

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Talking about Australian Pressure Groups: Adding Value to the Insider/Outsider Distinction in Combating Homelessness in Western Australia

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The insider/outsider model, first developed in the 1970s by Wyn Grant in the United Kingdom, is perhaps the most common analytical device deployed by Australian scholars in making sense of pressure or interest group behaviour. The British literature has since witnessed a high level of debate, critique and refinement of the original model, and we argue this also adds value to the discussion of group life in Australia. This article operationalises and compares two insider/outsider models commonly used to make sense of the public policy advocacy of pressure groups: (i) the conventional or orthodox models of insider/outsider and (ii) the so-called 'Aberdeen' insider/outsider model. It is argued that the latter model is more analytically powerful than the current understanding of insider and outsider pressure groups; that ideology is less of a determining factor in the ascription of status than the existing understanding implies; and that the Aberdeen model is applicable in the Australian context. These arguments are sustained via the examination of a case study of the policy advocacy of two social service groups in Western Australia during the State Homelessness Taskforce in 2001: the Western Australian Council of Social Service and the Tenants Advice Service of Western Australia.

Key words: *insider/outsider model, pressure group theory, homelessness*

Pressure Group Theory and Group Strategy

The labelling of pressure groups is bundled up with assessments of status and overall political salience. Several typologies have been developed that aim to categorise pressure groups¹. Perhaps the most prominent approach has been to utilise the different interests being organised by groups as a scheme to label them. The most well-known and used typology is Stewart's (1958) division between sectional and cause categories: sectional groups work in the best interests of their members, while promotional

groups advance causes in the name of society in general. Other classic approaches classified pressure groups according to literally whom the groups represent (see for instance Beer 1982). Group political strategy was of less concern.

In the United Kingdom these classic approaches have been criticised as being unable to adequately account for the diverse roles and influence of pressure groups (see Baggott 1995:15-17). A more contemporary typology, the insider/outsider model, emerged in the British literature in the 1970s in the work of Wyn Grant (see Grant 2000:19). Grant recognised the inadequacies of other pressure group

typologies and created a model that aimed to offer greater clarity by dividing pressure groups into insiders and outsiders. Insider groups were further divided into three sub-categories: 'high profile' groups that use the media to raise public support on an issue; 'low profile' groups that use the more 'acceptable' channels of influence; and 'prisoner groups', whose activities are curtailed due to their dependence upon government funding and/or support. Outsider groups were also divided into three sub-groups: those who may become insiders providing they use acceptable strategies; those who are outsiders due to the lack of skills and expertise required to be an insider; and groups that are outsiders based upon their ideology. The core contention is that a limited number of groups are influential – insiders – while the vast majority of others have limited influence.

The original model put forward by Grant has since been critiqued and revised. The core assertion being that it, like its predecessors, did not adequately deal with group strategy. Maloney, Jordan and McLaughlin (1994) advocated what has become commonly referred to as the 'Aberdeen model'. This revised version of the insider/outsider model disaggregates pressure groups' i) access to decision-makers (status) and ii) the activities designed to exercise influence (strategies). Maloney et al. (1994:28) emphasise that 'strategy is a matter *selected by the group*'. Conversely, the status of a pressure group is determined by the decision-makers it attempts to influence, and reflects the level of legitimacy of the group amongst decision-makers (Maloney et al. 1994:30). Maloney et al. (1994:28) note that 'the status position is conditional upon government granted legitimacy: it is *ascribed* by policymakers to the group'. The distinction between strategy and status is integral to an improved understanding of pressure groups (Maloney et al. 1994:29).

An important contention made by the Aberdeen group was that any pressure group with access to the consultation process has insider status. They believe that access is not difficult to achieve, and consequently there are many more insider groups than other insider/outsider models suggest (Maloney et al. 1994:19). Hence, they divide insider status into sub-categories.

The four sub-categories of insider status are core, specialist, peripheral, and failed. Outsider status groups are divided into two sub-categories: outsider status by ideology or goal; and outsider status by choice. (Maloney et al. 1994:32). Maloney et al. argue that it is the type of strategies these latter groups employ, rather than their beliefs, which result in their exclusion from the consultation process. Consequently, their chances of influencing policy are often minimal. However, the Aberdeen group argue that outsiders can, at times, be influential (Maloney et al. 1994:37-8). Additionally, the Aberdeen model recognises that some pressure groups, referred to as 'thresholders', alternate between insider and outsider strategies or use a combination of strategies (May and Nugent, cited in Baggot 1995:28).

