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Tasmania

**ACCRUAL BUDGET AND FINANCIAL  
MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

**Communication Strategy**

**Phase 4**

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

Version 3.0 October 2003

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**DOCUMENT ACCEPTANCE and RELEASE NOTICE**

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This is release 3.0 of the Communication Strategy for the Accrual Budget and Financial Management (ABFM) Project.

The Communication Strategy is a managed document that supports the ABFM Project during its lifespan. It is updated as the Project progresses. Changes are issued only as a *complete replacement* of the document. Amendments to a specific version of the document will refer to a section number.

This release outlines communication strategies for Phase 4 of the ABFM Project.

PREPARED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
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**1. BUILD STATUS:**


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<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b><i>Developed By</i></b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Sections</b>
3.0	October 2003	ABFM Project Team	Revised Strategy for Phase 4 Implementation	All Sections
2.0	May 2002	ABFM Project Team	Revised Strategy for Phase 3 Implementation	All Sections
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**2. AMENDMENTS IN THIS RELEASE:**

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<b>Change or Problem Id</b>	<b>Section Reference</b>	<b>Amendment Summary</b>
	All Sections	Revised for Phase 4

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**3. DISTRIBUTION:**

<b>Copy No</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Issue Date</b>	<b>Issued To</b>
1	3.0	October 2003	Mr Ian Pitchford, Project Manager, Department of Treasury and Finance
2	3.0	October 2003	Ms Andrea Lawrie, Director, Budget Management Branch, Department of Treasury and Finance
3	3.0	October 2003	Mr Craig Jeffery, Director, Government Finance and Accounting Branch, Department of Treasury and Finance
4	3.0	October 2003	Mr Philip Mussared, Deputy Secretary, Budget and Finance Division, Department of Treasury and Finance
5	3.0	October 2003	Mr David Hudson, General Manager, Corporate Services, Department of Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts
6	3.0	October 2003	Mr Brian Smith, Director, Corporate Services, Department of Justice and Industrial Relations
7	3.0	October 2003	Ms Dianne Smith, Deputy Director, Corporate Services - Finance, Department of Health and Human Services
8	3.0	October 2003	Ms Maria Skillern, Quality Review Consultant, Inter Agency Policy and Projects Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet
9	3.0	October 2003	Ms Debbie Sadler, Assistant Director, Government Finance and Accounting Branch, Department of Treasury and Finance
10	3.0	October 2003	Mr Tony Wells, Project Manager BMFRS Unit, Government Finance and Accounting Branch, Department of Treasury and Finance
11	3.0	October 2003	Electronic, ABFM Internet site

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## 1. Purpose

Improving communication is identified as a key strategic challenge in Treasury's Corporate Plan.

As identified in the approved Business Plan (Version 5.0) for Phase 3 of accrual budgeting implementation, communication is a major function of the Accrual Budget and Financial Management (ABFM) Project. Appropriate milestones and resourcing for ABFM communications have been allocated and are outlined in the ABFM Business Plan for Phase 4.

The ABFM Project Communication Strategy - Phase 4 outlines a planned, positive and targeted communication strategy to support the ongoing development of accrual budgeting and associated financial management reforms.

The implementation of accrual budgeting and financial management reforms is occurring over a number of phases (see Appendix 2 – Communication Background for further information). Key messages and communication methods have evolved in each phase.

This version (Version 3.0) of the Communication Strategy is for Phase 4 of the ABFM Project.

The Communication Strategy identifies:

- the key stakeholders that the communication strategy should address (Section 3.1);
- the key messages for communicating to the key stakeholders (Section 3.2);
- the method by which the key messages are communicated to key stakeholders (Section 3.3);
- identifies when the key messages need to be communicated to the key stakeholders. (Section 3.4);
- the actions required for implementation of the strategy and the communication roles (Section 3.5);
- resources applied to undertaking communication tasks (Section 4);
- communication risks (Section 5); and
- methodology and time-frame for evaluating the effectiveness of communications (Section 6).

### Key Features - Phase 4

Phase 4 represents the consolidation of the accrual budgeting framework and the continued development of associated financial management reforms.

Outputs for Phase 4 include:

- Revised and documented UPF budget consolidation methodology and processes.
- Revised and documented business process for the development of the Budget.
- An independent external post implementation review of Phase 3.
- A report on best practice budgeting and financial reporting.

- Implementation of the revised reporting regime as a result of legislative changes to the *Financial Management and Audit Act 1990*.
- Report on the Review of the Outputs Methodology finalised and an implementation plan.
- Training to agencies and budget analysts in the use of Transaction Types in coding BMS and PARS data.
- Training package for new users and administrators of BMFRS in both Treasury and agencies, including UPF and AAS concepts.
- More streamlined and informative pre-Budget report.

The focus of the communication strategy in Phase 4 will be on:

- consultation with agencies in achieving Outputs;
- ensuring that all stakeholders understand the accrual budgeting framework and Budget presentation;
- ensuring that all stakeholders are fully informed on the continued progress of accrual budgeting and other financial management reforms; and
- improving the general level of understanding of accrual financial management principles across the State Public Sector.

All appropriate communication tools described in section 3.3 will be utilised in Phase 4. The need for presentations for key stakeholder groups to consolidate the understanding of the headline Budget measure and accrual presentation in the Budget Paper will be established and required presentations conducted.

As a Related Project, a detailed Financial Management Education and Training Program for Tasmanian Government Agencies will also be developed and implementation commenced. This program will address, among other issues, the key areas identified in the recent *Survey of Financial Management in Inner Budget Agencies* conducted by KPMG.

Further background information on the ABFM Project is contained in the Project Business Plan (Version 6.0), which can be accessed on the Treasury Internet site <<<http://www.treasury.tas.gov.au>>> (and select the Accrual Budget Implementation link).

