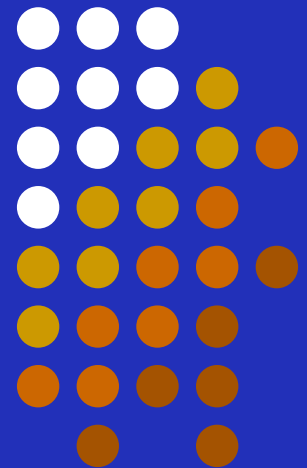
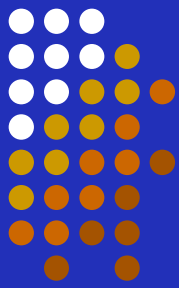


Enhancing Quality and Capability in the Public Sector Advisory System

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Government (ANZSOG)



Policy Analysis and Advising

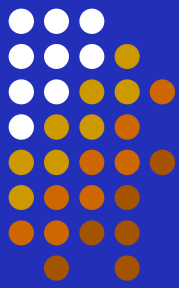


- Policy analysis is applied decisionmaking
- Analysts are designers who assist decisionmakers to address ‘problems’ and ‘opportunities’
- policy work is multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary – involves contesting views and values
- Westminster systems promote an apolitical advisory system which provides ‘free and frank’ advice
- Advisers have the skills to advise both current and future governments



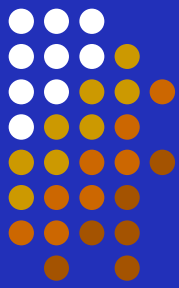


How has the value of policy advice been judged?



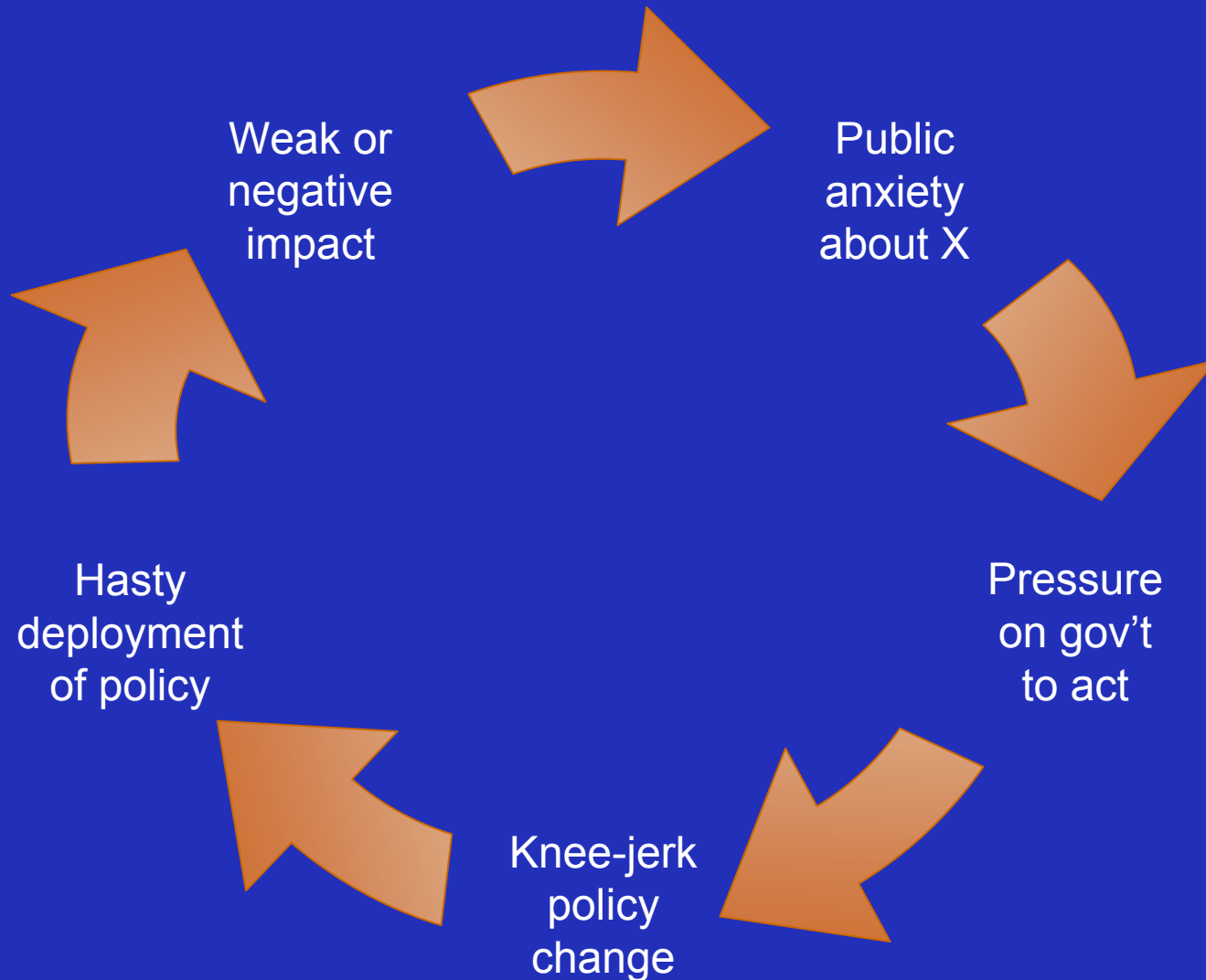
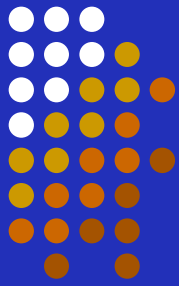
- Traditionally, by quality of inputs and processes – focus on Ministerial satisfaction/public acceptability; no surprises (anticipatory);
- Degree to which a department or ministry has a consistent and aligned approach to issues;
- Successful coordination and response to new directions and priorities;
- Evidence-based/informed;
- Are there professional standards/benchmarking that can be used to assess this?

