Engaging with the Community in the Smart State

Prepared by a working group of the **Smart State Council**

November 2006

Smart State Council

Dear Premier

Please find attached the Smart State Council working group report on *Engaging with the Community in the Smart State*.

The report notes that Queensland is already recognised nationally, and even internationally, for Smart State initiatives such as its investment in biotechnology, but many Queenslanders remain unconvinced. To bring them on board, the report suggests involving a broader cross-section of people, activities and communities in the successes and opportunities of the Smart State. It also notes the opportunity for government to become the exemplar of the Smart State by embedding long-term strategic thinking and innovative systems and processes in all its activities.

I commend it to you.

Professor Peter Andrews
Queensland Chief Scientist and
Chair, Standing Committee
Smart State Council

November 2006

Copies of this publication can be obtained at www.smartstate.qld.gov.au

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State
November 2006

WORKING GROUP

Chair

Dr Cherrell Hirst, Director, Queensland BioCapital Funds

Members

Ms Annabelle Chaplain, Chairman, Office of Economic Development for the City of Brisbane

Mr Alasdair Jeffrey, General Manager Financial Communication, Rowland Group

Professor Lesley Johnson, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), Griffith University

Mr Michael Rayner, Principal Director, Cox Rayner Architects

Mr Garrett Russell, Advertising Creative Director / Producer

SMART STATE COUNCIL

The Smart State Council was established in June 2005 as a central advisory body to provide high level advice to the Queensland Government on emerging Smart State issues and trends, and to propose measures to position Queensland to respond to challenges and opportunities.

The Smart State Council is chaired by the Premier of Queensland and comprises Government Ministers, the Queensland Chief Scientist and representatives from Queensland's business and research communities.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *2*
November 2006

Table of Contents

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State
November 2006

3

INTRODUCTION

Smart *adj*

1. showing intelligence and mental alertness

2. shrewd and calculating in business and other dealings

3. amusingly clever and possessing a quick wit

4. disrespectful or impertinent

5. with a neat and well-cared-for appearance

6. fashionable and stylish

7. vigorous and brisk

8. causing a sharp stinging sensation

9. used to describe a missile or weapon that is guided to its target by laser or radio beams

10. with a built-in microprocessor.

The Queensland Government has a vision for Queensland to become a Smart State'…a State where knowledge, creativity and innovation drive economic growth to improve prosperity and quality of life for all Queenslanders'. On the other hand, many Queenslanders, perhaps even the majority, appear to view the Smart State as   self-congratulatory political rhetoric. It is time to engage the community.

This report assumes that Government has a legitimate and powerful role to play as a promoter of cultural change.[1] Queensland will not become a smart state without the leadership of both the government and the community. At the same time, attitudinal change of the kind that would lead many Queenslanders to alter their perceptions of the Smart State to replace sunshine with smartness, or even to add smartness to their sunshine – to engage in education, innovation and creativity – will not be achieved easily.

This report takes a broad view of the Smart State, starting with the Queensland Government's vision for a knowledge economy and continuing this to its expression in a community steeped in knowledge, creativity and innovation. It also takes a broad view of community engagement, both in terms of the diverse range of communities that might engage with knowledge, creativity and innovation and the forms engagement might take. This report is mindful of the State Government's wider policy agenda to engage with Queensland communities long disenfranchised from decision-making about their lives.

This kind of Smart State – a broad culture of knowledge, creativity and innovation – and this kind of engagement – where communities identify and act upon their own notions of smartness – do not make for easy policy solutions. A marketing approach may form part of a total strategy, but mass marketing serves to inform only, not to engage in a dialogue. Marketing – whether it be

---

[1] Shane, Scott (1994). Cultural values and the championing process. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*. 18(4): 25-39.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *4*
November 2006

publicity, advertising or promotions – may aid understanding and clarify misunderstanding. It may link initiatives of the Government's Smart State vision to people's lives. But it will not engage people in the Smart State.

This report identifies models of innovation diffusion which indicate the way in which a culture of innovation might find its way throughout the Queensland community. The State Government's framework for community engagement is highlighted, along with tools available to seek community engagement at the deeper level needed to achieve cultural change. Other models of community segmentation and understanding are also presented. While cultural change will not happen quickly, these models identify potential ways of making change work more effectively.

