

CMC Review of Ministerial Office/Public Servant Interaction
GPO Box 3123
Brisbane Qld 4001

18th January 2010

CM10/00849

RE: CMC Review of Ministerial Office/Public Servant Interaction

Let us be honest and forthright.

The stakeholders we are dealing with here generally fall into four groups:

- The Minister
- Ministerial Staff
- Head of Departments/Agencies
- Senior Bureaucrats within those Departments/Agencies

The stakeholders themselves that we are dealing with here generally fall into two categories:

- Skilled/qualified & competent professionals operating with a medium to long term objective viewpoint
- Unprofessional and/or incompetent personnel with a subjective stance (where their associates believe their elevation to such positions is based upon the 'Peter Principle', 'cronyism', etc...)

The various contexts we are dealing with are:

- Political power
- Bureaucratic power
- Commercial power & influences (indirectly linked to lobbying, political donations, Political Parties, formal/informal friendships/relationships, seeking strategically personal alignments in the hope of securing a future favour/benefit, etc)
- Market dominance of specific public services by certain commercial suppliers
- Authoritative power & influence
- Perceived power & influence
- Personalities & Individual influences
- Less than 'arm length' boundaries of operational influences

The system works well when all the four group of stakeholders are professional & competent & objective...few protocols, procedures or constraints are required to ensure that arms length equilibrium and fair outcomes are achieved in an efficient and effective manner.

The system will never work efficiently and effectively when any one of the four group of stakeholders are unprofessional and/or incompetent and/or operate subjectively irrespective of the quantum number of protocols, procedures or constraints you may put in place. Until Political Parties, Premiers, Ministers, Department Heads, Senior Bureaucrats promote people to positions of authority on actual 'merit' and with a proven history of competence your Agency will be constantly revisiting this issue (and dealing with these messy outcomes). Have a nice day...

Yours in service,