## **1.1. Current Communications Environment**

A stocktake and evaluation survey of the Financial Management Reform Strategy was undertaken in 1999. In the Summary of Key Findings, it was noted that communication was a key area in need of improvement, in particular communication of the overall Financial Management Reform Strategy and of the individual reforms and how they can benefit agencies.

Treasury recognised that agency involvement in the reform process and effective communication with agencies is critical. A Treasury communication strategy was developed in July 2001 to provide a basis for effective communication of all Treasury projects with an external focus. This communication strategy has been developed in accordance with the Treasury Communication Strategy.

As noted in Section 2, the need for an accrual budgeting framework, the benefits of accrual budgeting and the concepts that the framework is based on, have been communicated to stakeholders since 1997.

In 2003-04, communication on accrual budgeting and related financial management reforms needs to build on prior communication and not repeat the messages communicated in earlier Phases. Phase 4 of the ABFM Project is concerned with ensuring that all stakeholders are fully informed on the progress of financial management reforms and improving the general level of understanding of accrual financial management principles. To enable a wide target group to be reached, a variety of communication tools will be necessary.

There will be a continued emphasis in Phase 4 on presentations to key stakeholders to increase the comprehension of the accrual budgeting framework, including the Headline Budget Measures. There will also be a focus on the continued and expanded use of established forums in ensuring the widest possible range of stakeholders are reached.

A key focus in Phase 4 will be consultation with stakeholders in achieving the Outputs detailed in the Business Plan.

## 2. Communication Strategy

Important attributes of an effective communication strategy are:

- identification of the target audience (stakeholder groups) (Section 3.1);
- communication of the appropriate or key messages (Section 3.2);
- use of appropriate communication tools (Section 3.3);
- appropriate timing of communications (Section 3.4); and
- identification of appropriate communication roles (Section 3.5).

The above attributes are discussed in the following sections in arriving at a Communication Plan for Phase 4, which is outlined in Section 7.

Details of resources allocated for carrying out communication tasks are outlined in Section 4.

Communication risks are outlined in Section 5 and the methodology and time-frame for evaluating the effectiveness of communication in Phase 4 is outlined in Section 6.

### 2.1. Target Audience

The target audience is classified according to the following stakeholder groups.

Group	Group Description	Stakeholders/Target Audience
<b>Outcome Impacted</b>	Individuals / groups / organisations / related projects who will be impacted by the achievement of the project's outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer and Treasurer's Office</li> <li>• Cabinet</li> <li>• Parliamentarians</li> <li>• Treasury</li> <li>• Heads of Agencies and agency senior executives</li> <li>• Auditor-General</li> <li>• Agency Finance Managers</li> <li>• Agency budget and finance officers</li> </ul>
<b>Output Utilisation</b>	Groups/organisations who will be required to implement and utilise the project's outputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer and Treasurer's Office</li> <li>• Cabinet and Budget Committee</li> <li>• Parliamentarians</li> <li>• Treasury</li> <li>• Auditor-General</li> <li>• Agency Finance Managers</li> <li>• Agency budget and finance officers</li> <li>• Media, Rating Agencies and other financial commentators</li> <li>• Public interest groups</li> </ul>
<b>Review</b>	Groups/organisations who need to review the project and its outputs/outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer and Treasurer's Office</li> <li>• Treasury Executive</li> <li>• Treasury Budget Strategy Committee</li> <li>• Treasury Corporate Management Group</li> <li>• Treasury Quality Assurance Committee</li> </ul>

Group	Group Description	Stakeholders/Target Audience
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auditor-General</li> <li>• Agency Finance Managers</li> <li>• Agency budget and finance officers</li> </ul>
<b>Provider</b>	Groups/organisations who will be required to provide inputs and services to the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasury</li> <li>• Agency Finance Managers</li> <li>• Agency budget and finance officers</li> <li>• Auditor-General</li> </ul>
<b>Output Delivery</b>	Groups/organisations responsible for the delivery of the project's outputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• ABFM Team</li> <li>• Working Groups</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome Accountable</b>	Client groups who are the corporate sponsors/clients for the project, supporting the achievement of project outputs and outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Client - Secretary, Department of Treasury and Finance.</li> <li>• Project Sponsor - Deputy Secretary (Budget and Finance).</li> <li>• Steering Committee</li> <li>• Business Owners</li> </ul>
<b>Related Projects</b>	Related projects and change activities that will impact upon this project.	<p><i>Government Finance and Accounting Branch</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Support System enhancements</li> <li>• Data collection and management</li> <li>• Review of Financial Management Legislation</li> <li>• Financial Management Education and Training</li> </ul> <p><i>Budget Management Branch</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Support System enhancements</li> <li>• Review business system requirements</li> </ul>

## 2.2. Key Messages

The communication aims for Phase 1 were to raise awareness and insight into the accrual budgeting and financial management reform process.

Due to the nature of reforms to be progressed in each Phase of the ABFM Project, the key messages in the Communication Strategy represent a different focus for each Phase, as broadly identified below:

Phase	Key Messages
<b>1 (2001-02 Budget)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of the ABFM Project, including the need for reform, plans for the reform process and the timing of reform.</li> <li>• Inform agencies of the accrual Budget requirements for Phase 1 and obtain agency involvement in specific Phase 1 tasks.</li> </ul>
<b>2 (2002-03 Budget)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase communication with regard to the Accrual Budgeting Framework and the specific reforms to be progressed in Phase 2.</li> <li>• Increase communications between Treasury and agencies to obtain participation on specific working groups and support for reform developments.</li> <li>• Continue to promote the benefits of reform to all Project Stakeholders.</li> <li>• Inform agencies and Treasury of accrual Budget requirements.</li> <li>• Target communications to senior Treasury executives and the Treasurer to seek approval for the Accrual Budgeting Framework.</li> <li>• Increase internal communication to Treasury Budget and Finance officers regarding the Project and the development and approval of the framework.</li> </ul>
<b>3 (2003-04 Budget)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase communication with regard to the details of the accrual budgeting framework to all key stakeholders, in particular the Treasurer, Cabinet, Parliamentarians, Treasury Executive and Budget Analysts. Key messages regarding the accrual budgeting framework are provided in Appendix 1.</li> <li>• Inform Treasury and agencies of the increased emphasis on Budget management through expanded Budget Management Guidelines and the introduction of additional Treasurer's Instructions.</li> <li>• Increase communication to agency Budget and Finance officers about accrual budgeting and financial management reforms through the development of an education and training program. The aim of the program is to increase the awareness and competency of Budget and Finance officers in all aspects of accrual financial management.</li> <li>• Communicate the details of the accrual budgeting framework and the new Headline Budget Measure to the media and public interest groups.</li> <li>• Communicate details of the implementation process to other Treasury and agency stakeholders.</li> <li>• Communicate the changes to the Budget development process for</li> </ul>

2003-04 to Treasury and agencies.

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- 4 (2004-05 Budget)**
- Communicate to agencies and within Treasury that the ABFM Project is continuing, convey the major tasks still required to improve and consolidate processes and maintain the momentum of the Project.
  - Communicate with stakeholders to ensure that they are fully informed on the continued progress of accrual budgeting and other financial management reforms.
  - Consultation with and involvement of agencies in achieving the Outputs of Phase 4
  - Improve the understanding of the Headline Budget Measures and the Accrual Budget presentation by key stakeholders.
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### **2.3. Communication Tools**

Below is an overview of:

- communication tools that have been used for the Project to date; and
- other communication tools that will be utilised to convey Project information.

#### **2.3.1. Project Communication Tools**

##### **2.3.1.1. Working Groups**

Working Groups have been established to undertake specific tasks to deliver Project Outputs and, where appropriate, they contain agency representation. Working Groups are a key tool for agency participation in the reform process and have been an excellent means to communicate Project undertakings and issues to a more detailed level.

Working Groups are an important means for exchanging information regarding the accrual budget reform process and outlining the requirements to stakeholders. A greater level of stakeholder ownership is generated through participation on Working Groups.

Working Groups will be used in Phase 4 to communicate the continuing financial management reform process and involve agencies in achieving Phase 4 Outputs.

##### **2.3.1.2. Finance Managers Forum and Agency Reference Group**

In a concerted effort to communicate to agencies and to promote involvement, an Agency Reference Group was established in Phase 1. The Agency Reference Group (ARG), which is chaired by the Project Manager, consists of senior budget and finance officers from all agencies. ARG meetings have been held on a regular basis since June 2000 and provide a forum to seek feedback from agencies and to provide updates on the Project.

In Phase 3 greater use was made of the Finance Managers Forum, with the ARG being used for consultation on specific issues as required. It is proposed that the Finance Managers Forum and the ARG will be used as communication media in a similar way in Phase 4. A particular focus will be the communication of the revised reporting regime as a result of legislative changes to the *Financial Management and Audit Act 1990*.

### **2.3.1.3. ABFM Email Bulletin**

The ABFM Email Bulletin is a publication designed to provide agency budget and finance officers and those involved with corporate and strategic planning with timely and accurate information on the progress of the ABFM Project

It is proposed to release the Bulletin at least quarterly as a primary communication tool for updating a wide range of stakeholders on developments, upcoming meetings and special interest topics. The Bulletin can be accessed through the Project Internet site. Edition No 13 was released in July 2003. Edition No 14 is proposed for release in October 2003.

### **2.3.1.4. ABFM Internet Site**

A section for the ABFM Project has been established on Treasury's Internet site. The site is maintained by the Project Team and provides:

- access to relevant Project material, including the Business Plan, outcomes of meetings of the Steering Committee, agendas and minutes of Agency Reference Group meetings and the ABFM Email Bulletin;
- links to other Internet sites and relevant documents, including links to Budget Papers and accrual budgeting discussion papers from other jurisdictions; and
- an overview of the Project and contact details.

### **2.3.1.5. Presentations**

Presentations have been used as a primary communication tool in all Project Phases to provide information to a wide range of stakeholders as they provide an opportunity for interactive discussion of the reforms and feedback with regard to communication.

During Phase 3 these presentations raised the level of understanding among these stakeholders of the Accrual Budget Framework, Headline Budget Measurers and the presentation of and information contained within the Budget papers.

Presentations for various stakeholders will continue in Phase 4. The focus of the presentations will again be to increase the understanding of accrual financial management principles, Headline Budget Measurers and the presentation of and information contained within the Budget Papers.

### **2.3.1.6. Education and Training Program**

As a related project to Phase 4 of the Project, an education and training program aimed at increasing awareness of and competency in financial management across the Tasmanian State Sector will be developed and delivery commenced.

The program is being developed and facilitated by an inter-agency working group and consultants. The Working Group is comprised of Treasury and agency officers and is addressing the specific training needs identified in the recent *Survey of Financial Management in Inner Budget Agencies*.

The education program will be used as a major form of communication for the continuation of financial management reform in 2003-04.

### **2.3.1.7. Project Management**

The Corporate Client, Project Sponsor and Steering Committee will be updated through periodic Steering Committee meetings. Minutes of these meetings will be prepared and provided to the Treasury Executive for review.

The ABFM Project Manager will prepare a Quality Assurance Report on a monthly basis for the Treasury Quality Assurance Committee.

The Quality Adviser for the Project will provide a Quality Review Report on a monthly basis. The Report will be provided to the Treasury Quality Assurance Committee and the ABFM Steering Committee.

