






Productivity reform in Australia and New Zealand: Barriers and opportunities

24 November 2020

AEDT	NZDT			
8:45 – 8:55	10:45 – 10:55	WELCOME – Karen Hooper, Principal Commissioner, Queensland Productivity Commission		
SESSION 1 – Chair: Michael Brennan (Chair, Productivity Commission)				
8:55 – 9:15	10:55 – 11:15		Professor Gary Banks	Not wasting a Crisis: The reform landscape and the role of the PCs
9:15 – 9:45	11:15 – 11:45		Professor Bob Gregory <i>ANU College of Business & Economics</i>	Grand designs: Key policy adjustments in a post COVID-19 world
9:45 – 10:15	11:45 – 12:15		Professor Alan Bollard <i>Victoria University of Wellington</i>	Infrastructure and productivity post COVID-19
10:15 – 10:45	12:15 – 12:45	BREAK		
SESSION 2 – Chair: Peter Achterstraat (Productivity Commissioner, NSW Government)				
10:45 – 11:15	12:45 – 1:15		Dr Janine Dixon Associate Professor <i>Centre of Policy Studies, Victoria University</i>	Harnessing productivity gains post COVID-19: Structural change implications for the Australian economy
11:15 – 11:45	1:15 – 1:45		Jason McDonald Chief Advisor (Economic) <i>Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</i>	Deregulation: Why do we need to deregulate?

AEDT	NZDT		
11:45 - 12:15	1:45 - 2:15		Professor John Daley Senior Fellow <i>Grattan Institute</i>
			The increasing institutional barriers to reform
12:15 - 1:00	2:15 - 3:00	BREAK	
1:00 - 2:15	3:00 - 4:15	PANEL DISCUSSION	
		Moderator: Dr Pradeep Philip - CEDA Board of Directors/President of the CEDA State Advisory Council (Queensland)	
		Dr Matthew Butlin , Chair and CEO - SA Productivity Commission	
		Peter Achterstraat AM , Commissioner - NSW Productivity Commission	
		Murray Sherwin CNZM , Chair - New Zealand Productivity Commission	
		Dr Karen Hooper , Principal Commissioner - Queensland Productivity Commission	
		Michael Brennan , Chair - Australian Productivity Commission	
SESSION 3 - Chair: Murray Sherwin (Chair, NZ Productivity Commission)			
2:15 - 2:30	4:15 - 4:30		Peter Harris
			Data and policy design: Options to improve productivity and welfare outcomes
2:30 - 3:00	4:30 - 5:00		Professor Arthur Grimes Victoria University of Wellington
			From Star to Superstar: New Zealand's productivity performance - Unlocking further gains
3:00 - 3:30	5:00 - 5:30		Professor Bruce Chapman Australian National University
			Vocational education & training: Reforming financing to improve outcomes
3:30 - 3:45	5:30 - 5:45	CLOSING REMARKS - Matthew Butlin (Chair, SA Productivity Commission)	

▶ Please register to attend: www.qpc.qld.gov.au/event/

This online event, hosted by the Queensland Productivity Commission, is a joint event of the Australian, New Zealand and state productivity commissions.



Speaker profiles



Professor Gary Banks is a Professorial Fellow at the Melbourne Institute and chairs the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. From 1998 to 2012, he was inaugural Chairman of the Productivity Commission and from 2013 to 2017 Dean of the Australian and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG). He was Chair of the OECD's Regulatory Policy Committee and recently concluded seven years as an independent Director of the Macquarie Group. In 2006, Gary headed the Regulation Taskforce for the Prime Minister and Treasurer. Earlier in his career, he was an economist at the GATT/WTO in Geneva, and a consultant with the Centre for International Economics. His contributions to public policy have been recognised in the Order of Australia and the Economic Society's Distinguished Public Policy Fellow Award.



Professor Bob Gregory is an Emeritus Professor at the Research School of Economics at the Australian National University (ANU) and headed ANU's Economics Department, RSES 1986-2000. He was consultant to the Tariff Board 1971-72 and the Industries Assistance Commission 1973-1975. He was a member of the committee that recommended the introduction of student income contingent loans (now adopted in 20 countries), the Reserve Bank Board and the Australian Sciences and Technology Council. He has served on numerous external advisory committees for the ABS, actively involved in the early development of administrative data sources.

He has held positions at University of Melbourne, LSE, ANU, Northwestern University, and visiting positions at The Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, Washington, Harvard University, University of Chicago, Hitotsubashi University, Royal Holloway and University College, London. His research interests include the labour market in China, immigration, the role of women in the labour market, the impact of the mining boom and the Australian welfare system.

Professor Gregory has been awarded the Order of Australia Medal and has an honorary doctorate from the University of Melbourne. He has served as ESA President and received the 2001 Distinguished Fellow Award. He is an elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and held the Chair of Australian Studies at Harvard 1983-84.



