**[Policy Coordination in Australian State Governments: A Comparative Analysis](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1467-8500.1981.tb00519.x)** - Martin Painter - December 1981

**Abstract:**Resource scarcity and social and economic complexity have prompted a growing focus by governments on coordination. New roles for central agencies in Australian State and Federal governments have emerged. An evaluation of these functions is undertaken, starting from the distinction drawn by Leon Peres between “principle” and “interest” as forces in the machinery of government. It is argued that this distinction has deficiencies for the purpose of determining central agency functions, and that the focus should be on procedural values or “rules of the game” that these agencies promote and defend.

Added to the procedural values of efficiency, economy and propriety there is now a growing focus on the “coordination principle”. That principle, which central agencies should promote, concerns processes of conflict management in the policy process within the context of general purpose rather than sectorally fragmented policy-making. Policy coordination as an objective, associated with central planning and hierarchical control, is rejected in favour of this view of central agency involvement in a multi-organizational governmental setting. The role of cabinet is stressed, with the caveat that cabinet processes do not always entail coordination processes. In conclusion, there is a warning about the growing power of central agencies and concomitant temptations for them to interfere constantly in sectoral or departmental detail, possibly to the detriment of the coordination principle.

**QUESTION**: What does Martin Painter imply when noting “rules of the game” that these agencies promote and defend.

The above text is certainly ABSTRACT, I could read it 20 times and still not comprehend.