The Business Owners will be regularly updated through weekly meetings with the ABFM Project Manager and the officers responsible for specific outputs.

Project management documentation will be maintained for each phase of the Project, including:

- a Business Plan;
- an Outcome Realisation Plan;
- a Communication Strategy

These documents will be submitted to the ABFM Steering Committee for approval and made available on the ABFM internet site.

### **2.3.2. Other Communication Tools**

#### **2.3.2.1. Budget Papers**

The Budget Papers are the Government's primary tool for communication of financial information.

Information concerning the proposal to implement an accrual-based Budget has been presented in *The Tasmanian Government Financial System Budget* document since 1998.

As the 2003-04 Budget was the first to be presented on a full accrual basis, detailed commentary on the aims and benefits of the reform and details of how to interpret the new Budget information was included in a Budget Guide to accompany the Budget papers.

The Treasurer's Budget Speech also focussed on the accrual Budget estimate and accrual Budget outcome in accordance with the new Headline Budget Measure.

The 2004-05 Budget Papers will build on the accrual information previously presented and will again include commentary to assist in interpreting the accrual Budget information.

### **2.3.2.2. Correspondence**

At significant points in the Project, correspondence to Ministers and Heads of Agencies will be prepared, advising them of changes to Budget processes and systems, 2004-05 information requirements and seeking their continued commitment to and support of the reform process.

This form of communication is essential to convey the Government's commitment to the reform process and to obtain high level agency support for the reforms and commitment to the ongoing process.

Minutes to the Treasurer will be prepared to advise the Treasurer on relevant matters. Minutes will also be used to advise Budget Committee and Cabinet of specific matters.

### **2.3.2.3. The Treasury Newsletter (@treasury.tas)**

@treasury.tas is the newsletter of the Department of Treasury and Finance and covers all functions of the Department. @treasury.tas is distributed to a wide audience including agencies, local government, other Treasuries and various private sector organisations quarterly. An article has been provided on the implementation of accrual budgeting in each edition and will continue to be provided in future editions.

### **2.3.2.4. Senior Executive Management Meetings**

On a regular basis, the Secretary of Treasury and Finance meets with the Treasurer, and Heads of Agencies. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to discuss issues and communicate important matters associated with the implementation of accrual budgeting.

On a regular basis the Deputy Secretary, Budget and Finance Division meets with senior agency executives. The Deputy Secretary is also a member of the Inter-Agency Steering Committee. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to discuss matters associated with the financial management reform process including accrual budgeting and reporting.

### **2.3.2.5. The Financial Management Reform Strategy Progress Reports**

An update on the progress towards implementing an accrual-based Budget is provided annually in the *Financial Management Reform Strategy Progress Report*.

### **2.3.2.6. Financial Management Forum**

A Financial Management Forum for agencies is held every six months. An update report on the Project and associated issues is provided at each Forum. Issues associated with accrual budgeting will be listed on the agenda for future Forums.

### **2.3.2.7. Monthly Liaison Meetings**

Treasury Budget Analysts hold monthly liaison meetings with agency Budget and Finance officers to discuss Budget issues. These meetings are used to provide information on the implementation of accrual budgeting, including agency requirements.

### **2.3.2.8. Treasury Branch Meetings**

The Budget Management Branch and the Government Finance and Accounting Branch hold weekly branch meetings. A progress report on the reform process will be provided as

required during Phase 4. An update on financial management reforms will be provided, as required, at other Treasury branch meetings.

## 2.4. Communication Opportunities

The types of communication opportunities identified for the individual Project Outputs from the Phase 4 Business plan are set out in the following table. The consultation and explanatory sessions will be included in the detailed planning for each Output.

<i>Output Id</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Detailed Description of Output</i>	<i>Communication Opportunities</i>
1	Revised and fully documented UPF budget consolidation methodology and processes.	Review consolidation processes for the development of the General Government UPF Budget and other state sectors including the method of effecting inter-agency and inter sector eliminations. Review to also consider short-term changes for the development of the 2004-05 Budget, long-term changes from 2005-06 onwards and preparation of UPF Outcome reports for the General Government and other state sectors. Focus is to streamline and enhance the current process, document the process and minimise impact on agencies.	Communication of consolidation processes and individual BMFRS variations to Treasury and the Treasurer.
2	Revised and fully documented business process for the development of the Budget.	Fully document all business processes associated with the development of the Budget including, documentation of UPF consolidation adjustments for the 2002-03 Budget and future consolidation and adjustment processes.	Communication of business processes to Treasury and agencies.

<i>Output Id</i>	<i>Output</i>	<i>Detailed Description of Output</i>	<i>Communication Opportunities</i>
3	Implementation of the revised reporting regime as a result of legislative changes to the <i>Financial Management and Audit Act 1990</i> .	Implementation of the revised reporting regime as a result of legislative changes to the <i>Financial Management and Audit Act 1990</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication of requirements to agencies</li> </ul>
4	An independent external post implementation review of Phase 3.	Post Implementation Review to incorporate issues from parallel internal reviews on the 2003-04 Budget Process and the Budget Management and Financial Reporting System (BMFRS) implementation of Accrual Budgeting.	Communication of findings and strategies to address recommendations to key stakeholders
5	A report on best practice budgeting and financial reporting	Undertake a review on Best Practice Reporting as described in the BMB Branch Operating Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with key stakeholders in determining best practice principals</li> <li>• Consulting with key stakeholders in determining implementation issues</li> <li>• Communication to stakeholders of recommendations and implementation strategies</li> </ul>

