Beyond Program Logic

Using Program Theory to (re)focus on people and practices

What happened when
Hunter Local Land Services tried it?

Col Freeman and Joe Thompson
APEN Conference, Darwin September 2019

Outline

1. Program Theory
    - Both sides of Bennett's Hierarchy
    - Programs as hypotheses
    - People-centred

2. Extension approach
    - Segmentation
    - Crossing the chasm

3. Incremental application in teams and systems
    - Lessons and Challenges

Hunter Local Land Services

NSW

HUNTER

NSW = 11 Local Land Services

Local Land Services Act 2013

Integrated services since 2014:

Publicly-funded

– biosecurity

– natural resources management

– agricultural advisory services

Single organisation combines:

– Catchment Management Authorities

– Livestock Health and Pest Authorities

– some advisory services of the DPI

The focus for Hunter LLS

Activities and outputs **to** outcomes

Project deliverer **to** change agency

Grant funding **to** extension

We are in the behaviour change business!

1. Why use Program Theory?

People-centred   (Outcomes = practice change)

A systematic approach to program design and implementation.

Explains **why** and **how** a program is supposed to work.

Why use Program Theory ?
(when we do OK without it)

Board: Want to see a logical link between strategy and activities

Hunter LLS: Being systematic

- clearly show links between our

Service Delivery Plans, KPIs and MERI

Teams: Doing our activities well:

- Better results for landholders
- More and better HLLS Outcomes

Program Theory helps with the big questions

| Desired Outcomes (Qualitative) ✓ | → | Program design and implementation Quantitative ✓ | → | MERI Plan ✓ |

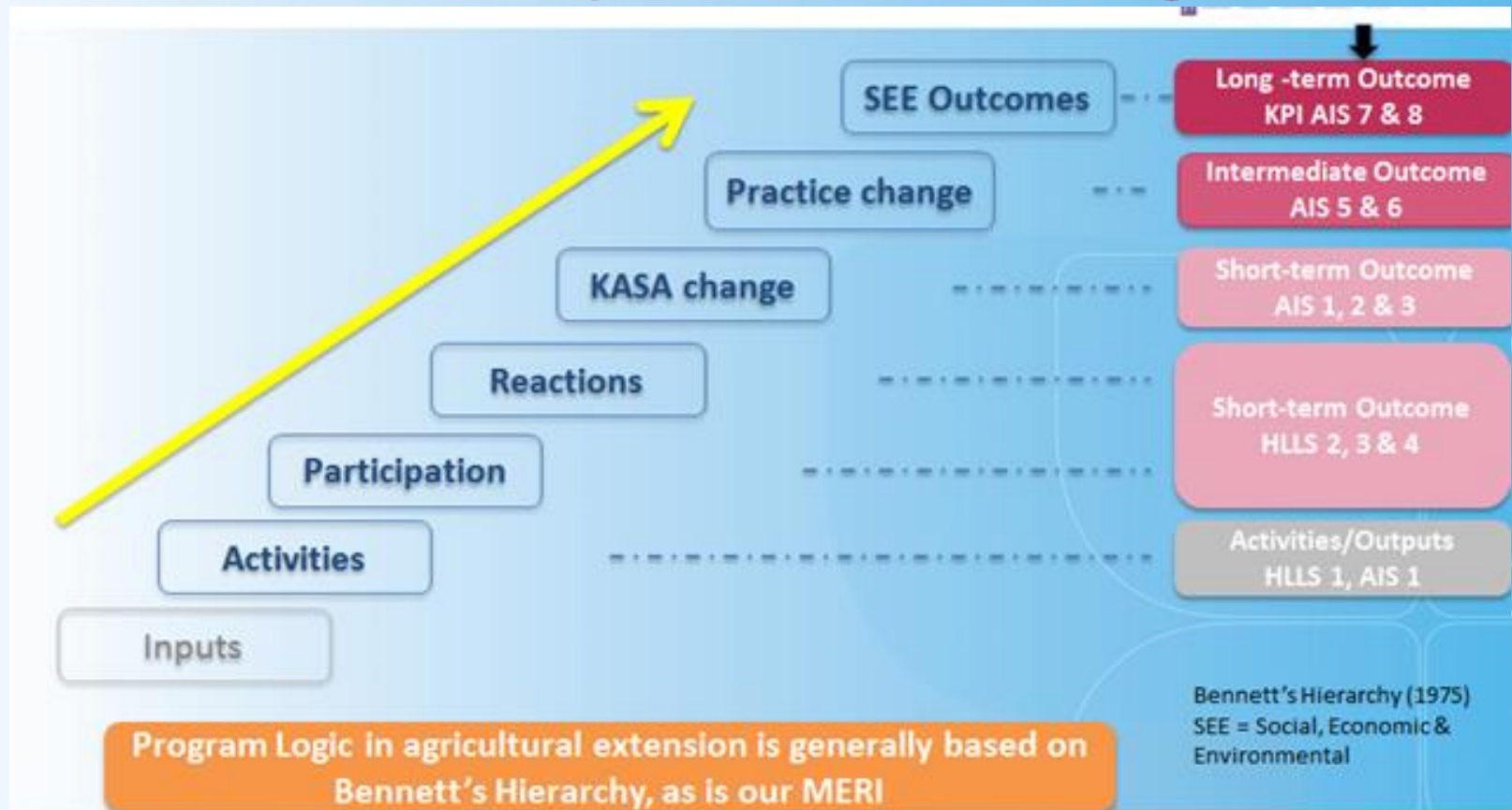## How do we make program decisions?

