

Review of Tasmania's State Service

Initial Consultation Paper - September 2020



Publisher:
Department of Premier and Cabinet

ISBN:
978-1-925906-15-8

Date:
September 2020

© Crown in Right of the State of Tasmania September 2020



Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
ABOUT THE REVIEW	5
Review Timelines	6
Consultation and Opportunities for Input	7
Similar Reviews	8
Further information.....	8



Introduction

The Tasmanian State Service (the TSS) is an essential part of the lives of all Tasmanians. It delivers the services, support and advice that they need, day in and day out.

Tasmanians expect a TSS that is efficient and effective and that delivers for them. Tasmanian governments rightly have a similar expectation. The experience of COVID-19 has further highlighted the critical nature of a well-performing, highly capable and flexible public service. Finally, the world has changed irreversibly in response to COVID-19.

The challenges the TSS faces are already significant. They are likely to increase over time with new technologies, ever greater flows of information, heightened community expectations and constrained resources.

All of the Australian public services face similar, but far from identical, challenges. To help meet them, to ensure their public services are best equipped to do so, several Australian governments have recently commissioned major, independent reviews of their services. Others have undertaken major pieces of internal work. There has also been major review work in New Zealand.

The Review of the TSS will perform a similar function for Tasmania, with the additional consideration of lessons learned from COVID-19. It will provide a road map that, if implemented, will help the TSS continue to provide the Government, and Tasmanians, with the services, support and advice that is essential for all Tasmanians' wellbeing, now and in the future.



About the Review

Since the *State Service Act 2000* (the TSS Act) was developed in the late 1990s, there has not been a full review of the structure, employment arrangements or approach to the TSS. To ensure that the TSS is fit-for-purpose, both today and into the future, the Review will identify practical improvements that ensure it can best support Tasmanians over the coming decades.

Dr Ian Watt AC has been appointed as the Independent Reviewer to conduct the Review. Dr Watt AC has significant experience in public service leadership, having worked at the highest level of the Australian Public Service.

Dr Watt AC will be considering nine Key Focus Areas as determined by the Review's Terms of Reference as well as comments provided on the Draft Terms of Reference made up to 31 January 2020. The Terms of Reference were amended on 4 September 2020 to include consideration of lessons from the COVID-19 response and to update the reporting timelines. The nine focus areas for the Review are:

Facilitating public service change and innovation that improves the delivery of public policy and services to support the aims of government and meet the needs of the community

Identifying opportunities to improve the delivery of government services, programs, projects and other initiatives, including information technology platforms

Identifying ways to promote collaboration and partnerships including to support more flexible movement of employees between the private sector, non-government and community organisations, and the public sector

Achieving greater economies and efficiencies in TSS administration, including opportunities to streamline bureaucracy and services where suitable

Examining the effectiveness and efficiency of government services, including the appropriateness and feasibility of further decentralisation

Facilitating areas of cultural change within the TSS (e.g. promoting risk-based decision making, increasing diversity, promoting innovation, improving accountability and identifying ways to enhance performance)

Identifying ways to help develop the long-term capability and agility of the TSS

Implementing enhanced workforce management processes across the employee life cycle, including opportunities to implement improvements to how the TSS recognises, develops and manages employee performance

Attracting, developing and retaining a skilled public sector workforce with the capacity to meet emerging economic, social, environmental and technological opportunities and challenges