Ultimately, this report gives the Queensland Government an opportunity to think strategically about developing the cultural infrastructure that underpins a Smart State in which knowledge, creativity and innovation are the most valued qualities.

THE CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF A SMART STATE

> *Transformational change usually requires strong culture, values, and emphasis on communication and leadership and always it needs persistence.*[2]

When Queensland Premier Peter Beattie first announced the Smart State concept in 1998, his may have been a voice in the wilderness as far as the broader Queensland community was concerned. Queensland was the Sunshine State, leading Australia in population growth, tourism and skin cancer.

Since then, there have been massive investments in the Smart State. But these investments, particularly in the physical infrastructure required to meet the challenges of a booming economy, must also be underpinned by the cultural infrastructure, the community's beliefs and values, which can help transform the economy over time into one based on knowledge, creativity and innovation.

This report focuses on that cultural infrastructure - an infrastructure that fuses sunshine with smartness and that engages the community in the knowledge, creativity and innovation necessary for Queensland to become a Smart State - a cultural infrastructure that supports the development of Queensland as a Smart State and sustains it into the future.

Such a cultural infrastructure will be characterised by:

- a Government which is the exemplar of innovation at work

- people who participate actively in education at all levels

---

[2] *Learning Government,* Graham Scott, OECD, available at
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/28/2495818/pdf

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *5*
November 2006

- local communities which identify with and value creativity and innovation.

The result will be a culture of innovation, a culture of individualism and freedom, curiosity, readiness to accept change, support for risk-taking, equality, acceptance of diversity and openness, cooperativeness and collaboration among individuals and institutions, and respect for the value of education.

THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT'S SMART STATE

A quiet revolution is taking place in Queensland. My Government is working with Queenslanders to make our State a place where ideas and innovation flourish, education is of the highest quality, the economy thrives and jobs are rewarding. It's the Smart State vision and as Queensland forges an international reputation in education, training, research, development, commercialisation and new and exciting industries, the vision is becoming a reality.[3]

In December 1998, at the end of his first six months in office, Queensland Premier Peter Beattie set seven priorities for Government for the year ahead. The top priority was jobs, but among the others for 1999 was '…making Queensland "the smart state" by improving the workforce skills base and raising general education levels, and improving quality of life for all Queenslanders.'[4] In the same month, in a number of forums, the Premier referred to Queensland as the "Action State" where businesses should seek to invest.

The Government's Smart State vision strengthened over the next several years, with investment in new and creative industries including biotechnology, aviation and games, strengthening of research links, and reforms of the State's education and training system.

In April 2005, the Queensland Government released the *Smart State Strategy 2005 – 2015* for '…a state where knowledge, creativity and innovation drive economic growth to improve prosperity and quality of life for all Queenslanders'. The Smart State vision is to deliver on the seven key priority areas of:

- growing a diverse economy and creating jobs

- realising the Smart State through education, skills and innovation

- managing urban growth and building Queensland's regions

- improving health care and strengthening services to the community

- protecting our children and enhancing community safety

- protecting the environment for a sustainable future

---

[3] Queensland Government. The Honourable Peter Beattie MP, Premier and Minister for Trade 2004.
[4] *Beattie government sets priorities for 1999.* Media Release Monday 14 December 1998.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State 6
November 2006

- delivering responsive government.

In the 2005 Strategy, the Government's vision of the Smart State clearly connected to its sunshine origins, with the Foreword over the Premier's signature drawing links between Queensland's sunshine past and its smart future, and the links between becoming smart and creating the jobs of tomorrow for Queensland's children. 'We have a brilliant environment, great climate and enviable lifestyle. If we don't continue to change, the Sunshine State will still be a comfortable place to live. But we will be overtaken… Queensland will become a technological and education backwater, slumbering in the sun.' The overarching message is 'Continue to innovate or stagnate.'

COMMUNICATING THE SMART STATE

Like the Smart State vision, Smart State communications have developed somewhat organically as the vision and strategy has found traction with several key audiences. Through 1999, the Premier was using the Smart State name in interactions with business, education and the community. The Premier worked to engage the Queensland Government, the Opposition, business and industry and the education sector in the Smart State vision. By 2004 when the Queensland Government embarked on its formal strategy development process, the Smart State was recognised in Queensland and nationally as the Government's aspiration for the future. It was variously praised and criticised in the local media.