- Which programs?
- Which customer segments?
- Why?
- For what expected results?

Beyond a pipeline 'Program Logic'

Program Theory

vs

Implementation Logic

Two sides of Bennett's Hierarchy

We have Implementation Logic

But we don't have a rationale for our programs and activities

- We did not show **why** we believe activities will lead to desired results

- We did not identify **mechanisms** to show **how** our activities will:
  - Attract people (or which people)
  - Trigger changes in behaviour

What is a mechanism?

Mechanisms are the responses that people have to stimuli

In general:
  – Desire for good things
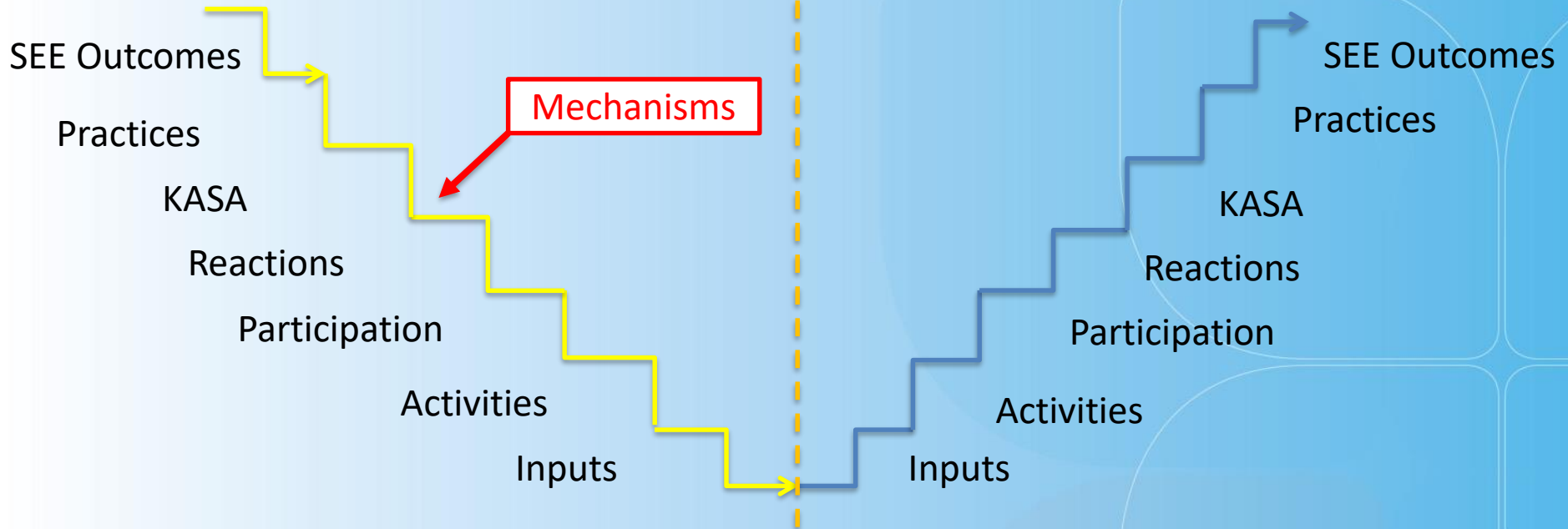 – Avoidance of bad things

A Program Theory for Program *Development*

Backwards mapping

Program Development	Program Performance
(3 year SDP)	(Implementation & MERI)

Start – Outcomes from Strategy

SEE Outcomes

Practices

Mechanisms

KASA

Reactions

Participation

Activities

Inputs

Inputs

Activities

Participation

Reactions

KASA

Practices

SEE Outcomes

From Bennett & Rockwell 1995

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Common models   vs   Ours   (people centred)

Activity	Outputs	Outcome

+ time

Activity	Outputs	Outcomes		
		Short term	Medium term	Long term

+ people

Activity	Participants		Outputs	Outcomes		
	Who	How many		KASA	Behaviour	Condition

The Program Theory process. (from Bennett's Hierarchy)

|	
Desired Condition	Local Strategic Plan and Industry Strategies
Practices that need to change	Industry Strategies
KASA that needs to change	Root Cause Analysis
Reactions (Activated by Mechanisms)	Attractors and Barriers to Adoption. Messages.
Participation	Client and Producer Segmentation – value proposition.
Activities	Program Planning