<b><i>Output Id</i></b>	<b><i>Output</i></b>	<b><i>Detailed Description of Output</i></b>	<b><i>Communication Opportunities</i></b>
6	Report on the Review of the Outputs Methodology finalised and an implementation plan for recommendations agreed.	Finalise the Outputs Methodology review and obtain final approval for the report and assess the recommendations from the review to prioritise and assess possibility of implementing these recommendations, including the administered/controlled classifications, Output specification, overhead distribution matters and better integration of Tasmania <i>Together</i> into the Budget Process.	<p>Consultation with agencies on the recommendations and implementation strategy of the Report</p> <p>Consultation with agencies on implementation of selected recommendations for 2004-05 Budget</p> <p>Explanatory sessions with agencies following endorsement of the Report by the Treasurer</p>
7	Training provided to agencies and budget analysts in the use of Transaction Types in coding BMS and PARS data.	Conduct training for agencies and budget analysts in BMB on the use of transaction types and how these transaction types link through to the AAS reports and UPF reports, to assist in improving data quality and understanding of agency impact on the General Government Budget.	Explanatory training sessions on documented explanations of Transaction Types
8	Training package for new users and administrators of BMFRS in both Treasury and agencies, including UPF and AAS concepts.	Identify training requirements and coordinate training for new users and new system administrators of BMFRS in Treasury and agencies, including AAS and UPF concepts, to reduced learning periods.	Consultation with agencies and Treasury staff identifying the training needs and preferred media

## 2.5. Timing of Communications

Appropriate timing of communication is essential to ensure that stakeholders understand the ongoing financial management reforms and the impact they will have on the Budget development and management processes and on the presentation of the Budget. Reforms that impact on agencies will need to be communicated at appropriate stages of the Budget development processes.

To ensure that the 2004-05 Budget Papers are of maximum benefit to stakeholders it is important that a sound understanding of the accrual budgeting framework and other reforms is generated by May 2004. This education process will build on the communication undertaken during previous Phases.

As outlined in Section 3.3, a variety of communication tools will be utilised to communicate the key messages. An indication of the timing for each communication tool outlined in Section 3.3 is provided below:

<b>Communication Tool</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Working Group meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working Groups will be established as required</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Reference Group (ARG) meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ARG meetings will be held as required.</li> </ul>
<b>ABFM Email Bulletins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Bulletin will be released at least quarterly.</li> </ul>
<b>ABFM Internet site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ABFM Internet site will be reviewed and updated at least monthly and prior to distribution of each ABFM Email Bulletin.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need for presentations to Parliamentarians will be established and if required will occur in May 2004.</li> <li>Presentation to other key stakeholders will be held as required.</li> </ul>
<b>Education and Training Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A training session on revised Transaction Types will be conducted in October/November 2003.</li> <li>Financial management training for agencies will commence in October 2003.</li> <li>Consultation with agencies on the design of training for new BMS users will be held in 2004.</li> </ul>
<b>Budget Papers and supporting information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2004-05 Budget Papers are published in May 2004</li> </ul>
<b>Correspondence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letters from the Treasurer to Ministers will be sent at key points during Phase 4.</li> <li>Memoranda from the Secretary to Heads of Agencies will be sent at key points during Phase 4.</li> <li>Minutes to the Treasurer, Budget Committee and Cabinet will be sent at key points during Phase 4.</li> </ul>
<b>@treasury.tas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>@treasury.tas is published quarterly.</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Executive Management meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular Weekly Meetings are held with the Treasurer.</li> <li>A Heads of Agency meeting is generally held monthly.</li> <li>The Inter-Agency Steering Committee meets monthly.</li> </ul>

<b>Communication Tool</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Financial Management Reform Strategy Progress Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published annually in September/October.</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Managers Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally held quarterly.</li> </ul>
<b>Monthly liaison meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings between Treasury Budget Analysts and agency Budget officers are generally held monthly</li> </ul>
<b>Treasury Branch meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly.</li> </ul>

The Steering Committee will be advised by the Project Manager of all communication activities.

## **2.6. Communication Roles**

Effective communication requires the communication of key messages from appropriate sources and by appropriate officers. The implementation of accrual budgeting and other financial management reforms affect all levels of Government including Cabinet, Parliamentarians, many areas of Treasury, agency senior executives, Budget officers and business unit managers. It is appropriate for communication of accrual budgeting reforms to Government and senior agency executives to be undertaken from senior levels within the Government and Treasury, to demonstrate commitment to the reform and to encourage ownership at a senior level.

Treasury plays a lead role in the reform process. As such, it is essential that clear and consistent messages be sent from all areas within Treasury.

Communication roles, messages and actions have been identified in the Communication Plan in Section 7.

## **3. Resources**

The Accrual Budget and Financial Management Project Team is fully resourced to undertake the communication tasks outlined in this strategy. Communication is a major function for Phase 4, which will be given a high priority by the ABFM Project Team. Staff assigned to the project team will provide the resource to undertake the communication tasks outlined in this strategy.

- The ABFM Business Plan for Phase 4 (Version 5.1.0) sets out the Project Budget. The Budget includes \$20 000 for training materials and publications.

In addition, a further \$100 000 has been allocated in the Government Finance and Accounting Branch budget to conduct an education and training program for stakeholders in accrual financial management issues, which is a related project to the ABFM Project.

## 4. Communication Risks

An analysis has been undertaken of the risks that may eventuate from poor communication. Five categories of risk have been identified:

Risk Category	Consequence
<b>Lack of Understanding and Awareness</b>	Failure of Project Stakeholders, particularly Parliamentarians, the media and public interest groups to be aware of the changes resulting from the financial management reforms, including the Uniform Presentation Framework Headline Budget Measure.
<b>Lack of Knowledge and Familiarity</b>	Failure of Project Stakeholders to obtain the knowledge of, and familiarity with the reform process and the systems and procedures that will be altered by reforms, and how financial management reforms will impact on their work.
<b>Limited Ownership and Participation</b>	Failure of Project Stakeholders to take ownership of and participate in the reform process.
<b>Benefits Not Identified</b>	Failure of Project Stakeholders to grasp the aims and benefits of the financial management reform framework.
<b>Barriers to Change</b>	Inability to remove barriers to change. (The cash system of budgeting has strongly founded traditions and is familiar to stakeholders).

