships are depicted at the furthest end of the continuum where common goals, high levels of commitment, and shared risks, responsibilities and rewards are established. Collaboration involves recognised interdependencies and a high level of integration.

It is important to analyse the whole-of-government task you are involved in, and recognise it for what it is on the continuum above. If it is purely a networking or information sharing forum, it is unlikely to lead to any real outcomes or improved service delivery. Whilst it is important to acknowledge the value of information sharing networks, if real results are necessary, effort, time and resources are required to move from networking and cooperation to true collaboration.

The key purpose of this paper is to encourage government agencies to work towards the collaborative end of the continuum, where appropriate, to solve difficult issues across government. Networking and cooperation remain important building blocks in developing collaborative relationships.

The next section of this paper discusses the critical factors that are required to move from coordination and cooperation to collaboration. The critical factors identified are also important to other relationships between agencies identified on the continuum above.

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18 This diagram has been adapted from Victorian State Service Authority 2007, Victorian Approaches to Joined Up Government, p5, which is adapted from Himmelman (2001).
7. Critical factors for successful collaboration

There are a number of critical factors for successful collaboration, which are set out below. Leadership is a key element, with other factors flowing from that.

A. Leadership — creating a culture of collaboration & driving results

Leadership is critical in two ways. Firstly in a general sense, leadership across the State Service is crucial to creating a professional culture that supports, models, understands and aspires to whole-of-government solutions. This requires leadership at all levels, including Heads of Agency, Deputy Secretaries, Directors, and Managers, who should champion collaborative projects, encourage interaction across agency boundaries and consistently model critical behaviours such as collegiality. Leaders should ensure that their staff understand the shared benefits that can be attained from working collaboratively and that their role on inter-departmental committees or working groups is not to defend territory, but seek solutions in the state’s interests. Leaders should also reward and recognise participation in collaborative projects.

The following have been described as key features of a culture that supports collaboration:

- flexible, persistent, adaptable and open to innovation and creativity;
- team focused with the ability to think and act across agency boundaries, tolerate mistakes and manage risks;
- capacity to build strategic alliances and negotiate to achieve joint outcomes;
- expression of diverse views is encouraged and different cultures and their strengths are appreciated;
- capacity to balance the tension between short and long term goals.


10
Horizontal management demands a reinvented form of leadership — a leadership that supports the evolution of culture as much as a leadership that delivers projects on time and on budget”.

Secondly, leadership is also critical to the success of specific collaborative projects. Effective teams must have clear leadership to drive outcomes and achieve results. Leadership can sit with one person, or it can be shared, shifting from person to person depending on circumstances and personal strengths. Good leaders need to have self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. They also need to have a clear sense of purpose, delineate roles and responsibilities and use interpersonal skills to communicate effectively and negotiate outcomes based on competing interests.

Different leadership styles are necessary at different times — ranging from a coercive style to a coaching style. The best leaders don’t just use one style — they are skilled at several and have the flexibility to switch between styles as circumstances dictate. A useful summary of six leadership styles is included in Annex 3.

The role of central agencies

It is also appropriate in this section, to comment on the role of central agencies in collaborative projects. Officers within DPAC and the Department of Treasury and Finance play a critical role in promoting effective whole-of-government outcomes.

Sometimes it is appropriate for DPAC or Treasury to lead a project in the early stages, with lead agency responsibility transferred to another agency once the project is established. This does not however mean that DPAC or Treasury needs to lead, or be involved in, every collaborative project — all agencies have the capacity to lead these projects. Appropriate leadership should be assessed on a case by case basis.

The Policy Division of DPAC is able to bring independence to policy analysis and development and act as a broker to facilitate decision making. The Division can provide advice on whole-of-government priorities, intergovernmental processes and priorities; explain the machinery of government and Cabinet processes and facilitate best practice collaboration, as outlined in this paper.

Treasury is able to provide financial and regulatory advice relating to collaborative projects, and advice on budget processes and available structures.

