



Job Network: Changing Community Sector Values

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ABSTRACT

In 1998, the Howard Government instituted one of its most bold policy reforms, the Job Network, making a 'market-place' of what had been the public employment service: the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) and its network of contracted services. This paper provides selected findings from a study on the impact of the Job Network on non-profit providers, conducted during 1999 and 2000. At that time, competition was fostering some innovative practices by agencies, but was also introducing conflicts between the traditional community sector orientation towards information sharing and cooperation and the need to guard market knowledge and power. The requirement to police job seeker attitudes, activities and compliance with 'mutual obligation' was beginning to cause tensions within organisations that had traditionally rejected this kind of approach.

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