



## Key Dilemmas Facing PSB Managers, Strategists and Policymakers

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### Summary

PSB managers, strategists and policymakers are facing a tougher environment than for many years. The market context within which PSB's operate is changing rapidly, in terms of competition, technology and consumer behaviour. I will give a few examples from our recent Reuters Institute Digital News Survey of some of the challenges these changes create in the area of access to news.

While PSB's must change to remain relevant they are often among the organisations for which change is hardest. Low levels of staff turnover may create a bias towards the status quo within the organisation. And from outside, the multiple groups who feel they have a stake in the PSB, may also see change as at best upsetting the balance of their interests in the PSB or worse bringing the PSB into direct conflict with their business activities. The result is that while PSBs need to adapt to changed circumstances, a range of forces, including demands for reinforced regulation, can often make that process of adaptation difficult.

Against this challenging context, expectations of PSBs are increasing and there is a greater need for clarity over some of the dilemmas that have faced PSB policymakers, strategists and managers for many years. In this talk I will discuss three of these dilemmas and propose some ways through each of them.

- a) Governance and Accountability: Effective PSB governance needs to combine protecting independence with ensuring that it is held to account by parliament and other stakeholders.
- b) Efficiency and Effectiveness: All PSB managers must ensure that their organisations can justify the expenditure of public money, but there is a multiplicity of different ways of assessing value for money.
- c) PSB Cultures - Targets & Creativity: Most PSBs will live or die because of the creativity they can deploy in their programmes and services. Clear objectives are necessary but PSBs must find sensible ways to audit performance that foster, rather than cramp creativity.

I will conclude with some thoughts on how PSB managers might navigate these dilemmas rather than be paralysed by them.