



Water stakeholder and community engagement

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Policy Statement

The NSW Department of Industry (the department) is committed to effective and genuine engagement with stakeholders and the broader community. The department recognises that engaging with stakeholders and the community leads to better public policy outcomes, improved service delivery and enhanced customer satisfaction.

The purpose of this policy is to embed within the Department of Industry - Water (DoI - Water) a transparent and consistent approach for DoI - Water to engage with stakeholders and the community. This policy identifies strategic principles to underpin the DoI - Water's engagement activities, and sets the spectrum of participation developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) as the model by which DoI - Water will operationalise these principles.

Scope

This policy applies to DoI - Water within the department. It applies to all ongoing/term/casual/temporary/seconded employees and private contractors/consultants undertaking engagement activities on behalf of the department.

This policy does not apply to engagement with other government agencies, whether local, state or federal. It does not apply to contact with media representatives, in which case the department's media policy applies.

This policy does not apply to emergency event response situations, for example animal disease, foodborne outbreak, flood or fire, in which cases engagement may be undertaken according to the department's standard emergency management practices.

Requirements

Principles

All stakeholder and community engagement conducted by DoI - Water must comply with the following principles.

a) Purposeful

Engagement activities are to deliver on NSW Government priorities and the department's corporate goals, and be undertaken with a clear understanding of what we want to achieve.

b) Inclusive

DoI - Water will identify and enable the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

c) Timely

DoI - Water will provide sufficient time for meaningful consultation, outline timeframes up front and conduct engagement activities in an efficient manner.

d) Transparent

DoI - Water will explain the engagement process, provide information to enable meaningful participation and set clear expectations around how participants' input will inform outcomes. To ensure transparency consultation plans and schedules of stakeholder engagement activities will be published on relevant department websites.

e) Respectful

Engagement activities will acknowledge the needs, experience, perspective and expertise of participants.

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of participation

- a) DoI - Water will operationalise these principles through implementation of the IAP2 spectrum of participation, which is recognised as the global standard for defining forms of engagement. DoI - Water will use different approaches to implement the IAP2 spectrum for engagement, as appropriate at any given time for the project or issue and for stakeholder and community needs.
- b) DoI - Water will use a targeted approach to engagement on issues which have relevance to limited audiences, or where consultation with specific groups who hold detailed knowledge will result in better public policy outcomes being developed by the department. In these cases, working with bilateral relationships, establishing short-term committees or reference panels or undertaking roundtables or deliberative forums with groups of stakeholders are examples of appropriate approaches. These are designed to enable direct and informed two-way consultation and sharing of information between DoI - Water and key stakeholders for specific-purpose engagement and to meet a genuine need for participants.
- c) DoI - Water will use open approaches to consult with, inform, promote awareness and access the views and knowledge of stakeholders and the community on general issues where detailed or technical knowledge is not a prerequisite for meaningful participation. Broad-scale engagement involves public communication, information, education and consultation, for example through website and social media material and undertaking 'town hall' style public meetings or community forums.
- d) DoI - Water will use technology where possible and appropriate to reduce potential barriers to participation in engagement activities, such as distance, mobility or availability at prescribed times/locations.

Procedures

1. Where a business line needs to engage and consult to support an operational program, policy initiative or campaign, this will be done *in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy and the IAP2 spectrum of participation*.
2. Prior to consultation taking place the subject owner will ensure that a stakeholder and community engagement plan is in place and identifies: why consultation is needed, the audiences and groups to be consulted and the methods and information that will be used.
3. The subject owner will provide their draft stakeholder and community engagement plan to their line manager for their agreement and endorsement.
4. An endorsed draft will be provided to Communication and Engagement (C&E) for their review and agreement. (C&E will consider reputation issues, community and communication implications, review messaging to align it with Department and Government messaging, and ensure all of the department's engagement activities are coordinated).
5. It is the business line owner's accountability to ensure that other governance and control functions, including Legal and Risk, are consulted and agreement sought where required.

6. When ED, C&E (or delegate) and other areas have provided their endorsement, the plan will be signed off by the Deputy Secretary (or their delegate).
7. Business lines then engage with stakeholders and/or the community *in line with the approved engagement plan*.
8. Business lines capture relevant information gathered during the engagement activity in the department's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and report on outcomes to their line management, C&E and other areas as appropriate.
9. Communication and Engagement will analyse trends across the department to identify opportunities to improve the department's performance in engagement activities.

Roles and responsibilities

Business Lines

- Plan and implement engagement activities in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy and the IAP2 spectrum of participation.
- Record relevant information gathered during engagement activities in the department's CRM system.
- Prepare and report on engagement outcomes for operational effectiveness in progressing programs, initiatives or campaigns.

Deputy Secretary and ED C&E (or delegates)

- Final approval on all stakeholder and community engagement plans.
- Review engagement reports and ensure key findings are considered for follow up actions.

All staff

- Comply with this policy.

Safety considerations

This policy will enhance the wellbeing of staff by providing a rigorous and consistent framework by which to undertake stakeholder and community engagement activities. This serves to protect staff from possible stress resulting from the risk of perceived or actual inadvertent improper conduct or loss of reputation in the absence of this policy.

Delegations

Approve stakeholder and community engagement plan

- Deputy Secretary
- ED, C&E

Definitions

- Community: The general public.
- Engagement: Communication and consultation for the purpose of sharing information, raising awareness, accessing knowledge, leveraging expertise, and/or gathering input. Engagement includes informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering stakeholders and the community.
- IAP2: The International Association for Public Participation.
- Participation: Stakeholders and the community actively taking part in at least one of the five IAP2 engagement activities: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower. It is the act of people sharing their views to influence the department's decisions to ultimately shape future service delivery.
- Stakeholder: An individual or group who has a direct interest in, or can directly affect or be affected by the actions of the department with respect to a specific issue. The department needs to engage with a different mix of stakeholders on different issues.

Legislation

- *Lobbying of Government Officials Act 2011 No 5*
- *Lobbying of Government Officials (Lobbyists Code of Conduct) Regulation 2014*

Related policies

- Code of conduct
- Complaints handling policy

- Fraud and corruption prevention policy
- Media policy
- Public interest disclosures policy
- Social media policy

Other related documents

- NSW Department of Industry Stakeholder and Community Engagement Public Charter
- NSW Department of Industry Corporate Plan 2015-19
- NSW Electoral Commission Register of Third-Party Lobbyists
- NSW Government Premier's Priorities

Superseded documents

This policy does not supersede any other document.

Revision history

Version	Date issued	Notes	By
1.0	30/03/2018	New policy.	Director, Strategy & Stakeholders

Contact

Communication & Engagement
Ph. 02 9338 6733