

Editor's Note

Ethos began life as a modest newsletter in 1994 to publicise the activities of the fledgling Institute of Policy Development (then known as the Civil Service College).

The name *Ethos* was chosen to reflect IPD's role in cultivating not just the skills and knowledge required of senior public servants, but also less tangible qualities such as esprit de corps. As the former Public Service Commissioner of Australia remarks in an interview in this issue, it is public service values that distinguish the public sector.

By 2002, IPD had become a statutory board with programmes catering to officers from the induction stage to the top leadership levels. IPD also began to capture the practitioner experiences of the senior policy community and to document policy in the making, so as to enhance the quality of its programmes. It became clear that *Ethos* would have to make a corresponding change. We began the process of repositioning *Ethos* so that it would be closer to a professional journal for senior public servants, written mainly by them.

Since then we have experimented with a variety of formats and types of articles. This issue features what has become one of our staples—an edited version of a speech by a senior civil servant. The article, "Is There a New Role for Government?" looks at the challenges ahead for the public sector and how it operates.

The issue also includes a departure from the norm, an interview with a foreign civil servant, the former Public Service Commissioner of Australia. This marks the start of what we hope will be a series of articles on public sectors in other countries.

During the past two years we have also published adaptations of academic papers by civil servants, presentations at conferences, essays by participants of IPD's courses and some in-house pieces by IPD.

Finding good articles and writers is a constant challenge. We have invited, begged, pleaded with and coerced would-be writers. Once in a while, we are delighted when we receive the odd unsolicited contribution.

In conjunction with this issue, many of you will be receiving an e-mail survey seeking your views and suggestions on how we can improve *Ethos*. We hope that you will take a few minutes to give us your candid and constructive comments.

We look forward to hearing from you and to making *Ethos* a useful and interesting publication that reflects the best of the public sector. And should you feel inspired, your contributions are always welcome.

Patricia Lam
The Editor