Key Steps in Program Development process

SEE Conditions

Start with Desired Outcomes

Work backwards to activities

Identify current sub-optimal conditions

Root Cause analysis

Five whys analysis / FIGURE 1
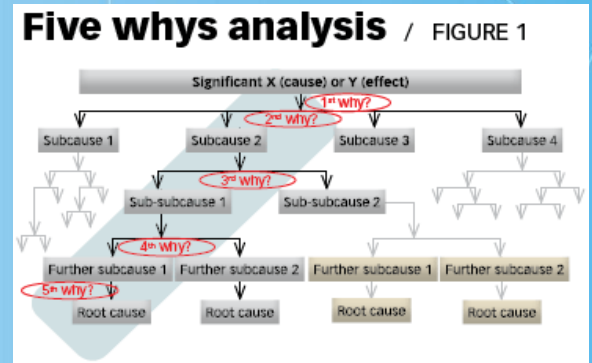
Practices

KASA

What practices need to change?

What KASA is needed for practice change?

Programs as Experiments (tests of hypotheses)

- The world is a complex place, and provides the **situation** for your program

- **A Program** is an **intervention** into the world which aims to trigger **changes** in program participants that lead to desired **outcomes**

- **A Program** is also an **experiment**. As a program designer, you have a **hypothesis**:

If we do 'this', then 'something' will happen.

Cont …

- Programs 'work' by triggering a **mechanism** within participants that leads them to **change.**

- Your **Program Theory** (theory of change) outlines:
  - **why** you think the intervention will trigger those mechanisms and **contribute** to **change**
  - **how** these **contributions** will lead to the desired **outcomes**.

