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Fact sheet finding guide

Most commonly asked questions and relevant fact sheets to refer to:

How do I increase the involvement of the public in my project?	How do I identify, reach and prioritise stakeholders?	What are the benefits of doing public participation well?
How do I build relationships/ partnerships with the community and successfully maintain them? (2.11)	How do I gauge the issues and register interest from the community at the start of my project? (2.15)	1. What is public participation? (1.1)
How do I create and maintain good relationships? Interpersonal skills that can help you. (3.2)	How do I identify project stakeholders? (1.7)	
How do I develop a public participation/communication plan? (2.5)	What is a community and how do I assess its capacity to get involved? (1.5)	
How do I introduce my project to the community and encourage involvement? (2.14)		
Involving participants and volunteers in your project. (2.4)		
How and when should I seek public comment? (3.10)		

What sort of training and skills do I need to be more effective at public participation?	How do I decide how to seek public comment/input?	How and when do I distribute scientific results out to the community?
How do I deliver an effective presentation? (3.7)	How do I choose the right level of public participation? (2.2)	Have I understood exactly what the issues are? (1.2)
How do I effectively facilitate a meeting or workshop? (3.5)	How do I choose the right public participation tools and maximise participation? (2.3)	How do I distribute scientific results to the community? (3.6)
How do I effectively plan and run a meeting or workshop? (3.4)	How and when would I hold a stakeholder and community workshop? (3.8)	How do I deliver an effective presentation? (3.7)
Working with adults and groups – how can we make it more successful? (3.1)	Which public participation tools should I be considering? (2.8)	How and when would I hold a stakeholder and community workshop? (3.8)
	How and when should I seek public comment? (3.10)	
	How do I develop a public survey/questionnaire? (3.11)	

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How would I go about setting up a committee?	How do I promote my project to the public?	How should industry involve the community?
Do I need to set up a committee? (5.1)	Have I understood exactly what the issues are? (1.2)	Why should industry involve the community? (6.1)
How do I choose a committee 'type' and name? (5.2)	How can I better understand the community that I'm working in? Developing a community profile. (1.6)	Public participation references in the *Environmental Protection Act 1984* Administrative Procedures part IV (6.2)
How do I recruit committee members? (5.5)	How do I introduce my project to the community and encourage involvement? (2.14)	What is an Environmental Improvement Plan? An industry consideration for public participation. (6.3)
How do I keep my committee on track? Creating a Terms of Reference. (5.4)	How do I gauge the issues and register interest from the community at the start of my project? (2.15)	What is Community Based Participatory Research? (6.4)
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	Working with adults and groups – how can we make it more successful? (3.1)	
	How do I deliver an effective presentation? (3.7)	
	How do I distribute scientific results to the community? (3.6)	
	Why should I define the scope of my public participation? (1.8)	

How do I work with a concerned community?	How do I work with Aboriginal communities?	Can you recommend resources for public participation?
Have I understood exactly what the issues are? (1.2)	How do I engage diverse groups? (3.3)	What are some useful public participation resources and training? (2.12)
How can I better understand the community that I'm working in? Developing a community profile. (1.6)		When and how do I engage an external provider to assist with a public participation process? (2.9)
How do I manage conflict or sticky situations? (3.9)		

How do I work with a concerned community? (2.1)		

How do I seek external support for my project (i.e. funding, resources and partners?)	**How do I evaluate the effectiveness of my public participation?**	**What are the key points I need to consider when managing a public participation project?**
How do I attract funding and resources for my project? (1.4)	What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project. (4.1)	What terminology should I use when discussing public participation? (2.10)
How do I get project partners and advocates on board? (1.3)	How do I conduct an end of project evaluation? (4.2)	Have I understood exactly what the issues are? (1.2)
Documenting and recording your public participation process through writing a final report. (4.3)	Documenting and recording your public participation process through writing a final report. (4.3)	Why should I define the scope of my public participation? (1.8)
		How do I gauge the issues and register interest from the community at the start of my project? (2.15)
		How do I develop a public participation and communication plan? (2.5)
		How do I develop a project action plan and timeline? (2.6)
		How can I better understand the community I'm working in? Developing a community profile. (1.6)
		How do I identify project stakeholders? (1.7)
		How do I introduce my project to the community and encourage involvement? (2.14)
		How do I manage my project budget? (2.7)
		What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project. (4.1)
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		Documenting and recording your public participation process through writing a final report. (4.3)

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	How do I develop a public participation plan?	
	How do I choose the right level of public participation? (2.2)	
	How do I identify project stakeholders? (1.7)	
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Fact sheet 1.1 – What is public participation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to define public participation, illustrate when it should occur and its benefits and principles. It will also provide some background and theory on the term.

