Northern Territory Government Program Evaluation Framework

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Acronyms	Full form
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
DIIS	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (now the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources)
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Sector
PEU	Program Evaluation Unit
NSW	New South Wales
WA	Western Australia

Contents

Acknowledgements

The Program Evaluation Unit would like to thank the many stakeholders involved in the development of the Program Evaluation Framework including:

- representatives from the Northern Territory Government Program Evaluation Community of Practice
- Charles Darwin University
- Menzies School of Health Research
- New South Wales Treasury
- Western Australian Government Department of Treasury
- Australian Capital Territory Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
- Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.

1. Introduction

All governments strive to increase service quality in a resource-constrained environment. Robust program monitoring and evaluation aims to ensure government achieves the best outcomes within the allocated budget and helps build a contextualised evidence-base of what works by asking questions such as:

- have we achieved what we set out to do?

- could we have done things better or more efficiently?

- should we continue to do this or try something else?

This whole-of-government program evaluation framework[1] integrates evaluation into the Northern Territory Government's policy and budget development processes and aims to improve transparency and accountability, and encourage better use of Territory Government funds by:

- ensuring new programs and extensions to existing programs have identified goals and objectives that are achievable and measurable or include actions to develop measurement as part of the program

- ensuring new programs and extensions to existing programs have an evaluation strategy

- incorporating sunset provisions[2] in new programs, linked to evaluation outcomes

- establishing a rolling schedule of evaluations to ensure existing programs are evaluated over time

- providing a clear mandate for agencies to evaluate their programs and target their investments

- outlining expected evaluation principles and standards

- providing government with clear advice about the costs and benefits of evaluation (including data collection and analysis) to help inform evaluation decisions

- establishing a protocol for policy and program officers to plan for evaluation across the program lifecycle (with a step-by-step guide in the online evaluation toolkit)

- establishing a tiered system of evaluations to ensure evaluation is proportionate to the cost, risk and complexity of a program

- describing how the Territory Government can build evaluation capability within the Northern Territory Public Sector and foster a culture of continuous improvement

- outlining how the Territory Government will measure progress in implementing the framework.

Territory Government agencies must use the framework and toolkit to help plan, commission and use evaluations. The framework and toolkit may also provide useful guidance for Territory Government service delivery partners and external evaluators of Territory Government programs.

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[1] As a general rule, this framework will not apply to infrastructure and information, communications and technology (ICT) projects (which have separate review processes) or externally funded programs.
[2] A sunset clause is a specified period after which funding for a program is reviewed or ceases.

1.1. Defining programs

For the purposes of the evaluation framework, a program is broadly defined as:

"**A set of activities managed together over a sustained period of time that aim to deliver an outcome for a client or client group**[3]".

The term 'program' is sometimes used interchangeably with project, service, initiative, strategy or policy. In practice, programs vary in size, duration and structure, and may span multiple agencies[4] (Figure 1). Regardless of program size, when designed and conducted well, evaluation can yield useful evidence about the effectiveness of programs.

A strategic approach to evaluation (see section 3) includes evaluations at several different levels. For example, evaluating at the whole-of-government program level to identify how different components of a strategy work together to achieve outcomes and evaluating at the project level to examine specific aspects of a program.