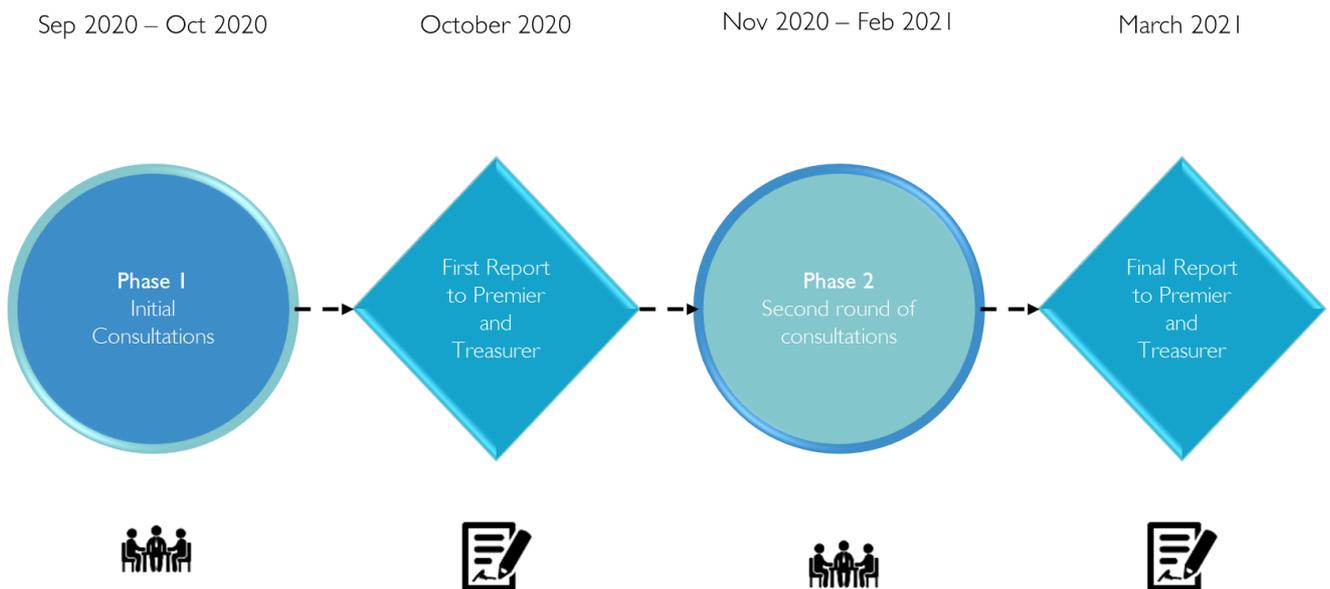
Review Timelines

Dr Watt AC will provide two Reports to the Premier and Treasurer. The First Report will be provided by 31 October 2020 with a Final Report due by 31 March 2021.

The Review will be conducted in two phases. Each phase will include opportunities for consultation by interested persons and organisations. The first phase of consultations will be conducted in September and October 2020 which will inform the development of the First Report.

This First Report will focus on how the TSS can more effectively contribute to the Tasmanian recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, and on setting the direction for further examination in the March 2021 Final Report. Some early recommendations on service improvements will be made.

A further opportunity for consultation will be available between November 2020 and February 2021, which will inform the final Review Report.



Consultation and Opportunities for Input

The first phase of consultation is now open. There will be opportunities for meetings with the Project Team and the Independent Reviewer. Submissions are strongly encouraged to enable the Independent Reviewer to better understand issues raised and suggestions made.

Submissions and feedback should consider any or all of the nine Focus Areas to ensure they are best able to inform the Review. Suggestions on changes and improvements to the TSS and lessons learned during the COVID-19 response are also encouraged. All feedback is important and every submission will be considered.

Submissions for consideration in the first phase of consultations will close on 9 October 2020. There will be a further opportunity for submissions later in the year.

HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

Submissions can be made by:

Email: StateServiceReview@dpac.tas.gov.au (preferred)

Mail: GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001

The Project Team can be contacted on (03) 6232 7020 with any questions about the Review, how to make a submission or the consultation period.

Consistent with Tasmanian Government policy, all submissions will be routinely published on the Review's webpage. If you would like your submission treated as confidential, whether in whole or in part, please clearly state this when making a submission, along with the reasons why. Confidential submissions will not be published.

Submissions containing defamatory or offensive material will not be published, in whole or in part. Submissions that include information that could enable the identification of other individuals, either all or in parts, will not be published.

Copyright in submissions remains with the author/s, not with the Tasmanian Government.

Similar Reviews

Challenge, change and a concern about the ability of public services to meet them, has recently led a number of Australian governments to commission broad brush review of their public services. For example, the review of the Australian Public Service and the review of the Western Australian Public Sector Reform. Further information on these reviews can be found at:

<https://www.apsreview.gov.au>

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/public-sector-reform>

As indicated above, while the challenges and context do differ, as do the Terms of Reference for the Tasmanian State Service Review from both the Commonwealth and Western Australian reviews, there are similarities that are worth considering. Interested stakeholders may find these reviews informative, noting they were conducted in a pre-COVID-19 world.

Further information

Further information about the Review can be found at the Review webpage:

http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/policy/review_of_the_tasmanian_state_service or by contacting the Review Project Team on the details above.