What is public participation?
'Public Participation is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision making and uses public input to make decisions' (international Association for Public Participation – IAP2)

'Public participation is not another task – it is the way we do business' (Victorian Government).

This definition promotes the concept that public participation opportunities should be integrated within core business activities of the department. Public participation should be built into your project management phases of scoping, planning, implementation and evaluation.

'Participation means creating an environment in which people want to engage' (Tom Bentley, DEMOS, UK).

'Public deliberation is about weighing – together – the costs and consequences of various approaches to solving problems. Making choices together in deliberation promotes civic responsibility. Human beings take more responsibility for what they have participated in choosing than for what someone has chosen for them. Making decisions as a public is claiming responsibility for the future'. (Kettering Foundation).

Public participation is not rocket science and does not need to be complicated. It is really no more than having respect for, valuing and actively seeking the knowledge and opinions of stakeholders and the wider community to create better project and policy outcomes. It involves common courtesy and principles of open and transparent communication.

The Department defines public participation as a planned process that involves the community in problem solving and decision making and uses their input to make better decisions. Public participation is the active and meaningful involvement of the public in government and industry decisions which affect their lives. Better decisions can be measured in terms of being more informed, understood, implementable and sustainable.

Public participation is an ongoing process which can involve communication, interaction and joint decision making between different stakeholders. Through public participation, all parties become better informed about the range of views on proposals and issues. Most importantly, a good public participation process will result in better decisions that are more sensitive and responsive to public concerns and values.

Public participation is an important tool in the management and decision-making practices of the Department. DEC staff are already involved in public participation on a daily basis through providing information to stakeholders and the community; conducting surveys; running workshops, public meetings and open days and seeking public submissions on plans and policies.

The key message in relation to public participation is 'Start early'! The earlier you involve stakeholders in your process, and the more involved in the design of the process stakeholders are, the better your outcome will be and the risk of community outrage decreases.

Who are the public?
Broadly, 'the public' incorporates all those living and working within WA including:

- all levels of government;
- industry;
- education institutions;
- peak bodies;
- environment/ conservation groups;
- indigenous groups;
- community groups;
- the media; and
- the general public.

The term 'stakeholder' generally refers more narrowly to those individuals or groups within the community who have a particular stake or interest in an issue or decision.

The term 'community' can refer to a community of place, a community of interest or a community of practice.

What are possible benefits of stakeholder and public participation?
- Increased understanding of the community's view towards the preferred direction of an issue, project or policy
- Improved quality of the plan/project/policy being developed, making it more practical, relevant and successful
- Sustainable outcomes
- Enhanced formation of partnerships
- Facilitated participation in decision-making and ownership of solutions
- Addressing the interests of many different parties
- Acknowledgement of local knowledge, skills, values, issues and priorities
- Enhanced reputation of government as open, accountable and willing to listen, therefore increasing trust
- New perspectives and solutions offered by the community on issues, which may even result in financial savings

When is public participation in DEC required?
- When you need to give scientific results to the community due to potential health risks (such as testing for volatile organic compounds in the air or testing for heavy metal contamination in air, water or land)
- During statutory participation processes, where public comment may be a legislative requirement e.g. Environmental Impact Assessments, Licences Appeals and Works Approvals
- When seeking community and stakeholder input to develop policies and strategies, such as the Air Quality Management Plan, Environmental Protection Policies and the Good Neighbour Policy;
- When you are undertaking a project in a community where the community will be participating or interested in the results
- When the management of land or water is being considered (such as a National or Marine Park)
- Providing information, advice and education programs such as Ribbons of Blue and Wastewise to the broader community;

- When providing support (resources, information, technical advice) to community groups such as Catchment Groups and Regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups;
- To help build / improve relationships and build capacity in communities where an issue has a long life, and to also assist DEC to achieve better practice by tapping into local knowledge
- When you are responding to an incident, such as fire or contamination

When is public participation not a good idea?
It is neither effective nor appropriate to engage in public participation if:

- a final decision has already been made;
- stakeholders cannot influence a final decision; and
- there is insufficient time and/or resources available for genuine participation.

