

# TRANSCRIPT OF PODCAST

## WORK WITH PURPOSE EPISODE 27

### **ROSEMARY HUXTABLE PSM**

Secretary  
Department of Finance

### **CHRIS MORAITIS PSM**

Secretary  
Attorney-General's Department

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DAVID PEMBROKE: Hi, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Work with Purpose, a podcast about the Australian Public Service. My name is David Pembroke. Thanks for joining me.

I begin today's podcast by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today, the Ngunnawal people and pay my respects to their elders past, present, and emerging, and acknowledge the incredible contribution they make to the richness of the life in this city and region.

Today, Studio 19 is once again in the parliamentary triangle at IPAA ACT's headquarters, and I'm pleased to say that a couple of IPAA's closest neighbours, Chris Moraitis PSM, the head of the Attorney-General's Department and Rosemary Huxtable PSM, the Secretary of the Department of Finance have dropped by for a chat.

Rosemary Huxtable has held the position of Secretary of the Department of Finance since 2016, a position with enormous responsibility for the financial performance, accountability, and governance of the Australian public purse. One can only imagine what it's been like cashing the checks that have been written in the last six months.

Rosemary, welcome to Work with Purpose.

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Thank you, David.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Chris Moraitis PSM is the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department. A career public servant, Chris spent the vast bulk of his career in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, rising to the position of Deputy Secretary before moving across in the same position to the Attorney-General's Department before he was appointed to the role of Secretary in 2014.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Chris, welcome to Work with Purpose.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Great to be here, thank you.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Rosemary, if I might begin with you, and we're now six months into the pandemic. We've moved to the next stage, the next normal. How are you managing the challenges in front of you at the moment given that the context is continuing to shift?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: That's a really good question because I think uncertainty is the theme of the year. Where we've come from, when we look back on it, I think we would want to impose some sort of pattern and logic on that and say, "Well, we had a pretty good idea at this point in time, and this was our response." But in reality, when we were living in it, of course, there was a lot of things coming at us from all sorts of directions. So, we had to be very flexible.

And I think, even now, while we all want to impose that sense of certainty on what we do, we're still in uncertain times. It's still very important that we focus on the health advice and on the evidence, and we keep grounding our responses in that. The capacity of us, as an organisation, we've been stretched. I think all our organisations have been stretched over the last six months.

But I would say my reflection is that we've got very strong institutions. We're part of very strong institutions and strong relationships, which really have been able to lift and respond very effectively. And I've got a lot of confidence that we'll continue to do that into the future. Not just the institutions that you might normally think of, the Parliament, the executive, but also, the way in which federations worked together.

I think that's been a great example of how when you've got a very difficult issue, that people will come together and work very effectively together. But also, the relationships that we've built over many years with our stakeholders, with our external partners across the Commonwealth, the way that we work together, I think it's given it a very ... We've got a very good grounding of collaboration, which means we can, I think, look forward with confidence to how we respond.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And to you, Chris, that same challenge of uncertainty?

CHRIS MORAITIS: Very much. I mean, Rosemary is absolutely spot on. It's the uncertainty of what's coming, but also the uncertainty of the duration of what is the new normal, and then defining what is that new normal. So, it really is, from my perspective and for the organisation, is keeping that mindset of being prepared and adaptable for any contingency, and working on the basis of the systems and relationships we've been building up as a whole myriad of issues that emerge that we need to deal with.

Because, as Rosemary said, we'll look backwards and find a rhythm and a pattern, but I mean, going forward, we'll have a mindset which will help us. And the mindset will be that of being prepared for the uncertainty and the duration of it. You can't say, "On the 15th of ... We'll try this 15th of November. We'll go back to what we were like in January or December last year." That's not going to happen.