B. Trust

Trust is a pre-condition for successful collaboration. It is also essential to build working relationships and effective teams. Trust is a complex concept which means different things to different people, but in a co-worker sense it has been described as ‘...confidence that one’s colleagues are competent and will act in a fair and reliable manner... and will not take advantage of them by withholding information.’ Team members who trust one another can be open, exposed to new ideas, and develop a sense of shared responsibility for an outcome. Building credibility, investing in relationships, openness and continual dialogue promote trust.

While the existence of trusting relationships in a collaborative situation is ideal, the common starting point can be suspicion rather than trust. In these circumstances, adopting the approach outlined in the diagram at Annex 4 might assist in building trust. Trust can gradually be built through starting with some modest but realistic aims that are likely to be successfully realised. This reinforces trusting attitudes and provides a basis for more ambitious collaboration.

23 Institute of Public Administration Australia, NSW State Conference 15 May 2003, Leadership and Integrated Governance: A Reader.
25 ibid.
C. Shared aims / benefits and evaluation of progress

To improve the chances of a successful outcome arising from a collaborative arrangement it is necessary to be clear about the aims and benefits of joint work and set realistic expectations. There are often difficulties associated with agreeing to shared objectives due to the variety of organisational and individual agendas that are present in collaborative situations. Tensions often arise because some organisations are very interested in influencing and controlling the joint agenda and some are reluctant to commit resources to it. Multiple and sometimes even conflicting aims can prevent agreement and block progress. 31

One way to ensure that participants are fully briefed on the purpose behind a collaborative arrangement is to engage them in the development of terms of reference. This will ensure that there is agreement on the aims and goals for the group early on in its establishment and provide a useful point of reference for the group should it start to deviate from the agreed course.

Depending on the size of the project the terms of reference could include accountability arrangements (see below), milestones and performance indicators, which should be monitored to evaluate the success of the collaboration. Where the project is large and complex, in addition to the terms of reference it may be useful to develop a formal project plan which clearly articulates the scope of the project, the project phases, milestones, responsibility and performance indicators.32

D. Membership

A critical component to a successful collaborative arrangement is identifying and engaging the right people at an appropriate level to participate in discussion and decision making processes. Members should also possess an understanding of the subject matter and carry the authority to make decisions on behalf of the agency they represent. It is important that members understand their role as departmental representatives and ensure that the view they present is the view of the agency they represent and that they have consulted on the issues being addressed by the group. As a key part of their role, members should also provide feedback on progress of the project to relevant staff within their agency.

Often collaborative structures are talked about as though stability of membership can be taken for granted. In practice however this is not the case. New members may join and others may leave which can cause a breakdown in communication, trust and an understanding of the issues and progress already made by the group. The relationships between individual participants when collaborating are often fundamental to achieving outcomes. This makes collaboration highly sensitive to membership changes. 33

As a general principle, occasional membership should not be accepted. It is preferable to have the membership clearly stated from the outset, whether this is contained in the terms of reference or other documentation. When establishing membership thought could also be given to allowing proxy or delegated membership in the event that the designated member is unable to attend a meeting.

To increase the success of a collaborative arrangement it is useful to ensure that members of the group (either individually or collectively) possess the following capabilities: relationship management; project or contract management; policy development and legislative experience; negotiation and mediation skills; change and conflict management; communication and marketing; and records management. Training and exposure to a broad range of government work is also beneficial.

E. Accountability and budget structures

Early consideration of budget and accountability arrangements is essential to proper planning, resourcing and management of collaborative projects.

The alignment of decision making, accountability and performance management within traditional agency structures can inhibit the availability of shared rewards, outcomes and responsibilities, but there are ways of achieving this within existing budget structures. Currently, within the Tasmanian Government, a lead agency model is most commonly adopted, where one portfolio Minister and agency is given responsibility for coordinating a whole-of-government project, even where it might be a cross agency initiative. Budget funds are allocated to that agency. Usually the project will be governed by a structure such as an inter-departmental or steering committee.