The relationship between strategy and status is a contingent one. Maloney et al. assert that while the strategies used by a group are important, it is the value of the group's resources to decision-makers that will ultimately determine the level of access and influence the group attains. Maloney et al. (1994:29-30) doubt that 'resource rich' groups (i.e. groups which have significant resources and/or which represent members who have significant resources) would be ignored even if they have acted outside accepted guidelines in the past. They further note that in some instances, less well-financed groups may also be effective, as 'the development of (some) technical expertise, or political sophistication, may give them credibility with decision-makers' (Maloney et al. 1994:21).

Grant (2000:29) has since remarked that the former understandings of insiders and outsiders 'might usefully be replaced by that offered by the Aberdeen group'. A brief comparison of the key features of the existing model and the Aberdeen model is offered in Table 1.

The above account of the state of the literature remains subject to revision. In an empirical exploration of Grant's original framework, Page (1999) concludes that insiders outnumber outsiders, and that any one group is likely to share aspects of both insider and outsiders. Jordan and Halpin (2003) establish that the strategy of groups may, within their lifetime, shift from

Table 1. Comparison of the Key Features of the Existing Model and the Aberdeen Model

	Categories	Importance of ideology	Importance of resources	Influence	Types of strategies used
Existing model	Groups are divided into insider and outsider categories. The status of groups and the types of strategies they use are inextricably linked.	Group ideology affects status. Groups with similar ideological leanings to government will be more influential.	Group resources impact upon influence (economic position, understanding of government and decision-making processes, expert knowledge, membership base, strength and level of administration, degree to which membership supports administration and its decisions). Groups which are economically powerful or that represent economically powerful interests are particularly influential.	Only insiders are influential.	Insider groups use insider strategies (submissions, representation on government boards and committees, lobbying ministers and their advisors, involvement with policy networks) and outsider groups use outsider strategies (public protests, boycotts, talk-back radio).
Aberdeen model	Groups are divided into four types of insider status (core, specialist, peripheral, failed), and two types of outsider status (by ideology or goal, by choice). Strategies are divided into insider, outsider, and threshold categories.	Ideology is not as relevant as resources and strategy.	Group resources are a more important determinant of influence than ideology. Resource rich groups may be influential regardless of strategy. Groups that are not economically powerful may also be influential if they have other resources to offer.	Groups with higher-level insider status and which use insider strategies are most likely to be influential, but outsider status groups can also be influential.	Status and strategy are not inextricably linked. Both insider and outsider status groups may employ a variety of strategies.

predominantly outsider to insider. Binderkrantz (2005:710), using Danish evidence, argues that groups *combine* strategies of influence, concluding that ‘... the insider/outsider distinction does not capture relevant variations within the large majority of groups engaging in various combinations of direct and indirect activities’. In sum, the original distinction remains a critical tool for analysts of groups engaged in public policy activities. Yet it has been subject to various critiques and amendments, the most recent of which have emphasised the almost tactical nature of choices over group strategy and the ease with which groups can gain access.

We argue that the Australian literature would profit from ingesting these insights and critiques of insider/outsider distinctions and of the debate over the choice and tactical nature of group strategy. This will be demonstrated in the case study analysis of the two social service organisations.

There are, of course, plenty of other frameworks with which to make sense of group activity and we do not pretend to offer an evaluation of other approaches herein. A defence for our focus on the insider/outsider distinction is its status as a key tool for political scientists, in the UK *and* Australia. Speaking of the UK case, Page (1999:205) observes ‘The distinction between “insiders” and “outsiders” occupies a central role in thinking about the relationship between government and interest groups in Britain’. He makes this conclusion based on textbook accounts, remarking ‘The idea’s status as conventional wisdom is confirmed by its prominence in textbooks on British politics that deal with the issue’ (Page 1999:206).

The Australian scholarly group literature has not rushed to embrace this approach;² however, it sits as a useful shorthand device for public policy scholars to denote (for the most part) status (cf. Casey and Dalton 2006:35). Significantly, it is a framework that dominates politics texts. If, as Page suggests, a reasonable litmus test of the orthodoxies of a discipline are its texts, then Grant’s original model – what we call the ‘existing’ model – is somewhat of an Australian orthodoxy too. While the dedicated pressure group academic literature in Australia does not give much space to the insider/outsider

distinction (at least compared to the UK), the textbooks give it a high level of prominence. (Abbott 1996:xi; Henderson 1989:189-196; Jaensch 1994:180; Matthews 1989:212,216; Singleton et al. 2003:344,350; Willmott and Dowse 2000:162).