And the question is when is that tipping point into a normality, but through the process we're in now, we need to just have that flexibility and ability to just go and at the same time, do our BAU work as well, which is building up and it's imperative to be done. And we're all in that same boat together and we are a really collegiate group of people working together.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And it's interesting, isn't it though? Because when you strip it all away, it really is a people challenge, isn't it? It's really to organise your people, and manage your people, and motivate your people, and keep your people on task that is going to help them to deliver for the Australian people.

So, Rosemary, to you, that people challenge, how have you gone about that?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Well, I don't think it starts the day you're in a crisis. So, it's all about the work that you do as an organisation to build your capability over the long term. And for us, we'd put a lot of investment into our technology platforms. I mean, never expecting that we would need to move a workforce out of the office overnight. But we were able to effectively do that at the same time as having to produce a very high volume output, much higher volume than we've had to deal with in previous years, just because of the pace and volume of decision-making and the need to be able to support our government to do that intuitive decision-making.

So, it is about having the tools, but it's also about having a culture in the organisation that can lift, and collaborate, and work effectively together. I mean, we very much focused on the team level. So, I think you can set the tone from the top, and a lot of people talk about that.

And there's no doubt we've worked hard over a number of years on establishing our expectations about leadership behaviours and values in the organisation and how are we going to work together. And I think we've got very good results out of that, but it's really what's happening at the team level, where you've got those groups of just half a dozen people who work most closely together every day, and how you support them to work effectively when you're in a very challenging, uncertain environment.

And remembering when we were at the start of this, no one really had a sense of what it would mean for them personally, what it could mean for their families. People were worried about vulnerable people in their own families. So, you're dealing with that uncertainty within individuals at the same time as having to adapt to a quite different work environment.

Some of it's very practical, just ... We had remote learning packages. We had GovTEAMS, which is a Teams product that we used. GovTEAMS, interestingly, has gone from 30,000 users in March to 100,000 users today, an explosion that we never would have expected. But actually using those tools to give people skills around how to manage teams remotely, how to set yourself up. I think we called it remote-ready, how to enable yourself in your home environment to be effective.

So, it was a whole range of things. I'm sure Chris could add more in terms of the experience at AGD, but we ... And I know Chris did this too. We've surveyed our staff in the course of the year, and people have overwhelmingly reported higher levels of productivity as they see it, from working in a different way.

So, really, the challenge going forward is how do you harness all that, how do you harness the positives, I guess, that you can take out of a situation like this and put that into the future when, hopefully, we get to a different normal.

DAVID PEMBROKE:

And that's a question I might put to you, Chris. How do you do that? We were talking just before the podcast about bottling the good of this period and sustaining it in a way that that flexibility is still there, but the productivity importantly is still there. So, how are you, as leaders in the public service, going to do that?

CHRIS MORAITIS:

I think Rosemary was pretty spot on, on a couple of those elements. She talked about the technology and you can't start a conversation about the culture on the day of the crisis. You've had to have embedded that from way back and we've been living on that cultural dimension.

I would say the two things that got us through in AGD have been the two Ts, the technology and the trust. When I say trust, it's a two-way trust. It's management's trust in the staff to get on with it and people's trust in the leadership to look after their well-being. So, those things are being sustained.

The issues going forward and bottling that experience are really tricky, and it can't just be gut feelings. It has to be based on what we can pick up from the evidence, what really works, what doesn't. So, it's a big work for us to work out what is empirically true. So, question one has been much more productive. Is that true? How do we prove that? What do we mean by that?

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah, people might say they're productive, but are they?

CHRIS MORAITIS: And secondly, because we were productive between March and now because we had this embedded culture, if you maintain absolute remote work for a long, long time, that culture dissipates a bit. So, how do you replenish that culture?

So, my first question to my staff is how do we work on that engagement cultural piece in that flexible work arrangement? So, we maintain those connections, those things that happen in a relationship in an office space, replicate that, build the trust, have the knowledge about what is productive, when it's productive, fine-tune the technology.