A variation of the lead agency model can include funding being appropriated to a number of agencies, with a nominated lead agency being responsible for coordination and reporting on performance.

30 ibid, p 35.
31 ibid, p 31.
Other possible models include the following:

- a single or common outcome where agencies are jointly funded to deliver a specific outcome. Funding is targeted solely at the initiative, and cannot be used to fund other outcomes within participating agencies. Savings could be moved across portfolios, if necessary. Agencies develop separate outputs, but budget papers and annual reports identify linkages with the common outcome;
- a purchaser–provider arrangement where a lead agency purchases services from one or more agencies but remains accountable for the outcome towards which the activity contributes;
- a multi-agency package under which agencies can be appropriated with funds to achieve a common policy outcome, with no formal requirement for continuing coordination. Typically, this could relate to measures that are simply extensions of existing programs or initiatives.

Each of these models offers advantages and disadvantages. A single outcome approach ensures funding and performance information is easy to identify in budget documentation. However, it also means that accountability is diffuse, agencies have reduced flexibility to move funds to meet demand and rules need to be developed to govern treatment of savings.

Purchaser–provider arrangements afford clear accountability, which generally resides with a single Minister. However, accountability of the purchasing agency depends on the actions of other agencies. Lead agency and multi-agency arrangements provide maximum funding flexibility for agencies and clear accountability for elements of the package. However, accountability for delivery of the package as a whole is unclear and if a lead agency is not given leverage to determine reporting arrangements, funding and performance information is can be difficult to identify.

The Department of Treasury and Finance should be consulted at an early stage in the development of collaborative initiatives to ensure that the flexibility that there is in the existing budget process is maximised and used to facilitate shared responsibility.

F. Information sharing and communication

As collaborative approaches become more common in the way agencies conduct their business, information sharing plays a critical role in generating better decision making and program delivery. Joint agency activities call on different players to come together for different projects. The capacity and willingness to share information across systems is required by all agencies to improve productivity and ease of data transfer and exchanges.

Managing information well is important in collaborative working. Relevant skills range from document management through to strategic information management. If data sharing is occurring across agencies, data collection, filing and recovery need to be intuitive and easily discoverable.

The establishment and maintenance of clear lines of communication are vital in whole-of-government collaboration. When participating in the formal collaborative structures such as IDCs, clear terms of reference, agreement to a regular meeting schedule and the circulation and agreement to an agenda which outlines the objectives for the meeting can help to keep members focused on the outcomes and drive decision making. Supporting this, formal minutes and action lists allocating responsibility that are prepared and circulated in quick succession after the meeting helps keep the momentum and reminds members of their responsibilities. A dedicated secretariat position is a key element in ensuring that these functions are performed.

The tools used most frequently at present to aid collaborative working are email, direct phone calls and face-to-face meetings. Email is the most commonly utilised tool however there are limitations arising from using email. A continuing exponential rise in email traffic is a risk in collaborative working. Email can be unwieldy, open to misinterpretation and weigh people down with unnecessary volumes of information. Email is good for brief information and updates but used extensively can limit collaboration to a particular level or individual point of contact. Face-to-face meetings and direct phone calls are more effective collaborative tools.

35 ibid, p.60.
36 ibid, p.61.
37 ibid, p.52.
All agencies share the obligation to adopt a whole-of-government approach where it is necessary to achieve the outcomes the government is seeking. Which structure is used will depend on the nature of the task, its urgency, priority, level of contention and difficulty as well as the available resources. The key to remember when forming a collaborative arrangement is that the structure should be matched to the task. Choosing the appropriate model will reflect the timeframe over which the services are to be delivered, the policy roles of the principal partners, the scale of the task and whether it can be delivered at a marginal cost by an existing agency. There is no one size fits all approach to collaboration. There needs to be a range of organisational options available to deliver policies programs and services across organisational boundaries successfully.