Thus, Grant’s ‘existing’ model is too somewhat of an Australian orthodoxy. As such, one core point in this article is to revisit – and perhaps update – this orthodoxy. In adapting to a more developed version of the insider/outsider model, we may also benefit from asking how a UK analytical lens translates to the Australian context. The Aberdeen model is based upon the observation that Britain is a ‘post-parliamentary’ democracy where policy is often negotiated and formulated by policy communities comprised of senior bureaucrats, pressure groups and other individuals and groups with knowledge and expertise. These policy communities remain relatively stable when changes in government occur (Richardson and Jordan 1979). In this environment ideology is not a key factor in the ascription of status and levels of access. This appears at odds with the Australian group literature which is dominated by the view, reiterated by Matthews and Warhurst (1993:95), that strong parties dominate at both state and federal levels in Australia, and a change in government increases access and influence to some groups, while minimising the role of previously privileged groups. Our use of the Aberdeen model (and subsequent modification) in the Australian context enables us to explore the lack of continuity (or otherwise) of access for pressure groups when changes in government occur.

We make no claims to theoretical innovation in this article; we aim simply to explore how the ‘modified’ insider/outsider model may assist in making sense of pressure group practice in Australia. In so doing, it has the associated intention of developing an existing orthodoxy. In this article we look at the choices of strategy by two groups operating in the same policy area in the same issue context. This research design offers the chance to study the decisions of groups *vis-à-vis* strategy. The study also contrasts activities under two governments of different party complexions, testing a related

thesis that party in government is a key determinant of group strategy.

The Case Study: Homelessness in Western Australia

In July 2001 the Western Australian government established a taskforce to investigate the causes and consequences of, and solutions to, homelessness. This investigation into a complex public policy issue offered a unique opportunity to study pressure group activity. In order to analyse the effectiveness of the existing insider/outsider model and the applicability of the Aberdeen model in the Australian context, case studies were conducted of two groups involved in this taskforce process.

The pressure groups involved in this research are the Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS), and the Tenants Advice Service of Western Australia (TASWA). WACOSS is the peak community services body in Western Australia. It played an important role in the lobbying of government to establish a homelessness taskforce. It also facilitated sector meetings during the Taskforce's consultation periods, and provided research and expertise. TASWA is a community legal centre specialising in tenancy issues and the rights of tenants. It also lobbied government to establish the Taskforce, and provided research and expertise on homelessness issues. It was selected for this study due to its controversial actions surrounding the State Homelessness Taskforce, including the resignation of its co-ordinator from the Taskforce, and the formation of an alternative taskforce on homelessness.

The studies of WACOSS and TASWA were conducted in accordance with case study method protocols as prescribed by Yin (1994:49), and focused primarily on the analysis of documentary evidence. Additional data were gathered from surveys of the organisations, conducted in August and September 2003;³ and from interviews,⁴ telephone conversations and email correspondence with key informants from each organisation throughout 2003. WACOSS' Social Policy manager at the time of the Taskforce was interviewed, as was TASWA's co-ordinator during the Taskforce.

In June 2002, WACOSS had a total of 354 organisational and individual members, including a number of state and federal government departments and several senior state government politicians (WACOSS 2002: member's section). TASWA had a total of 178 individual and organisational members (TASWA 2002:10) and four of its affiliates were members of the Western Australian Legislative Council.

Funding for both WACOSS and TASWA is derived primarily from state government administered operating grants. WACOSS does generate other income, while TASWA essentially receives its entire revenue base from government-administered grants. In the 2001/02 financial year WACOSS' total operating income was just over \$1million (WACOSS 2002:financial statements 9,14), while TASWA's was approximately half that amount (TASWA 2002:54).

Overview of the Groups' General Influence Strategies

In order to achieve their mission of influencing government policy, both organisations employ a variety of strategies. As one would expect, the types of strategies deployed vary from issue to issue. Interviews and responses to the surveys revealed that the groups have used an assortment of tactics prior to, during, and since the Taskforce. These strategies include representation on government committees and advisory boards; making submissions to government inquiries; consultation and negotiation with government; publication of research; involvement with a policy network and in public and sector forums; and formal contact with ministers. WACOSS also has informal contact with ministers and their advisors.