And the key thing with technology will be about our managers and leaders. And again, Rosemary alluded to the team level stuff. If you're going to make all the technology work, you'll need to have really, really good leadership skills, leadership in a remote way but building it all together through whatever collaboration, relationship building, leading by example, bringing people in an arm's length virtual way. That's going to take real leadership skills and that's what we have to build on.

And then leaving aside the normal things we've got to think about, is what is the new flexibility post-COVID because we're all invested in flexible work arrangements. That's the reality. And how do we build on that? So, we've got a target team in our department working on this very issue of what will flexible work look like after this is all done, and will it change?

Those are the things we have to work on. So, it's a combination of maintaining the cultural vision and the commitment we have there, and then learning from this experience in an objective, evidence-based way we can all share. We don't have the answers. I mean, we want to know that, and this is the stuff that we'll build on because I think it's a great opportunity, not just the challenge.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Rosemary?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Can I just raise or add two things to that? I mean, one is around the mental wellbeing of people who are working in that remote environment. And I absolutely agree with Chris. So, to charge into this head on, there was a great common purpose and an expectation that this would go for a period of time, a period probably since past. The capacity to actually maintain that over long periods, I think, can be quite challenging for people.

And one of the things we've done, and I'm sure Chris has too, is to work quite actively with our staff about the indicators where you might not be coping as well as you think you might be, and actually, really encouraging people to reach out for help in those environments.

And I think that goes for leaders as well. I think for all of us, there have been times when it's been difficult when you're trying to juggle a lot of things. You're carrying a lot of responsibility. There are decisions you're advising on that have very big consequences for the country and you're also potentially, partially working remotely. So, there's a lot of things that you're juggling. And then we also have the same issues where we're thinking about our families, and our friends, and parents, and all the normal things that people are concerned about.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And how have you coped with it personally?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: It hasn't always been easy, I have to say. And I think it's important that we admit that it's not always easy and that you can feel the weight of that. I was asked ... I did a stand-up for staff actually using the GovTEAMS platform, which we've tried to do quite a lot to stay connected with people. And someone asked me at that, what I'd found the hardest. And I think, for me, it was actually being part of the decision-making environment where you were providing advice, where the decisions that government would take would have consequences.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Big decisions.

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: That's a big responsibility and it's very hard to have certainty at that point in time. You're often on partial evidence and there's levels of uncertainty. So, that was a burden, I think, that a lot of people in senior leadership positions felt, but also just recognising that you're working very long hours but you haven't got your team around you in quite the same way that you normally have.

I mean, I was certainly working one or two days a week from home at the peak of the pandemic. And I really missed my little team, my little executive support team who would always be there to say, "I remember you've got to do this call.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Anticipating, yeah.

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Would you like a cup of tea," which is a very nice offer that no one's making at home. So, it becomes a very long day, and you can feel very isolated. And so, we're human. We have the same struggles as other people, I guess, in those environments.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah. And for you, Chris?

CHRIS MORAITIS: Yes. I mean, that's exactly right. But I think at the Secretary level, Deputy Secretary level in the public service, we're more familiar with greatness and complexity. And so, that's helped us a bit but you're absolutely right. It has been really difficult and tiring.

I think, from my perspective and my team's perspective, it's been relentless since the beginning of the year. And it was interesting that we look ... I got my staff to show me the figures for leave, days off, that sort of thing, and there's obviously been a period where people haven't taken breaks, which is counterintuitive. So, we've been nudging our staff to have short staycations, trying to be sympathetic and say, "Look, we know you can't go over to any places. You won't go to Bali or Europe, but just take a few days here and there."

And I did the same thing last week. I took four days off because I needed that break. And you don't realise that ... It was an interesting ... Because it reminded me of my time when I was in DFAT and I was the COO, and we had all these embassies abroad and there was always a crisis. And the first rule you learn in HR is that the head of mission will always say, "No, no, no, I don't need ... I've got the crisis under control." They don't need any support from Canberra, and you think, "Yeah, okay. Yes, I know it's all right, but we'll start planning for a bit of a helping hand coming our way."

