

**Media Release:**

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## **Latest Research shows some progress in Governments using Evidence Based Policy principles**

For the third year running, independent research undertaken by two philosophically opposed Right and Left think tanks finds that basic standards of evidence and consultation-based policy making are only loosely followed by Australian federal and state governments. Nevertheless, there was an improvement on last year's results.

Averaging the two think tanks total scores for each case study from 2020 shows that nine cases received solid scores (between 7.0 and 9.5) while 2 got unacceptable scores (below 5.0). The remaining 9 received mediocre scores (between 5.0 and 6.5).

An important variation on previous research is that this year eight of the case studies involved how well governments made decisions in response to a national emergency (Covid-19). This required modifying the standard Wiltshire 'business case' criteria for assessing the quality of government policymaking in 'normal' times to dealing with a 'crisis' demanding urgent decisions.

The Project's research was undertaken by the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), a self-described 'free-market' think tank and Per Capita Australia, a self-labelled 'progressive' think tank. The two think tanks jointly selected the 20 case studies to examine with each organisation preparing its own report before comparing results and reconciling any differences over public information (e.g. Were alternative policy options considered? Were stakeholders consulted?). In 16 of the case studies, the two think tanks gave the same or similar score. In four case studies the scoring difference between the think tanks was 2 points.

### **Research Project's Focus**

The research was commissioned by the newDemocracy Foundation (nDF), a non-partisan organisation that seeks ways "we can do democracy better". This year it was fully funded by the Susan McKinnon Foundation, which underwrites better policy governance projects.

The research project's Steering Committee - which includes people experienced in business, public and social affairs - such as Glenn Barnes, Peter Shergold, Verity Firth, Martin Stewart-Weeks, Carol Mills and Percy Allan – said the research again demonstrated the need for all major political parties to publicly commit to evidence-based and inclusive engagement processes for making major policy decisions of government.

Each think tank separately benchmarked the same 20 federal and state government policies against ten attributes of good decision making identified by Professor Kenneth Wiltshire AO, the J. D. Story Professor of Public Administration at the University of Queensland Business School. Four of these criteria were modified for those case studies involving urgent emergency policy responses. Professor Wiltshire, Martin Stewart-Weeks and Percy Allan served on the Research Project's Editorial Panel which reviewed the work of each think tank, but each think decided the final content of its report.

The Wiltshire criteria focus on good process, not results, because the net fiscal, social, economic and environmental impact of a policy may not be known for a long time. The think tank reports' findings involve judgements only about the way a legislated policy was made, not whether it was good or bad policy per se.

However, Professor Wiltshire reiterated what he has said previously:

*“My research over nearly four decades suggests that good policy processes result in better outcomes than decisions made without a strong evidence base and close consultation with stakeholders.”*

An exception to this might be where a policy needs to be made on the run such as in bushfire, flood, earthquake or pandemic crises where less time is available to design the policy carefully.

The think tanks relied on publicly available information for each case study's assessment criteria since a government's final policy decision should have transparent underpinnings.

There was joint agreement that the policies that came closest to an ideal decision-making process were the Queensland Personalised Transport Ombudsman and the Federal My Health Record which received average total scores of 9.5 and 9.0 respectively. The Federal Client Rights to Bank Data Bill also scored highly at 8.5. Acceptable scores of between 7.0 and 7.5 were achieved by the Federal JobKeeper and COVIDSafe measures, the Victorian Gender Equality Bill, the NSW Abortion Law Reform Bill, the Victorian Wage Theft Bill and the Queensland Child Death Review Bill.

The lowest scored case studies were the Federal Repeal of Medevac Bill and the Victorian Free TAFE provisions which respectively averaged total scores of 3.0 and 3.5 out of 10.0.