In addition, both groups regularly run pre-election campaigns in the hope of gaining commitments from the political parties, and facilitate meetings with other community organisations within the sector. WACOSS also holds pre-budget forums and lobbies government when the budget is drafted; provides general information, policy alternatives, research and feedback directly to

ministers, ministerial advisors and bureaucrats; and acts as a gateway between government, service providers and consumers to enable government consultation with these groups (TASWA 2002:37-39; 2001a:55; WACOSS 2001a:1).

Use of the media is a further strategy utilised by both groups, and it is aimed at informing the public and putting pressure on decision-makers. Both groups distribute media releases, and are consulted by the media for their point of view. Between October 2001 and June 2002, WACOSS was interviewed 67 times by a range of newspapers, and radio and television stations. WACOSS was consulted about a broad range of social policy issues (WACOSS 2002:14). TASWA has received increasing recognition of its expertise on tenancy and housing issues, and has been interviewed several times by newspapers, and television and radio programs (TASWA 2002:39). Survey results revealed that TASWA also uses, when necessary, talk-back radio, public protests, letter and fax campaigns, and court action to influence policy.

In general terms WACOSS has traditionally hesitated at types of action that would risk a more permanent loss of status, while TASWA is less cautious and seems driven less by pragmatism and more by principle.

Group Activities during the Western Australian State Homelessness Taskforce

Both WACOSS and TASWA took advantage of the Taskforce process and developed strategies to exert their influence upon public policy formulation. The strategies of the groups immediately prior to, and during, the State Homelessness Taskforce included the pre-election lobbying of political parties (TASWA 2001a:55; WACOSS 2001b:1-2,7, 2000:10), correspondence with ministers (TASWA 2001b; WACOSS 2001c), the formation of alliances with other organisations (Organisation A 2001; TASWA 2001c, 2001d; TASWA and Organisation B 2001), and attendance at community sector meetings, some of which were administered by WACOSS. In addition, WACOSS' Executive Director became the

liaison person between the long-term working party and the government (Non-Government Working Party 2001; WACOSS 2001b:7, 2001c, 2001d). Positions on the Taskforce were also accepted. The president of WACOSS was appointed as the chairperson and the co-ordinator of TASWA was appointed as a Taskforce member. Much as Maloney et al. (1994) suggest, access was relatively easy to achieve by both groups. Insider status was not difficult to accomplish for either WACOSS or TASWA.

Additionally, both groups made detailed, research-based submissions to the Taskforce that contained criticisms of the poor content and insufficient analysis of the causes of homelessness within the Taskforce's Issues Paper and Draft Report (TASWA 2001e, 2001f; WACOSS 2001e, 2001f).

There were, however, major differences between the strategies of the two groups. Even though WACOSS was concerned about the direction the Taskforce was taking, it chose to attempt to assert influence from the inside. TASWA on the other hand took a more hostile approach. According to interviews, its co-ordinator resigned from the Taskforce when her concerns were not acted upon by the Taskforce and its Secretariat, and TASWA staff and committee members became a driving force behind the formation of an alternative taskforce on homelessness – the Housing the Homeless Coalition (HTHC 2001a).

The Housing the Homeless Coalition released a statement in which it outlined its criticisms of the government Taskforce (HTHC 2001b). The Coalition did not regard its statement as a submission to the formal Taskforce. Rather, the statement was released to highlight the ability of the alternative taskforce to work effectively outside of the formal process, and to provide a detailed account of the causes of, and responses to, homelessness; an outcome that it believed the formal Taskforce was incapable of achieving (Personal Communication 2003). The Housing the Homeless Coalition gained publicity for its stance in an article in *The West Australian* (Casellas 2001:40; HTHC 2001c), and the ministers to whom the formal Taskforce was reporting replied favourably to the

Coalition's statement (McHale 2001; Stephens 2001).

Discussion: Evaluating the Existing and Aberdeen Insider/outside Models

Key similarities were evident in the activities of WACOSS and TASWA in their attempts to influence the Western Australian State Homelessness Taskforce. There were also key differences between the strategies of the groups, as WACOSS chose to continue to work within the formal process while TASWA opted to work outside of it. Via the analysis of the strategies employed by the groups, in conjunction with their perceived status during successive Liberal and Labor Western Australian governments, it is possible to categorise the groups using both the existing and Aberdeen models and to compare and contrast the adequacy of these two models.