And that's just part of the mindset. We've got to remember how in crisis, after a while you hit a wall. And for many of us, we were working remotely, but I think, from my perspective, it was mainly working in the office, it was just the nature of the work. And quite a few of our staff were missing from the office. And also, we had a lot of our staff with ... Our Victorian-based staff in the recent months has been really difficult, and we've been having some conversations.

All the team had a discussion recently and we talked about just really empathising that, "We know what you're going through. We want to be as helpful as we can. We're thinking about you and we're trying to make it as easy as we can, but we want to have your interests looked after, particularly your health interests." And so, things like, for example, making sure that if they needed a pass to get to the office in Melbourne, you're spot on, so straightaway. So, that was all done very quickly and things with day care and stuff like that, we were there for them. Little things like that really help in a time like this.

DAVID PEMBROKE:

Yeah, it was interesting just before we started with the podcast, you reflected quite sincerely about the pride that you've felt in your people. And Rosemary, I imagine it's the same. What are you proud about? What has made you proud?

CHRIS MORAITIS:

Well, there's a whole variety of things. One that people did what they've been prepared to do, which is their normal work. In our space, it's the legal work. It's the workplace relations work. It's work health and safety, stuff that they really mobilised on, but also just being agile and shifting to other things.

We're a pretty small Department like Rosemary's. Ten percent of our workforce put their hand up to be deployed. We deployed people to Services Australia, people who worked in the Treasury Department to help out Treasury. We even sent Policy Officers to the Health Department because they were under a lot of pressure and we were doing our normal stuff as well, which is all the legal work, all the privacy app here. It requires ... The WhatsApp, the app requires a privacy statement.

The JobKeeper Act required changes to the Fair Work Act provisions and awards and stuff like that. The work health and safety guidelines were pretty much really worked over and given guidelines, and millions of hits on the websites and all that sort of thing. People really were there for each other too and that's good. And that's what people want to be doing.

And as you said, the key is how do you bottle all that and maintain that engagement? But the engagement doesn't happen because of crisis. A crisis shows whether you're engaged or not. It just reminds us all that culture is a really important part of an organisation's ability to sustain itself short term, medium term, long term. And this is probably a nice reminder of that reality.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And for you, Rosemary, the pride, I imagine it'd be very similar?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Oh, absolutely. And the number of people who are willing to put their hand up to go and do something different. We had our COMCAR drivers who clearly couldn't drive the way they were because members of Parliament weren't moving around in the same way. A number of those went down to Services Australia and did things that they've never really done before or hadn't done for many years.

I went down and visited them and our staff at Services Australia, and they were just fantastic. They were pretty excited to be there. They really were on the front line making a real difference and they could see that. It wasn't work that they were used to, but they were willing to give it a go. Some of them are still down there doing that work even now. And I mean, yeah, people just really put in and had that flexibility. They were working in a different way, but their output ... Like quantitatively, our output was up.

I've got measures of just the amount of decision-making that we were supporting, the number of costings we agreed, the number of briefs that were written for the decision-making processes. They were up exponentially on previous years. But also, there's a lot of other work that Finance does that probably isn't so visible to people, and that was also really critically important. Getting the governance frameworks right, making sure the indemnity arrangements were in place for some of the things that were happening.

The work that we did with our shareholder entities who were on the commercial side were being impacted by the pandemic and the effective change, changing patterns around commercial behaviours and activities. There was a lot of work done right across the organisation, and I think people were unswervingly flexible and willing to put in long hours and do the job, basically.

CHRIS MORAITIS: I'm just going to add to that, Rosemary, because both our departments, whether it's the finance or the money, AG is on the law, we're there in the room all the time, helping the primary drivers of whether it's the trade or the economic or the health stuff, or the submissions, or the NPPs, all that stuff happening with it, and our staff were there all the time supporting the whole APS effort.