- **"Program Logic"** (Logframe) is a model of what you expect will happen on **Implementation**.
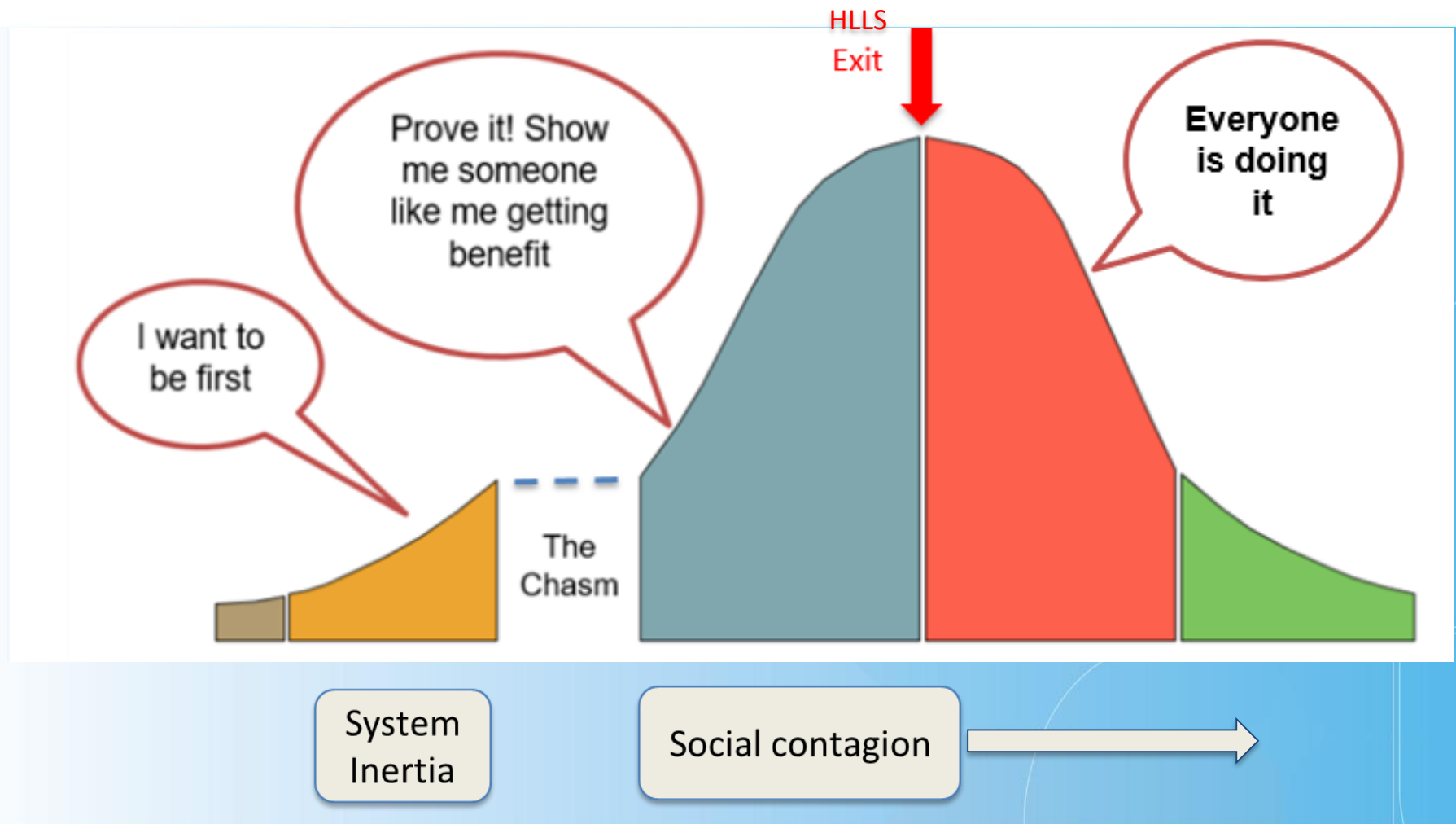
Hunter LLS Program Theory model
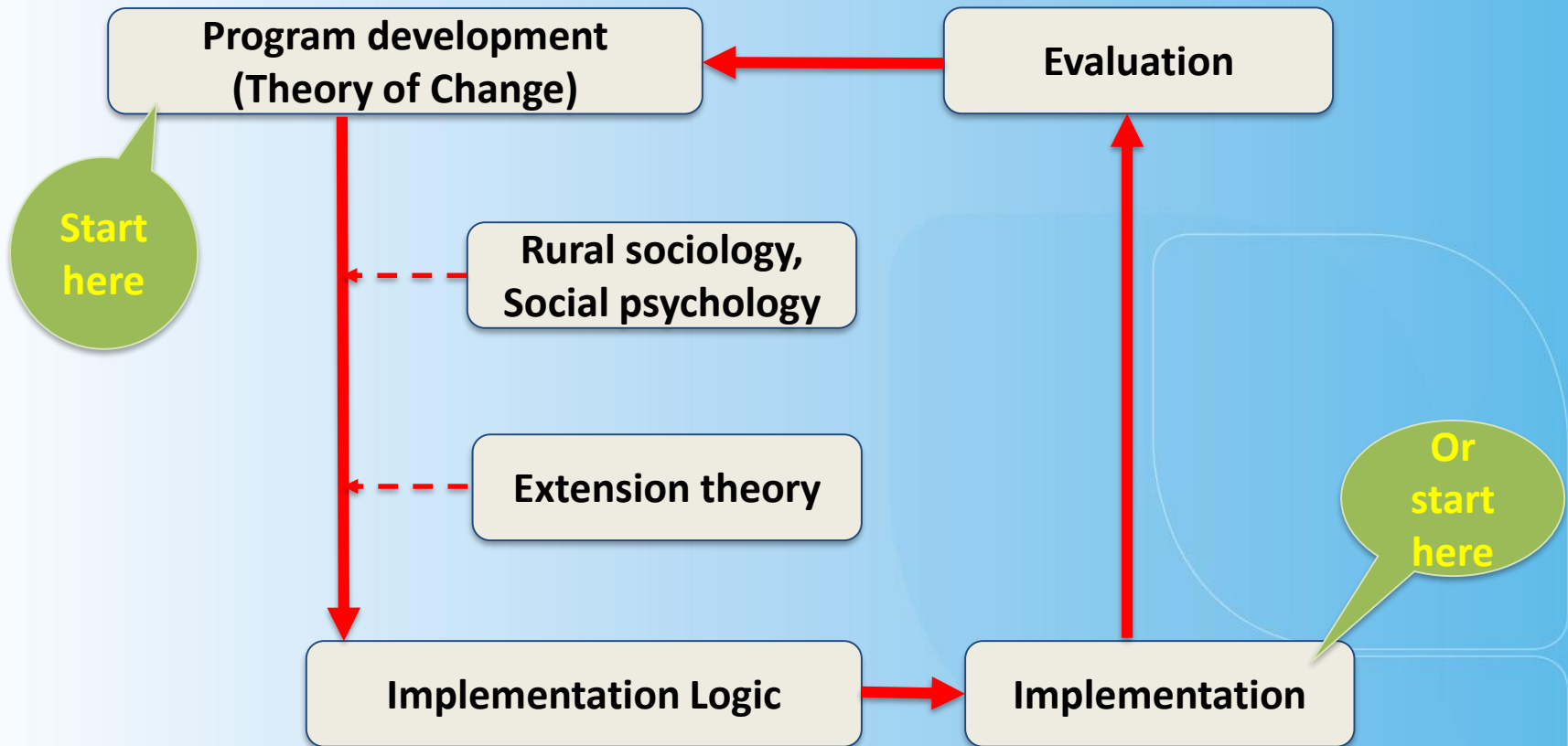
Our Ag Team has used Program Theory to:

- identify causal mechanisms to explain landholder behaviour

- embed approaches from rural sociology and adoption theory in the design of programs

- generate predictions of practice change outcomes

2. Hunter LLS Extension Model

2. Segmentation

Client Segmentation

Professional, Commercial, Semi-commercial, Lifestyle

Producer Typology

5 x MLA types from national survey (each 20%)