WACOSS' actions during the Taskforce typify the insider style under both the existing and Aberdeen models. Of prominence is the organisation's decision to stay within the formal Taskforce process when other groups broke away to form the alternative taskforce. According to interviews, WACOSS did not feel it could leave the formal process when its own president was chairing the Taskforce, as this would surely sour its relations with the newly elected government. WACOSS also recognised that building and maintaining a relationship with the new Labor government was integral to the future success of the organisation in influencing policy, and, due to having interests across the broad range of social policy issues, WACOSS could ill-afford to place itself offside on this issue and possibly adversely affect its level of insider status on other issues.

The new Housing Minister also appeared considerably more focused on addressing homelessness than his predecessor, and WACOSS did not want to distance itself from a more amenable minister. Additionally, homelessness had not been on the policy agenda (State Homelessness Taskforce 2002:25), and the organisation therefore saw the Taskforce as a strategic opportunity to have government acknowledgement and address the causes and conse-

quences of homelessness. WACOSS was also not convinced that the formation of an alternative taskforce would be an effective strategy, so it opted to stay inside the formal process and attempt to exert an influence from within (Personal Communication 2003).

TASWA similarly made use of insider strategies. However, when the organisation failed to have its desired impact upon the process, it switched to outsider methods. There were a number of factors that led to TASWA's change of tactics. From the outset, the organisation was sceptical that the government Taskforce would achieve outcomes that would effectively address homelessness, and, most obviously, the organisation felt that it would not have its views incorporated into the Taskforce's recommendations via the formal channels. This became clearly evident to the group after the TASWA co-ordinator felt her input was ignored (Personal Communication 2003). TASWA also had less to lose by switching to outsider methods than some of the other groups involved in the Taskforce: it was a small group with a comparatively narrow policy focus; it had a low level of insider status; and it was not a group from which bureaucrats routinely sought information.⁵

The above analysis brings us to the issue of the shadow cast by party politics over group decisions about strategy and policy-maker decisions over ascribing status. Under the existing model WACOSS could be classified along ideological lines as an insider group under Labor governments and as an outsider group under Liberal governments. Its classification as an insider group under Labor governments is not contentious. Under the current Gallop Carpenter Labor government (elected in February 2001) WACOSS has access to decision-makers, is seen to be influential, and uses orthodox methods to try and achieve its goals.⁶

However, its classification as an outsider under Liberal governments is problematic. Under the previous Richard Court Liberal government (1993-2001) WACOSS was able to influence some social policy decisions, and bureaucrats and advisors did seek information and advice on some social policy issues⁷. WACOSS was also represented on a number

of government advisory boards and committees (WACOSS 2001b:8-9). Further, it should be noted that the organisation tried to achieve its goals via the use of insider methods under the Court government, and only resorted to the use of an outsider strategy on one instance when its funding was reduced.⁸

Using the Aberdeen model, under the Gallop Labor government WACOSS could be classified not only as a group with insider status, but as a core insider in social policy circles;⁹ that is, as a group at the top level of meaningful interaction with government on social policy issues.¹⁰ As per the definition of a core insider, WACOSS is not necessarily influential across the entire social policy area, but rather upon a range of issues in which the group is recognised to have particular expertise. In greater detail, under the Aberdeen model WACOSS can be described as a group that has core insider status and which uses insider strategies.

Under the previous Liberal government WACOSS can be classified as a specialist insider group. WACOSS was not very influential across the broad social policy area, but it did have influence in some key policy areas and its input was both canvassed and respected by decision-makers.¹¹ Furthermore, the organisation can be classified as pursuing insider strategies during this period, and as utilising a thresholder strategy when its government funding was under threat.

Under the existing model TASWA would be classified as an outsider group under both Labor and Liberal governments based upon ideological differences and its use of outsider methods. Again, the existing model offers too simplistic an analysis of the group's role in the policy process, and the Aberdeen model enables groups such as TASWA to be defined more succinctly.

Even though TASWA resorted to an outsider approach in its attempts to influence the State Homelessness Taskforce, it is not actually an outsider group as the existing model implies: it is viewed as legitimate by decision-makers; is represented on several government committees and advisory boards; and does, on the whole, participate in the insider style of politics.¹² However, the group does employ a combination of insider and outsider tactics. This is am-

ply demonstrated by TASWA's actions during the Taskforce: in addition to its involvement in the alternative taskforce and its loud criticism of the formal process, TASWA simultaneously made its own separate submissions to the government Taskforce.