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Yeah. So, I think we're kind of the enablers.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Yeah, and that was really-

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Whether it's the money or whether it's-

DAVID PEMBROKE: The money and the lawyers.

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: And can we do it legally, yes.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Yeah.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Listen, one of the great features of this podcast is our questions from IPAA's Future Leaders Committee, and I know you're both very interested in the development of young staff.

So, questions to both of you. The first one comes from a regular, Steph McLennan from Geoscience Australia, and she asks, "Digitisation is a core part of the future of work, and the last six months has seen it shift from the future to current work. What can aspiring leaders do now to equip themselves to lead in a more digital APS with increasingly distributed teams?"

Chris, I'll throw it to you first.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Yeah, I think this is a very good question and credit to raising that. Counterintuitively, again, if you talk about digitalisation, it's not going to be about technology for an emerging leader because the emerging leaders who are now ... They're digital natives. I realised this with my graduates when we were talking about remote work. I realised that they've been working on computers and remotely through the university. So, they know all that.

The challenge for them now will be the emotional people aspect of being a leader in a digital world, because that's what's going to be really necessary to magnify, bring it all together, and it's not going to require digital intelligence. It's going to require the emotional intelligence that we all seek for all our leaders to have. To bring people together, to understand, to empathise, to reflect about what impact are you having as a manager on the screen with all your staff.

Are you bringing everyone into the conversation? Do you let the person always talk? Do the people not get a chance to have a conversation that half your team feel excluded by the process? Do you feel or understand and empathise where people are coming from? Can you pick up the signs that someone else is not coping with the setup? What can you do to improve things? What can you do to get things going and build the team?

Because it's okay to go into a crisis where everyone knows everybody. As a leader, you know who does what. What happens when there's a churn? There are people who already have started working in organisations who have never met their staff in person. That's a really interesting phenomenon, if you think about it.

So, the qualities for an emerging leader to think about coming into this new normal, this is going to be the reality, is not about what sort of software system or what sort of technology it's going to be because that's going to change, of course, at the speed of light as we know and we've adapted pretty well. It's the emotional, intellectual, the EQ stuff of leadership that's going to help us bring it all together, in my view.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Rosemary, what's your advice to these emerging leaders in this new world?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: I think a lot of the leadership behaviours that you need and have always needed to be an effective leader remain, whether you're talking about digital platforms or other platforms, and a lot of those Chris has spoken about. To me, one of the big things is about how do you listen and enable innovation in the workplace.

And in many ways, leaders have to get out of the way of innovation. I don't think that from the top, you are going to think up all the bright ideas in your organisation that's going to revolutionise the way that it works. What you have to do is actually enable it to happen at the team level. And for our young leaders coming up, I think one of the challenges is how do you create those workplaces where people can be innovative, where they can have ideas based on their experience in the workplace.

Usually, they're the people who know better ways of doing things. That's a sort of internally focused thing, but also, having that sense of the client perspective and the client experience and being very open to that, so that they can actually work with external stakeholders and clients to come up with different and more effective ways using technology, which is a great enabler if you can get it to work effectively for you.

So, for me, it's about how do you enable that innovation really at the coalface. And our young leaders, as Chris said, they are natives. They don't have a fear of it, but there will be others coming up after them who know even more and you've got to allow those people to also thrive in that environment.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Totally.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Chris, this is from one of your people, Jack Milne from the Attorney-General's Department. And he asks, again, question to both of you, "As the Department of Finance was awarded the 2019 Graeme Innes Disability Employment Award and the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department is the co-chair of the department's disability network, the Celebrating Ability Network, how can we leverage the future of work as an opportunity to accelerate our progression towards a more inclusive workplace?"

CHRIS MORAITIS: Yeah. It's a good question. I mean, inclusive workplace is actually something we need to think about in terms of the experience of the last six months. The conversations we've been having about flexible work, the ability of people work remote, they've been discussed in a conversation for the past ... where you need to prove why this is good for the organisation.