Figure 1[5] Program hierarchy

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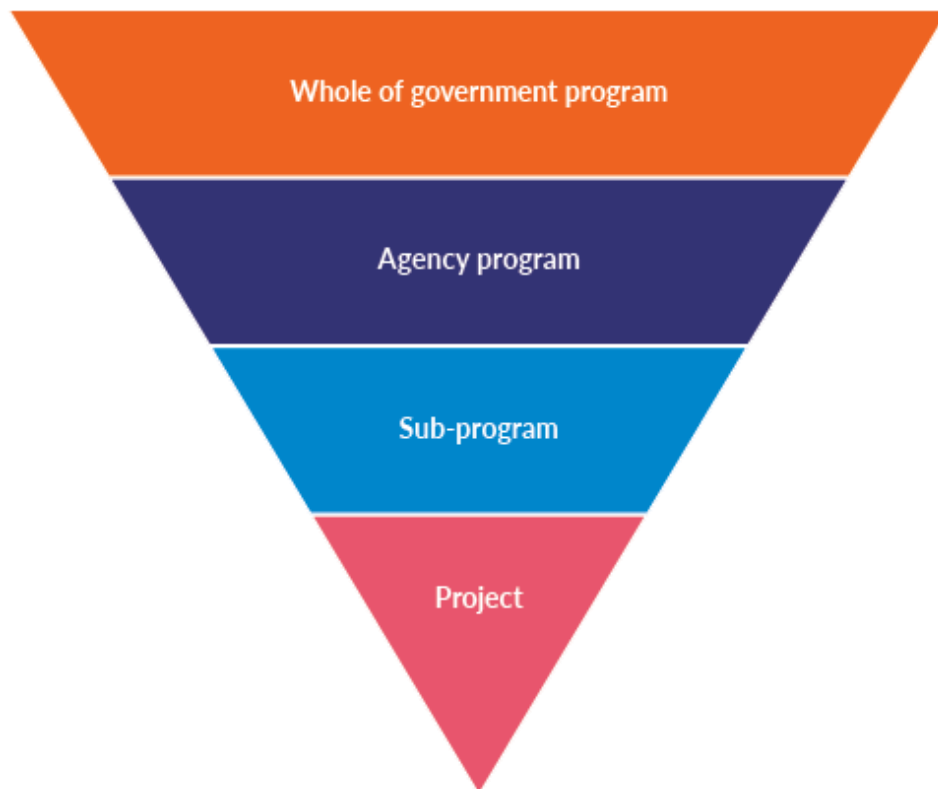
[3] NSW Government Evaluation Framework August 2013
[4] Whole-of-government programs can be large and significant strategies, action plans or frameworks that encompass multiple agencies and locations, and comprise many agency-level programs, sub-programs and projects.
[5] NSW Government Evaluation Framework August 2013

1.2. Defining monitoring and evaluation

For the purposes of this evaluation framework:

Monitoring is:

"**A management process to periodically report against planned targets or key performance indicators that, for the most part, is not concerned with questions about the purpose, merit or relevance of the program**[6]"

Evaluation is:

"**A systematic and objective process to make judgements about the merit or worth of one or more programs, usually in relation to their effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness**.[7]"

The different types of evaluation are covered in section 3.2.

Both monitoring and evaluation are needed for effective program management and decision making.

1.3. Benefits of evaluation

Effective public policy is informed by evidence. Without rigorous evaluation, there is a risk that poorly performing programs continue without change, impeding government's ability to achieve the desired outcomes and wasting taxpayer's money.

Program evaluation aims to improve government services to achieve better outcomes for Territorians. When an evaluation shows a program is not working well, agencies can use the evaluation findings to improve the program – by either modifying the existing program or taking a new approach. Each evaluation is an opportunity to learn – by either demonstrating what works well or what does not.

Over time, evaluations will build an evidence-base of what works in the Northern Territory and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Table 1 outlines the benefits of robust evaluation for different stakeholders.

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[6] NSW Government Evaluation Framework August 2013
[7] NSW Government Evaluation Framework August 2013. This definition applies more to outcome and impact evaluations rather than process evaluations that tend to focus more on implementation.

Table 1: Benefits of evaluation for stakeholders[8]

Stakeholder	Potential benefits
Government	• More robust information to assist decision making • Improved ability to achieve government priorities • Efficient resource allocation • Highlights achievements and opportunities to strengthen performance • Encourages greater public engagement and trust in government.
Agencies	• Stronger basis for informing government priorities and resource allocation • Improved service delivery and client satisfaction • Builds a reputation for innovation and continuous improvement.
Public servants	• Develops new skills and broadens experience • Increased opportunity to shape public policy • Fosters a more dynamic and creative work environment • Recognises and rewards efforts to improve performance.
Community	• Improved government services that are more responsive to the needs of the community • Transparent and accountable government • Public monies used more efficiently • Greater confidence in the activities of government.

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[8] WA Government Evaluation Guide 2015

2. NTG program evaluation framework

2.1. Principles

The Territory Government evaluation framework is underpinned by ten best practice evaluation principles[9]:

1. **Build evaluation into program design.** Plan the evaluation as part of program design to ensure clearly defined objectives and measurable outcomes prior to commencement.

2. **Base the evaluation on sound methodology.** Adopt a best practice evaluation methodology that is commensurate with the program's size, significance and risk.

3. **Allocate resources and time to evaluate.** Include provision for the required evaluation resources and timeframes when planning and budgeting for a program. Ensure evaluation findings are available when needed to support key decision points.

4. **Use the right mix of expertise and independence.** Use evaluators who are experienced and independent from program managers but include program managers in evaluation planning.

5. **Ensure robust governance and oversight.** Establish governance processes to ensure programs are designed and evaluated in accordance with this framework, including meeting reporting requirements.

6. **Be ethical in design and conduct.** Carefully consider the ethical implications of any evaluation activity, particularly collecting and using personal data, and any potential impacts on vulnerable groups[10].

