

OBPR

Identify the actual problem and not the symptoms  
Video Transcript

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**Mark Booth:** I've been involved in policy development now as a policy professional for many, many, many years. Far too many years than I care to remember, and I've done it in four different countries around the world.

The key problem that I've always found in every one of those countries is problem definition. How do you really define what it is that you're looking at? You have to define what the problem is. Otherwise, if you don't, you can go down a myriad of different rabbit holes trying to come up with answers, which may seem logical at the time, but at the end of the project, you suddenly find you don't actually answered the problem that you're trying to look at in the first place.

Because the more time you can put into the problem definition part, the easier you will find the whole of the exercise.

**Neil Savery:** If you jump to conclusions, if you haven't got your evidence base, you could well find that you formulate a regulatory position that is expensive, it's difficult to actually implement, and at the same time, it's not actually hitting the mark to solve the problem.

So knowing what your problem is in the first instance is critical in formulating your options and your policy outcomes.

**John Skerritt:** One of the advantages of doing a Regulation Impact Statement and reflecting on the policy process is actually getting to the root cause of the issue.

It may be better in terms of economic efficiency and also in terms of social impacts to actually try to look at treating the root cause rather than necessarily addressing a symptom.

It also gives you a more durable policy solution.