

Foreword

Paul G. Thomas has taken a major interest in the issue of performance measurement and management and has written extensively on the subject. The following monograph first appeared as two articles:

- 'Performance Measurement, Reporting and Accountability: Recent Trends and Future Directions', *Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy Paper No 23* February 2004; (<http://www.uregina.ca/sipp/>) and
- 'Performance Management and Management in the Public Sector', *Optimum Online — The Journal of Public Sector Management* Vol 35, Issue 2, July 2005. (<http://www.optimumonline.ca/>)

They are re-presented here in a single, wide-ranging and provocative monograph that offers much to the academic researcher, the policy practitioner and those at the 'coal face' who sometimes struggle to implement appropriate measures of what they do.

Together, these works traverse the area of performance measurement as practiced by governments in Canada, the US, Australia and New Zealand and consider, not only why performance management is useful and necessary, but also the difficulties inherent in it.

Professor Thomas debunks the myth that 'if you can't measure it, you can't manage it' and shows how the resources required to 'do' performance management can sometimes exceed the expected gains. Lastly, governments need to think about actually using the results they achieve from performance management and of tailoring their performance measurement activities to their needs and their resources.

I am sure that this very practical material will be very useful to managers in the Australian and New Zealand contexts as it provides both an overview of what has been done overseas and also a sensible appraisal of the range of available tools and approaches.

Readers who wish to explore in more depth are provided with an extensive bibliography of sources with recommendations for further reading.

John Wanna
Sir John Bunting Chair of Public Administration
ANZSOG
Research School of Social Sciences
The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 0200