Sam Mellett, Director of Susan McKinnon Foundation which funded the project said:

*“The events of 2020 have demonstrated the critical importance of good public policy. Some nations around the world will come out of 2020 in a far better position than others due to the decision making of their governments. Rigorous policy development processes help build trust in times of crisis and also ultimately deliver better outcomes. “*

Percy Allan who chairs the project's Steering Committee said:

*“Governments repeatedly get into in trouble because of a faulty decision-making process. To avoid that trap they should adopt good policy making steps as proposed by the Wiltshire criteria. That would ensure real evidence and consultation-based policies to win the public's trust.*

*“Good process leads to good policy which in turn makes for good politics. That's clear from the 60 case studies we have now completed over the last three years. Politicians should heed the lessons from our case studies if they want to restore credibility with an increasingly jaded electorate”*

Iain Walker of newDemocracy that commissioned the work said:

*“It's important that we keep looking at process innovations which will help Australia make genuinely long-term public decisions, and for the public to trust that their money is spent based on process, not political whim. After three years, seeing two thinktanks with quite different viewpoints repeatedly reaching closely aligned assessments regarding the quality of process being followed highlights the non-partisan applicability of the Wiltshire Criteria.”*

## Research Project's New Findings, 2020

The research project's Steering Committee ranked the main findings of the two think tanks as follows, after averaging their total scores for each case study.

### Excellent Process (2)

- Qld Personalised Transport Ombudsman 9.5
- Fed My Health Record 9.0

### Sound Process (1)

- Fed Client Rights to Bank Data 8.5

### Acceptable Process (6)

- Fed JobKeeper 7.5
- Fed COVIDSafe 7.5
- Vic Gender Equality Bill 7.5
- NSW Abortion Law Reform 7.0
- Vic Wage Theft Bill 7.0
- Qld Child Death Review Bill 7.0

### Mediocre Process (9)

- Victorian Invoking of Emergency Powers\* 6.5
- Fed Funding Childcare 6.0
- NSW Invoking of Emergency Powers\* 6.0
- NSW Music Festivals Bill 6.0
- NSW Right to Farm Bill 6.0
- Qld Invoking of Emergency Powers\* 6.0
- Qld Police Discipline Reform Bill 5.5
- Fed Early Release of Superannuation 5.5
- Fed HomeBuilder Grant 5.0

### Unacceptable Process (2)

- Vic Free TAFE Provisions 3.5
- Fed Repeal of Medevac Bill 3.0

\*Note that the invoking of state emergency powers did not include the execution of such powers (see first question in Appendix 1, Frequently Asked Questions - FAQs),

Case studies where the individual total scores by each think tank differed by two points were the Federal HomeBuilder Grant, Queensland's Use of Emergency Powers, Victoria's Wage Theft Bill and the NSW Music Festivals Bill. In all other cases the total scores for each case study were either the same or differed by just one point,

Of the 200 criteria marked in the 20 case studies the think tanks had identical scores on 178 criteria and differed in judgement on only 22. As with previous year's research it was reassuring that experts from both a Right and Left think tank could broadly agree on which legislated policies had been well formulated and which had not even though they did not necessarily agree on the policy prescriptions.

This suggests that standardising public policy making to accord more closely to recognised best practice (such as meeting the Wiltshire ‘business case’ criteria) could remove much of the distrust and discord in Australian politics. Indeed, those policy case studies that largely followed good process seemed to fare better politically than those that only partially adhered to it.

The two reports showed that Australian political processes overall provide transparency so that the public is aware of differing political views on a policy. For example, with JobKeeper, there was parliamentary consideration of the Labor opposition’s view that a wider group should be eligible, although this was not agreed by the Parliament. This strengthens the public’s trust in decision-making because the alternative was aired and considered.

As with previous years’ case studies the research found that most scope for improvement in ‘normal’ policy-making was comparing the costs and benefits of alternative policy options, explaining how a policy decision would be rolled out and issuing a Green Paper to invite public feedback before announcing a policy decision in a White paper.

For ‘emergency’ policymaking the research suggests that governments should give more attention to weighing up alternative options and methods, disclosing key data and consulting recognised experts in the subject matter before deciding a particular course of action.

## Research Project’s Consolidated Findings, 2018-2020

The results of the sixty case studies undertaken so far over the last three years suggest a solid process was followed in 21 of them by the governments involved. In 14 cases the ratings were well below par. In the balance of cases the process quality was mediocre. See table below.

Policy Decision-Making Process	Think Tanks’ Average Score out of 10 Test Criteria	2018 Case Studies Number	2019 Case Studies Number	2020 Case Studies Number	2018-20 Total Case Studies Number	2018-20 Percentage Share %
<b>Acceptable, Sound or Excellent</b>	7 - 10 criteria satisfied	6	6	9	<b>21</b>	<b>35.0%</b>
<b>Mediocre</b>	5 - 6.5 criteria satisfied	10	6	9	<b>25</b>	<b>41.7%</b>
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Under 5 criteria satisfied	4	8	2	<b>14</b>	<b>23.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

The think tanks’ total scores on the ten Wiltshire criteria for the 60 case studies to date were remarkably similar in 48 cases (either identical or only one-point difference). In the remaining 12 cases the difference was two-points. See table below.

