

COMMENT FROM THE EDITOR OF IPMR SYMPOSIUM ISSUE

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The articles in this issue of IPMR are intended to be of interest to both academics and practitioners who are either involved in or are students of business process transformation in government to enhance their understanding of the inherent challenges faced in such change. The focus of this symposium edition is on Business Process Transformation in the U.S. Federal Government and the Department of Defense (DOD). The articles provide valuable information regarding past practices and policies, important recent transformational initiatives and real-world accounts of outcomes and organizational challenges as a result of these initiatives.

The purpose of publishing this symposium in IPMR is that leadership and managers in ministries and departments of defense all over the world are typically curious about reform in the U. S. Department of Defense and the U. S. federal government. Many defense management systems in nations around the globe have been modeled on or influenced by the practices of the U. S. defense department, e.g., PPBS, acquisition and procurement. Furthermore, many of the management changes now in progress in the U.S. context that are based upon importing of practices from the private sector to government and are similar to and reflective of reforms attempted in other nations in the area of national defense and in government more generally. For this reason the transformation initiatives in the U.S. provide more general lessons to other nations with respect to how public management change may be attempted, and those variables within government that appear to enhance reform or impede it.

The two articles leading off this issue focus on reform of the U. S. government rather than just defense. The first contribution to the issue by Fred Thompson offers analysis of government finance and fiscal policy – taxing and spending – from the perspective of what is termed the new macroeconomics. Thompson suggests that a macroeconomic approach is more appropriate and makes more sense than traditional conceptions in terms of how we should assess the overall impact and consequences of government finance decisions. A short essay by Steven J. Kelman follows, providing an account of his recent interaction with a class of federal managers learning about federal government acquisition reform and public-sector performance measurement in an executive education program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. His article provides an important grounding of policy to practical application and results experienced in the field by practitioners. Thompson and Kelman offer a broader perspective of reform in the context of the U.S. federal government, and Kelman's article provides a transition to the more specific examples involving transformational efforts and initiatives in the U.S. Department of Defense. In the third article Richard L. Dawe and L.R. Jones describe and analyze defense business management transformation initiatives proposed and implemented under Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Dawe and Jones identify important transformation challenges that must be addressed by defense business management decision makers in the next decade. Next, John T. Dillard describes recent 'turbulence' in defense acquisition policy. He explains how new policies add complexity

and are, in effect, counter to ‘appropriate management strategies’ in a transformational era. In the fifth paper, L.R. Jones and Jerry L. McCaffery identify key points of linkage weakness and failure between DOD financial management and acquisition decision systems, and then suggest how reengineering and realignment might be approached to resolve some of these problems. Ira Lewis authored the next contribution on Public Management and Performance-Based Logistics. Lewis offers a preliminary discussion of DOD Performance-Based Logistics (PBL) initiatives and assesses the extent to which they appear to be representative of a significant adoption of public management principles by DOD leaders. Next, Richard L. Dawe provides an account of transformational reform of business systems funding processes by senior leaders at a DOD Unified Command. Their transformational actions have cultural and budgetary implications and provide an example for others to consider in similar, large-scale change initiatives. In the final paper of this symposium issue, L.R. Jones and Jerry L. McCaffery provide an in-depth account of the reform of the DOD Program Budgeting System now known as the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) system. They analyze the importance of the recent changes and also recognize that significant management change is an ‘evolving process’ with limitations.

This is the second issue of the sixth volume of the International Public Management Network e-publication The International Public Management Review (IPMR). IPMR is published twice per year on the IPMR website at www.ipmr.net. Volume 1, Number 1 appeared in December 2000 as a double issue to inaugurate the series. Back issues are available at www.ipmr.net.

Why does IPMN publish an electronic journal? First, e-journals are a recent innovation in the publishing business and we want IPMN to lead in this area. Second, we want IPMR to have a slightly more practitioner focus than IPMN’s print journal, The International Public Management Journal (IPMJ). Third, IPMR provides an additional outlet in which IPMN members and others can publish their work in the rapidly expanding discipline of public management.

The editorship of IPMR is organized on a regional and international basis with Associate Editors for regions and by nation in some cases. The Associate Editors share the task with the IPMR editorial group of finding good manuscripts for review. The Editorial Board of IPMR is composed of the leading public management scholars and practitioners around the world.

We hope you enjoy reading the articles in this issue and that you consider submitting your work to IPMR at ipmnet@aol.com for publication consideration.

ABOUT IPMR

IPMR	The International Public Management Review (IPMR) is the electronic journal of the International Public Management Network (IPMN). All work published in IPMR is double blind reviewed according to standard academic journal procedures. The purpose of the International Public Management Review is to publish manuscripts reporting original, creative research in the field of public management. Theoretical, empirical and applied work including case studies of individual nations and governments, and comparative studies are given equal weight for publication consideration.
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