Changing Context for Policy Advising

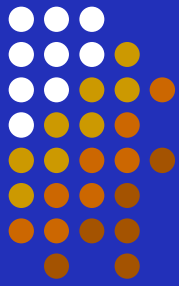


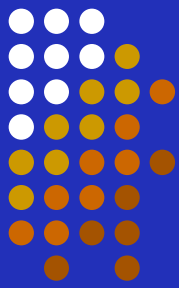
- More unstable and contested policy and political environment;
- ‘wicked issues’; new paradigms and ideologies;
- Rising public expectations that government will cater for diversity and tailor solutions;
- Less confidence and trust between Ministers and advisers; MMP environment means more negotiation on issues;

The challenge of eliminating the policy 'panic cycle'



...which can lead to a crisis management cycle, rather than a learning cycle





Declining Capability?

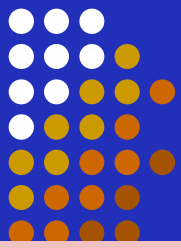
Is the public sector system more constrained and risk averse?

Is the institutional knowledge of the public sector and its independence valued?

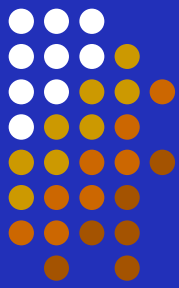
Is there a decline in trust between Ministers and public sector analysts; relation to growth of political advisers?

Is there a migration from Westminster to Washminster?

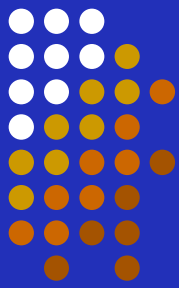
Free and Frank Advice?



Are these requirements changing?



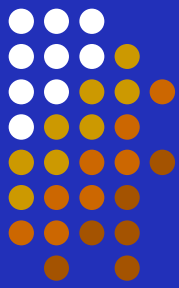
- Generic or departmental/sectoral specific;
- Balance of in-house or contracted out advice;
- Need for internal think tanks or expanded R&D capability;
- Recruitment and retention issues for policy advisers; excessive focus on management and generic attributes?
- Need for new ways of producing policy (eg more relating outwards as well as upward) – a more open systems approach



Behm et al Value-creating analysis

- More about capability issues
- Too much focus on 'responsive transactional core competency factors; not enough on strategic transformational pro-active factors:
eg, political savvy; proactive; alert to best thinking; vision; partnership between customer and service provider; willingness to market government's policy
- Whole of government ways of working



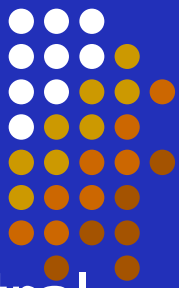


The hypothesis?

- Are these problems about Changing Demand or the Nature and Quality of Advice and Services required from Public Servants?
- Are the ‘problems’ and ‘opportunities’ about gaps in skills, competencies, capacity, capabilities?
- Are ‘problems’ about shortages of individuals or more about culture, behaviours, systems, structures?







What are some alternatives?

- Monitoring and evaluation – internally, by central agencies, or through audit;
- More benchmarking with similar agencies;
- Are better systems of feedback from decision-makers needed?
- Does Public Sector system of advice need more ‘room to explore’, ‘take risks’, opportunities for reflection; more direct involvement of ‘outsiders’; more diversity within?
- Are ‘decisionmakers’ contributing to the capability/quality issues?

UK Capability Review Wheel