7. **Be informed and guided by relevant stakeholders.** Listen to stakeholders, including program participants, government and non-government staff involved in managing and delivering the program, and senior decision makers.

8. **Consider and use evaluation data meaningfully.** Include clear statements of findings, recommendations or key messages for consideration in evaluation reports. Use reports to inform decisions about program changes.

9. **Be transparent and open to scrutiny.** Disseminate key information to relevant stakeholders, including methodologies, assumptions, analyses and findings.

10. **Promote equity and inclusivity.** Harness the perspectives of vulnerable groups during evaluations, to enable fair and socially just outcomes.

2.2. Roles and responsibilities

Central oversight is critical to developing a strategic whole of government approach to evaluation and strengthening evaluation culture[11]. The Territory Government's centralised approach to program evaluation supports:

- a consistent standard of evaluation across agencies

- an ability to identify systemic issues across government

- capacity to set strategic priorities for, and identify gaps in, evaluation

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[9] Adapted from the NSW Government Program Evaluation Guidelines.

[10] In some circumstances, formal review and approval from an ethics committee certified by the National Health and Medical Research Council may be required. Refer to the NTG program evaluation toolkit for further information.

[11] Bray, R., Gray, G., 't Hart, P, Evaluation and learning from failure and success, Australia and New Zealand School of Government, 2019.

- accountability for multi-agency and whole of government programs

- coordinated capability building, resourcing, data collection, reporting and evaluative effort

- a centralised repository of evaluations to enhance continuous learning and quality improvement.

Under this approach, evaluation activity will continue to be primarily undertaken by individual agencies (this may include using external experts commissioned by the agency) to maintain a close link between the evaluation and the program area with relevant subject matter knowledge and experience.

Evaluation activity will be overseen, coordinated and supported by a central Program Evaluation Unit (PEU) within the Department of Treasury and Finance, supported by the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment and the Department of Corporate and Digital Development (Table 2).

Table 2: NTG program evaluation roles and responsibilities

Agency	Role
Department of Treasury and Finance	- promote the use of evaluation in government decision making - lead the NTG Program Evaluation Community of Practice[12] - support agencies to complete evaluation strategies as part of their Cabinet submissions - coordinate the rolling schedule of evaluations - strengthen evaluative capacity across the NTPS - prepare an annual whole of government summary of evaluations - maintain a database of completed evaluations and share findings to inform future policy and program design
Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet	- promote the use of evaluation in government decision making - collaborate on evaluations through appropriate forums - advise on agency evaluation priorities and schedules - advise on the development and enhancement of the evaluation toolkit to support capability building
Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment	- promote the use of evaluation in government decision making - support capability building and evaluation training opportunities
Department of Corporate and Digital Development	facilitate open data, and data sharing and linkage initiatives
Line agencies	- conduct or commission evaluations - identify evaluation priorities for the rolling schedule of evaluations (to be determined by the Budget Review Subcommittee of Cabinet) - incorporate lessons learned from previous evaluations into program and policy design - include evaluation strategies as part of Cabinet submissions - report to the PEU on evaluations undertaken and managed - upskill relevant staff to build evaluation capability and capacity - provide feedback on the evaluation toolkit

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[12] A Community of Practice is a group of people with a common interest who share knowledge and best practices.

3. Evaluating strategically

Evaluations should be undertaken in a strategic manner as it is not feasible, cost effective or appropriate to fully evaluate all Territory Government programs.

Evaluations should aim to achieve the highest rigour for the lowest cost by:

- incorporating evaluation planning at the initial program design stage
- collecting the required data for monitoring and evaluation throughout program implementation and aligning this to existing data collections where possible
- using a tiered approach to evaluation that prioritises evaluative effort (as outlined in Table 3).

3.1. Evaluation as part of the program cycle

Integrating evaluation into the program lifecycle ensures that cost-effective evaluation is delivered in time to support key decision making points (Figure 2).

Planning for evaluation should start at the program design stage so that all stakeholders understand the key performance indicators the program will be assessed against and how and when evaluation will occur. Early planning also ensures that data requirements are identified prior to commencement and that lessons learned from previous evaluations can be used effectively.

