

# TOWARDS A MORE STRATEGIC & HOLISTIC SYSTEM FOR EVALUATING PUBLIC POLICIES & PROGRAMS

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Resources (Vic)



Economic Development,  
Jobs, Transport  
and Resources

# OVERVIEW

## Presentation

### 1 Our context

- Understanding our diverse needs, opportunities & challenges

### 2 Our journey in building a stronger & more enduring evaluation culture

- Getting our evaluation system right
- Incorporating strategic evaluation and capability building

### 3 Our lessons

- General reflection & lessons

# THE DEDJTR CONTEXT

## The Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR)

– opportunities & challenges for evaluation



### A 'mega' department

- Amalgamation of three departments
- With an outcomes framework



### Diverse portfolios

- 8 ministers
- 12 portfolios
- Siloes



### Several restructures

- Created in 2015
- Several org. reconfigurations since

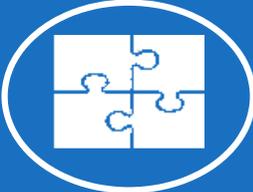


### Variable cultures

- Evaluation capacity & capability exist but to varying degrees

# AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

An independent review recommends improvement in DEDJTR's evaluation culture and system

Prioritisation	Integration	Quality	Utilisation
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make evaluation a management priority</li><li>• Re-focus from compliance to continuous improvement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Embed evaluation into strategic planning, policy &amp; program design</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen evaluation quality through early collection of outputs &amp; outcomes data</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen responses to evaluation by increasing accountability &amp; transparency of responses</li></ul>

# WE ARE NOT ALONE

## DEDJTR's issues & challenges are not that unique.....

### NSW Auditor-General (2016)

"Government decision-makers are not receiving enough information to make evidence-based investment choices"

"... there is little assurance that the right programs are being evaluated"

### Vic Auditor-General's Office (2015)

".... evaluation governance structure is unnecessarily complex, and decision-making and accountability roles are difficult to determine"

"....findings are not centrally aggregated to inform strategic planning"

# OUR INTENDED OUTCOMES – *ENDURING*

## Our planning & investment decisions are evidence informed

Evaluations deliver useful & robust performance evidence

Evidence from evaluations is used to inform planning

Evidence from evaluations is used to inform program design & delivery

## We routinely deliver good practice evaluations

Evaluations are considered early in the life of programs

Evaluations are well planned & delivered

Evaluations meets minimum quality standards

## Evaluation is a business priority

Strong evaluation leadership & governance

Evaluation used to meet business needs

## Evaluation is well supported

Required tools, guidelines & advice are available

Improved evaluation capability & capacity

Evaluations are appropriately prioritised & supported

# Stronger evaluation culture

# BUILDING AN EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR DEDJTR

To strengthen the evaluation culture in DEDJTR, we needed a more strategic and holistic evaluation system



# OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## An evaluation system that:



Aligns with department's key policies and commitments



Is driven by evidence needs, not compliance



Focuses on pragmatic and tangible priorities – in areas of greatest need and impact, over time



