

*Résumé*  
**Robert Peter Gibbons M Ec**

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<b>Career Summary</b>	Executive manager and leader of state, local and regional government agencies and community organisations; a consultant in economic, financial and urban planning; and an expert in solving complex organisational problems, report writing (including presentation communications), and dispute resolution. Designer and negotiator of visionary yet practical initiatives which have lasting effects.
<b>Qualifications</b>	Master of Economics, University of Sydney – high distinction in ‘Politics of Urban Policy’; and ‘Transport Co-ordination in Sydney’(thesis on success/failure factors in Sydney’s planning in the twentieth century). Bachelor of Economics, University of Sydney (majoring in Economics, Government and Economic History) with undergraduate honours theses on Sydney’s and Chicago’s development. First in Descriptive (Applied) Economics and eight other courses; second in another – in merit list in two more therefore 11 at high level in a total of 12.
<b>Professional Development</b>	Additional training courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Industrial Relations Workshop for Senior Public Sector Managers in NSW (John Niland and Keri Spooner)</li><li>• Finance for Non-Finance Executives (AIM)</li><li>• Managing for Performance (Doug Stace)</li><li>• Human Resources &amp; Industrial Relations: Managing Change Development Program (Russell Lansbury and Ed Davis)</li><li>• Job Analysis &amp; Job Evaluation (Cullen Egan Dell)</li><li>• The Art of Persuasion (Peter Thompson)</li><li>• Executive Outlook (Premier’s - including John Gattorna on planning and Paul Griffiths on media handling)</li><li>• Train the Trainer (Chamber of Manufactures)</li><li>• Competition and Strategy (Harvard Business School Faculty, Executive Education Program)</li></ul> Conference involvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• chaired "Advanced Public Sector Accounting and Auditing", 5 September 1990</li><li>• paper "Practical problems of implementing an accrual accounting system", 2nd Annual Conference on Public Sector Accounting, 30 April 1991</li><li>• chaired "Human Resource Management in the Public Sector", 23 May 1991</li><li>• paper "Business and strategic planning for government departments", Public Sector Accounting Conference, 17 September 1991</li><li>• chaired “Our Governance”, Planning Institute of Australia NSW Conference, 20 September 2002</li><li>• paper “Sydney Ports – thinking logical logistics”, Sydney Harbour Maritime Forum, June 2003</li><li>• panel presentation “How to finance sustainable transport ... .”, Rapid Active and Affordable Transport Alliance, 18 November 2009.</li></ul>
<b>Employment</b>	Consultant and contractor (August 1998 to present) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• strategic advice to central and local governments and to companies and NGOs</li><li>• detailed knowledge of world best practice in public policy:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➢ <i>Options for Financing Regional Infrastructure for the Premier's Department – an international survey whose recommendations were emulated in the Queensland and Victorian PPP schemes</i></li><li>➢ <i>Review of Performance Indicators on a Whole-of-Government Basis of the NSW Budget sector for the Council on the Cost and Quality of Government, Premier's Department (won by tender)</i></li><li>➢ <i>review of urban policies and planning in Sydney including ecological footprints – Total Environment Centre (sponsored by PlanningNSW, Lend Lease, Landcom, Land and Water Conservation and Sydney Water)</i></li><li>➢ <i>planning legislation submissions for Australian Institute of Urban Studies (AIUS) and like work for publications</i></li><li>➢ <i>Sydney's next transit generation – funding the new Metro network (RailCorp)</i></li></ul></li><li>• advice to companies including e-commerce trading, developers (Homebush Bay, Lake Macquarie, Sefton, Berrima etc), and to Guides Australia re financial system</li><li>• advice to councils and local government associations re planning and other reforms and personal long-term contract with Rockdale City for strategic planning and other governmental relations, Liverpool re governance and with rail industry for improving planning in Sydney. Also Harden Shire strategic plan related to fibre optic access; and contracts for 2 out of the 7 councils involved in the Sproats Inquiry into Local Government Boundaries</li><li>• planning reviews of East Gippsland, Geelong and the Yarra Valley and Ranges</li><li>• research, writing, long-term financial analyses and website/FB underpinning the first application of UK “best value” assessments in the form of ReviveBlueMountains – proved council was over-charging</li></ul>

- research and liaison for National Inquiry into Builders' Warranty Insurance; infrastructure planning for the greyhound racing industry; reform of Sydney Ports' planning; road, rail and land use planning for the Parramatta Road corridor (for Planning NSW) etc.