Total Score Differences	2018 Case Studies Number	2019 Case Studies Number	2020 Case Studies Number	2018-20 Total Case Studies Number	2018-20 Percentage Share %
<b>None</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>36.7%</b>
<b>1 point</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>43.3%</b>

<b>2 points</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>3 points</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Comments on Research Project Findings, 2020

John Roskam, Director of The Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) noted:

*"Good policy process which is based on sound evidence and consultation with all affected stakeholders in the community is fundamental to Australia's liberal democratic form of governance.*

*"Too often policy in Australia is based on short-term interests, decided on the run, and lacks a credible evidence base which leads to poorly designed, ineffective, and costly implementation."*

Emma Dawson, Executive Director of Per Capita Australia stated:

*"Per Capita was pleased to contribute again to the Evidence-based Policy Project in an extraordinary year. Despite the need for urgent policy decisions in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains important that changes to Australia's legislative and regulatory system, at both state and federal government levels, are based on sound evidence and, as far as possible, adhere to established processes.*

*"These principles will be even more important as we grapple with the task of rebuilding our society in the months and years ahead, which will require significant and far-reaching policy decisions to reset our economy. We look forward to continuing this valuable research in collaboration with the project secretariat and the Institute of Public Affairs."*

Carol Mills, Director, Institute for Public Policy and Governance, University of Technology Sydney said:

*"The sheer range of case studies reviewed for this year's report is a salient reminder of the breadth of impact government policy decisions have on our businesses and communities. They also illustrate why a robust and transparent policy making process is so important. It not only leads to better decisions, but also improves community confidence in those decisions. This annual project is particularly effective as both a means of assessing process improvements and of demonstrating why that matters."*

Professor Peter Shergold, AC FRSN, Chancellor of Western Sydney University, said:

*"At a time when democratic governance is becoming increasingly tribalistic, it's heartening to see two respected Australian think tanks, with very different agendas, reaching across the political divide in their shared commitment to good public policy processes."*

Glenn Barnes, a company director and co-chair of the Citizens for Democratic Renewal remarked:

*"Australians are blessed to live in a country rated as one of the best liberal democracies. That said, our governance processes are falling short when it comes to consistently and transparently developing the 'common good policy that the majority can live with' – and public trust in the system is in long term decline.*

*"If our governments, state and federal, were to discipline themselves to 'evidence-based policy development' using transparent and disciplined processes we would be one step closer to re-building trust in our democracy."*

Verity Firth, Executive Director Social Justice at UTS and former NSW Minister for Education said:

*"This project is particularly relevant in a year when Australians are watching the American government's response to the COVID crisis and the hyper-partisanship of the US election. Our project shows evidence-based decision making in government is something that can, and should, be above politics. In addition, the pandemic response in Australia proves the effectiveness of a well organised and well-funded public sector and the public trust that flows from that."*

## **NSW Parliament endorses Statement of Public Interest**

The Evidence-Based Research Project made progress in New South Wales where the Parliament's Upper House Procedures Committee after examining our proposal for a Green and White Paper process to precede all contentious bills agreed instead to suggest to the state government our fallback option that a Statement of Public Interest accompany every bill tabled in parliament. This would answer six basic public interest questions before any legislation was debated and passed in Parliament. These questions encapsulate the essence of the Wiltshire criteria:

1. **Need**  
Why is the policy needed based on factual evidence and stakeholder input?
2. **Objectives**  
What is the policy's objective couched in terms of the public interest?
3. **Options**  
What alternative policies and mechanisms were considered in advance of the decision?
4. **Analysis**  
What were the pros/cons and benefits/costs of each option considered?
5. **Pathway**  
What are the timetable and steps for the policy's rollout and who will administer it?
6. **Consultation**  
Were the views of affected stakeholders sought and considered in making the policy?

Such a statement would only be a few pages so should not be onerous for a government to produce. We hope the government responds positively to this suggestion.