Importantly it is ineffective and inappropriate to involve the community in processes where the scope of the consultation is not clearly understood by all parties. This includes understanding who will make final decisions, and how public participation will and has been used. Due to legislative requirements, final decisions in any process will often need to be made by the Director General or the Minister. Ineffective or inappropriate consultation is a considerable risk; it’s counterproductive and increases apathy and cynicism, not only towards future consultations, but also about political processes, public institutions and our systems of governance.

Key principles for stakeholder/public participation
- Needs to start early in the process
- Needs to be an integral part of project management
- Public participation processes will have a clearly stated purpose and clearly identified boundaries
- A range of participation tools should be used
- Ensure scope and purpose of consultation is clear (i.e. negotiable vs non-negotiable aspects of project)
- Be open, honest and transparent
- Communicate clearly
- Early and appropriate identification of stakeholders, including those often ‘hard to reach’
- Allocating sufficient time and resources to the public participation process, including evaluation
- Visible senior level involvement
- Provision of public participation training and support to staff
- Recording/documenting public participation process
- Provide timely feedback to the public on how its input will or won’t be used and why
- Honouring commitments and only making commitments that can be honoured
- Public participation processes will emphasise the sharing of information, joint learning and understanding.

Public participation principles
The public participation principles and standards followed by DEC and State Government are endorsed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). The IAP2, working through its members, helps organisations and communities around the world improve their decisions by involving those people who are affected by those decisions.

The IAP2 has established a ‘Public Participation Spectrum’ (see fact sheet 2.2 - How do I choose the right level of public participation?). The spectrum consists of five levels, and ranges from simply providing information and telling people about your proposal (inform), through to empowering stakeholders to make the decisions that they are willing to live with (empower). You will need to ensure that you have selected the appropriate level of public participation for your particular project. This will depend on whether the decision has already been made and the resources available. Good public participation is about selecting the appropriate level of participation that is in line with the community's expectations of participation.

The IAP2 has created some core values for the practice of public participation, which are also endorsed by DEC:

1. The public should have a say in decisions about actions that could affect their lives.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 1.2 – Have I understood exactly what the issues are?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide guidance on how to identify all of the issues and potential issues surrounding your public participation project.

Understanding the issue is more important than trying to solve the issue. The questions that are asked are more important than the solutions proposed. The wrong question will usually be far harder to reach agreement on than a clearly defined question.

Issues emerge around topics from different sources. An issue may come to your attention as a result of:

- media attention;
- Ministerials;
- formation of community groups advocating for certain issues;
- letters to government/NGOs from community and industry;
- community input being sought; and
- normal reporting practices e.g. ongoing monitoring, budgetary considerations, performance indicators, planning processes.

The term ‘issue’ can be used to describe a range of concerns, events and actions or where a decision of some form is likely to be made. A project can be based on a single issue, or be made up of multiple issues from the beginning, with some issues only being identified or arising over time. In the scoping phase, it is important to gain an understanding of the main project issue (as perceived by the community) as well as any potential additional or peripheral issues that are likely to impact on your project or be affected by your project. Fact sheet 2.1 *How do I work with a concerned community?* further outlines the importance of addressing ‘real’ as well as ‘perceived’ community issues.

Issue identification will often be a continual process, with new (and previously unconsidered) issues emerging through exploration.