Professor Alan Bollard is a Professor of Practice at Victoria University of Wellington. He has extensive experience as a senior public servant. He has previously held roles as the Executive Director of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat, Governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, and Chief Executive and Secretary to the New Zealand Treasury. He holds a PhD in Economics and an honorary Doctor of Laws from Auckland University.



Associate Professor Janine Dixon is an economist at the Centre of Policy Studies (CoPS) at Victoria University. She works mainly with economy-wide models of the Australian economy, undertaking economic consultations for various public and private sector clients in Australia and internationally.

Janine is responsible for the Victoria University Employment Forecasting project. As part of this project she has worked on the development of detailed “baseline” forecasts of the Australian economy and labour market, which are regularly updated to reflect changing economic conditions.

Janine is an experienced lecturer and trainer in CGE modelling, having taught on many CoPS short courses and undergraduate courses and supervised PhD students. Prior to joining CoPS in 2007 Janine worked at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1997-2002) where she was the manager of various surveys of the service industries in Australia. Dr Dixon has a PhD from the University of Dublin, Trinity College (2006) and a Bachelor of Economics with First Class Honours from Monash University (1997).



Jason McDonald is the Chief Advisor (Economic) in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and will soon take up the role of head of the Deregulation Taskforce. As Chief Advisor, Jason provides economic advice to government across a range of economic issues, most recently focused on the government’s economic recovery strategy from COVID19 and as an advisor to the National Covid19 Commission Advisory Board. Before that, Jason also focused on international economic issues in his role as the G20 sous-Sherpa. Jason also ran the Northern Australian White Paper taskforce in Prime Minister and Cabinet, after a 20 year career in the Australian Treasury working across much of the department, including five years on budget policy, the Henry Tax review and the design team that introduced the GST. Jason has a Masters and First Class Honours degree in economics from Monash University.



Professor John Daley is one of Australia’s leading public policy thinkers. He was the inaugural Chief Executive of the Grattan Institute for its first 11 years, and led it to become the leading domestic policy think tank in Australia. He continues to work there on institutional reform as a Senior Fellow.

While at Grattan, John has published extensively on institutional reform, government priorities, budget policy, tax reform, retirement incomes and housing affordability.

John has 30 years’ experience spanning academic, government and corporate roles at the University of Melbourne, the University of Oxford, the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, consulting firm McKinsey and Co, and ANZ Bank.

John graduated LLB (Hons) and BSc at the University of Melbourne in 1990. He completed a D Phil in public law at the University of Oxford in 1999.

John is also the Chair of the Australian National Academy of Music, a Director of the Myer Foundation, and a keen amateur pianist and gardener.



Peter Harris is a senior public policy adviser with extensive experience in both State and Commonwealth infrastructure projects, structural reform and national competition policy. He has had particular experience in transport and telecommunications issues over many decades.

Most recently, Peter was CEO of the National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board providing a business perspective to Government on Australia's economic recovery from the pandemic.

Peter was Chairman of the Productivity Commission (2013-18) and instrumental in the research and recommendations in reports such as "Public Infrastructure", "Shifting the Dial", "Data Availability and Use" and "Competition in the Australian Financial System".

In his earlier career, Peter served as Senior Private Secretary handling micro economic reform for then Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke; adviser to the Hilmer Inquiry on National Competition Policy; in senior positions in the Commonwealth Department of Transport dedicated to rail, road and aviation reforms, including the privatisation of Australia's largest airports; as Vice President in the Ansett/Air NZ group; and as Director General of Public Transport in Victoria.



Professor Arthur Grimes holds the Chair of Wellbeing and Public Policy at Victoria University of Wellington's School of Government. He is also Senior Fellow at Motu Economic and Public Policy Research and a member of the World Wellbeing Panel. Prior positions include Chairman and Chief Economist of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Chief Executive of Southpac Investment Management Limited, Chair of the Hugo Group, Chief Economist of the National Bank of New Zealand, and Board Member of the Financial Markets Authority. His current research focuses on the economics of wellbeing, and on urban economics; he has also published research on economic reform, productivity, taxation and monetary economics. In 2018, US National Public Radio's Planet Money described him as "one of the most important economists in the world" for his pioneering work on inflation targeting.



Professor Bruce Chapman is a professor of economics in the College of Business and Economics at the Australian National University. He is a labour and education economist and has a PhD from Yale University. He has published around 200 papers and several books in the areas of higher education financing, unemployment, wage determination, and the economics of sport and crime. He is considered to be the architect of the higher education contribution scheme, the world's first national income-contingent loan for higher education, and as advised the World Bank and the governments of around 15 countries with respect to student loans. He was presented with the Distinguished Fellow Award of the Economics Society of Australia in 2015, the Australian Financial Review Lifetime Achievement Award for Higher Education in 2017 and the Order of Australia in 2020.