Iain Walker concluded:

*"The work of IPA and Per Capita and the Project's Editorial Panel stewarding this research work demands the attention of every parliaments' Procedures' Committees to this study."*

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**After the end of the embargo period, a copy of this media statement together with both the IPA and Per Capita reports can be downloaded from the newDemocracy Foundation website -**

[www.newdemocracy.com.au/EBP2020/](http://www.newdemocracy.com.au/EBP2020/)

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## Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- ***Why were the NSW, Victorian and Queensland Emergency Powers case study results so similar?***

The two think tanks reviewed only how well each state invoked its emergency powers legislation to frame policies for dealing with the Covid-19 epidemic. They did not examine how well those policies were implemented since the evaluation methodology is confined to policy-making processes not policy execution and outcomes.

For instance, in the case of Victoria the process for invoking an emergency power to make a policy was rated (e.g. the decision to hotel quarantine for 14 days all incoming travellers), but not the operational decision on how that policy was rolled out (e.g. use of private security firms instead of state police to enforce the quarantine accommodation).

- ***How can I see the full reports?***

The two think tank research reports can be downloaded at - [www.newdemocracy.com.au/EBP2020/](http://www.newdemocracy.com.au/EBP2020/)

The common research methodology used, and the separate findings of each think tank are summarised in Appendix 1-3 of this media release.

- ***What are the Wiltshire criteria?***

The Wiltshire criteria can be found in Appendix 3.

Using these criteria, the think tanks each asked 10 questions of each public policy to score the number of Yes answers out of a possible 10. These too are listed in Appendix 3.

Notice that the questions slightly differed depending on whether a government policy was made in 'normal' circumstances or decided 'on the run' in an 'emergency' crisis.

Eight case studies dealt with public policies in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its ensuing economic recession while twelve case studies dealt with 'normal' public policies of a non-emergency nature.

- ***Where did this project originate?***

The research project's Steering Committee was self-selected from a newDemocracy forum exploring ways to make trusted, long-term decisions involving over 100 opinion leaders held in Melbourne and Sydney in 2017/18. Participants were asked to work together to answer what could be tried to restore trust in public decision making.

A similar benchmarking study (confined to the federal government) was done in 2012 by the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) when Professor Allan was its National President. Professor Allan proposed to this forum that the exercise should be revived on an annual basis and extended to state governments.

## Appendix 2 - Summary of Project Findings

### Think Tanks' Rating Scores on 20 Government Case Studies, 2020

Policy	Criteria (Emergency)																				Total Score	
	Justify Urgency		Establish Need		Set Goals		Consider Options		Consider Methods		Disclose Data		Design Pathway		Consult Experts		Convey Decision		Review Lessons		PC	IPA
<i>FEDERAL</i>																						
	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA
Early Release of Superannuation	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5/10	6/10
JobKeeper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	8/10
COVIDSafe	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	8/10
HomeBuilder	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4/10	6/10
Funding Childcare	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	7/10
<i>STATES: INVOKING OF EMERGENCY POWERS</i>																						
	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA
Victoria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	6/10
New South Wales	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6/10	6/10
Queensland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	7/10	5/10

Policy	Criteria (Non-Emergency)																				Total Score	
	Establish Need		Set Goals		Identify Options		Consider Methods		Compare Solutions		Design Pathway		Consult Public		G & W Papers		Debate & Legislate		Convey Decision		PC	IPA
<b>FEDERAL</b>																						
	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA
My Health Record	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	10/10	9/10
Repeal of Medevac Act	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	3/10	3/10
Client Rights to Bank Data	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10	9/10
<b>VICTORIA</b>																						
	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA
Wage Theft Bill	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10	6/10
Gender Equality Bill	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8/10	7/10
Free TAFE Provisions	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4/10	3/10
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES</b>																						
	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA	PC	IPA
Abortion Law Reform	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	7/10

Music Festivals Bill	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	5/10	
Right to Farm Bill	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6/10	6/10	
<b>QUEENSLAND</b>																								
	PC	IPA	PC	IPA																				
Child Death Review Bill	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7/10	7/10									
Police Discipline Reform Bill	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	6/10	5/10
Personalised Transport Ombudsman	Yes	No	Yes	9/10	10/10																			

**Legend:**

- PC = Per Capita
- IPA = Institute of Public Affairs
- Yellow Shading = Different Scores