The last six months has actually shown things can be good for the organisation in a remote way, flexible work, giving people the opportunity to do things that in a 9:00 to 5:00 presentees and mindset was always the assumption that it's too hard. But I'm sure, Rosemary and I, would have endorsed, if not one, our principle of flexible work, for example, whether you're a woman with young children, whether you're coming back from maternity leave or you have a disability, you prefer to work a certain way. All those things, as late as we've been arguing that it's one of presumption, that you should enable that to happen.

Well, guess what, it's happened anyway, and it's worked, and everyone's been able to see that it can work. And everyone's been able to see where people who've been pushing the line of flexible work felt somehow stigmatised because they've asked for part-time work or they've asked for that, or they've sought this adjustment. And it's almost been like a demandeur, asking for something. And I think people have realised, "Hey, this is for everyone."

And therefore, maybe that changes the worldview about inclusion and that's ... I don't think it's going to radically ... It still requires that conversation and the reinforcement of why inclusive workplaces make a difference, but it's actually shown that it's possible. And maybe the tone of the conversation can be a bit more productive and focused on how do you create a workplace that's inclusive, how do you forget about the stigma. There's no stigma about flexible work.

I mean, I've had conversations in the past with focus groups in my department about flexible work and mainly women, of course. And that flip side of that is why aren't men doing flexible work? And so, now it's like, "Well, hey, we've been through flexible work and working 90% of the time and guess what, it works. So, maybe I can come and have that conversation about flexible work."

Our disability network, the Celebrating Ability Network, obviously, has been engaged in this process of how we work. Overwhelmingly, our staff find that the last few months have been positive in many ways. We're just going to build on those experiences. So, this is actually one of the great opportunities coming out of this. That inclusive workplace conversations can be a bit more grounded on real experience, not just theoretical trying to disprove that it's not bad.

DAVID PEMBROKE:

Rosemary, I imagine it's similar for you?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE:

Yeah. I think also some of those tools that we've had, they worked very well for some of our staff with disability who might find it harder to move around the office, for example, who sometimes feel that they're not heard at meetings.

I mean, we've had what we call the five on five. So, five staff with disability talking with five of our leaders around their experience, and many of them were saying, "Well, we find that our GovTEAMS meetings, it's a lot easier for us. We can put up our hand and we'll be heard. We don't have the same issue sometimes with whether it's hearing. We can turn up our volume. We don't have to move around in quite the same way that we had to."

So, there's lots of benefits from that for us as well, but we need to work with all our staff, our staff with disability, in terms of how we bring people into the organisation and then how we create an environment in which they can thrive. And a lot of that is just working directly with them. And when we've had some very good outcomes in terms of the percentage of staff with disability, we've put a lot of effort into building that up.

But I do think that the last six months has almost shown that there's other ways to work. I mean, we do a lot of hybrid meetings now where some of us are in the office and some of us are online. That can also really enable people.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Great. And a final question from our future leaders, another one from the Attorney-General's Department, Deeanne Allan asks you, "Secretary Moraitis, you established your career and developed your leadership style at DFAT. What was it like transitioning to a totally new department in a leadership position?"

CHRIS MORAITIS: It was great, to cut to the chase. Seriously, a lot of the work that I used to do in DFAT, whether it's international law or national security, there was aspects of that. But to be fair, most of the work of the Attorney-General's Department, I wasn't familiar with. I really didn't know much about it. But Rosemary and I know, and I think all our colleagues would know, that leadership is not about being the smartest person in the room.

So, the transition is relatively easy if you accept that reality. That you're there to inspire people, to give them trust, to create that environment. And if you've got those tools, you can do that. So, I have no problem being in a room full of brilliant lawyers and they can tell me what the law is. My job is not about second guessing or saying what the judge said in that judgement of 1925 or something like that.

