

The Secretary  
Advisory Group on Reform of Australian Government Administration  
Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet  
PO Box 6500  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

30<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Dear Secretary

**SUBMISSION to the Advisory Group on the Reform of the Australian Government  
Administration: *Building the world's best public service***

Thank you for providing the opportunity to make a submission to the review.

The CSIRO Section (CSIRO Staff Association) of the Community and Public Sector Union (PSU Group) covers employees predominantly not in the APS, however this submission highlights issues on behalf of our members in the CSIRO, Anglo-Australian Observatory, and National Measurement Institute.

This is not a comprehensive submission as the full submission of the Community and Public Sector Union (PSU Group) is supported by the CSIRO Staff Association.

We hereby highlight the following matters for consideration by the Advisory Group:

1. The Advisory Group should place a greater focus on innovation and open policy including an emphasis on relevant proposals in the Cutler review of the national innovation system.
2. That the Charters of non-APS science and research agencies be strengthened by defining a framework for open and transparent policy advice into the APS and to government.
3. Immediate improvements to technology and culture must occur to facilitate more open access and information sharing between the APS and non-APS science and research agencies. This is critical to addressing key policy challenges in areas such as climate change, water, and energy.
4. Evidence-based policy making between APS and non-APS science and research agencies requires greater data sharing, open debates and new opportunities for staff participation across agencies.
5. Staff should be supported to develop skills in innovative practices including participatory e-technology platforms (e.g. Web 2.0). These platforms can be applied to improve policy formulation and integration including in new initiatives such as 'strategic policy hubs'.

6. An additional domain focussing on open access should be added to the four domains for excellence (page 20 of Advisory Group report) required for high quality, forward looking and creative policy formulation.
7. Barriers to collaboration involving non-APS science and research agencies include overly risk-averse, distrustful and hierarchical management approaches to information dissemination and internal debates on evidence and policy formulation.
8. Overly risk-averse management approaches to information dissemination and internal debates fail to sufficiently recognise the alternate risks that can arise associated with political and public perceptions of censorship.
9. Mobility between APS and non-APS science and research agencies could be improved with more consistent agency capability planning and cross-agency communication.
10. Poor implementation of agency-specific processes and systems, including areas such as procurement and ICT infrastructure, absorbs resources that could be more effectively allocated to improving capabilities and training and development of staff.

Some of the above matters also pertain to the Advancing Public Sector Innovation project however they should be considered as part of the mainstream of the APS and in any proposal for reform of Australian Government Administration.

Your sincerely,

Sam Popovski  
Secretary  
CSIRO Staff Association