

## **Analytical Capacity of the State**

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**Policy analytical capacity** refers to the research that the government produces, organizes or sponsors in order to understand, forecast and anticipate public opinion, users' need and policy impacts.

- Medium to long term
- Mostly related to agenda setting

**Policy advice** refers to the provision of analysis and information

- Short to long-term
- All stages of the policy process including policy implementation.

*Can policy analysts and advisors speak truth to power?*

# How to organize policy advice and analysis?

- **Politically appointed ministerial cabinets, spin doctors or units in charge of doing the analysis**
  - **Low** independence
  - High coordinating capacity of analysis
  - Knowledge can be centralised
  - Advice and analysis are intertwined
- **Work commissioned to consultants, think tanks and research institutes**
  - **Medium** independence
  - Medium to low coordination capacity of analysis
  - Knowledge can be dispersed
  - Advice has to be done still in-house
- **Work contracted with an independent commission of experts**
  - **High** independence
  - Governmental knowledge and analytical capacity is required to understand and discuss publicly the drafts.

*Are there resources for evidence-based research?*

## Should the organization of policy analysis be centralized at the Prime Minister's level?

- **Decentralized policy analysis** may aggravate coordination problems and “turf” wars
- **Centralized policy analysis** in units that “mirror” individual ministers might create a positive dialogue, but also a source of distrust
- **What is the case for centralisation?** Many society problems require whole-of-government approach

*Is there a case for having permanent skills in-house?*

## How to recruit policy analysts?

- Politically and temporarily appointed **analysts to advisory units**
  - *Short-termism of policy analysis*
- **Analysts as professional civil servants** require some type of career perspective
  - *They may give stability to the analysis of long-term problems*
- **Examples of professional civil servants of Canada**
  - **Public Opinion Research and Environmental Analyst:** *Contract type: Temporary - Acting, Lateral Move*
  - **Senior Policy Analyst:** *Employment Type: Permanent Full-time*

*Analysts can be bundled for career prospective*

## Government

### Government change

*Does it hinder permanent analytical capacity?*

### Coalition government

*Do coalition agreements accept whole of government functions?*

### Time

*Is there a long term perspective in government?*

## Assets

### Skills

*Are there available skills on quantitative and qualitative techniques?*

### Information

- *Do ministerial ICT systems exchange knowledge?*
- *Is quantity and quality of information fit for purpose?*

### Financing

*Is it sufficient for primary research?*

## Use

### Agenda setting

*Is analysis used and provided in a timely manner?*

## Assessment of analytical capacity in other countries

Most of the times, the analytical capacity is **assessed as low and mixed with policy advice.**

Criteria among countries differ, but common problems persist:

- **Effectiveness** and **quality** of policy (advice) suffers.
- **Low satisfaction** with (advice) during the policy-making process
- **Mismatch** between advice and ministers' priorities
- **Poor integration of external views** from experts and citizens

Source: Several government reports: Australia, Canada, New Zealand.

**Time & Resilience**

- **Government looks into the future...** Scientific council for government policy (The Netherlands); Institute of Future Studies (Sweden)

**Accountability**

- **Government responds** by giving feedback on consultation to users and to independent commissions (UK).

**Boundary spanning**

- **Governments taps on (information) analytical capacity** of other stakeholders through social networks (FixMyStreet – several countries)

**Data mining**

- **Government mines data** from all sources (for instance, call centers) (New York)



## Scientific council for government policy (The Netherlands)

- **Consults the program** with a range of stakeholders
- **Final approval** by the Prime Minister
- Operates with **coalition governments**
- **Project groups**: Council's staff, seconded researchers and policy-makers, external experts
- **Process**: Peer review
- **Report nature**: Advisory and exploratory reports

## The government of the UK gets external analysis from independent commissions

- **Normally headed** by well respected professionals above party politics
- **The commission** delivers a report using government resources in an independent way
- **Reports** are responded by government with the reasoned acceptance or not of recommendations