Table 1 summarises the available options for collaborative structures and when they might be useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Useful when...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
<td>High level officials</td>
<td>Advising on a particular project. A group of high-level stakeholders who are responsible for providing high-level guidance on overall strategic direction. Significant issues are elevated to the Steering Committee for decision; these are generally high risk, high profile and complex issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdepartmental Committee (IDC)</td>
<td>Employees meet formally as representatives of their agencies, they are expected to speak with authority and seek clearance of positions in advance.</td>
<td>Tasked with coming up with a result i.e. a policy or a proposal for service delivery or a new piece of legislation. Decision making is by consensus and a record must be kept. IDCs may also be standing committees to coordinate the execution of established policies and provide a forum for formal consultations. Alternatively they may be ad hoc committees to tackle a particular issue or manage a particular event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Group</td>
<td>Relevant agency representatives with technical expertise — staff from policy or program areas</td>
<td>Collaborate with partners to implement policies and programs. Dedicated to producing a well-defined output within specific timeframes. Working-groups tend to have no life beyond the delivery of that particular output. These are often a sub-group of an IDC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taskforces</td>
<td>Members have time limits and objectives to provide a clear outcome, they bring their skills and experiences to joint problem solving — they are not there as representatives of agencies and may be drawn from outside the public service</td>
<td>Taskforces can be used for program development and service delivery. They are useful for policy development where the issue is a high priority for government, the problem is complex and creative solutions are required, and/or where there is contention across key stakeholders or within government. They often engage with a consultative IDC drawn from the affected agencies and can conduct consultations with community organisations. There are different levels of formality involved in setting up a taskforce, they may for example be used to describe the bringing of people together to work on a particular issue, involving one day a week of collaborative work offline from all other activities or short term secondments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops, Reference or Focus Groups</td>
<td>Relevant internal and external stakeholders</td>
<td>These tend to be more consultative rather than collaborative and are useful when attempting to gather stakeholder views on precise matters to feed into broader policy development processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Knowledgeable representative</td>
<td>An advisory committee is a group of volunteers that meets regularly on a long-term basis to provide advice and/or support to government directly or through another formal structure such as an IDC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In practice there are many challenges associated with collaboration across government. The absence of relationships across government, territorial attitudes and the focus on short term delivery may all hinder inter-agency collaboration. 43

Additional challenges to inter-agency collaboration may include:

• uncertainty around who will take responsibility for outcomes;
• difficulty in finding the right people to work with;
• a traditionally risk adverse culture;
• objectives relating to personal achievement, not collaborative achievement;
• uncertainty as to the tangible benefits to each party;
• administrative barriers in obtaining sign off to work collaboratively;
• tight timeframes; and
• budgetary considerations 44

Given that Tasmania is a relatively small jurisdiction, there is a real opportunity to utilise the networks and relationships that currently exist across agencies and develop a truly collaborative approach to solving difficult policy issues.

This paper outlines an approach to collaboration which, if applied, should lead to better outcomes for all Tasmanians in terms of improved policy development and service delivery.

All state service employees, at all levels of Government, are encouraged to think about how they can contribute to building a culture of collaboration across Government and apply the critical factors for collaborative success outlined in this document, to achieve improved outcomes for the State.

The approach outlined in this paper will also be complemented by a number of areas for further work as outlined in Annex 5. During 2010/11 an action plan will be developed covering a number of areas such as ensuring a commitment to collaboration, education, support and tools for collaboration.


Institute of Public Administration Australia, NSW State Conference 15 May 2003, Leadership and Integrated Governance: A Reader.


Annex 1 —
A Guide to Collaboration

What is the problem?

Is a collaborative approach necessary to address the problem?
- Would planning benefit from input from other agencies or their stakeholders?
- Will you need help from other agencies for program or service delivery?
- Will more than one agency be required to report on results achieved?

Answering yes to two or more of these questions indicates that it’s likely you have a whole-of-government project to manage.

