

AUSTRALASIAN EVALUATION SOCIETY

Canberra Chapter

HOT ISSUES BREAKFAST:

Australian Government Reforms: Implications for evaluation

Thursday May 6, 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Belmore Annex, Brassey Hotel, Belmore Gardens, Barton
Cost: \$20 for members (includes hot breakfast)

The next members' networking event will focus on the recently released Moran report *Ahead of the Game: Blueprint for the Reform of Australian Government Administration* and its implications for evaluation. The recently released report is available at: http://www.dpmc.gov.au/publications/aga_reform/aga_reform_blueprint/index.cfm.

The report's positive discussion of the importance of evaluation raises significant opportunities for the discipline of evaluation.

This breakfast will be chaired by Susan Garner. Susan is the Chair of the Canberra Chapter of the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) and the previous past convenor of the AES International Conference: Evidence *and* Evaluation that was held in the nation's capital in September 2009. Susan heads up the evaluation practice in Grosvenor Management Consulting. Susan's background in evaluation covers health and social policy sectors. As a past policy and program manager in the Australian Public Service, Susan is very interested in the nexus between evaluation and the proposed reforms of the APS.

Because of the significant interest in the previous breakfast, and the anticipated popularity of this topic, this event is being held in a private room rather than at a café.

We have booked the Belmore Annex to hold the May Hot Issues Breakfast. The subsidised cost to members for attendance is \$20 which will cover a full breakfast buffet and room hire.

RSVP

Please RSVP to Susan Garner at susangarner@grosvenor.com.au or 6274 2248 by COB Monday May 3, as space will be limited. If after booking you are unable to attend, please let Susan know, so we can provide the spot to another member.

Venue

Belmore Annex, Brassey Hotel, Belmore Gardens, Barton

A map of the venue is attached

Parking

Parking is available at both the Macquarie Street and Belmore Gardens entrances.

About the topic

The proposed direction of the APS reforms to transform the APS into a strategic, forward organisation with an 'intrinsic culture of evaluation and innovation' are outlined in *Ahead of the Game, Blueprint for the Reform of Australian Government Administration* (March 2010). The four areas of reform (summarised) are:

- Forging stronger relationships with citizens
- Strengthening the capacity of the public services to undertake rigorous research, gather and analyse data and provide the highest-quality strategic policy advice
- Investing in capability with a repositioned APSC to provide expertise, guidance and performance monitoring
- Focus on efficiency and quality and performance improvement.

Throughout the report there are numerous references to evaluation and related topics such as performance measurement and research.

For example:

[the reforms] put in place data collection measures to build a robust evidence base for future evaluations. (Exec summary, p. ix)

The goal is to transform the APS into a strategic, forward looking organisation, with an intrinsic culture of evaluation and innovation. (Final sentence of executive summary, p. xi)

Over time, citizen feedback also improves the data available for future evaluations of public service performance. (p.17)

Actions to [strengthen strategic policy include] ... a policy tool kit, developed by PM&C in consultation with agencies, that provides guidance on strategic thinking, problem definition, stakeholder engagement, data analysis, project management, implementation, regulation, design and evaluation. (p.42)

Future breakfast meetings

Further topics are planned for coming months:

- Thursday June 3: Evaluation Ethics (chaired by Stephen Horn)
- Thursday July 1: (tentative) internal versus external evaluation

Any suggestions for future topics, or expressions of interest to chair them, will be welcome. Chairs get a free breakfast! Please forward any suggestions to Graham Smith at grahamsmith@bigblue.net