The Queensland Government communicates the Smart State vision and its relevance to Queensland life in a number of ways. It directly markets and communicates the vision through mediums such as:

- the media campaign that accompanied the launch of the Smart State Strategy in 2005

- *Catalyst*, the magazine-style publication produced by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet which highlights Smart achievements in Queensland

- the Smart State website which provides access to publications produced by Government, as well as a basic outline of the Smart State vision and strategy

- Smart State achievements in media releases and speeches

- Smart State Ambassadors (four have been nominated to date)

- the Government's Smart Awards for business and industry and Smart State – Smart Women Awards for women in science, engineering and information and communication technologies.

The Queensland Government has also invited community engagement in the Smart State vision as evidenced by:

- Community Cabinets involving the Queensland Cabinet visiting a regional city or town, with Ministers making themselves available to talk directly with citizens

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State
November 2006
7

- the consultation process to develop the Smart State Strategy in 2004 which included public submissions (incorporating an e-survey), a summit and forums for business, industry and youth

- Smart Stories which were real-life examples of the application of science and technology gathered from local communities and published on the website (now archived)

- the Smart State Council, an advisory body to the Queensland Government comprising experts from business, education and research sectors.

ARE WE ENGAGED IN THE SMART STATE?

There are many ways of understanding and describing the Queensland communities that might engage in a culture of knowledge, creativity and innovation. The following (overlapping) communities will have different stakes in the future of Queensland as a Smart State:

- the Queensland Government could be the exemplar of knowledge and innovation at work

- small and large business and industry could be partners in creating the Smart State through research and innovation

- school, vocational training and higher education providers could be instilling skills and the capacity for lifelong learning, as well as participating with industry and government in research and innovation

- local government authorities which could also act as exemplars of innovation at work

- the community of Queensland could benefit from the Smart State and engage in its culture of learning and innovation.

It would appear that the Smart State has support from some sectors of these communities. Consultations suggest that there is considerable support amongst community and business leaders and in the research and education communities for the Smart State, but that the general community understanding of and identification with the Smart State still lags somewhat.

While there has not been a large quantitative study of community attitudes to the Smart State vision, a range of sources provide qualitative data on community engagement with the culture of knowledge, creativity and innovation. During the development of the revised Smart State Strategy in 2004, Government organised community consultation events involving over 200 leaders from business, industry, research and education, together with young people. Feedback from these forums was published, along with the views of a number of working groups on key Smart State issues. The call for public submissions to the Smart State Strategy process elicited a total of 430 responses. The Queensland Government also commissioned a small focus group based study of the Smart State concept in 2004. More recently, as part of the development of this report,

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *8*
November 2006

business and industry leaders were drawn together to explore the extent of community engagement with the Smart State vision.

The findings from these sources suggest Queenslanders are a long way from engagement with the Smart State. Some are uncomfortable with the notion of being 'smarter' than other states. Some don't know what a 'smart state' is. Some see it as nothing more than Government rhetoric. Cynicism characterises responses. Those who do understand what the Smart State is see it as being about general economic prosperity but not their lives and families. They see the Smart State failing to grapple with the urgent environmental issues of our time. They don't connect the Smart State with their own lives.

Three specific community concerns with the Smart State vision were consistent across the focus groups, planning forums and the recent reference group for the preparation of this report:

- the Smart State is predominantly associated with the economic rationale for the Smart State and does not capture hearts and minds

- there was no perceived link between the Smart State concept and quality of life for most Queenslanders unless someone had direct experience of a Smart State initiative

- the Smart State cannot or will not address issues that are considered more urgent, including water, the environment and population growth.