Look for Mechanisms

Behavioural segmentation   (Operational)

Types	Interests and drivers	Value proposition	Interest in participation or adoption
1 20%	No need for change unless it makes things easier and involves little risk or investment. Only basic information needed. Winding down.	**Managed retirement**	Low
2 20%	Risk averse, content, self reliant, less open to change. A low stress, peaceful life. Holding steady. Optimise returns from existing systems.	**Simple maintenance**	Low (slow to adopt)
3 20%	Financially constrained and concerned about debt. Optimise returns from existing systems. Tradition, succession and long term viability.	**Long term control**	Will adopt if confident of returns
4 20%	Open to change if it does not require heavy borrowing. Incremental change. Active learner and group member.	**Continuous improvement**	Will adopt to improve
5 20%	Prepared to take calculated risks to deliver significant benefits. Will to borrow and invest. Seeks information to underpin business decisions.	**Return on investment**	Will adopt to improve

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Typology: MLA typology for Ag Team

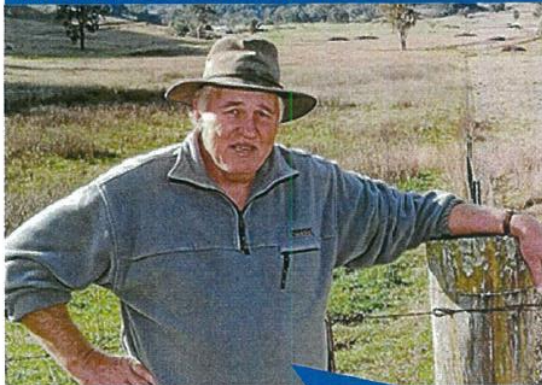**Winding Down**
21% total producers
22% beef herd, 7% sheepmeat flock, 6% goatmeat flock

I'm basically retired and I'm not looking to make changes at this stage in my life. There's no one to pass the farm on to so why bother putting in all that effort. I like to keep in touch with what's going on but I'm not interested in all the detail.
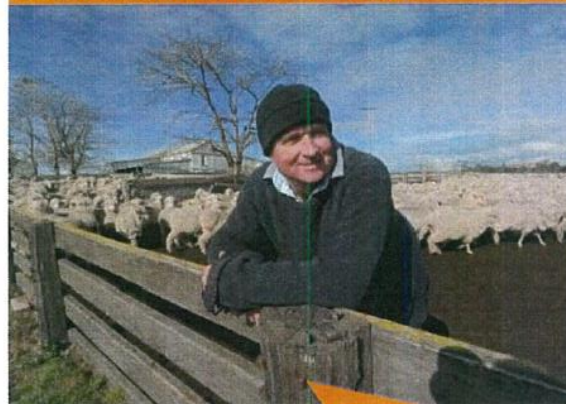
Holding Steady
19% total producers
7% beef herd, 27% sheepmeat flock, 26% goatmeat flock

The farm's working pretty well and I don't see the need to change things – it's often a lot of effort for not much benefit. I know what I need to. There's so much information around these days you could spend half your life reading it all.

Driving Growth
22% total producers
46% beef herd, 40% sheepmeat flock, 30% goatmeat flock

I want to be a leading producer... I want to grow and to do that I need to invest in improvements to ensure I have a competitive edge....I'm always on the look out for new ideas and thinking about the future ... I'm building my farm for the long term
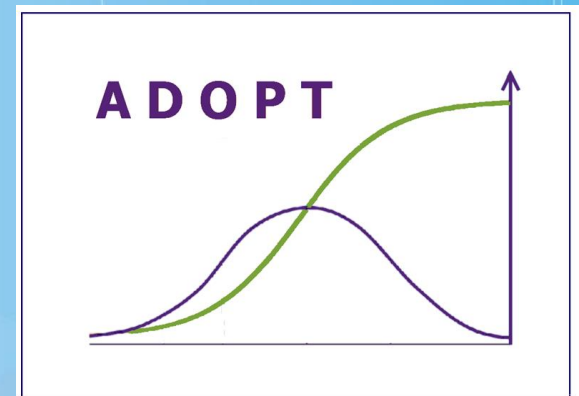
Reality checking

Number crunching:

- Number in each customer segment
- Expected participation from each segment
  - **40** : **40** : **20** rule of thumb for producer types

ADOPT (CSIRO)