Figure 2: Integrating evaluation into the program lifecycle[13]
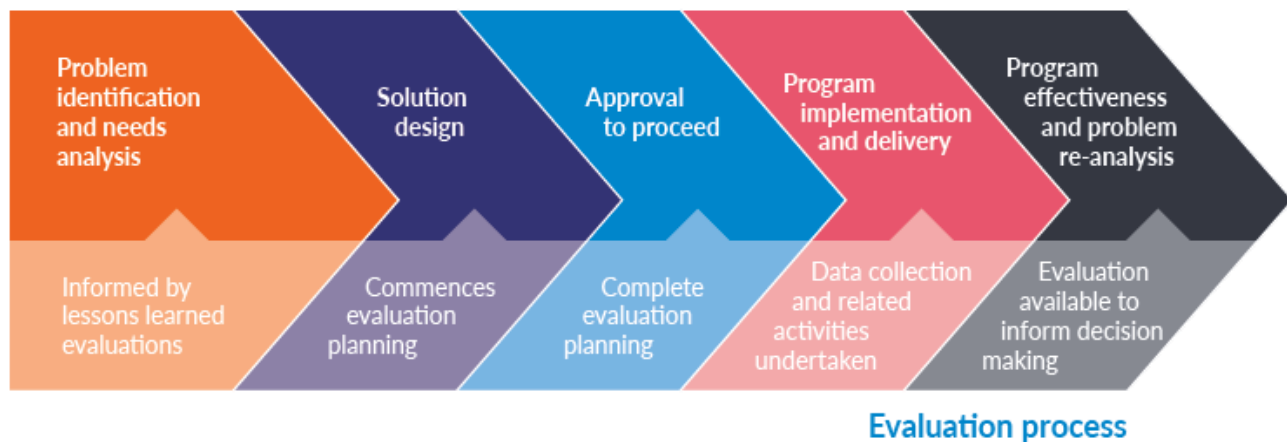
[13] Adapted from NSW Government Evaluation Guidelines 2016

3.2. Types of evaluations

While there are a number of different approaches to evaluation and the terminology varies, this evaluation framework is based on three types[14], linked to the program lifecycle:

1. **process evaluation:** considers program design and initial implementation (≤18 months)

2. **outcome evaluation:** considers program implementation (>2 years) and short to medium term outcomes

3. **impact evaluation:** considers medium to long term outcomes (>3 years) and whether the program contributed to the outcomes. and represented value for money

These three evaluation types address different questions at various stages of the program lifecycle and the appropriate timing may vary. Each evaluation builds on the evidence from the previous evaluation[15] (Figure 3). Not all programs will require all three evaluation types. The evaluation overview, completed as part of the Cabinet submission process, will specify which evaluation types are necessary for each program.

Figure 3[16]: Different types of evaluations consider different aspects of the program.
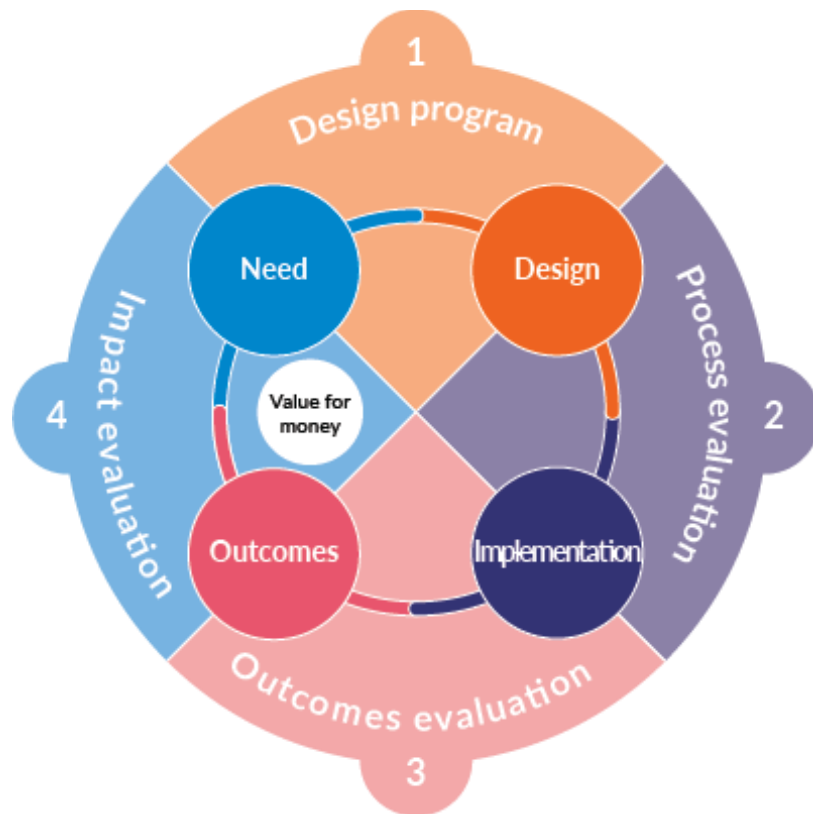
The different types of evaluation are used to build a clearer picture of program effectiveness as the program matures (Figure 4).

