



**Phil
Richardson**

“I’ve had the opportunity to work on some significant and controversial reforms during my career including National Health Reform. We had to get health into better financial shape and one way to do that was via the devolution of hospital and health services to local boards.

I’m now working on electricity pricing and regulation. Prices have risen by 125 per cent since 2007. Deregulation would bring Queensland into line with other larger states.

“Policy has been and continues to be a very rewarding career choice. When you enjoy work, it’s rarely a chore.”

What has been consistent throughout my career, what I have been most passionate about, is the need for rigorous, evidence-based public policy. If we marry that with a compelling narrative, one that makes clear what the policy will achieve and how it will impact on real people, this gives us the best platform for policy.

We are focused on what is best for the community as a whole, so that the Queensland Government will achieve good outcomes.

I started out working in child protection. My first full-time job was as an education facilitator with Lifeline Community Care, working with children in out-of-home care. My first public sector job was as a Policy Officer in the Department of Child Safety developing foster carer procedures and training.

In 2008 I spent a very rewarding year working with the United Nations in the Pacific focusing

on democratic governance. As well as really enjoying the work and the setting, my experience in the Pacific helped sow some seeds for my future career direction.

On the ground in these developing countries I saw that building blocks like good governance and economic growth were crucial for societies to thrive. This prompted me to move from social policy into economic policy and working in central agencies.

Since then I have studied economics and finance and worked at Treasury and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, before being seconded to Energy.

The policy officers I know are well-rounded generalists. Effective written and verbal communication skills are essential. An ability to engage with stakeholders, negotiate and take on board other people’s views is also important. A balance of life experience and working across different policy areas can help with this.

A grounding in economics and finance is also something I’d recommend for anyone thinking about a career in policy. Certainly it’s something I wish I had done in my undergrad studies. It helps develop the strong logic, rigour and quantitative skills that are so important for policy.

Policy has been, and continues to be, a very rewarding career choice. When you enjoy work, it’s rarely a chore. Most mornings I feel energised by the challenge ahead—you want to turn up every day.

A/General Manager – Energy Consumer and Pricing, Department of Energy and Water Supply

Tertiary education: Master of International Economics and Finance (currently underway),
Master of Governance and Public Policy,
Bachelor of Arts (History, English)



**Queensland
Government**