The Communication Strategy will enable the effective management of the above risks and will facilitate the successful achievement of the desired Project Outcome, as outlined in the Project Outcome Realisation Plan and Business Plan.

## 5. Evaluation

In accordance with the approved Business Plan for Phase 4, a review of each phase of the Project is to be conducted. A review of Phase 4 will be conducted in July/August 2004 and will include a review of the effectiveness of this communication strategy. The review will include recommendations for continuing communication of the accrual budgeting reform process during 2004-05.

To evaluate the effectiveness of this communication strategy, the following methodology will be applied:

- feedback on communication will be sought from the Business Owners and Project Sponsor on a regular basis with regard to the effectiveness of communication to the Treasurer and Treasurer's Office, Treasury Executive, Treasury Corporate Management Group, other areas of Treasury and agency senior executives;
- evaluation of questions raised and comments made by Parliamentarians during the Budget process, in particular through the Budget Estimates Committee process;
- the effectiveness of communication of accrual budgeting implementation will be included for discussion on the agenda of each Agency Reference Group meeting;
- feedback on the effectiveness of communication of accrual budgeting implementation will be sought from the Financial Management Forum; and
- feedback will be sought from Treasury Budget Analysts at weekly branch meetings.

## 6. Communication Plan

Whilst there is a need to target information to particular stakeholders, there will be occasions where information can be provided to all or a number of groups simultaneously. The elements of this strategy are outlined in section 3 of the Communication Strategy. Key messages regarding the accrual budgeting framework are provided at Appendix 1.

Stakeholder/ Target Audience	Key Messages	Communication Tools	Timing	Communicator
Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanation of the Headline Budget Measures and Budget Paper presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentations</li> <li>Cabinet Minutes</li> <li>Budget Guide document</li> </ul>	April and May 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treasurer, Business Owners and Project Manager</li> </ul>
Parliamentarians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanation of the Headline Budget Measures and Budget Paper presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentations</li> <li>Budget Guide document</li> </ul>	April and May 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>
Media and Public Interest Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanation of the Headline Budget Measures and Budget Paper presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Guide document</li> <li>Media Releases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 2004</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treasurer/ Treasury Senior Officers</li> </ul>
Heads of Agencies and senior agency executives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice on ABFM goals, projects, issues progress and information requirements</li> <li>Agency involvement, participation and resource implications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspondence</li> <li>@treasury newsletter</li> <li>Senior Executive management meetings</li> <li>FMRS progress Reports</li> <li>Senior Executive Management meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At key points</li> <li>Quarterly</li> <li>Monthly</li> <li>September 2003</li> <li>At key points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>Secretary/Deputy Secretary</li> <li>Project Manager</li> <li>Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>
Agency Finance Managers, Budget and Finance Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice on ABFM goals, projects, issues progress, information requirements and implementation issues</li> <li>Agency involvement, participation and resource implications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ABFM Email bulletin</li> <li>ABFM Internet site</li> <li>@treasury newsletter</li> <li>Presentations</li> <li>Budget Papers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly</li> <li>At key points</li> <li>Quarterly</li> <li>At key points</li> <li>May 2004</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Manager</li> <li>Project Manager</li> <li>Project Manager</li> <li>Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>

Stakeholder/ Target Audience	Key Messages	Communication Tools	Timing	Communicator
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence</li> <li>• FMRS Progress Reports</li> <li>• Financial Management Forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At key points</li> <li>• September 2004</li> <li>• Half yearly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>
Auditor-General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice regarding the changes to Budget presentation and management and any legislative impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABFM Email Bulletin</li> <li>• ABFM Internet site</li> <li>• Budget Papers</li> <li>• Correspondence</li> <li>• @treasury.tas newsletter</li> <li>• Senior executive management meetings</li> <li>• FMRS progress reports</li> <li>• Financial Management Forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly</li> <li>• Updated monthly</li> <li>• May 2003</li> <li>• At key points</li> <li>• Quarterly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• September 2003</li> <li>• Quarterly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Corporate Client</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>
Corporate Client – Secretary of Treasury and Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABFM Project progress</li> <li>• Project management and quality assurance issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Committee Minutes</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> <li>• Internal correspondence</li> <li>• Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• At key points</li> <li>• At key points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager/ QA Consultant</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>

<b>Stakeholder/ Target Audience</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>	<b>Communication Tools</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Communicator</b>
Project Sponsor - Deputy Secretary (Budget and Finance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABFM Project progress</li> <li>• Project management issues</li> <li>• Quality assurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project documentation</li> <li>• Correspondence</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> <li>• Internal meetings</li> <li>• Steering Committee meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• At key points</li> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• As required</li> <li>• Monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• QA Consultant</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> </ul>
Treasury Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABFM Project progress</li> <li>• Project Management issues</li> <li>• Quality assurance issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence (Internal Memorandums)</li> <li>• Steering Committee Minutes</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At key points</li> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Owners/ Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager/ QA Consultant</li> </ul>
Treasury Corporate Management Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABFM Project progress</li> <li>• Project management issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Briefings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At key points</li> <li>• Monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Business Owners</li> </ul>
Treasury Quality Assurance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project management issues</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Committee Minutes</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager/ QA Consultant</li> </ul>
ABFM Project Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABFM Project progress</li> <li>• Project management issues</li> <li>• Quality assurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project documentation</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> <li>• Steering Committee meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• QA Consultant</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> </ul>
ABFM Project Business Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of the accrual budgeting framework</li> <li>• Quality assurance</li> <li>• Project management issues and implementation issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project documentation</li> <li>• Quality assurance reports</li> <li>• Internal meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> <li>• Weekly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• QA Consultant</li> <li>• Project Manager/ Responsible Officer</li> </ul>
Related Project Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of the accrual budgeting framework</li> <li>• Impact on related Project objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet Site</li> <li>• Internal meetings/briefings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated monthly</li> <li>• As required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> </ul>