How have the critical factors been addressed?

Leadership
- which agency(s) is/are going to lead?
- which Minister is responsible?
- who will champion this project from the top?
- who will lead / drive the group?
- is it clear which agency(s) is/are accountable?

Trust
- how are you going to build trust?

Shared Aims
- what is the group trying to achieve?
- is there a shared understanding of the aims
  and is this reflected in the terms of reference?
- have the benefits for each party been clearly articulated?

Membership
- is membership clearly defined?
- are all stakeholders represented?
- are members at the right level to make decisions on behalf of their agencies?
- will you have the requisite technical expertise?

Budget and Accountability
- are there dedicated resources for the work?
- is there Ministerial / Head of Agency support?
- have shared risks and rewards been identified?
- how will performance be monitored and evaluated?

Information Sharing
- have you agreed a process for sharing information
  eg. minutes and papers circulated X number of days before a meeting?
- who will be responsible for information management?

Have you got the most appropriate structure to solve your problem?
Inter-Agency Support Team

The Inter-Agency Support Team (IAST) program is an example of a whole-of-government collaborative model that provides timely, practical and multi-agency responses to support children, young people and their families who have multiple and complex needs. The program currently supports around 250 young people state-wide.

Although there has been no formal evaluation to date, information collected by Tasmania Police suggests that the IAST model is delivering a number of effective outcomes, including: positive interventions for young people and their families; improved collaboration, coordination and information sharing between government agencies; and an increased number of young people re-engaging with education and being diverted from the criminal justice system.

If the model is to continue to operate effectively as a whole-of-government collaborative strategy to support ‘at risk’ young people, consistent participation, trust, commitment, accountability and appropriate allocation of resources by other member agencies are necessary to ensure the success and sustainability of this collaborative model into the future.

Child and Family Centres

The purpose of Child and Family Centres is to improve the health and well being, education and care of Tasmania’s very young children by supporting parents and enhancing accessibility of services in the local community.

To do this effectively government agencies need to work together to offer services in new ways that cross departmental boundaries.

The integration of services and programs will take time, but there are already noticeable changes in the way that agencies are talking about working together to deliver services. This has been primarily driven by strong leadership, initially from the Premier and now from the Minister for Children, clear objectives, that are shared by agencies, and the good relationships that have been developed between members of the Committee overseeing the project.
**Service Tasmania**

Service Tasmania is an example of a highly successful collaborative project across the Tasmanian Government. Several reasons have been identified as to why the development and roll out of Service Tasmania worked so well. These include:

- the objectives were clear and easily understood;
- there was widespread interest and support in the community and the public service for the change;
- there was a single focus for the project; and
- it was a priority, led and supported at the highest level politically and bureaucratically for the lifespan of the project.

Leadership was a critical factor in the success for the project, particularly the strong endorsement by the Premier as the project was not merely focused on the development of a new service but using existing resources in a brand new way. Some agencies had to give up employees, space and physical resources such as cameras that take drivers’ licence photos and hand them over to a new system that had not yet proven itself.

While the political imperative for the development of Service Tasmania was unambiguous, there was at the same time a high degree of negotiation, cooperation and trust at all levels. This project utilised the collective skills and experience of the whole public service and its partners.
## Annex 3 — Goleman’s six leadership styles at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The leader’s modus operandi</th>
<th>Demands immediate compliance</th>
<th>Mobilizes people towards a vision</th>
<th>Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds</th>
<th>Forsgoes consensus through participation</th>
<th>Sets high standards for performance</th>
<th>Develops people for the future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The style in a phrase</td>
<td>‘do what I tell you’</td>
<td>‘come with me’</td>
<td>‘people come first’</td>
<td>‘what do you think?’</td>
<td>‘do as I do, now’</td>
<td>‘try this’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlying emotional</td>
<td>Drive to achieve, initiative, self-control</td>
<td>Self-confidence, empathy, change catalyst</td>
<td>Empathy, building relationships, communication</td>
<td>Collaboration, team leadership, communication</td>
<td>Conscientious, drive to achieve, initiative</td>
<td>Developing others, empathy, self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the style works best</td>
<td>In a crisis, to kick start a turnaround, or with problem employees</td>
<td>When changes require a new vision, or when a clear directive is needed</td>
<td>To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances</td>
<td>To build buy-in or consensus, or to get input from valuable employees</td>
<td>To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent team</td>
<td>To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall impact on climate</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Most strongly positive</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note** This table has been extracted from Goleman, D, 2000 ‘Leadership that gets results’, Harvard Business Review, p 7-8.
Annex 4 —
The Trust Building Loop

