

Grand reform Is it all over?

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History of public sector reform

- UK 1997-2006
- Australia 2007-13
- US 2008-16

UK

- National Health Service Funding and Commission
- National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, Academies
- Working Families Tax Credit, Sure Start

Australia

- Federal-state funding mix: schools, hospitals
- National Broadband Network
- Carbon Tax
- University expansion

US

- Affordable Care Act
- Common Core Standards

‘New Public Management’

- Growing emphasis on markets and technology
- Pressure on traditional boundaries of state organisation
- Target and contract-driven change
- Public-private partnerships at core of governance
- Incremental growth in public funding

The impact of the Great recession

- Shock and disruption
- Extreme budget pressures
- Unemployment and social costs
- Political fragmentation
- Intensified economic challenge

Longer term effects

- Enabled quick and bold action
- But...
- Constrained progress and legitimacy over time

Challenges to 'grand reform'

1. Achieving political legitimacy
2. Complexity and uncertainty
3. Impact

Mis-aligned

- Public sector reform efforts do not match changes in the wider environment
- Recession has increased inequality and decreased public trust
- New approaches emerging to creating change in complex environments

New reform landscape

- Goals - population and behaviour
- Methods - system and network
- Capabilities - diffusion and mobilisation

Questions

- Is grand reform a dead duck?
- What are the common challenges?
- What capabilities does the public sector really need?