



SCHOOL OF
Policy Studies
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Why does TBS make life so complicated?

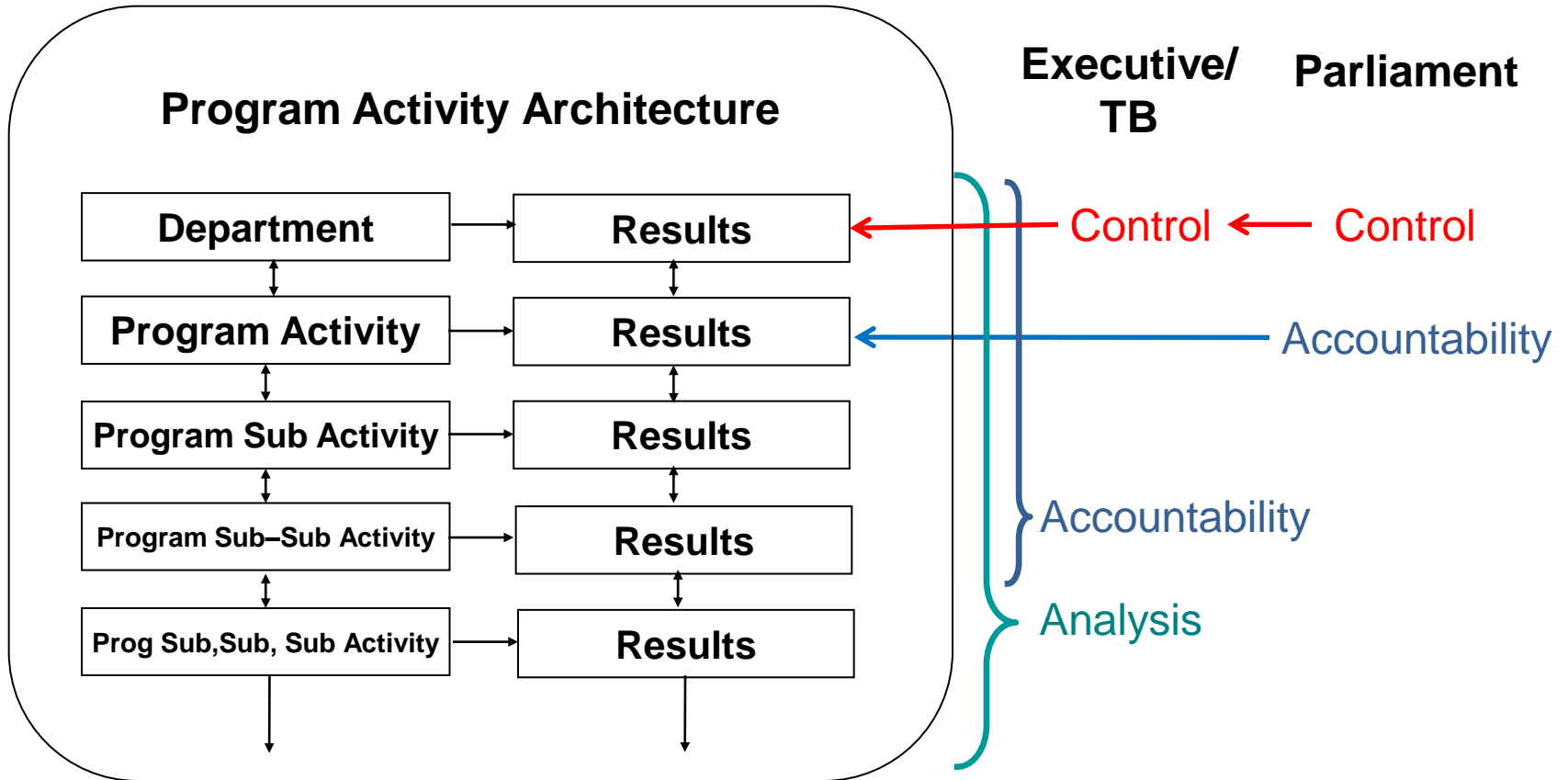
Mike Joyce

FMI PD Week

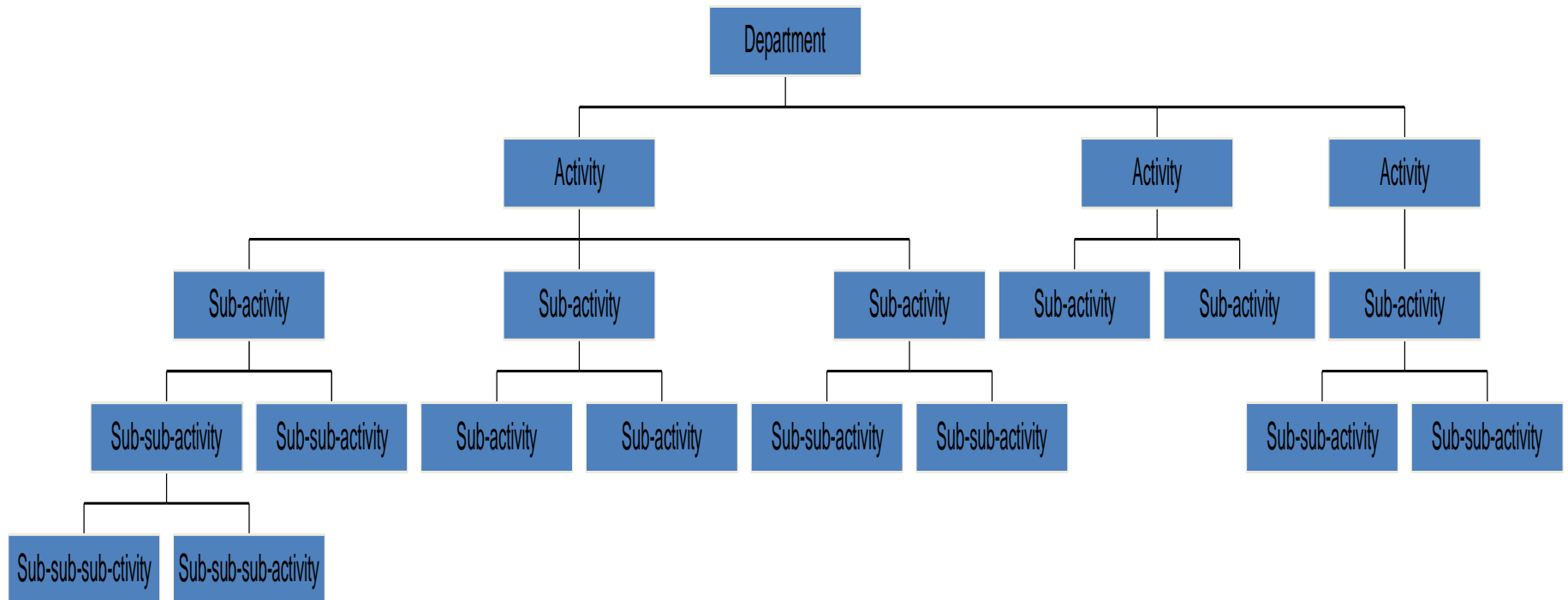
Thursday 26th November 2009

The case of the Program Activity Architecture (PAA)

Basic Concept



Basic Concept



Implementation principles

- Departmental ownership
- TB ***approval*** of PAA limited to the control level
- TB “***acceptance***” of lower PAA levels
- Getting it right takes time – a medium-term objective
- Linked to proposed review cycle

Subsequent complications

- Accelerated focus on data collection
 - A fishing expedition in the absence of a clear strategy for TBS use of data
- Unrealistic requirements placed on EMIS
- Compressed implementation schedule
- Getting it right too soon and “agonizing”
 - over the PAA structure
 - over results statements and outcomes/outputs theory
- Scope expansion

Subsequent complications

- Implementation by committee
- Internal TBS organizational flux
- Equivalency rather than consistency with Estimates
- Political priorities
 - Expenditure review and the Expenditure Review Committee (Martin government)
 - Strategic reviews (Harper government)

