

HCIA

Hearing Health Advocacy Forum

Engaging with the Public Service



Hearing Aid
Audiometrist Society
of Australia
APPROVED PROFESSIONAL BODY



The role of a Public Service

Protectors of the public interest and there for the long term

- The public service is the advisory, the Ministerial support and implementation and regulatory arm of government.
- Public Servants are there for the long-term.
- They are more likely to be interested in the substance of an argument or idea, rather than what votes it might win.
- A good public servant is well aware of the environment they operate in and of the politics of the government in power.

Engaging with the Public Service

Relationships are everything – they need to be built and nurtured

- Make sure you know what you want and why you want it. Be clear about your priorities. Don't ask for the moon; ask for the most important things or a package covering your top priorities.
- Build relationships with officials; after all, they are there for the long haul.
- Know the key senior people in charge.
- Relationships are everything - they need to be built and nurtured,
- Be known, trusted and respected.
- Be rigorous in what you do. It's good to have statistics or research to prove your case. It is not enough to rely on emotions – a well argued and well reasoned case is needed.
- Timing is important. Learn about the budget cycle and start making your submissions mid-year, rather than at the end of the year.
- Follow the money. Know the cost of what you are proposing and be prepared to compromise.

What is the most effective way for a consumer group to influence policy?

Talk to Ministers and talk to the national press. Talk to and lobby back benchers. Have good information to support your case.

At what level should consumer groups be looking to engage with the public sector?

For policy matters, relationships with the Branch Head are crucial. If initiatives are big, go up the food chain to the Division Head, the Deputy Secretary or the Secretary (departmental head). Go to where the quality officials are and where the interest in what you are trying to do lies.

My advice is to have your smartest and most knowledgeable people do the engagement.

The Hon. Michael Wooldridge
Former Federal Minister for Health and Ageing

About the Hearing Care Industry Association

The Hearing Care Industry Association represents Australia's hearing healthcare retailers who, between them, care for thousands of hearing-impaired Australians in more than 700 locations around the country. Its members employ more than 800 professionals in teams of clinicians and client service officers to provide excellence in hearing care.

The clinicians are industry-trained and government-accredited specialists and they work with the latest technology. Many are members of international groups which deliver hearing services to clients around the world.

As an association, HCIA aims to provide a unified voice to all stakeholders about the needs of hearing-impaired Australians and this includes government, the bureaucracy, the media, professional bodies, and the public.

The Hearing Care Industry Association

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