Public diplomacy in an Australian context:
A policy-based framework to enhance understanding and practice

Presented by
Caitlin Byrne LLB, Bond

Department of International Relations and Diplomacy
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2009
To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis entitled: *Public diplomacy in an Australian context: A policy-based framework to enhance understanding and practice*, represents my own work and contains no material which has been previously submitted for a degree or diploma at this University or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement is made.

Signature:       Date:
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the unfailing support and advice of my supervisor, Dr Anne Cullen. Anne guided my exploration of the world of public diplomacy, was a source of wisdom and advice, and kept me on track and on task – even from afar, and for the entire journey. Thanks must also go to Dr Stuart Murray and to Bond University’s School of Humanities Research Committee for supporting me in pursuing this thesis.

I am also grateful to those who took the time to discuss ideas and provide advice to me through this process. In particular, I acknowledge Senator Russell Trood, Robyn Archer, and Chris Lamb for their valuable insights very early on in the process. I also acknowledge those officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and AusAID both in Australia and serving as diplomats overseas for accommodating the discussion of public diplomacy and providing their thoughts and advice despite their own hectic schedules.

Thanks must also go to those who have had to live and work with me while I was completing this task, including my friends and colleagues of the Queensland Government Department of Communities. The dedication and commitment they show on a daily basis to their field of practice has been inspiring.

Finally, I owe my deepest gratitude to my husband, Tom and to our children Riley, Emilie, Joseph and Patrick. I could not have tackled this task without the generous space you gave me to do it. Thank you for your un-ending reserves of patience and tolerance, for your tireless encouragement, and for your unwavering confidence in me.
SUMMARY

The Australian Government’s Joint Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade observed in 2007 that, when it comes to Australia’s program of public diplomacy, ‘perhaps the whole is not as great as the sum of its parts’. Such a compelling observation is the central hypothesis for this thesis. It comes at a time of increasing international discussion around the emerging role of modern public diplomacy as an important tool for nations in advancing foreign policy priorities, a discussion from which Australian foreign policy practitioners and academics have been noticeably absent.

Public diplomacy recently defined for the Australian context as, ‘work or activities undertaken to understand, engage and inform individuals and organisations in other countries in order to shape their perceptions in ways that will promote Australia’s foreign policy goals’ is a contested and evolving concept. Closer examination of Australia’s output-focussed public diplomacy program, coordinated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) reveals that public diplomacy is generally not well understood or supported within Australia’s political, bureaucratic and academic circles; is lacking in strategic leadership and coordination, and is consistently under-resourced. When considered together, these issues point to an underlying systemic failure in Australia’s public diplomacy program, that is, a fundamental lack of connection between public diplomacy and strategic foreign policy priorities. Without such strategic alignment, public diplomacy floats around the fringe of foreign policy, appearing only at a superficial level in rhetoric and symbolic gestures, one-off or randomly planned events and activities, and crisis media management. This significant

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1 Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Committee Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 15 March 2007, p.9.
2 The Senate Committee definition of public diplomacy was presented to the Australian Senate on 16 August 2007 upon the conclusion of the Inquiry and delivery of the Committee’s Final report. Australian Senate, Hansard, 16 August 2007, p.42.
gap raises concerns about Australia’s ability to leverage international image, reputation and soft power to deliver on current foreign policy priorities and future challenges.

The overall lag in Australia’s take up and understanding of public diplomacy is the central issue of concern for this thesis. Taking the 2007 Senate Inquiry into Australia’s public diplomacy program as the launching point, the responsibility of this thesis in broad terms is twofold:

i) to extend the contemporary body of Australian knowledge in the field of public diplomacy, with the aim of bridging a gap between theory and practice; and

ii) to suggest a policy-based framework that might facilitate coherent and consistent consideration of public diplomacy as a strategic instrument of Australian foreign policy.

The thesis explores the current role and structure of public diplomacy in Australia’s foreign policy, to better understand why the Senate Inquiry concluded that the whole of Australia’s program of current diplomacy is less than the sum of its parts. In doing so, the thesis moves beyond existing literature to establish a policy-based framework to support better understanding and utilisation of public diplomacy in a way that might contribute to the achievement of strategic foreign policy objectives.
**ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Australian Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>AICC</td>
<td>Australian International Cultural Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIS</td>
<td>Australian Information Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation</td>
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<td>AIPRD</td>
<td>Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Reconstruction and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Australian Labor Party</td>
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<td>ANAO</td>
<td>Australian National Audit Office</td>
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<td>ASIO</td>
<td>Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASIS</td>
<td>Australian Secret Intelligence Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AYAD</td>
<td>Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFAT</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
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<td>FARC</td>
<td>Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCI</td>
<td>Foundations, Councils and Institutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCO</td>
<td>British Foreign and Commonwealth Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA</td>
<td>Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>Group of Seven (7) traditionally refers to the meeting of the finance ministers from a group of seven industrialized nations: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G20</td>
<td>Group of Twenty (20) traditionally refers to the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors is the group of finance ministers and central bank governors from the following economies: South Africa, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, United States, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, United Kingdom, and European Union. More recently, the G20 has provided a mechanism for heads of states of these economies to meet to discuss issues of global significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAO</td>
<td>United States Government Accountability Office</td>
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<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent</td>
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<td>IGO</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTERFET</td>
<td>International Force in East Timor</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Government Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTER</td>
<td>Northern Territory National Emergency Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONA</td>
<td>Office of National Assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACER</td>
<td>Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM&amp;C</td>
<td>Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAMSI</td>
<td>Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate Committee</td>
<td>Senate Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCCR</td>
<td>Vienna Convention on Consular Relations 1963</td>
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<tr>
<td>VCDR</td>
<td>Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation</td>
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