At the same time, Queenslanders do see the value of science and technology to the community. A 2005 household survey examining Queenslander's perceptions of the role of science and technology found that:

- 53.5% of Queenslanders agree that because of science and technology there will be more job opportunities for the next generation (compared with 85% in the US, 72% in the EU and 77% in the UK)

- 85% believe Queensland needs to develop science and technology in order to enhance international competitiveness (compared with 77% in NZ and 79% in the UK)

- 95.5% believe science and technology are important for the preservation of Queensland's environment (compared with 82% in NZ)

- 77.4% feel science and technology are making their lives better (compared with 86% in the US, 71% in the EU and 68% in the UK).[5]

Whilst not a survey of the Smart State concept, it does show that Queenslanders are linking science and technology to international competitiveness, the preservation of the environment, and better lives, if not to future jobs. This is important in that while the Smart State has not engaged the interests of the community, the principles of a culture of innovation fed by science and technology are becoming clearer.

---

[5] Queensland Government, Office of Economic and Statistical Research (2005). *Survey into Queenslander's perceptions of the role of science & technology.* Commissioned by the Office of the Queensland Chief Scientist.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *9*
November 2006

HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

Cultural change is a complex process involving changes in people's understanding, attitudes and behaviour. A number of models have been developed to understand how cultural change happens. These models may help in suggesting a strategic approach to community engagement in the Smart State. One model for understanding change, developed by Everett Rogers (Figure 1), provides insights into the adoption and diffusion of technological innovations.[6]

Figure 1: Categories of innovation diffusion and adoption
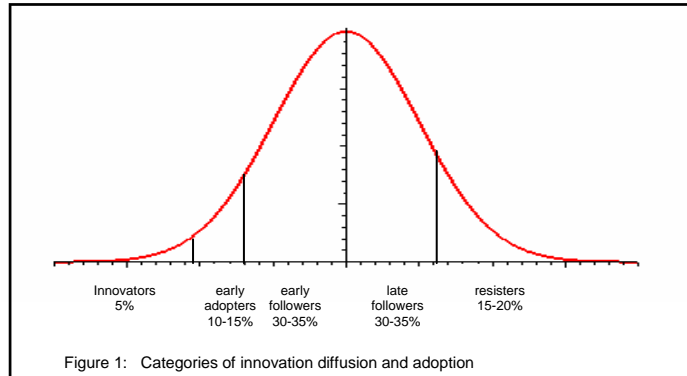
In the Rogers model, innovators were the smallest group (5%) of a population likely to take up innovations first. Early adopters (10 – 15%) are more integrated into the local social system than innovators. They provide leadership in the adoption of innovation. Because early adopters are not too far ahead of the average individual in innovativeness, they serve as a role model for many other members of a social system. Early followers (30 – 35%) adopt innovation just before the average member of a system.

The Rogers model can help to understand that cultural change will not happen quickly and that resources are best targeted at those likely to change. Some people were engaged in a culture of knowledge, creativity and innovation before the Queensland Government first articulated the Smart State. Others may never engage in creativity, innovation and knowledge. Practitioners who have adapted the Rogers model for use in organisations, stress the importance of working with the early adopters and early followers in leading change. Time and resources will be wasted on trying to engage people who will never change. By working with those who want or are at least open to change, a critical mass can develop and eventually take on a life of its own.

The Queensland Government has already followed a strategy of working with early adopters in spreading its Smart State vision. Over time, the Smart State vision may be adopted more widely, although its focus on economic development and its perceived exclusion of smartness outside science and technology may hamper diffusion in that people may not see it as being relevant to

---

[6] Rogers, Everett (1995). *Diffusion of innovations.* (4th ed). Free Press.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State
November 2006

10

their lives.

Another model for understanding change and innovation is Richard Florida's concept of creative capital, based on his 'three Ts of talent, technology and tolerance.' [7] Florida's global creativity index attempts to capture the processes that lead to geographic concentrations of scientific and technological creativity. His focus is on the attraction of talent – artists, engineers, educators, researchers, lawyers and other classes of knowledge worker. A region's ability to attract, retain and grow knowledge workers may rely on its technological capability as well as cultural indicators such as tolerance, diversity and openness. 'Ranking places according to how successful they are in attracting highly mobile knowledge workers is a compelling approach, because it implies a different type of policy response. For example, Florida frequently cites such aspects as vibrant downtowns and thriving artistic communities as drivers of place-based success, and even uses a Bohemian Index to measure a community's tolerance level.'[8]