Reinforce trusting attitudes

Gain understanding for more ambitious collaboration

Aim for realistic (initially modest) but successful outcomes

Form expectations about the future of the collaboration

Have enough trust, be willing to be vulnerable and take a risk to initiate the collaboration

Note: This diagram has been extracted from Huxham, C and Vangen, S “Doing things collaboratively: Realising the Advantage or Succumbing to Inertia?” in O’Flynn J and Wanna, J (Eds), 2008, Collaborative Governance: A new era of public policy in Australia, p 34.
Annex 5 —
Possible Further Work

There is more work that can be done to achieve true collaboration across government. The table below is divided into tasks that could be achieved relatively quickly and some longer term activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining a commitment to collaboration across government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include a commitment to working collaboratively across government in all departmental strategic plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on collaboration in Heads of Agency and departmental leadership meetings e.g. strategic planning for collaborative projects and regular reports on progress of multi-agency initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a mechanism for attributing ministerial responsibility for collaborative projects where the issues cross multiple portfolio boundaries e.g. through the Strategic Policy and Projects Oversight Committee of Cabinet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include collaborative targets in performance agreements to recognise and value individual contributions to collaborative projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review current whole-of-government projects by applying the critical factors for success contained in the Tasmanian approach to collaboration to determine whether improvements could be made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies to consider other ways in which to implement the Tasmanian approach to collaboration e.g. incorporate into leadership and management training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education on the Tasmanian approach to collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribute the paper outlining the Tasmanian approach to collaboration to all government agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and provide promotional material to publicise the Tasmanian approach to collaboration within government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver sessions on the approach outlined in the paper for relevant officers within agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide ongoing advice and support to agencies leading collaborative projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools for collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct an audit or review of existing whole-of-government structures (for example steering committees, IDCs and working groups), identifying their membership, terms of reference, subject matter and secretariat contact, and sharing this information across government e.g. incorporating into government directory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Longer Term Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Obtaining a commitment to collaboration across government | Amend the Tasmanian *State Service Act* (2000) to include reference to collaboration e.g. a core function of the SES under the Commonwealth *Public Service Act* (1999) is to ‘promote co-operation with other Agencies’ (s 35(2)(b)).  
Develop performance measures for the Policy Division to measure the impact of the Collaboration approach.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Education on the Tasmanian approach to collaboration | Develop a training course through the training consortium for State Service Employees in the Tasmanian approach to collaboration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Support for collaboration                           | Consider non-financial mechanisms to better acknowledge and reward those involved in collaborative projects e.g. ensuring adequate time is allocated in an individual’s work plan for collaborative projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Tools for collaboration                             | Develop better information and communication systems to enable data sharing and information exchange.  
Improve directory facilities across government e.g. incorporating an individual’s speciality topics as a search field.  
Consider mechanisms for sharing examples of successful collaborative projects across agencies e.g. password accessed collaboration Intranet.  
Consider on-line mechanisms for collaboration (e.g. on-line think tank).  
Consider alternative budget models to facilitate joint responsibility and shared risks and rewards for collaborative projects.  
Dedicate resource allocation and incentives to support collaborative initiatives.  
Develop a Cabinet Minute template for collaborative projects. |