- Expected level of adoption
- Time to peak adoption

Example ADOPT: 66% peak adoption in 13 years

Population = 308 "Professional" and "Commercial" producers
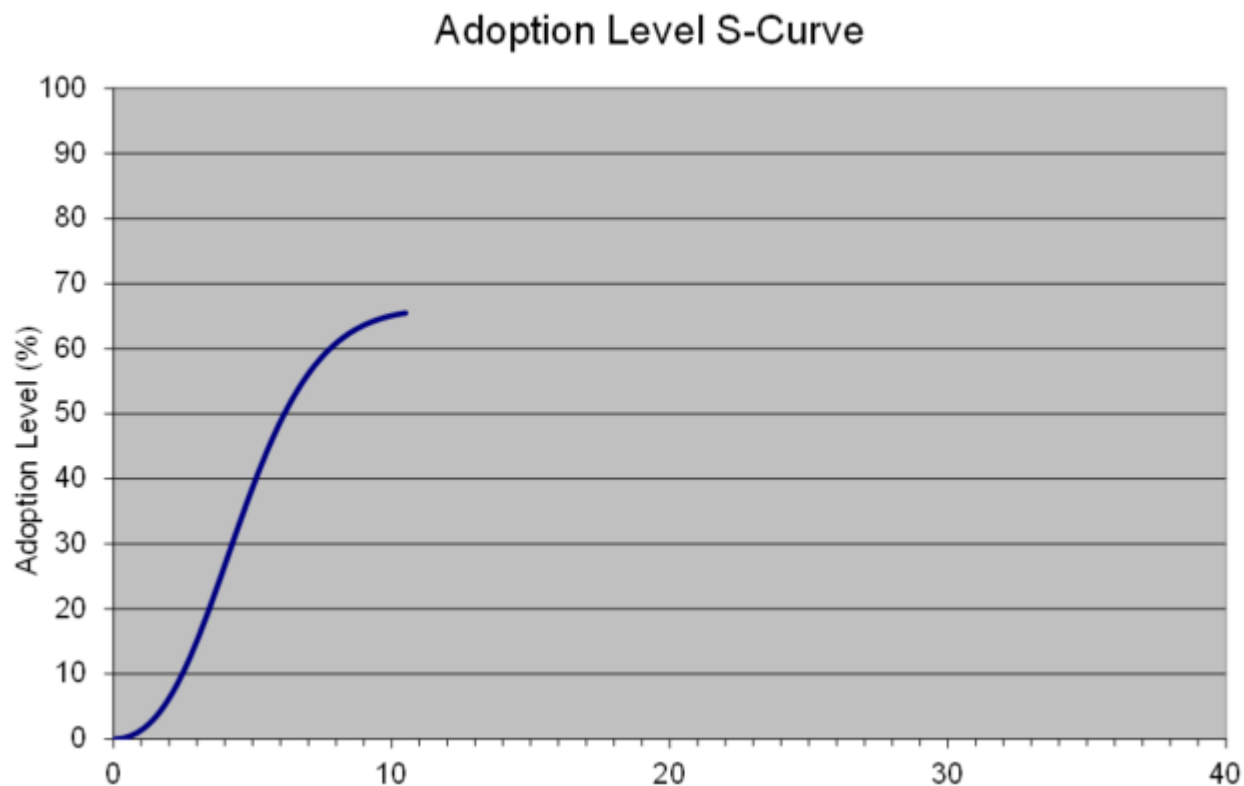
Describing/assessing an enterprise using pasture production benchmarks

3. Incremental application

What happened when ….

Board were pleased

Strategy ⟷ Activities ⟷ KPIs

Organisation

- Clearer links between Planning and Reporting systems

- But requires changes to retrofit

Ag Team What happened when …

- Retrofitting to a couple of major programs
- Designing a friendly template
- Will use for future programs
- Tweak it as we go   80 : 20

"We do this in our heads all the time!
Why do we need to write it down?"

Responding to grant body requirements:
- – their outputs and outcomes
- – their 'Program Logic'

The 'Environmental Science Trap':
- – Just purchase environmental outcomes

"The ADOPT tool is not relevant to what we do"