The Roy Morgan Values Segments (Figure 2)[9], used by media and communications industries to design marketing campaigns, is a way to understand the psychographic profiles of segment populations and how to develop and send appropriate messages that reach these groups.
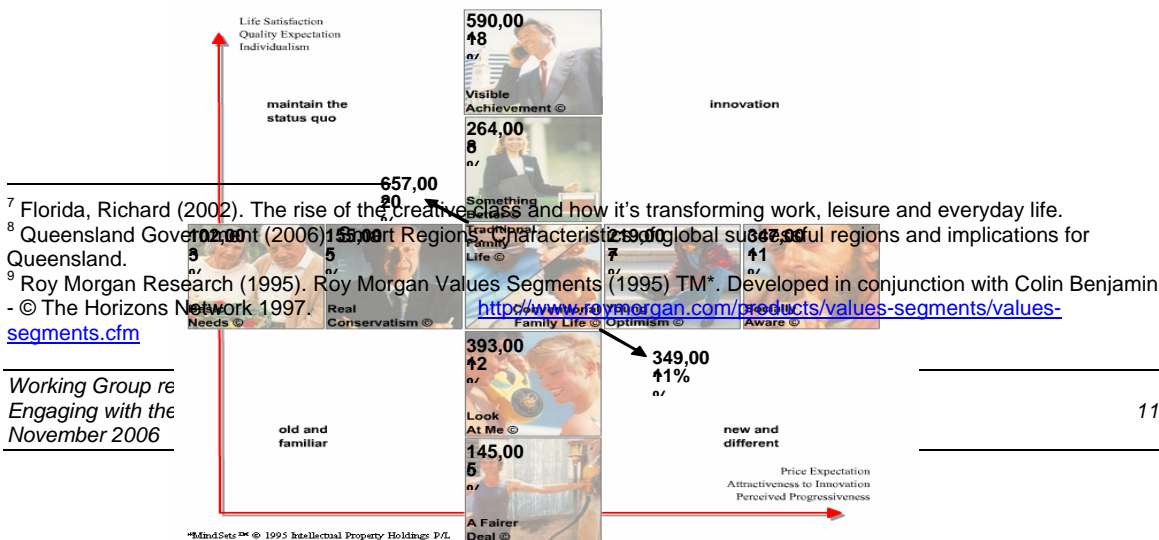
[7] Florida, Richard (2002). The rise of the creative class and how it's transforming work, leisure and everyday life.
[8] Queensland Government (2006). Smart Regions: Characteristics of globally successful regions and implications for Queensland.
[9] Roy Morgan Research (1995). Roy Morgan Values Segments (1995) TM*. Developed in conjunction with Colin Benjamin - © The Horizons Network 1997. http://www.roymorgan.com/products/values-segments/values-segments.cfm

Figure 2: Roy Morgan Values Segment

These tools for segmenting the Queensland population have potential to help communicators understand who they are talking to. They can also inform the development of tailored marketing campaigns.

So, for example, Early Adopters and Early Followers might be more likely to adopt and follow cultural change to the Smart State vision. A campaign targeted at this population sector might be useful at this stage in the life of the Smart State. A combination of the Rogers model and Morgan Values Segments might be used to describe in values terms a first group of Early Adopters and Early Followers (Visible Achievement, Young Optimism, Socially Aware).

Whatever model is applied to understand the process of cultural change and adoption of innovation, it needs to be understood that change will be a slow process, particularly if the Government seeks to engage with the community in deciding the change process.

A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Governments worldwide are working to engage more meaningfully with communities at local, state and national levels in order to improve their decisions and increase community involvement in the business of government. Community involvement improves decisions, makes policy more relevant to people's lives and creates a more active, involved citizenry.[10]

In 2004, the City of Toronto embarked on a seven-week public engagement campaign to develop a new vision by looking at the city from the inside-out as well as the outside-in. Their aim was to discover and define what Toronto stood for: what was the city's essence and vision, its qualities and aspirations that made it unlike any other city in the world.

---

[10] Brown, Kerry & Keast, Robyn (2003). Citizen-government engagement: community connection through networked arrangements. *Asian Journal of Public Administration.* 25(1): 107-131.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State
November 2006

12

Their hope was that a new vision would allow Torontonians to 'speak in one voice so that our message is clear, focused and solid'[11] in order to compete globally for trade and tourists. They conducted extensive research in the United States, United Kingdom and Canada and engaged their citizens, marketing experts and local community leaders.