<b>Stakeholder/ Target Audience</b>	<b>Key Messages</b>	<b>Communication Tools</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Communicator</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branch meetings</li> <li>• Financial Management Forum</li> <li>• ABFM Email bulletin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required</li> <li>• Quarterly</li> <li>• Monthly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> <li>• Project Manager</li> </ul>

## 7. Appendix 1 – Accrual Budgeting Framework Key Messages

Framework Component	Key Message
Budget Paper No 1 and presentation of new headline Budget measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanation of the Headline Budget Measure</li> <li>• Changes to BP 1 presentation</li> <li>• Focus General Government sector and presentation of the Consolidated Fund</li> <li>• Explanation of revenues and expenses presented as opposed to cash receipts and payments</li> <li>• Different classifications of revenue and expenditure used in the new Budget presentation and how they relate to Consolidated Fund Budget classifications</li> <li>• What is nominal interest on superannuation</li> <li>• What balance sheet items mean eg, equity assets, superannuation liability</li> <li>• What is Net Debt, how is it calculated and how is it used</li> <li>• Where is cash information presented and how will it be used in the Budget context</li> <li>• Comparative information</li> <li>• Consolidated Fund information</li> </ul>
Budget Paper No 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanation of an agency's Budget result (NOR) and why it shows a deficit</li> <li>• Overview of changes to agency budget chapters</li> <li>• Explanation of revenues and expenses presented as opposed to cash receipts and payments</li> <li>• Total resource focus and where to find Consolidated Fund information</li> <li>• Different classifications of revenue and expenditure used in the new Budget presentation and how they relate to previous classifications</li> <li>• Presentation of administered items</li> <li>• Where to find information on concessions</li> <li>• Where to find cash information</li> <li>• Link to the Consolidated Fund</li> </ul>
Development and Management of the Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of the Special Deposits and Trust Fund items</li> <li>• Approval of the total resource Budget and management of the Consolidated Fund</li> <li>• Management of accrual items</li> <li>• Agency impacts on development and management of accruals and Special Deposits and Trust Fund items</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agency appropriations</li><li>• Revise Reporting Framework and changes to the State of the Budget Report</li><li>• Budget Management Guidelines and Treasurer's Instructions</li></ul>
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## **8. Appendix 1 – Accrual Budgeting and Financial Management Project Communication Background**

In February 2000, the Accrual Budget and Financial Management (ABFM) Project was established to implement accrual budgeting, progress associated financial management reforms in the Tasmanian General Government sector and review the Outcomes/Outputs methodology.

The presentation of the 2003-04 Budget in accordance with an accrual budgeting framework was a significant milestone in the financial management reform process.

The desired Outcome of the ABFM Project for Phase 4, as stated in the approved Project Business Plan (Version 6.0) remains “a more effective Budget and financial management framework for managing public finances”, leading to an overall Project Outcome of “improvement in management of financial resources”.

### **8.1. Implementation Strategy**

The implementation strategy for accrual budgeting and financial management reforms is based on a progressive phased approach:

- Phase 1 (2001-02 Budget)
- Phase 2 (2002-03 Budget)
- Phase 3 (2003-04 Budget)
- Phase 4 (2004-05 Budget)

#### **Key Features - Phase 1**

During Phase 1, communication focused on raising awareness and insight into the accrual budgeting and financial management reform process. Information provided to stakeholders included:

- the drivers of accrual reform and the benefits of accrual budgeting;
- accrual budgeting principles;
- conceptual issues, including Budget development, management and presentation, financial management legislation, Outcomes/Outputs methodology and accrual appropriations;
- details of accrual budgeting frameworks implemented in other jurisdictions; and
- the implementation strategy, including the benefits of a phased approach.

Stakeholder participation and involvement was encouraged.

The following Outputs were achieved in Phase 1:

- publication of an accrual Budget chapter in 2001–02 Budget Paper No 1, consistent with the principles of Australian Accounting Standard AAS31 – *Financial Reporting by Governments*; and

- presentation to Budget Committee of agency accrual financial information, as part of 2001-02 pre-Budget reports.

### **Key Features - Phase 2**

Phase 2 represented the development of an accrual budgeting framework, including appropriation concepts, review of Budget development and management processes and revised Budget presentation. Phase 2 also included identification of enhancements to business support systems and the development of education and training programs.

The objectives of the Phase 2 Communication Strategy were to:

- continue to raise and promote stakeholder awareness of the Accrual Budget and Financial Management Project through communication of key messages to stakeholders;
- encourage commitment to accrual budgeting and financial management reforms from all stakeholders;
- inform stakeholders of the ongoing status of Accrual Budget and Financial Management Project developments, accrual Budget requirements for Phase 2 and to obtain approval of the accrual budgeting framework.

Internal communication to Treasury Budget and Finance officers regarding the Project and development of the accrual budgeting framework was increased.

The following Outputs were achieved in Phase 2:

- development and approval of an accrual budgeting framework for the General Government Sector, to be implemented for the 2003-04 Budget;
- development of agency accrual budgets for 2002-03 for submission to Budget Committee and consolidation into a whole-of-government (General Government Sector) accrual Budget; and
- development of a consolidated accrual Budget for 2002-03 published in the 2002-03 Budget Papers.