But have begun to:
- – Social survey in targeted locations

Example ADOPT: 4.8% adoption after 10 years
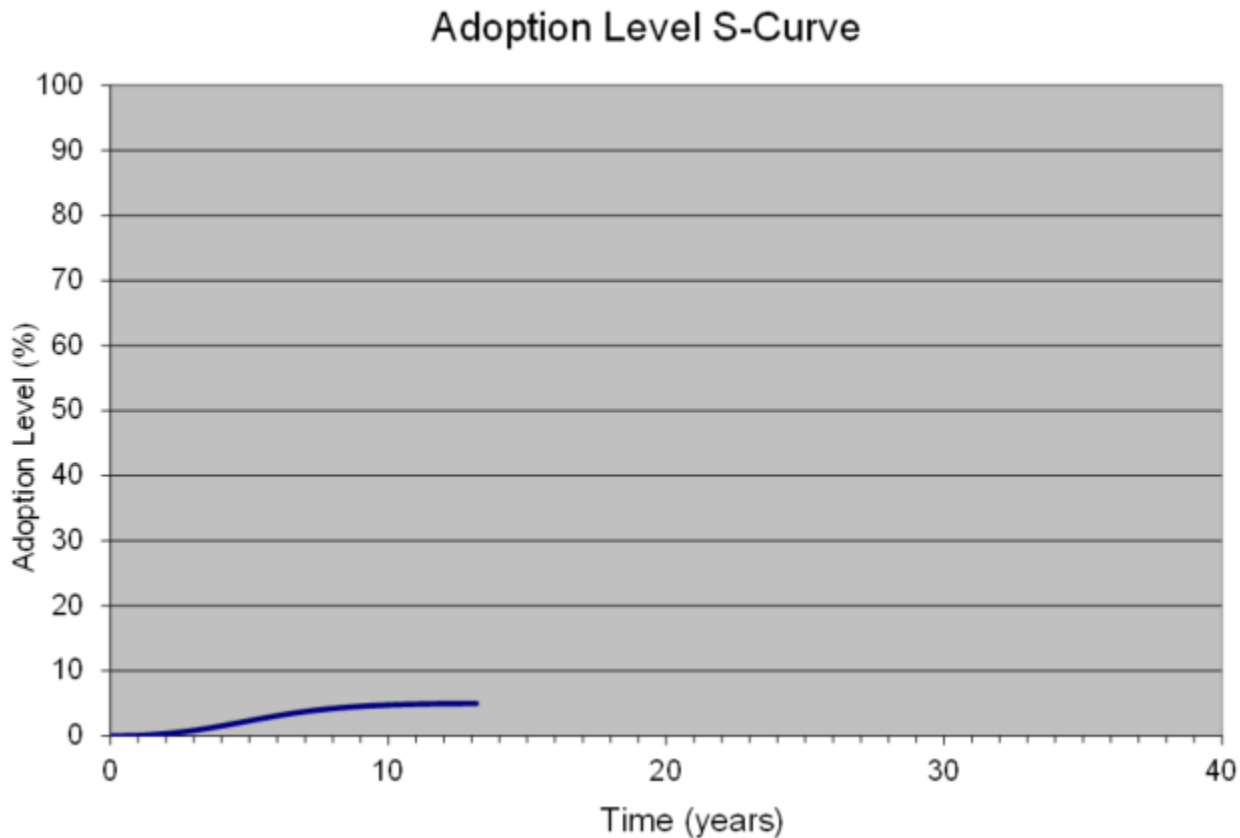
Fencing bushland for habitat values

Community Engagement Team

New team: Peri-urban, NRM and Biosecurity

- Situation analysis, Segmentation:
  - what are people's motivations (mechanisms)?
  - targets, messages
- Developing their Theory of Change *(changeology*)*
- Purpose: From grant takers to grant seekers

Jamberoo typology: New Rural Landowners

(Gill et al, 2010)

Lifestyle Agrarian	Akin to traditional rural or farming senses of stewardship. Production and conservation entirely compatible part of farm management.
Regenerative	Interest in improving land management as a whole with improved ecological management and restoration as important goals.
Conservationist	Primary focus is on ecological restoration and/or provision of habitat. An opportunity to remedy past mistakes in land management.

Bus systems team

1 x champion dipping a toe into a pressing topic

Business Improvement officer:
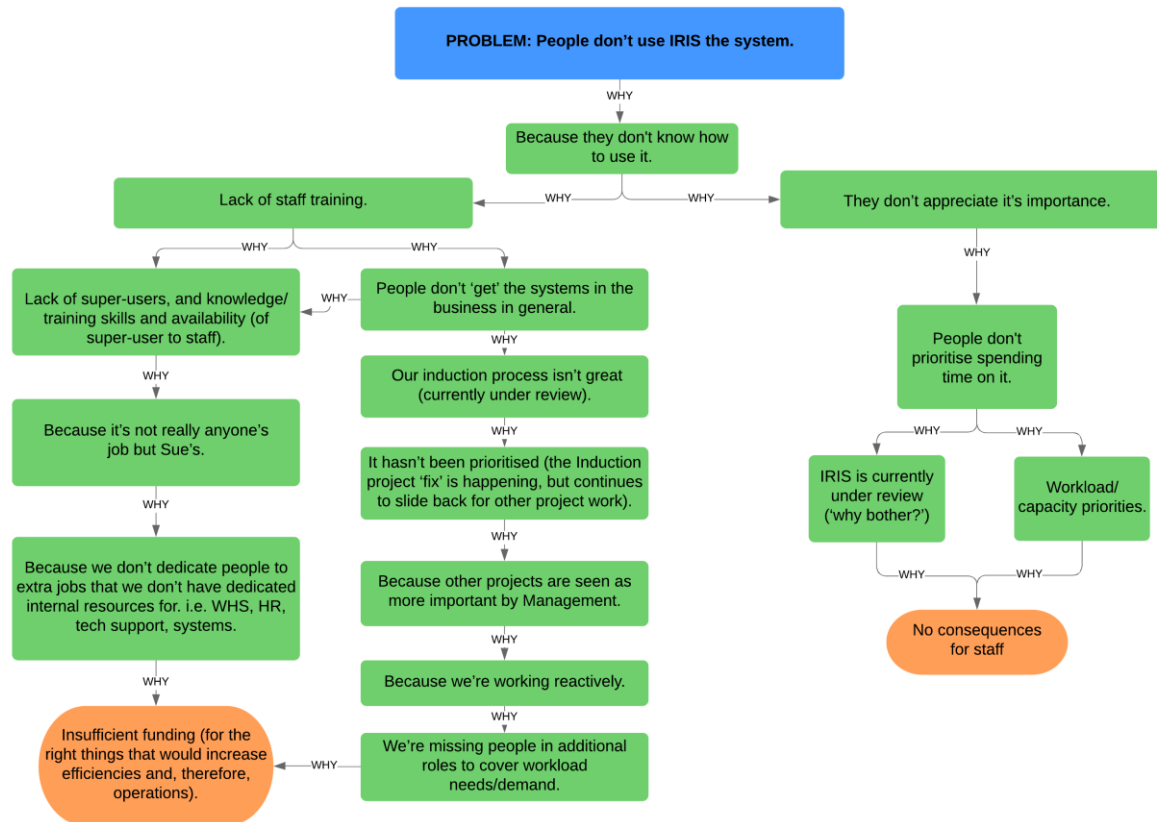
"Business systems also involve people … who knew!"

