



ANZSOG Lecture

# Leadership in Times of Crisis

## Professor Paul 't Hart

Professor of Political Science at the Research School of Social Sciences, ANU and Adjunct Professor, ANZSOG

Friday 2 October 2009

When societies are confronted with major, disruptive emergencies such as terrorist events, abrupt economic breakdowns or civil disasters, the crisis management process sooner or later becomes the subject of political contestation. Quite often, the fate of politicians, public agencies and public policies hangs in the balance.

Both government actors and their opposites will try to escape blame for their occurrence, consolidate/strengthen their political capital, and advance/defend the policies they stand for. Crises thus generate so-called 'framing contests' to publicly interpret the crisis events, their causes, the responsibilities involved, and the lessons to be learned. It is a crucial part of strategic crisis leadership to manage this potential 'crisis after the crisis' as astutely and wisely as the response phase, since it determines how, and how well, governments and societies learn from crises.

The views expressed in this lecture are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the views of ANZSOG.

A Dutch Australian, Paul 't Hart arrived here in late 2005 and is now Professor of Political Science at the Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, and Professor of Public Administration, Utrecht School of Governance, Utrecht University, the Netherlands. He is an adjunct professor of the Australian New Zealand School of Government, where he convenes the Leading Public Sector Change course in the EMPA program and is also Director of the new ANZSOG core program, Towards Strategic Leadership (TSL), which is being run for the first time this year.

He has taught and trained thousands of mid-career and senior officials within the public service, military, police and emergency services in The Netherlands, Sweden, and Australia.

He has had visiting positions in Oxford and Stockholm. Paul's research, teaching and training activities focus on public leadership, political-administrative relations, crisis management, policy evaluation, and public accountability.

A multiple prize-winning author, his recent books include: *The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership Under Pressure* (Cambridge UP 2005), *Observing Government Elites: Up Close and Personal* (Palgrave 2007), *Governing After Crisis* (Cambridge UP 2008), *The New Eurocrats* (Amsterdam UP 2008), *Public Leadership* (ANU E Press 2008, forthcoming), and *Dispersed Leadership in Democracy* (Oxford UP 2009, forthcoming).

