

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
GOVERNMENT AND NON GOVERNMENT  
SECTORS: THE CASE OF TASMANIA**

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Philosophy

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The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

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**ACOSS- Australian Council of Social Services**

**APS – Australian Public Service**

**ASF – Agency Sector Forum**

**CSO - Community Sector Organisation**

**DCHS – Department of Community and Health Services**

**DHHS – Department of Health and Human Services**

**DPAC – Department of Premier and Cabinet**

**NPM - New Public Management**

**NGO - Non Government Organisation**

**NCP – National Competition Policy**

**RCAGA- Royal Commission Australian Government  
Administration**

**TasCOSS – Tasmanian Council of Social Services**

**The Plan – Tasmania’s Community Services Industry Plan**

**TPA – Trade Practices Act**

**TSS- Tasmanian State Service**

**UK - United Kingdom**

**NZ- New Zealand**



## ABSTRACT

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The role of Government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been dynamic and is rapidly changing beyond conventional understandings of public administration. Widespread reform to public administration across most developed countries has occurred, with Australia no exception. Whilst changes driven under 'new public management' (NPM) are well covered within public administration literature its transformation has not been limited to these restructuring efforts.

This thesis examines the mechanisms available for actors and non-government organisations to participate in the policy process. In doing so it considers whether bureaucratic traditions are fundamentally resistant to consultative changes. Despite the span of literature on the increasing use of consultation in policy making, there is limited applied investigation of consultative changes. This thesis bridges the gap between theoretical understandings of consultation and its practice. In doing so it provides critical scrutiny of the challenges and barriers facing government and non-government sectors.

Tasmania's Health and Community Sector provides an illuminating example of the challenges facing government and non-government organisations. This sector has undergone significant changes in the business of policy-making with several attempts made by the State to move towards partnership style arrangements. In doing so policy makers in both government and non-government sectors have faced significant challenges as they move into a new realm of policy making, one where each sector is increasingly reliant on working with the other.

Overwhelmingly this thesis illustrates significant challenges and barriers faced in the new policy paradigm. Whilst consultation has indeed brought forward higher levels of trust and reciprocity in the policy process, there remain significant structural barriers to an effective working relationship. Key issues include organisational memory and long term policy planning. The case of Tasmania illustrates that consultation appears to be embraced in spirit if not in practice. These findings provide significant lessons to policy making; lessons not simply confined to Tasmania. With governance increasingly perceived as a 'balancing act' between government and community sectors, the findings of this dissertation are noteworthy. This thesis highlights challenges facing consultation and collaboration between these two sectors.



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