2 x attending *changeology** (Incl Team Leader)

*Les Robinson, Enabling Change

Business Systems team


Business Systems Program Theory
Root Cause Exercise
tiff.doman | September 4, 2019

PROBLEM: People don't use IRIS the system.

WHY

Because they don't know how to use it.

WHY → Lack of staff training. ← WHY

WHY → They don't appreciate it's importance.

WHY → Lack of super-users, and knowledge/ training skills and availability (of super-user to staff).

WHY → People don't 'get' the systems in the business in general.

WHY → People don't prioritise spending time on it.

WHY → Because it's not really anyone's job but Sue's.

WHY → Our induction process isn't great (currently under review).

WHY → IRIS is currently under review ('why bother?')

WHY → Workload/ capacity priorities.

WHY → Because we don't dedicate people to extra jobs that we don't have dedicated internal resources for. i.e. WHS, HR, tech support, systems.

WHY → It hasn't been prioritised (the Induction project 'fix' is happening, but continues to slide back for other project work).

WHY → No consequences for staff

WHY → Because other projects are seen as more important by Management.

WHY → Insufficient funding (for the right things that would increase efficiencies and, therefore, operations).

WHY → Because we're working reactively.

WHY → We're missing people in additional roles to cover workload needs/demand.

Lessons and Challenges

- Program Theory is a tool to capture staff insights
- Outcome focus & programs as hypotheses 'click'

- Staff are busy, so it needs to make their work better
- Staff are bio-physical professionals, not extension
- Business systems are slow to change/adapt

- Management support is vital
- Can't do it in a day … get started and tweak it

Program Theory: making it work for us

Sweet spot
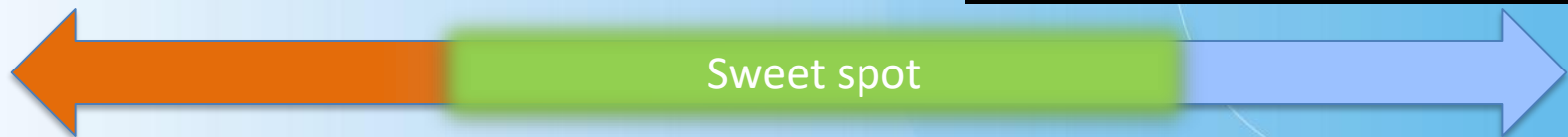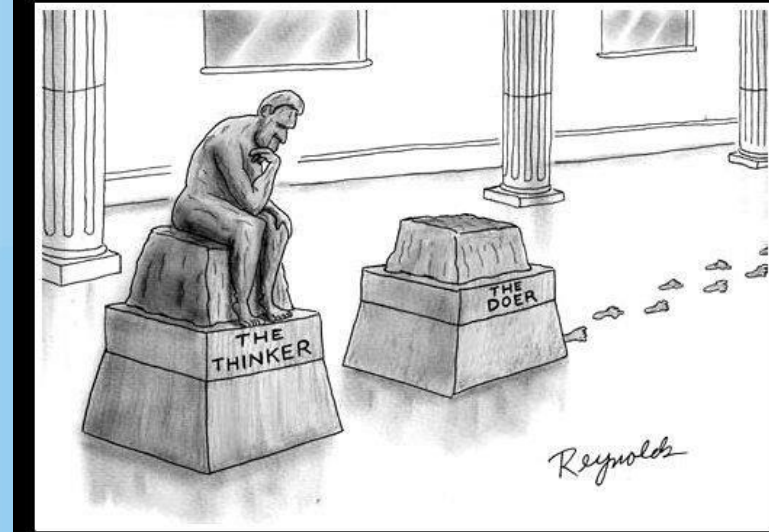
"There is no template to follow when tackling a wicked problem.
Teams that approach wicked problems must make things up as they go along"

Horst Rittel

Thank you ☺

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