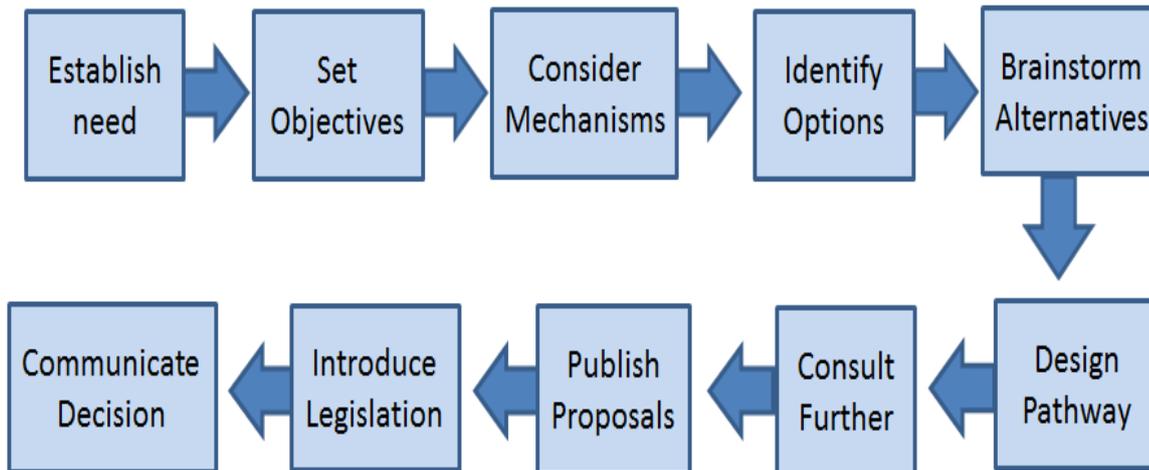
**Sources:**

- Institute of Public Affairs, *Evidence Based Policy Research Project - 20 Case Studies*, A Report Commissioned by the Evidence-Based Policy Research Project and facilitated by the newDemocracy Foundation, November 2020 (Principal authors: Dara Macdonald, Research Fellow and Matthew Lesh, Adjunct Fellow Research Associate, IPA).
- Per Capita, *Evidence Based Policy Analysis - 20 case Studies*, A Report Commissioned by the Evidence-Based Policy Research Project and facilitated by the newDemocracy Foundation, November 2020 (Principal authors: Abigail Lewis, Research Associate and Simone McKenna, Research Assistant, Per Capita).

### Appendix 3 – Case Studies Evaluation Methodology

Based on an article for the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) by Professor Kenneth Wiltshire AO of the University of Queensland Business School, the essential elements involved in developing a business case in a public policy context can be stated as follows:

#### The Elements of a 'Business Case' Approach to Public Policy Making



Source: Based on the Wiltshire Ten Point Criteria for Public Policy Making

### Ten Criteria for a Public Policy Business Case

1. **Establish Need:** Identify a demonstrable need for the policy, based on hard evidence and consultation with all the stakeholders involved, particularly interest groups who will be affected. ('Hard evidence' in this context means both quantifying tangible and intangible knowledge, for instance the actual condition of a road as well as people's view of that condition so as to identify any perception gaps).
2. **Set Objectives:** Outline the public interest parameters of the proposed policy and clearly establish its objectives. For example interpreting public interest as 'the greatest good for the greatest number' or 'helping those who can't help themselves'.
3. **Identify Options:** Identify alternative approaches to the design of the policy, preferably with international comparisons where feasible. Engage in realistic costings of key alternative approaches.
4. **Consider Mechanisms:** Consider implementation choices along a full spectrum from incentives to coercion.
5. **Brainstorm Alternatives:** Consider the pros and cons of each option and mechanism. Subject all key alternatives to a rigorous cost-benefit analysis. For major policy initiatives (over \$100 million), require a Productivity Commission analysis.
6. **Design Pathway:** Develop a complete policy design framework including principles, goals, delivery mechanisms, program or project management, implementation process and phases, performance measures, ongoing evaluation mechanisms and reporting requirements, oversight and audit arrangements, and a review process ideally with a sunset clause.
7. **Consult Further:** Undertake further consultation with key affected stakeholders of the policy initiative.
8. **Publish Proposals:** Produce a Green and then a White paper for public feedback and final consultation purposes and to explain complex issues and processes.
9. **Introduce Legislation:** Develop legislation and allow for comprehensive parliamentary debate especially in committee, and also intergovernmental discussion where necessary.
10. **Communicate Decision:** Design and implement a clear, simple, and inexpensive communication strategy based on information not propaganda, regarding the new policy initiative.