#### General Manager, Newcastle City Council (Jan 1997 to July 1998)

Commenced with an intensive familiarisation with City and its stakeholders, dealing with crises including closure of BHP's steelmaking and negotiation at national level of related recovery package, re-negotiation of failed contracts over Bicentennial sponsorships, recovery from stalled restructure, and inherited conflict between Council and the business community.

Achieved a substantial turn-around in key aspects of the Council's performance as well as contributing substantially to the Hunter Regional Organisation of Councils' programs including:

- Chair of Civic Theatre Board, Director of Newcastle Airport Board and of Bicentennial Events Corporation, honorary director of Wetlands Centre Board, Sponsoring General Manager in the Hunter Region for InfoHunter, the Joint Action Group (on economic development) and Cultural Development
- Establishment of positive relationships with major city stakeholders
- Major improvements in Council structure, financial planning, monthly financial and operational reports to Council and halving of response time to Councillor requests, introduction of strong Activity Based Costing program, community safety, mainstreet and urban design improvements, energy programs, strengthening of financial impact statements on major transport and urban projects and proposals for asset conversion (sale of old assets to fund new ones) and for purchase of land, re zoning and redevelopment to increase asset returns and urban outcomes (included plans to introduce Brisbane City's Chill Out programs and Gold Coast Arts Centre-based reforms). The budget methodology won a Gold Medal for the Council at the Institute of Municipal Management Awards on 1 August 1999 and energy programs have been widely praised
- development of integrated infrastructure planning cycle for the Lower Hunter, with acceptance by State and regional stakeholders as a model for the State

The Deputy Lord Mayor's unsolicited reference included - "(he) had an enormous effect on Council and the Hunter Region. His knowledge of local government was unprecedented, his financial reforms and divisional restructure were acknowledged by his peers as exceptional". Returned to Sydney partly due to serious illness of daughter.

#### Management Contractor and Charity Executive (Sept 1992 to Jan 1997)

- Consultant to General Manager, WorkCover Authority of NSW
- Executive Business Analyst, Council on the Cost of Government
- Strategy consultant to NRMA Clean Air 2000 Campaign: research and writing of *Towards a Transport Vision for Sydney*; energy and environmental policies for government/premier
- A/Executive Director, Transport Planning & Projects, NSW Department of Transport: review of transport planning methodologies and corridors, initiation of busways program, adaptation of Brisbane's TravelSmart initiatives
- Consulting assignments for TAFE (financial modelling for enterprise agreement negotiation) and Department of Health (tenders for 2 linen services), and private clients
- Executive Director of Holyoake Institute of Alcohol & Addiction, and of Emmaus Disabled Persons Services.

#### General Manager, Group Finance & Corporate Services April 1989-92

#### Director Executive Support 1988-89, Commercial Services Group NSW

Founding member of the executive and responsible for the management, reporting, staffing, financial, industrial, industrial democracy, systems, program evaluation and devolution/reform aspects including:

- establishment of integrated head office including reduction of staff without time lost or other interruptions
- renegotiated superannuation accounting across State Enterprises
- survey of HR best practice in Lend Lease, ICI, AMP, IBM etc and preparation of strategy documents, negotiation of relevant culture change initiatives and involvement of Cooper & Lybrand for Performance Management facilitation.
- Exceptionally fast commercialisation and privatising, contracting out and the like under Government direction - best-practice planning, highly focussed and timely monthly and annual reporting against financial and operational criteria, team-building, customer service reform, co-ordination of financial reform and introduction of accrual accounting with recognition such as the words used by the Treasury in a letter in May 1991:

*The Department is to be congratulated for the financial accounting and management reforms it has implemented in introducing commercial accounting systems and procedures throughout the Department. Whilst further enhancements can be, and are being, made, the Department's financial reforms success is a source of encouragement and guidance to other government organisations. The participation of Mr. Robert Gibbons and Mr. John Hall, in public seminars on the implementation of accrual accounting is tacit recognition of the Department's achievements.*

Manager, Policy Analysis and Research, State Development/Department of Industrial Development and Decentralisation

- redrafted State Economic Development Strategy, established Forest Products Working Party, set up regional tripartite bodies in Western Sydney and Illawarra, liaison with Dr Victor Chang and Dr John Shine

Senior Policy Advisor, Minister for Energy, Industry, Small Business, Minerals and Technology (seconded from Transport)

- reviewed and led reform of electricity and gas legislation, set up Electricity Generation Inquiry, led other reforms including creation of NSW Investment Corporation and energy efficiency labelling (adopted nationally).

Manager Planning Co-ordination and other positions, Ministry of Transport

- responsible for Commonwealth/State liaison, short- and long-term policy advice, Secretary of Transport Strategy Advisory Committee (State-wide), Container Railing Working Party, Coal Transport Planning Committee, and other bodies; introduction of random breath testing, set up Snowfields Access Working Party, co-ordinated an international conference and wrote several major reports (including Trolley Bus Task Force).

Management Analyst/Trainee, Sydney Water Board

- comprehensive training in HR, IR, development assessments, real estate and program evaluation. Appointed to one of only three annual openly-advertised cadetships
- Prepared policy templates in Real Estate and in Development Services
- Called up by President Ted Walder to be told I was the best cadet in his experience and asked to stay. Left when seconded to Ministry of Transport.

#### PUBLICATIONS:

“Finance and Planning: the Sydney Water Board and the 1959 Green Belt Releases”, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, June 1976; *Sydney Strategic Study: Institutional Decision-Making* (Painter, Gibbons & Brezzo, Commonwealth Bureau of Roads, 1975); “The Road Freight Industry” (Study No. 20 in the NSW Economy Study Group), 1977; “Improving Sydney 1908-09”, in J. Roe (ed.), *Twentieth Century Sydney* (Hale & Iremonger 1980); “The fall of the giant: trams versus trains and buses in Sydney, 1900 to 1961”, in G. Wotherspoon (ed.), *Sydney’s Transport* (Hale & Iremonger, 1983); and the Trolley Bus Task Force, Report (1981).

Also *Towards a Transport Vision for Sydney* (NRMA Clean Air 2000 1995) – creation of a transit-friendly society, *Economies and Efficiencies in Urban Transport* (Council on the Cost of Government 1996) (economic logic for same), and *Plan Making* (AIUS submission to DUAP July 1999) – the complete urban planning cycle to sustainability. Total Environment Centre, *Sydney – the Sustainability Challenge* (2003), sponsored by PlanningNSW, Sydney Water, Landcom, Land and Water Conservation and Delfin Lend Lease.

Two histories nearing completion – “*Thank God for the Plague*” (Sydney’s great reform council 1900-10), and “*Sydney’s Shambles*” (State reforms in Sydney from 1830 onwards – official NSW Sesquicentenary history of the Greater Sydney Movement).

*Sydney Ports – thinking logical logistics* (Globestar Shipping 2003) then Logical Logistics II – Eastern Seaboard rail freight development plan.

Two opinion pieces in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on urban reform. Organised WSROC’s conference on *The Real Issues and Need for Reform* (10<sup>th</sup> April 2001) including presentation on *Time to Act!* (local government funding and planning crises). Opinion pieces in SMH, Daily Telegraph, ResPublica (UK), OnLineOpinion, ABC (Stateline, Sydney and Central West) and commercial station 2GB on urban and state planning issues.