Torontonians were asked to respond to specific questions, via a website:

- What is your vision for the future of Toronto?

- What do you love about Toronto?

- What would you do to enhance Toronto?

- How do we tell the Toronto Story?

This input from inside and outside led to a new identity for the city: 'Toronto is a city built with and for the limitless imaginations of the people that come here. And it is these people that make Toronto the city of imagination.'

The Queensland Government has adopted a number of innovative strategies to involve the community in its business, including Community Cabinets, geographic community renewal programs and Cape York Partnerships. The Government has an online community consultation mechanism, ConsultQld, which consults the community via the internet on selected issues and policy matters. ConsultQld raises awareness of consultation processes. Reports are posted to the site when the consultation ends, outlining a summary of results and the next steps in policy development.

These initiatives have been developed within the Queensland Government Community Engagement Policy Framework that identifies six principles for any engagement:

- inclusiveness

- reaching out

- mutual respect

- integrity

- affirming diversity

- adding value

and a continuum of interactions, ranging from:

- one-way information sharing

- two-way consultation

- active participation in decision-making processes.

---

[11] http://www.torontounlimited.ca/

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *13*
November 2006

One-way information sharing, which includes marketing communication activities, can lead to better-informed citizens. It is a given that the information is accurate, easy to understand and timely.

Two-way consultation, which includes public submissions, forums and e-democracy, will involve citizens and may lead to policies and programs that represent diverse needs.

Active participation in decision-making processes is the only form of community engagement with potential to strengthen civic capacity and mobilise resources. It is the only form of engagement with the potential to create cultural change. In Queensland, the Cape York Partnerships and various geographically based community renewal programs are examples of active participation in decision-making by communities.

Active participation is more complex to achieve on a grand scale for the whole of Queensland than in local community settings. However, various tools including citizen panels, citizen juries and citizen dialogues have been used to facilitate community participation in decision-making at state and national levels. These tools seek to bring together all legitimate stakeholders including citizens on an equal footing to consider important issues.

Given the success of these mechanisms in engaging the community, there is a clear opportunity to extend the model to communicate the benefits of the Smart State.

BUILDING CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

> *You cannot change a culture overnight but you have to try as if you could… It's like pushing a rock uphill. You need strength, passion and persistence.*[12]

To continue to innovate rather than stagnate, the Queensland Government now needs to focus on building the cultural infrastructure that underpins a Smart State. The 2005 Smart State Strategy points to the need for broader community engagement. 'Government will use its influence to cultivate a confidence about the importance of knowledge, creativity and innovation to our future. This must occur at every level – as part of the education and training system, in Queensland's small business as well as big business. The people who shape Queensland's thinking share this responsibility for promoting the importance of knowledge, creativity and innovation in our lives.'[13]

At its best, community engagement creates space for dialogue between a citizen and a government that changes both of them. Developing a culture of knowledge, creativity and innovation will not be simple. The Queensland Government needs strategies that can facilitate

---

[12] Yd, D and Hartman, C (2000). *Washington's knowledge management pioneer*, Knowledge Management Review. The words of Dr Shereen Remez, the first US official to be appointed Chief Knowledge Officer of the General Services Administration.

[13] Queensland Government, Department of the Premier and Cabinet (2005). *Smart Queensland: Smart State Strategy 2005-2015.*

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   14
November 2006

cultural change by giving as much autonomy as possible to the community about change. Strategies that engage with communities in the Smart State need to accommodate diverse responses and forms of engagement.

The findings of this report are informed by the Queensland Government's own strategic framework for community engagement. Government could continue to market its Smart State. It could do its marketing better and in a more targeted way. It could clarify misunderstandings, present positive images and eventually more Queenslanders might understand what it is trying to do. Or it could build on its communications and marketing approach and seek a deeper level of engagement in the Smart State, creating the cultural infrastructure that will lead many more Queenslanders to embrace a future where knowledge, creativity and innovation accompany sunshine and sport as key life values.

This report suggests that governments seeking a smart future ought to lead by example, valuing knowledge, innovation and creativity in their own business and providing smart services. The State Government should continue to be a champion of education and training and should continue to be the loudest voice advocating the need for Queensland to become smart. This is part of the Government's challenge that it has already defined for itself - an ambitious vision to transform Queensland.