Source: Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA), *Public Policy Drift - Why governments must replace 'policy on the run' and 'policy by fiat' with a 'business case' approach to regain public confidence*, April 2012, page viii. 11

The Research Project's Editorial Panel translated the above Wiltshire Criteria into the following questionnaire that could be used by the two think tanks to evaluate whether the decision-making process used for producing a government policy met the Wiltshire ideal "business case" model. This applied to a 'normal' situation, one not necessitated by a pressing 'emergency'.

#### 1 Need

Is there a statement of why the policy was needed based on factual evidence and stakeholder input?

#### 2 Objectives

Is there a statement of the policy's objectives couched in terms of the public interest?

#### 3 Options

Is there a description of the alternative policy options considered before the preferred one was adopted?

#### 4 Mechanisms

Is there a disclosure of the alternative ways considered for implementing the chosen policy?

#### 5 Analysis

Is there a published analysis of the pros/cons, data/assumptions and benefits/costs of the alternative options/mechanisms considered in 3 and 4?

## **6 Pathway**

Is there evidence that a comprehensive project management plan was designed for the policy's rollout?

## **7 Consultation**

Was there further consultation with affected stakeholders after the preferred policy was announced?

## **8 Papers**

Was there (a) a green paper seeking public input on possible policy options and (b) a white paper explaining the final policy decision?

## **9 Legislation**

Was the policy initiative based on new or existing legislation that enabled comprehensive Parliamentary debate and public discussion?

## **10 Communication**

Is there an online official online media release or website that explains the final policy in simple, clear and factual terms?

For an 'emergency' situation (crises such a Bushfires, Floods or Pandemics) the Editorial Panel slightly modified the previous questionnaire to that below. An 'emergency' is an exceptional, unexpected, serious and dangerous situation requiring immediate action.

### **1 Urgency**

Was a justification given for the short timeline of the policy decision and was it accepted by the Parliamentary Opposition and ratified under existing or new legislation?

### **2 Need**

Was there a statement of why the policy was needed based on factual evidence and expert opinion?

### **3 Objectives**

Was there a statement of the policy's objectives couched in terms of the public interest?

### **4 Options**

Was there any disclosure of why the chosen policy was preferred over other possible policy responses?

### **5 Mechanisms**

Was there any disclosure of different ways (e.g. incentives versus fines) considered for executing the chosen policy?

### **6 Analysis**

Was there any disclosure of technical data, working assumptions and mathematical modelling behind the chosen policy?

## **7 Pathway**

Was there any evidence of a carefully considered logistical strategy for rolling out the policy decision?

## **8 Consultation**

Was there meaningful input from relevant experts and stakeholder representatives before and after the policy decision?

## **9 Communication**

Is there an official online media release or website that explains the final policy in simple, clear and factual terms?

## **10 Review**

Was there a stated intention to review the lessons learnt from the official policy response once the emergency was over?

## **Appendix 4 – Project Acknowledgements**

### **Project Legal Sponsor:**

- Iain Walker, Executive Director, newDemocracy Foundation.

### **Project Financial Sponsor:**

- Susan McKinnon Foundation: <http://www.susanmckinnon.org.au/>

### **Project Steering Committee:**

- Professor Percy Allan AM, Chair of the Steering Committee, Visiting Professor, Institute of Public Governance, University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and former Secretary, NSW Treasury.
- Glenn Barnes, former Chairman of Ansell Limited and Co-Chair of the Citizens for Democratic Renewal Project (being facilitated by the newDemocracy Foundation).
- Rebecca Bishop, an experienced policy and financial advisor who has worked for the Wesley Mission, Family and Community Services, IPART and the NSW Treasury.
- Peter Doukas, Chair of the Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW and Managing Director of law firm Denison Toyer.
- Verity Firth, Executive Director of Social Justice for the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion, University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and Co-Chair of the Citizens for Democratic Renewal Project.
- Janice Lee, Head of Government Practice, LEK Consulting.
- Sam Mellett, Director of the Susan McKinnon Foundation which sponsors research into bold new solutions to entrenched problems.
- Professor Carol Mills, Director, Institute of Public Policy and Governance, University of Technology Sydney and former senior Commonwealth and State public servant.
- Kirsty Nowlan, Executive Director, Strategic Engagement, Research and Innovation at Achieve Australia.

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