### Examples:

- **Report on:** Foreign Involvement in the Critical National Infrastructure
- **Response:** Government's Response to the Report on Foreign Involvement in the Critical National Infrastructure

Below are some of the issues we have recently consulted on and their outcomes: [Reform of regulatory system to control small sewage discharges from septic tanks and small sewage treatment plants in England](#)

**We Asked:** As part of efforts to improve environmental regulations, last year we proposed simplifying the regulations for septic tanks and small sewage treatment plants in less sensitive areas and taking a risk based approach to permitting of these systems in the most sensitive areas where a higher level of protection is needed. **We proposed retaining the rules that control and prevent pollution, and for these to become known as general binding rules applying to the whole country.**

**You Said:** Responses to the consultation broadly supported the proposals but highlighted **concerns about:** the loss of information that could have been gathered from registration to help support efforts to improve catchment areas and water bodies; sufficiently protecting sensitive areas and rare habitats; and that any **changes needed to be communicated to households and businesses.**

**We Did:** A government response was published in October 2014. In January 2015, new rules were introduced see [www.gov.uk/small-sewage-rules](http://www.gov.uk/small-sewage-rules). The new approach focuses on making sure septic tanks and sewage treatment plants are maintained in good working order, correctly installed and not causing pollution. **We are working with catchment partnerships, parish councils, service companies and others to communicate the rules to households and businesses.** See our leaflet Your Sewage – Your Environment.

**Source:** [https://consult.defra.gov.uk/we\\_asked\\_you\\_said](https://consult.defra.gov.uk/we_asked_you_said)

**FixMyStreet** [Report a problem](#) [Your reports](#) [All reports](#) [Local alerts](#) [Help](#)

Report, view, or discuss local problems  
(like graffiti, fly tipping, broken paving slabs, or street lighting)

Enter a nearby GB postcode, or street name and area:    
Or [locate me automatically](#)

**How to report a problem**

1. Enter a nearby GB postcode, or street name and area
2. Locate the problem on a map of the area
3. Enter details of the problem
4. We send it to the council on your behalf

**Recently reported problems**

994 reports in past week    1,876 fixed in past month    161,028 updates on reports

- [Overgrown hedge over pavement](#) 16:52 today
- [Obnoxious advertising](#) 16:47 today
- [Road noise](#) 16:46 today
- [Light out in olive grove](#) 16:43 today

This is a summary of all reports for one ward. You can [view all reports for the council](#) or [show all councils](#).

**Selly Oak, Birmingham City Council**

FixMyStreet is now available for local council websites. [Find out more.](#)

**Recently fixed**

- [Misuse of traffic signs](#)

**New problems**

- [Flytipping](#)
- [Obstructions in Cycle Path](#)

**Older problems**



- Created in 2007.
- Citizens can report common problems on their street.
- Report documented on the site + relevant council informed.
- Prevents same problem being reported multiple times.
- See how many issues are reported in locality and what the council does about it, which councils are most and least effective.
- As **of 22 Feb 2015**:
  - ✓ Past week – 2,003 reports – Nov 12- and 4427 in **Feb 2015**
  - ✓ Past month – 3,201 problems fixed in Nov 2012; 7604 in **Feb 2015**
  - ✓ So far... **812,473** updates on reports from 233,757 in Nov 2012 and from 166,540 in Nov 2011