### **Key Features - Phase 3**

Phase 3 represented implementation of an accrual budgeting framework which incorporates:

- measurement of the Budget Outcome on an accrual basis;
- the Budget being developed and presented on a full accrual basis; and
- accrual Budget management processes.

The implementation of an accrual budgeting framework was supported by:

- revised business support systems;
- revisions to financial management legislation; and
- an education and training program to increase awareness and competency in financial management.

The focus of the communication strategy in Phase 3 was on providing details of the accrual budgeting framework to key stakeholders, in particular Parliamentarians, agency Executives, Budget Analysts and Finance officers, the media and each interest group

It was essential to ensure that communication of the accrual budgeting framework and associated reforms occurred in a structured and targeted manner, prior to the commencement of the 2003-04 Budget development process and publication of the 2003–04 Budget Papers. There was a strong emphasis on the use of presentations, particularly to Parliamentarians, the media and public interest groups, during Phase 3.

The following Outputs were achieved in Phase 3:

- development and presentation of the 2003-04 Budget on a full accrual basis;
- modification of business support systems to support an accrual budgeting framework; and
- delivery of a comprehensive communication program to key stakeholders to raise awareness and assist in understanding the new accrual framework and changes to the Budget Papers.

## **8.2. Prior Communications**

Stakeholders have been exposed to the ideas and messages that have been expressed in prior ABFM Project communications from Treasury.

Since 1996, accrual concepts have received significant attention, primarily through the Financial Management Reform Strategy (as outlined in annual FMRS update reports), discussion papers, seminars and reports, the accrual Budget trial and information about reforms in other jurisdictions. Key messages about the benefits and reasons for moving to accrual reporting, accrual accounting and then accrual budgeting have been conveyed regularly through these mechanisms.

Phase 1 of the ABFM Project was an introduction to accrual budgeting, where stakeholders were made aware of the Project and were provided with an opportunity to develop agency accrual budgets for the first time. Phase 1 reforms were minimal and did not aim to achieve a fundamental shift away from cash budgeting practices. The details of accrual budgeting were not communicated as the accrual budgeting framework had not been developed at that time.

During Phase 2, stakeholders indicated a desire to be more involved in, and informed about, the reform process. Project communications adopted for Phase 1 were expanded in Phase 2 to increase the level of stakeholder awareness.

During Phase 3, stakeholders were provided with details of the accrual budgeting framework and associated reforms. A program was undertaken to communicate changes in Budget development and presentation and to raise the general level of understanding of accrual financial management.

An overview of Treasury communications, undertaken from 1996 onward that have included reference to accrual budgeting, is provided in the following sections.

### **8.2.1. Financial Management Reform Strategy**

The Financial Management Reform Strategy was first introduced in 1996 to provide a clear view of the direction of financial management reform in the General Government sector. Accrual budgeting was referred to in the Strategy as a means of enhancing the

Outcomes/Outputs methodology and providing a clear link between budgeting, accounting and reporting.

Developments toward implementing accrual budgeting have been reported in the 1997 to 2002 Financial Management Reform Strategy Progress Reports.

### **8.2.2. Discussion Papers, Seminars and Reports**

Accrual budgeting has been the subject of a number of discussion papers, seminars and reports since 1996, including:

- the *Tasmanian Financial Management Reform Proposal* (1996), prepared by consultants Professor Ian Ball and Graham Scott;
- a presentation by Professor Ian Ball in 1996, in Hobart, to the Institute of Public Administration Australia and the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants entitled *The New Zealand Experience with Accrual Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting*;
- *Accrual Budgeting* (1998), Department of Treasury and Finance;
- *A Guide to Contemporary Financial Management* (1999), Department of Treasury and Finance;
- the *Review of the Financial Management Framework for Government Agencies and Statutory Authorities* (1999), Department of Treasury and Finance;
- *A Guide to Accrual Based Financial Management* (1999), Department of Treasury and Finance; and
- papers and presentations arising out of the Accrual Budget and Financial Management Project since February 2000.

### **8.2.3. Accrual Budgeting Trial**

Treasury conducted a trial accrual budgeting process in October and November 1999, involving the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education and the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources. The outcomes of the trial were released in the *Report on the Trial Accrual Budgeting Process and Recommended Future Direction*, which is available on Treasury's Internet site.

### **8.2.4. ABFM Internet Site**

In Phase 1, a website was established for the ABFM Project containing details of the accrual budgeting reform process and including links to other jurisdictions' budget reform websites. The website has been continually updated with relevant information throughout the duration of the Project.

### **8.2.5. ABFM Email Bulletin**

The distribution of periodic Email Bulletins to stakeholders to provide details of the accrual budgeting reform process commenced in Phase 1 and has continued throughout the Project.

### **8.2.6. @treasury Newsletter**

Regular updates on the accrual budgeting reform process have been published in @treasury.tas.

### **8.2.7. Presentations to Key Stakeholders**

During Phase 2, presentations were made to senior agency executives, and budget and finance officers, to outline accrual budgeting concepts and provide information on the accrual budgeting framework. During Phase 3, these presentations were expanded to include Ministers and Ministerial staff, Parliamentarians, the media and public interest groups, the Treasury Corporate Management Group and other Treasury and agency staff.

### **8.2.8. Agency Reference Group**

An Agency Reference Group (ARG) was established in Phase 1 in an effort to promote agency involvement in the reform processes. The ARG, which is chaired by the Project Manager, consists of senior budget and finance officers from all agencies. ARG meetings have been held on a regular basis since June 2000 and provide a forum to seek feedback from agencies and to provide updates on the Project. However, during Phase 3 the ARG meetings were largely combined with Finance Managers Forums.