I come for other reasons and I'm there for other purposes, because as one of the Secretaries of PM&C said, "Well, don't worry about it, Chris. If your legal skills are not up to what it were when you were younger, we've got enough lawyers in AGD. But your job is to lead and accepting the reality of leadership is not knowing everything about the subject matter. That's not why you're the boss always necessarily. You always have to have a technical expertise, but coming there with those qualities of leadership."

I think the advantage in DFAT is, and I've said this to several colleagues, is that you get that experience of running a large mission. For example, I was High Commissioner in Papua New Guinea and that taught you a lot about leadership. It wasn't necessarily about policy, but you get used to the fact that there's no such thing as-

DAVID PEMBROKE: You're dealing with issues.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Dealing with issues. And it's about people 90% of the time and about conditions, and that thing really, really makes a difference. So, as I said, it was a pretty easy transition if you accept those premises.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Okay. Now, listen, I do want to ask you a final question and it means you have to sort of travel forward in time a little. So, I want you to go forward, maybe let's go back ... Let's go forward ten years and then ask you to look back on now, on this time. What do you hope sticks around? What would you like to describe, or what would you like to see as part of your legacy, having been part of this leadership cohort of the APS at such a critical time? Describe it for me. What do you see? What do you hear?

ROSEMARY HUXTABLE: Yeah, it's a pretty hard question but look, for me, it's about how our nation made the difficult passage through what was an unpredictable crisis situation and the way in which we supported effective decision-making that meant that we were on a sustainable recovery path.

The stakes are high here. Our capacity to see that economic recovery through what will still be uncertain times going forward. And ten years seems like a long way away, but the recovery path will be inevitably a long one. And that we've come out of that as a strong country, taking advantage of what we can to strengthen our competitiveness in the world. I think they're the things, and that we have a strong community also that's emerged from that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Chris, final word to you.

CHRIS MORAITIS: Picking up on those points, I think in ten years' time, I'll look back and think, hopefully, be thinking and saying, "Yeah, that period showed that the institutions of State, of the Commonwealth, of the State, the nation that we're part of, they can make a good contribution to the community and they're an important part of society."

And it's sometimes taken for granted, but when the going gets tough, the institutions of State can make a positive difference to the lives of many, many people in a really good way. And the trust dimension that's been built up in the last few months, hopefully, that's sustained so that we don't go through that period of the last ten, 15 years where there's been this cynicism about the State and its role. It's not there to create problems. It's there to actually enable and to protect our people in the good times and particularly in the bad times.

And I think if there's a newfound respect and appreciation of why the apparatus of State exist, that'll be, I think, an enduring legacy especially in uncertain times as we go forward.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Chris, Rosemary, thank you for your service and thank you for being my guests today on Work with Purpose.

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Ladies and gentlemen, we're now just five short weeks away from the commencement of the global GovComms Festival, which is part of the OECD's Government After Shock global dialogue. We have announced this week that the event will follow the sun and run for 24 hours on November the 17th, featuring content from around the world.

One quick story, I was on a Zoom call this week to someone in Mali, West Africa and they confirmed a speaker for the event. Now, the story of how the government in Mali is managing communication is inspiring. So, jump on to GovComms. Google GovComms and it'll come up, and make sure you register yourself for that conference.

Because the other big news today is that our good friends and long-term partners here at IPAA ACT have come on-board as an event partner. So, a very big thanks to Caroline Walsh and the team here at IPAA for their support. It's going to be great. A few sleepless nights ahead for me, no doubt, but it will be a great conference as part of the OECD's Government After Shock global dialogue.

Work with Purpose, if you would like to leave a rating or review for the program, please do so because that does help us to be found. And if you do see the social media promotion, please share and pass it along. Thanks again to IPAA and to the APSC for their ongoing support. This program would not happen without it. That's it for this edition of Work with Purpose. We'll be back at the same time next week, but for the moment, it's bye for now.

SPEAKER 4:

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