Builds on existing internal good practices and successes

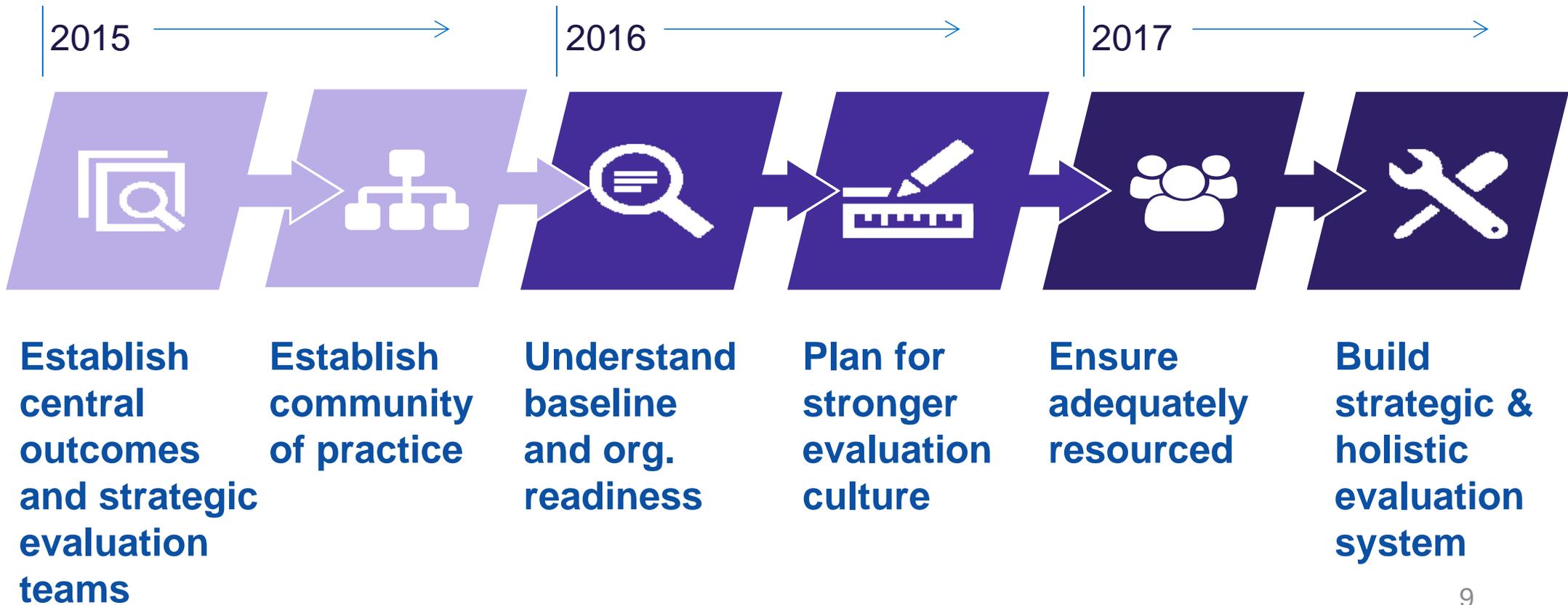


Builds on a partnership approach



has a governance structure that is simple, well-coordinated and provide role clarity