Possible causes

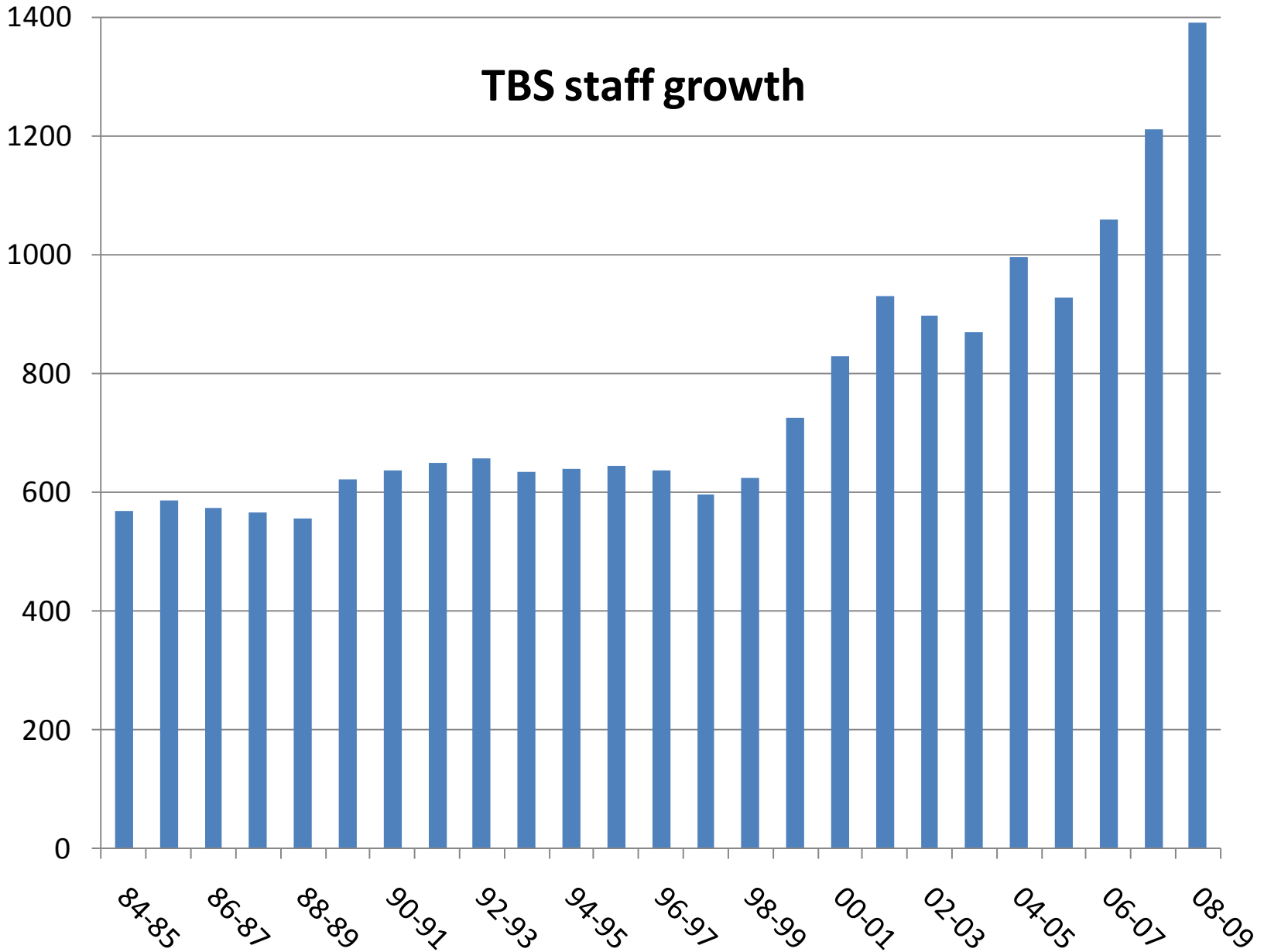
- Not the concepts, the way they are implemented
 - Scope creep and unrealistic expectations
 - Transparency
 - Decks
 - Senior staff turn-over
- TBS growth

Wildavsky

- Complexity appears to be a threshold variable; once the number of factors involved has grown considerably beyond the capacity of the human mind, it does not seem to matter how much more it grows.
- Decision makers at the city level who are overwhelmed by 86 variables do not behave that much differently than those at the state level who cannot manage 860, or those at the national level who find 8600 too much.
- Those who budget deal with their overwhelming burdens They simplify in order to get by.

TBS staff growth

FTEs



Relative growth (indexed)