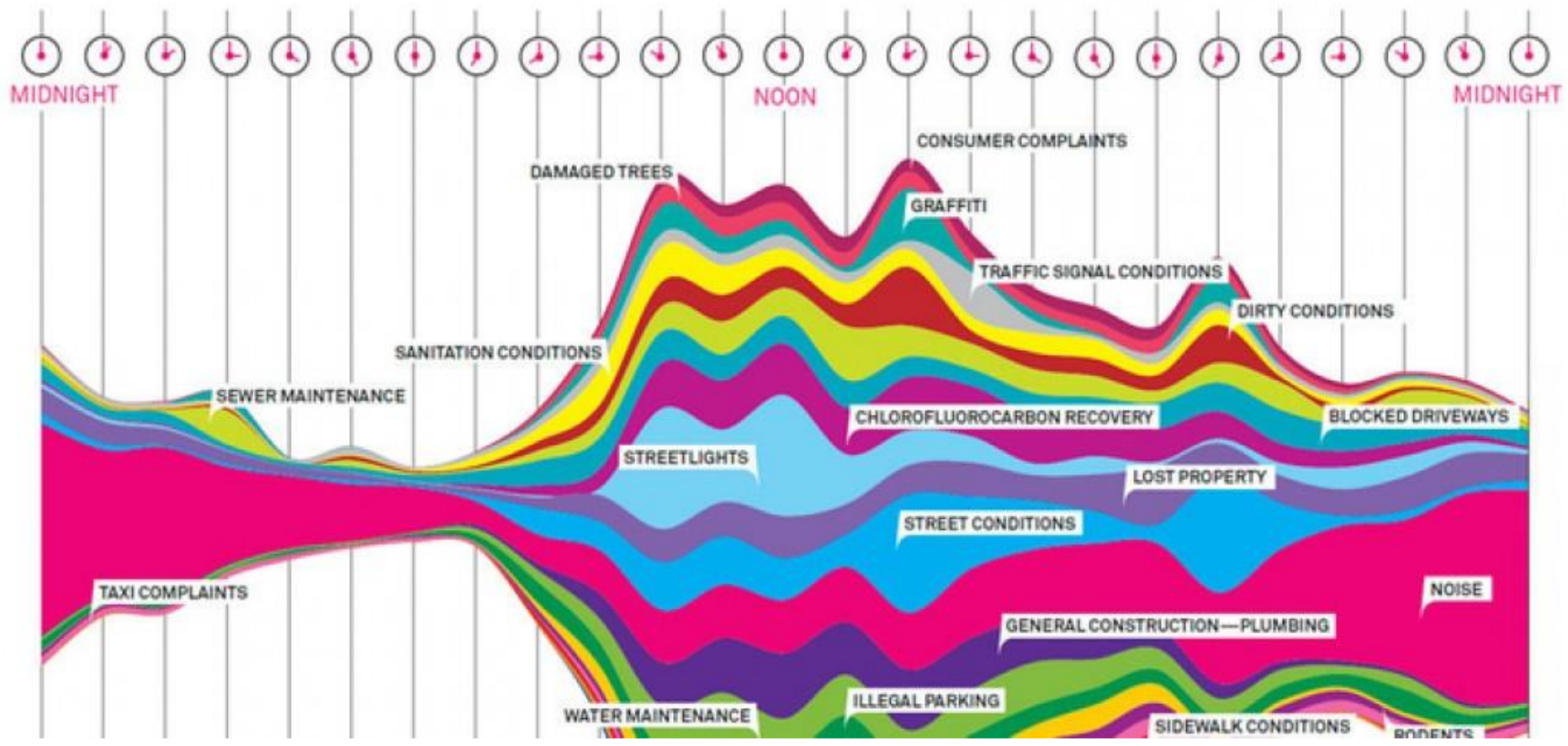
Example: Serpentine Road  
Harborne, Birmingham B17 9RD

## What a Hundred Million Calls to 311 Reveal About New York

By Steven Johnson  November 1, 2010 | 12:00 pm | Categories: [Wired November 2010](#)

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- Sound **policy analysis is key to policy advise**
- Even in the presence of “silo” departments, **whole of government analytical capacity is key** because **some society problems cut across party lines**
- Policy analysis requires **permanent assets** from in-house skills, outside experts and citizen-experts, financing and willingness to exchange knowledge
- **Governments need** to look into the future, account for policy analysis, tap on society resources and mine unexplored data