Therefore, rather than being labelled as an outsider group TASWA, under the Aberdeen model, can be classified as an organisation of minimal influence which has peripheral insider status, and which employs thresholder strategies. It is not considered to be a key player in the policy process by either party, although it is accepted as a legitimate group that has access to decision-makers via consultation processes. TASWA's use of different strategies illustrates the Aberdeen group's fundamental criticism of other insider/outsider models: that they 'conflate' status and strategy, equating insider status with the exclusive use of insider strategies, and outsider status with outsider strategies.

The Aberdeen model also questions the extent to which ideological similarities and differences between pressure groups and decision-makers influence the ascription of group status. The results of this research indicate that in the Australian context ideology may be less of a determinant of levels of access and influence than the existing model (and the discussion of Matthews and Warhurst 1993) implies, although clearly a broader analysis is required to uphold a general finding of this nature.

The case here suggests that a change in government may affect the level of insider status a group enjoys, but will not necessarily result in the absolute loss of insider status. Change in strategy was a conscious choice, while group resources were key considerations in ascription of status by government. Therefore, ideological differences do not seem in any direct way discernable to us as a contributor to the exclusion of the groups we examined from the consultation process and their exile to the outsider realm (although the fate of associations more generally at the federal level under the current Coalition government could be viewed as affirming this connection – see Dalton and Lyons 2004). In the case of WACOSS, for example, changes in government have seen its level of

insider status change, not its type of status. The group is recognised for its high level of expertise on social policy issues, and it has resources to offer whichever party is in government. TASWA has fewer resources, and its influence over policy decisions and its level of access to decision-makers has varied little over the terms of the Gallop Labor and previous Court Liberal state governments, and its insider status has remained at the peripheral level.

Conclusions

The aim of this research was to determine the effectiveness of the existing understanding of insider and outsider pressure groups in the Australian literature, and to apply the Aberdeen model in the Australian context via the analysis of information gathered from case studies of two community sector organisations. The results of this analysis indicate that the existing model is less effective than the Aberdeen model in categorising pressure groups in a meaningful way. The benefit of applying the Aberdeen model is that it enables groups to be classified according to *both* their status and use of strategies, thus allowing more clarity in group analysis. As such it directs attention to 'choice of strategy' and 'resources' as key determinants of status (and therefore access), as opposed to the complexion of government as *the* defining feature. This provides greater insights into the role and influence of pressure groups in the Australian policy process as the possibility that a wide range of groups, not only the traditional insiders, may play a role in the formation of policy can be explored. As such, the Australian pressure group literature would benefit from further examination of the Aberdeen model. No doubt, it would also benefit from close engagement and deployment of the North American literature; however, this is beyond the modest scope of the present article.

The Aberdeen model is not a magic bullet for the difficulties faced in the analysis and classification of pressure groups. However, it importantly recognises the complexities of the relationships between pressure groups, decision-makers, and policy processes, and

constitutes a valuable tool for Australian scholars to make sense of and discuss Australian interest group behaviour.

Endnotes

1. The terms 'pressure group' and 'interest group' are often used in the Australian political science literature. However, the term pressure group seems to have the ascendancy in the British literature. Given the weight of British literature in this article, the term pressure group is deployed to avoid confusion.
2. There is no mention of this approach in two reviews of the academic literature in the area (Matthews 1980; Marsh 2003)
3. Survey questions included: how many staff are employed; does the group compete with other groups for membership; did/does members of the Gallop Labor or Court Liberal government seek assistance or advice on policy; what strategies are employed by the group; do the strategies employed vary from issue to issue; and how influential upon policy does the group believe it is/was under the Gallop Labor and Court Liberal governments? Lastly, the group was asked to nominate which category of status best described the organisation's position (core, specialist, peripheral, failed, outsider by ideology or goal, or outsider by choice).
4. Interview questions included: what were the main aims of the organisation going into the Taskforce process; was the organisation happy with the Taskforce process; did the organisation feel that it achieved its goals and was successful; were there any issues that the organisation felt were not adequately addressed by the Taskforce; which strategies has the organisation found to be the most successful in influencing decision-makers; which strategies does the organisation believe were the most successful in influencing the outcomes of the Taskforce; how does the organisation decide upon strategy and policy; and does the membership have much influence over these decisions?

5. Refer endnote 3.
6. Refer endnote 3.
7. Refer endnote 3.
8. Refer endnotes 3 and 4.
9. Refer endnote 3.
10. A further indication of the group's reputation amongst policy-makers was the appointment of the former executive director of WA-COSS as the director of the Social Policy Unit by the Gallop government's Department of Premier and Cabinet in February 2003.
11. Refer endnote 3.
12. Refer endnote 3.

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