Investigation of the issue you choose should result in some or all of the following outcomes:

- Positively impact on a major community issue.
- Bring together community members and factions who would not otherwise meet to address issues of common concern (See fact sheet 2.3 – *How do I choose the right public participation tools and maximise participation?* and fact sheet 3.3 – *How do I engage diverse groups?*).
- Attract advocates to jointly support projects (See fact sheet 1 - how do I get project partners and advocates on board?).
- Enhance the stature and reputation of the community.
- Increase understanding, skills expertise and empowerment of the community.
- Make a difference on a limited budget within a project timeline, while allowing for community to continue working on the issue afterwards, if they wish.

If your project has successfully harnessed enthusiasm, skills, and resources to work further on an issue without your input or resources, this is a clear sign of success.

See the *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement* on page 13 for a pro-forma on 'Identifying issues'.

References

Department of Environment, *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement*, 2003.

Department of Health (DoH), *Public health consultation: A guide for developers*, 2006.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 1.3 – How do I get project partners and advocates on board?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide you with assistance and advice on how to identify project partners and advocates for your project.

What are project partners and advocates?
A project partner is an organisation and/or group that shares resources and the responsibility to achieve a common objective. Partners often have a decision-making role and have a vested interest in the outcome of the project.

Advocates can be likened to 'champions', or 'allies' for your project. They may not necessarily be financial contributors or contribute to the project decision- making, but may provide valuable advice, time and influence and use their interests and passion to communicate your project and its objectives to others. Advocates are often from the local community and hold positions of leadership within their communities (such as Councillors).

Projects involving communities attract potential partners and advocates for a range of reasons. Partners and advocates may eventually take over a project long after your group has completed its original objectives. This is an ideal situation in order to maintain community momentum (especially if this was discussed as a possibility at the outset).

Identifying potential partners and advocates
To identify potential partners and advocates, the following should be considered:

- Identify all the links between your project and others within State and Local Government and other organisations. Try and make sure you aren't duplicating your objectives and look for opportunities to bring processes or projects together (i.e. hold a meeting or workshop to see whether there are opportunities for collaboration)
- Look for groups who are already active in your area (For example, check the local government's database of community groups and talk to city/shire community development officers/Councillors or the local Rotary/Lions/Chamber of Commerce). They may already be working on the issue that you are interested in. Advocates may not be aware or concerned about your issues initially, but may be drawn to your project because of their link to the community.
- Undertake research (census data, local government websites and community development officers are an excellent source of community information) and network with people who are likely advocates that will actively support the project and encourage others to do so.

Ensure you identify any potential conflicts of interest, risks or bias in accepting partners, and that all project partners are acting in the interests of the public. Where organisations have a negative history with the community or where conflict exists, it may be that a potential partner is better placed as a sponsor or donor and not invited to participate in decision-making. This is a more hands-off model for gaining resources, although if risks are high enough, a project may need to decline offers of support from some interested parties.

See fact sheet 2.11 – *How do I build relationships/ partnerships with the community and successfully maintain them?* for information on how to maintain partnerships successfully once they are formed.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 1.4 – How do I attract funding and resources for my project?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide advice on how to attract funding, resources and advocacy to maximise the success of your project.

How to attract funding and resources
Projects usually require resources and funding to successfully meet the project objectives. Often these resources will come in many forms and from multiple sources. These sources include:

Project partners and advocates
Project partners and advocates with an interest in the outcomes of the project are potential sources of funding. These groups have declared an interest in providing support where they can and in some cases have dedicated resources and/or infrastructure. Fact sheet 1.3 – *How do I get project partners and advocates on board?* provides assistance to identify project partners and advocates.

Other resources may be sourced by identifying the potential motivations your project may be able to satisfy and seeking contributions from those with a matching motivation:

- Socially motivated – community volunteer networks e.g. Scouts, Rotary, Lions and local environmental networks. For example, these groups could assist by collecting data and delivering information.
- Time poor but socially motivated – in kind contributions from businesses, community bodies and local governments, e.g. use of meeting venues, catering, photocopying, equipment, goods, radio promotion time etc.
- Common goal or partnership motivated – sharing existing resources and infrastructure that meet both their and your needs for research, collection of data and/or monitoring.
- Credibility motivated – donations of time, advice or other credible outputs from professionals or people well known to, and trusted by, the community.
- Work experience motivated – student placements and support from educational institutions of any level or professional area (e.g. science, communication and marketing).