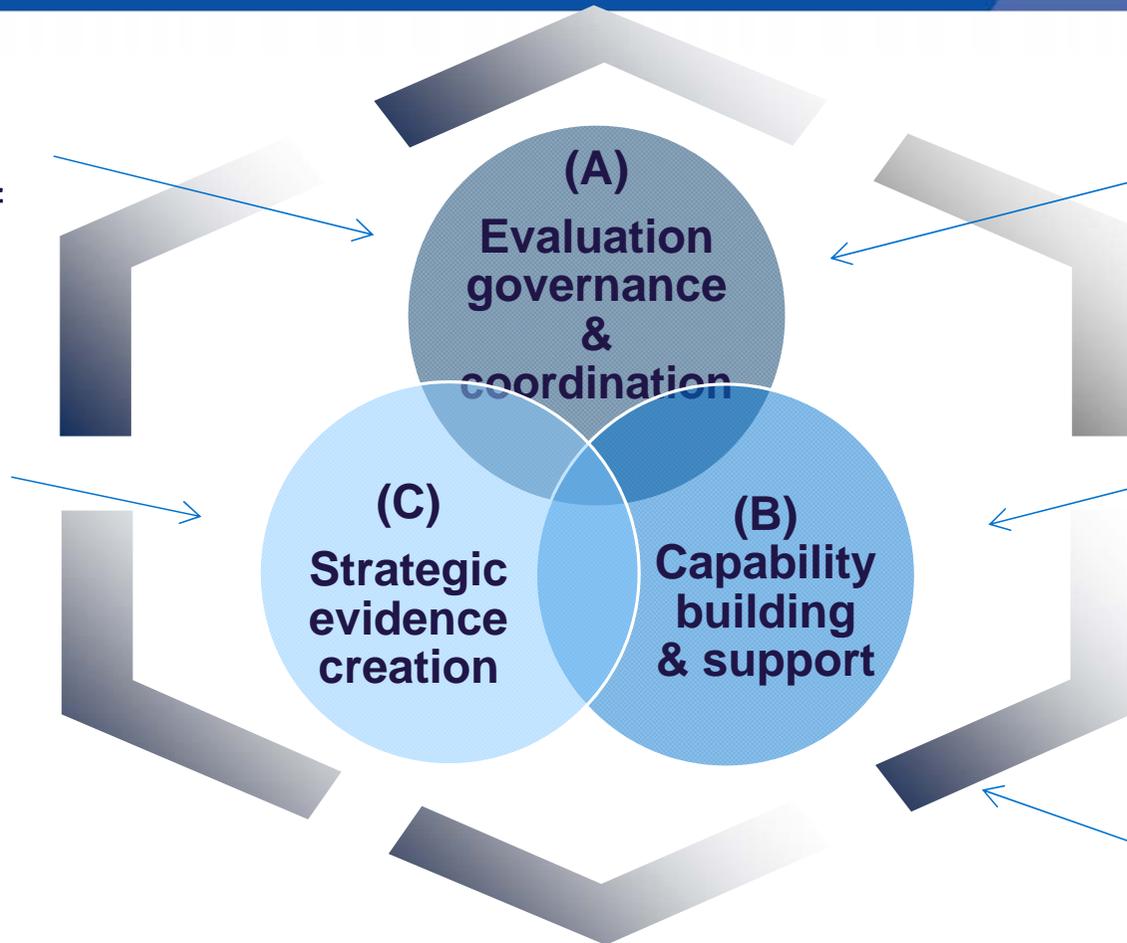
# OUR GENERAL APPROACH



# THE DEDJTR EVALUATION SYSTEM

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Community of Practice

- ✓ Strategic insights
- ✓ Demo. Projects
- ✓ Innovation



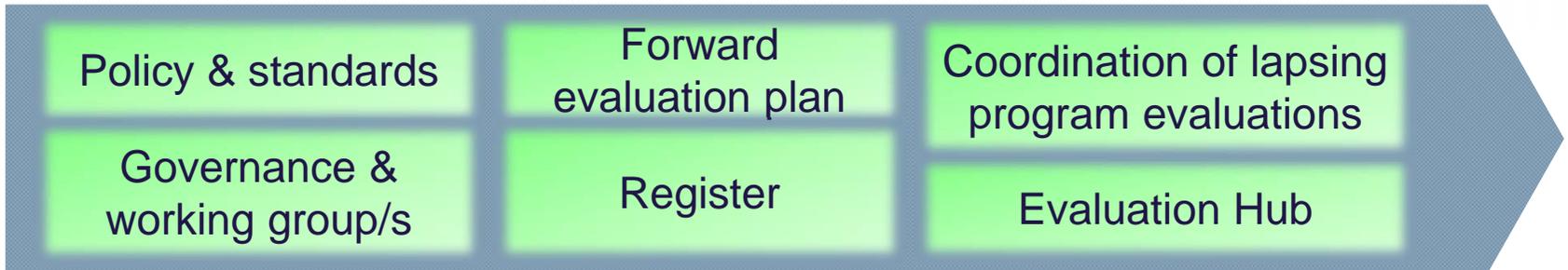
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Standards
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Coordination
- ✓ Expert Advice
- ✓ Guidance
- ✓ Support

## Portfolio areas

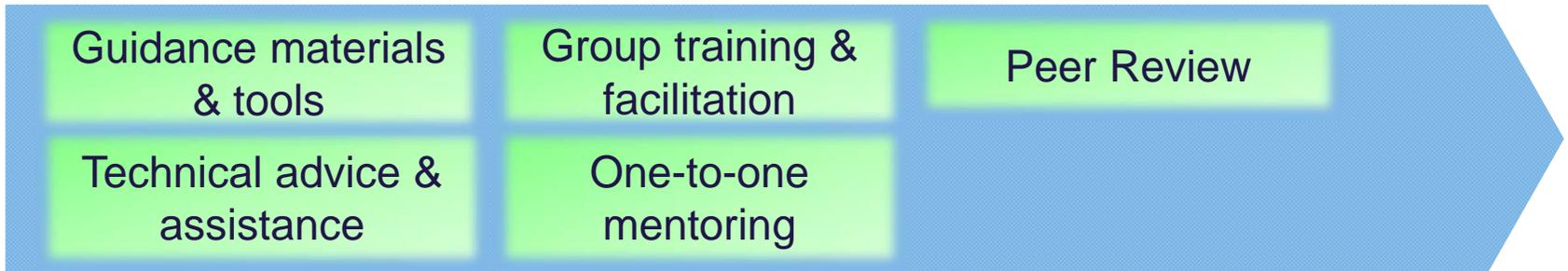
- ✓ Plan
- ✓ Deliver
- ✓ Utilise

# OUR INTENDED OUTPUTS – *CURRENT*

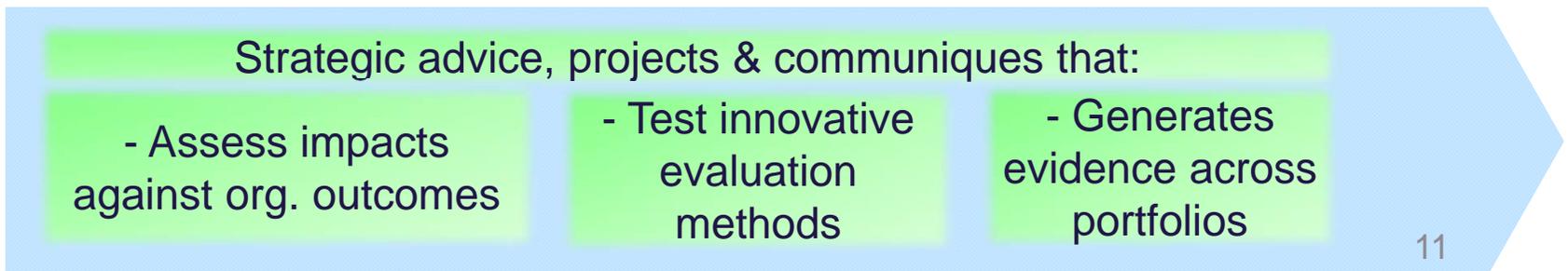
(A)  
Evaluation  
governance  
&  
coordination



(B)  
Capability  
building &  
support



(C)  
Strategic  
evidence  
creation



# GENERAL LESSONS & TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- Evaluation culture is underpinned by a government agency's **receptiveness & readiness** to embed evaluation into routine practices
- Having an **evaluation system** will improve the organisation's receptiveness & readiness to evaluation
- An evaluation system could **couple strategic evaluation with evaluation capability building**:
  - Strategic evaluations can stimulate interests and allows systemic gaps to be identified
  - Capability building will build more enduring interest and capability over time
- It **takes time, numerous 'quick wins' and endurance** to build a strategic & holistic evaluation system
- **Leadership, governance and accountability** arrangement is a crucial element of the evaluation system