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[14] Further information on these three evaluation types are in sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.3

[15] Better Evaluation Manager's Guide to Evaluation, accessed May 2020, https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/node/5282

[16] Adapted from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (formally DIIS) Evaluation Strategy, 2017-2021.

Figure 4:   Potential evaluations over the program lifecycle of a major program[17]
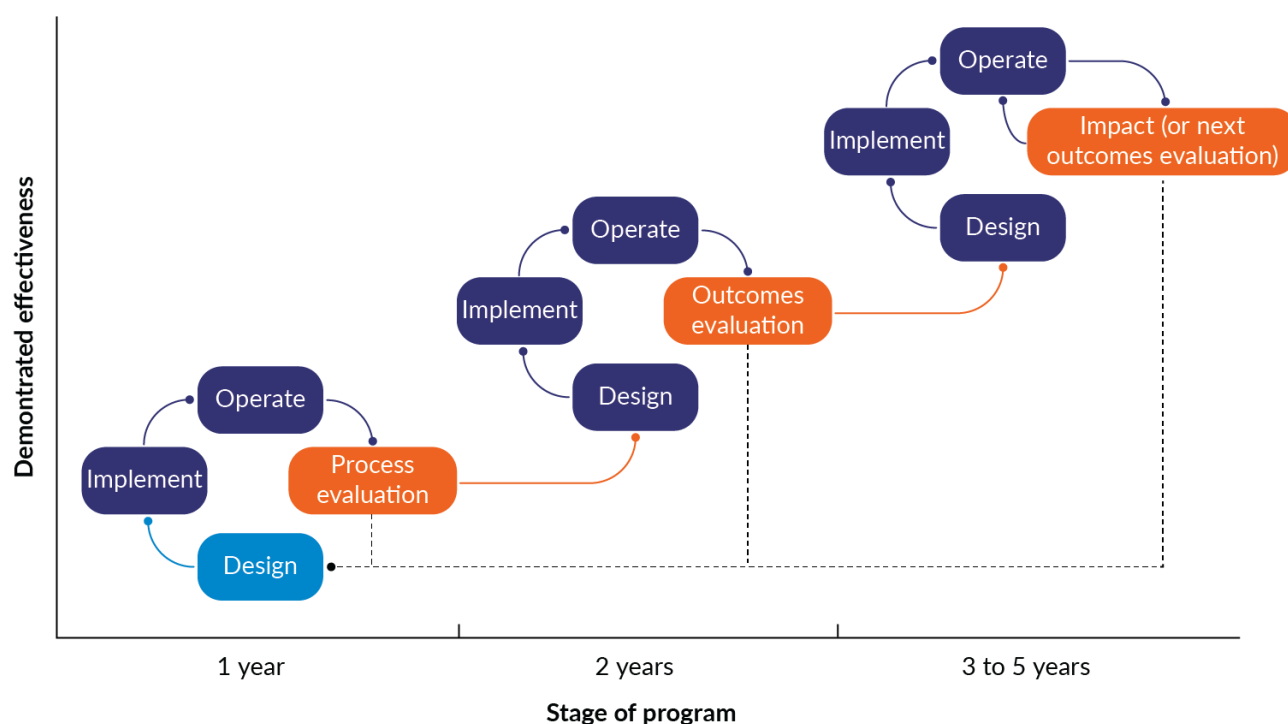
3.2.1. Process evaluation

A process evaluation investigates whether the program is being implemented according to plan[18]. This type of evaluation can help to differentiate ineffective programs from implementation failure (where the program has not been adequately implemented) and theory failure (where the program was adequately implemented but did not produce the intended impacts)[19]. As an ongoing evaluative strategy, it can be used to continually improve programs by informing adjustments to delivery[20].

Process evaluations may be undertaken by the relevant program team, if they have appropriate capability.

A process evaluation will typically try to answer questions such as:

- Was the program implemented in accordance with the initial program design?
- Was the program rollout completed on time and within the approved budget?
- Are there any adjustments to the implementation approach that need to be made?
- Are more or different Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) required?
- Is the right data being collected in an efficient way?

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[17] Adapted from NSW Government Evaluation Framework 2013
[18] Better Evaluation Manager's Guide to Evaluation, accessed May 2020, https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/node/5282
[19] Rogers, P. et al. (2015), Choosing appropriate designs and methods for impact evaluation, Office of the Chief Economist, Australian Government, Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
[20] NSW Government Evaluation Toolkit, accessed May 2020, https://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/tools-and-resources/evaluation-toolkit/2-develop-the-evaluation-brief/

3.2.2. Outcome evaluation

An outcome evaluation assesses the progress in the early and medium-term results that the program is aiming to achieve[21]. It is suited to programs at a business as usual stage in the program lifecycle and is usually externally commissioned.

