Accountability Challenges in the Age of Responsive Governance

Professor Martin Painter
City University of Hong Kong
Responsive Governance and Accountability

- What is ‘Responsive Governance’?
- What are its origins?
- What does it mean for accountability in modern government and public administration?
Traditional Public Administration

- 19th Century: the emergence of the ‘career’ civil service in parallel with development of representative government
- Doctrine of ‘neutral competence’
  - Merit principle – public service as source of expertise
  - Officials as loyal servants of the government of the day, but offering neutral, objective advice
  - Civil service as the guardian of ‘fair and equal treatment’ – stress on ‘due process’ and rule of law
  - Stability, predictability and continuity
- Accountability? vertical and hierarchical: rules; loyalty to ‘god’ (government of the day); the government alone ‘answers to the people’
Public Management

❖ ‘Business’ as a model
❖ Management as a generic art / science - the ‘profession of management’
❖ Business methods borrowed to improve efficiency and performance
❖ ‘Managerialism’: if management is a generic art / science, ‘let the manager manage’ – hands-on management

❖ Accountability? Take personal and professional responsibility for results – ‘performance’ accountability
New Public Management (NPM)

- Public management according to economic principles
- Use of market type mechanisms (MTMs) as incentive structures for managers to produce public goods economically and efficiently.
  - Contracting out, purchaser / provider split, performance pay, ‘autonomization’ of public agencies, ‘customerization’ of service delivery
- ‘Normalization’ of the status of public employees – end of the career service?
- Accountability? – results and performance, or output / product accountability – the bottom line is ‘customer satisfaction’.
Origins of Responsive Governance

1. Global discourse of ‘good governance’, associated with development assistance
2. ‘New governance’ as a global trend
3. The ‘Information Society’ and its impact on government
Doctrines of ‘Good Governance’

1. Rule of law
2. Stable, coherent political leadership enjoying widespread trust and legitimacy
3. A neutral, competent, efficient, business-like civil service
4. Transparency, predictability and accountability in public administration
5. Mechanisms of voice for civil society participation
6. Government-business partnerships for development
‘New Governance’ Theories

1. Globalization makes all community and jurisdictional boundaries porous and unstable
2. Growing complexity and loss of political community as sovereignty and authority dissolve and disperse
3. Traditional basis of trust in government is threatened by perceptions of declining performance and accountability
4. Growing need for effective cooperation and integration across boundaries (public / private) and communities:
   1. Networks / partnerships replace hierarchies
   2. Multi-layered / polycentric forms of organization replace hierarchical, unitary ones
The Information Society and Government

1. ICTs create new possibilities for service delivery responsiveness and effectiveness (e-government)

2. ICTs create new opportunities for administrative integration, coordination and cross-jurisdiction cooperation (‘joined-up government’)

3. ICTs create new opportunities for citizen communication (‘e-democracy’)
Responsive Governance

- New kinds of citizen engagement
- Growing reliance on networks and partnerships & on enhanced collaboration across sectors – government as *enabler* and *coordinator* rather than provider
- More diverse, flexible organizational forms
- Less homogeneity, higher expectations of quality, in process and product
- More diverse forms of accountability: accountabilities are to multiple stakeholders and ‘360º’
The Six Accountabilities

1. Political Accountability
2. Administrative Accountability
3. Personal Accountability
4. Professional Accountability
5. Output Accountability
6. Deliberative Accountability

(Adapted from a framework presented by Tero Erkkila, University of Helsinki)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Accountability</th>
<th>Defining Features</th>
<th>Mechanisms</th>
<th>Context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Political</td>
<td>Democratic, external</td>
<td>Chains of answerability</td>
<td>Democratic state</td>
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<td>2. Administrative</td>
<td>Hierarchical, legal / formal</td>
<td>Rules, sanctions supervision</td>
<td>Bureaucracy</td>
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<td>3. Personal</td>
<td>Internal, normative</td>
<td>Values, ethics</td>
<td>All public offices / roles</td>
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<td>4. Professional</td>
<td>Peer-oriented, expertise</td>
<td>Peer review, professionalism</td>
<td>Expert organizations</td>
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<td>5. Output</td>
<td>Client / customer focus</td>
<td>NPM, self-regulation</td>
<td>Market, MTMs</td>
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<td>6. Deliberative</td>
<td>Interactive, open, public</td>
<td>Public hearing, transparency</td>
<td>Public sphere</td>
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## Responsive Governance and the Six Accountabilities

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<th>Key</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Traditional Public Administration</td>
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Implications

1. Accountability conflicts will increase
   - E.g. the conflict between ‘output’ or performance accountability and deliberative or multiple stakeholder accountability

2. Public officials will be required to exercise increasing judgment over which form of accountability to prioritize in a given circumstance

3. Professional / personal accountabilities will become increasingly important for public administrators – senior administrators will have new leadership roles to play

4. Political accountability will become less dominant

5. Political representatives will become increasingly required to assume ‘meta-accountability’ roles – i.e. monitoring the ‘accountabilities system’ for its overall results and integrity