Smart Communication

The Smart State Strategy has developed organically, starting as a bright idea and taking on momentum with each iteration. Education and industry sectors have been involved along the way in Smart State initiatives. So in many ways, the Government has worked with the segments of the population most likely to embrace the Smart State vision (education, research and industry leaders) and it may be that ownership among these groups will begin to filter through to other segments of the community. Feedback to date suggests that there is some 'stickiness' in community attitudes in Queensland, that the Smart State – the importance of education, knowledge and innovation to the future – has some traction now that is new and different.

More targeted communication that makes the concept of the Smart State relevant to a wider range of stakeholders will form a foundation for effective consultation and engagement. The development of a fully-integrated communication strategy along the lines outlined in the previous section will be fundamental to ensuring that the Government is successful in changing the cultural infrastructure of the state to deliver on its vision for the Smart State.

It needs to be clear in all communication that the Smart State is aspirational rather than descriptive of Queensland now (in the way the Sunshine State describes Queensland now). While the Queensland Government's rhetoric for the Smart State makes clear that the Smart State is a vision of the future, mass marketing tactics like Smart State number plates describe a current situation not an aspiration. They will not sit comfortably with Queenslanders who don't see

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *15*
November 2006

Queensland as particularly 'smart' or who don't like competing with other states (except in sport) and being 'the' smart state. The number plates read *Queensland – the Smart State* not *Queensland – Getting Smart*, or *Thinking Smart*. There is no sense of journey here, of *Queensland – A Learner Smart State*.

Smart Local Communities - Participation

One difficulty of engaging the community in the Smart State is the perceived ownership by Government of the Smart State vision. It is always more difficult to engage people in a set of values they have had no role in developing. While the Government has made a number of attempts to engage with various communities, the perception remains that the Smart State is owned by the Government.

In addition, the Government needs to provide stories of what it means to live in a Smart State that connect more intimately with people in their everyday lives. Well publicised stories of smart heroes and heroines from all walks of life need to be provided on a continual basis. There is scope to engage the community more deeply in existing events such as the Government's Smart Awards by introducing a People's Choice award or e-voting. In this context it is important to ensure that the Government expands the focus of the Smart State to encompass other areas such as the arts and the creative industries. Recent advertisements about the new buildings on the South Bank cultural precinct are an important development along these lines that need to be built on in the future.

The Smart State would also benefit from being brought down to earth in a local community as more than rhetoric, preferably a local community that has been traditionally disenfranchised from decision-making.

With Queensland Government support and facilitation, such a community could devise its own version of smartness, its own priorities and indicators for being smart and implement a smart community strategy. One local community might have learnings that could be mapped across the State, on a community-by-community basis.

Smart Government - Leadership

Two of the issues emerging from research on community views of the Smart State concern the extent to which Government itself is 'smart' and the perceived failure by the Queensland Government to solve some of the major issues facing the Smart State into the future.

Smart regions are characterised by smart governments which are exemplars of knowledge, creativity and innovation at work. Smart services will be the best advertisement for the Smart State. Some of the most critical issues facing the Smart State are providing health services to an

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   *16*
November 2006

aging population, particularly in rural and remote areas, and infrastructure and sustainability in the south east in the face of water shortages and rapid population growth. These issues would benefit from community engagement in solutions.

The recent announcement by the Government of a fibre optic network for Brisbane and eventually the state as a whole will be a significant step forward in both demonstrating leadership but also in providing people with a daily experience of what it means to live in a 'Smart State'.

Yet, arguable the most important single initiative the Queensland Government could take to engage the community in the Smart State would be to work with all providers of education and training in order to build an education system from early childhood to later life that promotes innovation and lifelong learning, with high levels of participation by the broader community.

The Government has already embarked on a reform process of its own education business, introducing an extra school year, focusing on middle years and ensuring all young people are in learning or earning until they turn 17. However, much more could be done in order to have a smart statewide education system where every stage leads to development of the skills and attributes that make us innovators and entrepreneurs.

Working Group report to the Smart State Council on
Engaging with the Community in the Smart State   17
November 2006