An outcome evaluation will typically try to answer questions such as:

- What early outcomes or indications of future outcomes are suggested by the data?
- Did the program have any unintended consequences, positive or negative? If so, what were those consequences? How and why did they occur?
- How ready is the program for an impact evaluation?

A good outcome evaluation should consider whether the program has contributed to the outcomes.

3.2.3. Impact evaluation

An impact evaluation builds on an outcome evaluation to assess longer-term results. An impact evaluation must test whether the program has made a difference by comparing what would have happened in the absence of the program.

Impact evaluations are usually externally commissioned due to their complexity and are generally reserved for high-risk and complex programs due to their cost. Impact evaluations usually include a value for money assessment to determine whether the benefits of the program outweighed the costs and whether the outcomes could have been achieved more efficiently through program efficiencies or a different approach. Value for money in this context is broader than a cost benefit analysis – it is a question about how well resources have been used and whether the resource use is justified.

Impact evaluations often use a mixed-method research approach to find objectively verifiable results. These evaluations commonly occur at least three years post-program implementation and measure medium-term and long-term outcomes. Impact evaluations are intended to inform both internal and external stakeholders.

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[21] Better Evaluation Manager's Guide to Evaluation, accessed May 2020, https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/node/5282

An impact evaluation will typically try to answer questions such as:

- Were the intended outcomes achieved as set out in the program's aims and objectives?
- Have other investments influenced the attainment of the program's aims and objectives? If so, in what way?
- Did the program contribute to achieving the outcomes as anticipated? If so, to what extent?
- Were there any unintended consequences?
- What would have been the situation had the program not been implemented?
- To what extent did the benefits of the program outweigh the costs?
- Did the program represent good value for money?
- Was the program delivered cost-effectively?

3.3. Existing programs

This framework emphasises the importance of planning for evaluation and data capture at the program design stage, however, existing programs without an evaluation strategy should also be periodically reviewed as:

- the bulk of government spending relates to legacy programs
- the nature and outcomes of these programs may have evolved or drifted away from their initial rationale or purpose
- legacy programs have the potential to become embedded or institutionalised by the participants or community in ways that may have significantly affected their outcomes.

Evaluating programs that were not designed with evaluation in mind (known as a post-hoc evaluation) can be complex and expensive[22], particularly where the data required to answer basic evaluation questions has not been collected.

To balance evaluative effort against the potential benefit, agencies will be asked to review their existing stock of programs and develop evaluation strategies for priority programs over time as part of the rolling schedule of evaluations across government. Programs should be prioritised for evaluation through consideration of the program's cost, strategic significance and degree of risk.

Table 3 provides a guide to prioritising programs for the rolling schedule of evaluation, which will be determined by the Budget Review Subcommittee of Cabinet each year. A best-fit approach should be utilised when categorising a program (i.e. a program does not need to satisfy every characteristic to fall into a particular tier).

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[22] Althaus, C., Bridgman, P., Davis, G., (2018), The Australian Policy Handbook, 6th edition, Allen and Unwin

Table 3[23] Guide to program tiers, evaluation types and timing[24]

Tier	Characteristics of program	Evaluation type		
		1 year	2 years	3-5 years
4	**Priority:** strategic priority for government **Program accountability:** Cabinet or Cabinet subcommittee **Funding:** significant government/agency funding **Risk:** high risk (either to government or the community) **Scope**: multiple government agencies and/or multiple external delivery partners **Other factors:** lack of evidence base, major external reporting requirements (e.g. Commonwealth), innovative approach	Process	Outcomes	Impact
3	**Priority:** strategic priority for agency **Program accountability:** responsible Minister(s) **Funding:** significant agency funding **Risk:** moderate to high risk **Scope**: multiple government agencies and/or external delivery partners **Other factors:** lack of evidence base, internal reporting and evaluation requirement	Process	Outcomes	Impact or outcomes
2	**Priority:** named in department agency strategic plan **Program accountability:** agency executive **Funding:** moderate agency funding **Risk:** low to moderate **Scope**: responsibility of single agency, may involve external delivery partners **Other factors:** limited evidence base, internal reporting and evaluation requirement	Process		Outcomes
1	**Priority:** low or emerging strategic priority for agency **Program accountability:** business unit within agency **Funding:** limited agency funding **Risk:** low **Scope**: single agency, may involve external delivery partners **Other factors:** local delivery similar to other successful programs	Process		Process

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[23] Adapted from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (formally DIIS) Evaluation Strategy 2017-2021 and NSW Government Guidelines and WA Government Guidelines

[24] Timing and evaluation types may vary depending on the program.

