

ICA 40th Conference
The Challenges & Issues of WOG
Brainstorming Networking Session: Group 3
Moderator: Ann Steward, Australia

Thank you to Group number 3 for their very active participation this afternoon.

On question one, what is whole of government? We had a very good and broad discussion but the areas that we've highlighted here are the ones that we feel will be the major points that we want to share with you. And the first component of that is that this is collaboration, its around a cultural change, it's a very significant move away from it being looked at as technology, it required cultural change. It will require all of the participants to actually take off their individual agencies' hats and look at this from the perspective of what does the citizen want from the whole of government, not just from the individual agency. So it's not a siloed approach, its horizontal, picking up the vertical where that's necessary for a particular service offering.

Importantly, when government undertakes a whole of government approach, it will be critical that we don't lose sight of what might have already occurred out in the private sector, and wherever possible for us to take account of that and lessons learned from it.

Equally, there was an important recognition when we talk whole of government, do we talk whole of government at all the levels or at only some of the levels? Question two, we were asked to identify what would a whole of government look like in five years time? And I think the primary thing from a citizen's perspective is that it will meet the individual's needs, both efficiently and with a much better understanding of what the individuals needs really are. So much more personalisation and having that reflected back in any of the service offers that come from government.

As we also progress over the five-year period, we won't have achieved all of this, we will have made progress but there will be much greater clarity around the services that will be available, and how to achieve them. It also won't be based on the citizen becoming to government asking for information or seeking a service, there will be many more natural triggers for where a service will be available, and this builds on examples that we have already heard, in particular some countries where there are, through the information that the government already has, tax returns won't have to be lodged because the government already holds the information and has a good understanding of the individuals. So that will become a growing feature over that five-year period. And we very much supported our colleagues from Finland in the comment that we would hope by a five year period from now that there will be a much more self-serviced approach, in other words no services actually needed I've been able to find where I need to get the things to help me in what I'm doing on a day to day basis.

From a business perspective, we saw that there would be a significant reduction in red tape, and therefore would have a significant positive impact on any business operation. It would have a reduction in cost in the way in which business would be interacting with government having to undertake reports to government, and the like. Equally, we saw that there would be opportunities for new business activities to be generated, those that we may never have understood or thought possible but that could be created from the various interactions. There may be new intermediaries that would be operating in the marketplace, bridging the service between what had been a traditional government entity and the business.

We also reference back to what we could, for many of our participants in the last three days, around the important foundation building blocks of transparency and trust. And we expected

that there would be greater transparency both from what the government would be offering to either to the citizen or business, and what they could expect of government in return. But we didn't think that would be uniform across all tiers of government but it would be maturing. I think it was fair to say that there would be still a healthy level of cynicism existing toward government, both from the citizen's perspective as well as business. The third question was, what are the challenges? What are the challenges that are going to be faced by government as we try and move forward and adopt and implement a more whole of government approach? And again, there were many areas but the ones that we've highlighted we feel they will probably have prominence. It will require ongoing organisation and structural changes to occur but they will be, as a means to an end, it's not just around changing a structure and you will therefore naturally have a positive process.

Through a broader whole of government approach we feel that there will be demands for, expectations of, and the need to deliver much greater accountability. We heard yesterday about the growing use of information through the social networking and that will only grow. We saw that the continuing demands in bridging digital divide will be a feature and that won't go away, it will be a continuing challenge for all governments but I think particularly for those governments that are maturing, and the nations that are maturing into very sound economic positions.

In recognition of a vast amount of information that will be available in the way in which governments are already enhancing their levels of security, and their obligations in terms of securing both information data and access that there will be important contributions that will be made and need to be maintained. And that goes also to an understanding of who else may be in the service delivery chain and who will have access and authority over either the information, the data or the service.

The next main question that we were asked to consider is what is the business case for whole of government? Why would you invest in it? And I think, in preparing anything that we would take for to government, it was solidly hooked on in reference to user satisfaction. And therefore through heightened users' satisfaction there would be a growing trust in government and therefore a greater drive to applying extended services under that whole of government banner.

Now the more mobile workforce really, in this context, was around the challenges that will come through adopting a whole of government, that there would need to be greater opportunities for mobility and flexibility in the workforce of the future to be able to respond to a different way of providing a service. No doubt, governments will also be looking for efficiency, either through downsizing or reducing duplicated services.

And the final question that we were looking at, what recommendations do we have for any government on adopting a whole of government approach. Well, we thought we would like to champion what ICA is about, because that's what we do in 25 different national governments, in looking at things from a whole of government approach as well. Critical to any of the arrangements that might be put in place is to have identifiable, the national leader to champion that. Now a national leader, either through the elected government or within the administration, the individual who is the champion in applying that, not just from a technology perspective but across the administration as a whole. We didn't feel that the CIO, in their own separate role, would be able to be the single champion, they would be a companion champion in support of and in working in collaboration with the leader.

And again, of the reference back to some of the other presentations that we've had over the last two days, in particular to our colleagues from Canada in looking at what might need to be undertaken is discrimination between those things that you can actually do in common, and would naturally fit and fold into common and collaborative ways of working, to those things that we could potentially cluster together to make it a more joined up, more holistic service

offer or those things that we could do, perhaps in a more removed, more broadly aligned manner. But don't forget that we will always need to be able to give access to those who are experts in this field and therefore be able to come down through a vertical process wherever required to get to that authoritative source.

In adopting whole of government, critical to establish review points, and to ensure that it remains fit for the time, fit for the future. And our closing comment was this is not about technology and being driven by technology, this is around a cultural change and understanding the role of technology within that. It won't be achieved in a short term, this will take five to seven years. Thank you.