Tier 4 and Tier 3 programs should be prioritised for evaluation and would usually be expected to go through process, outcome and impact evaluations over the program lifecycle. The prioritisation of Tier 1 and 2 programs is at the discretion of agencies but should be influenced by how they fit into higher tier programs (if applicable).

4. Integrating evaluation into the budget process

Integrating evaluation into the budget process allows governments to make better use of resources[25]. This framework integrates evaluation into the Territory Government's budget process through the use of sunset clauses and establishing a rolling schedule of evaluations.

Agencies are responsible for ensuring that funding proposals include an evaluation strategy overview and that evaluations are conducted in accordance with the approved approach. Agencies are also responsible for reporting evaluation outcomes.

4.1. Evaluation overviews

An evaluation overview is mandatory for all new programs seeking additional funding of $1 million or more in any single year (refer to the Cabinet handbook and submission templates). This overview should be a concise summary of the key outcomes the program is trying to achieve and how and when success will be measured. A full evaluation work plan should be completed if the program is approved to proceed.

When seeking Cabinet approval for new programs, agencies must:
- consider previous evaluations as part of the new policy/program design to ensure continuous learning and improvement
- identify the outcomes the program aims to influence
- identify the key performance indicators against which the success of the program will be measured
- identify data sources to monitor program effectiveness, including baseline data
- include sunset clauses (see section 4.2)
- include provision for evaluations as part of the initial funding request.

The number and type of evaluations under each strategy will depend on the program tier. The evaluation toolkit and PEU will provide guidance on evaluation cost estimates.

Similarly, proposals for additional funding to extend, significantly modify or expand existing programs should be accompanied by either the findings of a relevant evaluation or a new evaluation strategy.

Guidance on how to complete an evaluation overview and evaluation work plan is included in the Cabinet Handbook and the evaluation toolkit.

Evaluation overviews will be reviewed by the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, and the Department of Treasury and Finance as part of normal Cabinet submission processes. If a program is approved to proceed, a copy of the full evaluation work plan must be provided to the PEU within six months of the approval.

4.2. Sunset clauses

A sunset clause is a specified period after which funding for a program is reviewed or ceases. Unless otherwise directed by Cabinet, funding for new programs (or extensions of existing programs) that impact

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[25] Lopez-Acevedo, G., Krause, P., Mackay, K., Building Better Policies, Chapter 6 Monitoring and Evaluation Systems and the Budget, World Bank, 2012

the Territory Government's operating balance by $1 million or more in any one year will be subject to an initial five year sunset clause. This ensures that ongoing funding for programs is informed by evaluation.

4.3. Rolling schedule of evaluations

To help manage and prioritise evaluations, agencies are required to prepare multi-year rolling evaluation schedules that are reviewed annually by the Budget Review Subcommittee of Cabinet. In addition to evaluating new programs in accordance with the approved evaluation overview strategy, the schedules will be expected to include:

- a list of existing programs planned for evaluation, including the tier and expected evaluation timeframe

- who will conduct the evaluation (i.e. internal/external)

When preparing the evaluation work plan, agencies should give priority to:

- Tier 4 and Tier 3 programs (as per the program tiering in Table 3)

- programs that have not previously been evaluated

- programs for which evaluation is required by Cabinet (e.g. in line with an evaluation strategy overview approved by Cabinet).

The evaluation schedule for each agency should be aligned to agency corporate planning cycles and internal decision-making processes and should be developed in consultation with the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet.

A whole-of-government evaluation schedule will be compiled by the PEU and submitted to the Budget Review Subcommittee of Cabinet for approval along with an annual summary of evaluation findings for the previous year.

5. Evaluation toolkit and templates

The evaluation toolkit is a guide for managing evaluations in the Territory Government context. The evaluation toolkit includes templates and provides step-by-step guidance on evaluation for Territory Government employees involved in policy development and program design. The evaluation toolkit is a living document, which will be refined in response to user feedback.

Table 4: Overview of the step-by-step evaluation guide[26]

Timing	Content
During program design	• how to identify key stakeholders and decision makers and define roles and responsibilities • how to clearly articulate the program's aim, how the program's activities will achieve the aim, how and when success will be measured, what systems need to be in place to collect data throughout the program and what resources will be needed for the evaluation
Before the evaluation	• how to develop the Terms of Reference for the evaluation and the relationship with the Request for Tender • how to select the right evaluation team and apply the procurement governance policy. • how to identify data collection requirements to answer the key evaluation questions and provide guidance on who should develop the evaluation methodology and what factors should be considered • how to develop and review an evaluation work plan to ensure that good practice project management is used during the evaluation
During the evaluation	• the role of the evaluation manager in overseeing the implementation of the evaluation work plan • how to structure an evaluation report, including succinct reporting of the evaluation findings. This step will also outline the minimum requirements of an evaluation report
After the evaluation	• how to appropriately communicate evaluation results and respond to recommendations

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[26] The key underlying resource for the toolkit is the Better Evaluation Manager's Guide to Evaluation (https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/managers_guide).

6. Transition and review

6.1. Building evaluative capacity

There are pockets of evaluation expertise across the NTPS but more is needed to improve the quality of internal evaluations and enhance commissioning of external evaluations. Successfully implementing this framework requires cultural change across the NTPS[27], including investment in training and development to improve evaluation capability and quality.

Building evaluative capacity will help embed evidence-based policy and evaluative thinking across the NTPS. Over time, this will help shift the perception of evaluation as a compliance exercise to being an integral part of program design and policy development[28].

Developing and maintaining evaluation maturity is an ongoing process. The evaluation maturity of the NTPS will be monitored by PEU over time as per Table 5.

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[27] Fiscal Strategy Panel's final report: *A plan for budget repair* 2019.
[28] This framework will also be supported by the Evaluation Community of Practice, an inter-agency network aimed at fostering a culture of evaluation across the Northern Territory Public Service and evidence-based policy development.

Table 5[29]: Evaluation maturity

	Beginning maturity	Developing maturity	Embedded maturity	Leading maturity
Culture	Evaluation awareness is low and is as a response to identified problems.	Widespread awareness of the benefits of evaluation.	Evaluation perceived as an integral component of sound performance management.	Demonstrated commitment to continuous learning and improvement across government.
Capacity	Evaluation skills are limited. No formal evaluation procedures and structures are in place.	Targeted training and recruitment is used to develop staff skills. Formal evaluation policies and structures are in place.	General evaluation skills are widespread. Relevant staff have higher order skills and experience, which is leveraged by the agency. Evaluation systems, structures and procedures are robust, integrated and of proven effectiveness.	The government is recognised for its evaluation expertise and innovative procedures and systems.
Planning	Evaluation planning occurs for some programs, mainly after implementation. No, or very basic, evaluation strategy.	Programs have well defined objectives and performance indicators as a baseline for future evaluation. Evaluation activity is coordinated and an evaluation strategy is in place.	Evaluation planning is an integral component of policy development.	Evaluation plans are in place for most programs.
Strategy	Programs with identified problems are prioritised.	Large and high risk programs are prioritised.	Guidelines for prioritising and scaling evaluation activity are used.	Evaluations are prioritised and scaled to provide the most useful evidence for the least cost.
Conducting	Evaluation occurs but is infrequent and ad hoc.	Priority programs are evaluated.	Evaluation is widespread and conforms to this framework.	Evaluation is almost universal and best practice.
Using	Evaluation findings disseminated within the agency. Significant recommendations are implemented.	Evaluation findings routinely inform decision making and are often disseminated outside the agency.	Evaluation findings are widely disseminated and used to improve performance.	Findings are used to optimise service delivery and improve accountability and transparency.

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[29] Adapted from the ACT Government Evaluation Policy 2010.

6.2. Reviewing the evaluation framework

The evaluation framework will be internally reviewed in 12 months and externally reviewed 3 years after implementation (2023).

The external review will assess whether the evaluation framework is meeting the needs of the Territory Government and whether the evaluation maturity of the NTPS has increased. The hierarchy of policy objectives and indicative performance measures is presented in Table 6[30]: Results of the review will be communicated to Cabinet.

Table 6: Objectives of the evaluation framework and indicative performance measures

Objective	Indicative performance measures
Build a culture of enquiry, learning and continuous improvement	Percentage of staff who are aware of the program evaluation framework. Percentage of staff who perceive evaluation as an opportunity to improve government services.
Increase government evaluation capability	Whole-of-government evaluation training available. Increase in the number of staff who have undertaken evaluation training. Improvement in whole-of-government evaluation maturity Increased number of evaluations meeting quality standards.
More informed government decision-making	Increased number of evaluation recommendations implemented.
Higher quality government services	Increased number of programs that use the results from previous evaluations to inform design and implementation.

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[30] Adapted from the ACT Government Evaluation Policy Guidelines 2010