After the work is done, it will be important to thank them and acknowledge their support in suitable ways. For example, the socially motivated may welcome a thank you morning tea, or the work experience motivated a written reference. Businesses appreciate acknowledgement through a thank you letter or certificate for display.

Grants
A number of government and non-government organisations provide grants and funding opportunities to groups working with the community. For a comprehensive list of Western Australian and national funding opportunities, refer to the Office of Multicultural Interest's website at www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?event=publicFunded

When applying for grants from government and/or non-government organisations, it is useful to consider the following:

- Be realistic about the time and effort involved, both in the grant-writing process and in the project itself.
- Start early, do your homework and research extensively to find the most appropriate funding bodies for the project you have in mind.
- Ensure you understand your funder's motivation – what do they want their grants to achieve? Is this a good match for your project? If so, ensure you clearly express this within the grant application. Don't hesitate to phone them with questions about their expectations.
- Work collaboratively with other group members to help with the grant application process.
- Make sure everyone who will be involved in implementing the project is also involved in the grant application process.
- Read the funder's guidelines carefully and follow them. If they ask a question, answer them directly regardless of how often it feels you are saying the same thing – clarity and consistency are key.
- Have someone outside the grant application process read the application and check that it gives a clear message of your intentions.

All types of resources should be expressed as a monetary value in any grant applications (e.g. volunteer hours multiplied by an average hourly rate – show this calculation). If you are likely to utilise a resource, this should be expressed as expenditure.

The Western Australian Department of Local Government and Regional Development has developed a 'Guide to Submission Writing'. This provides a useful starting point in assisting with the submission writing process:
www.grantsdirectory.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/Publications/GuideSubmissionWriting.pdf

References and further reading

Starr, Linda, 'Show Me the Money: Tips and Resources for Successful Grant Writing', Education World, 2003.
www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdev039.shtml.

Western Australian Department of Local Government and Regional Development, 'Guide to Submission Writing: Suggestions and tips to assist you in the submission writing process', 2006.
www.grantsdirectory.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/Publications/GuideSubmissionWriting.pdf

Grant websites

Citizenscape website – state and national funding opportunities
www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?event=publicFunded

'Our Community' website - for an annual fee community groups are sent emails on various grant opportunities and reminders of closing dates etc. www.ourcommunity.com.au/

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 1.5 – What is a community and how do I assess its capacity to get involved?

The aim of this fact sheet is to help you understand what a community is, and to provide you with assistance to assess the capacity or the ability of your community to be involved in public participation activities.

Aspects of a community
Communities of interest and identity are not always bound by geography, but can be bound by a shared characteristic or interest. Avoid constructing a profile based on a particular set of geographic boundaries - other characteristics which define your community include:

- Culture and Language
- Religion, age or gender;
- Occupation or workplace;
- A particular interest or hobby;
- A shared experience;
- Membership of an organisation; or
- Pursuit of a common social cause.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has released a new tool on its website to map Census data for a specific region, which provides information about a population such as size, age, and occupation. 'QuickMaps' gives fast, easy access to thematic maps of Census data for a specific region, free of charge. This allows a range of users to easily understand their community and how it is changing.

Assessing your community's capacity to get involved in a project
It is important to assess your community's current capacity to become involved. This may be assessed through understanding:

- how is your community affected by the issue? e.g. economically, socially, environmentally;
- how many households and landowners live in the area/s?;
- what are their socio-economic characteristics?;
- your community's past experience in dealing with similar issues. This will give an indication of the capacity and willingness of your community to contribute to the project;
- community self image;
- ability to organise;
- the number and influence of community/ environmental/ conservation groups
- community leaders' support;
- existing related projects within the area; and
- Community resources and existing infrastructure which may assist your project.

Once you have identified your community and their capacity to be involved in the project, investing time in building a community profile may be useful in increasing understanding of your community. Fact sheet 1.6 – *How do I better understand the community I'm working in? Developing a community profile*? provides further information on building a community profile.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics, QuickMaps link:

http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2063.0Media%20ReleaseAug%202001?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2063.0&issue=Aug%202001&num=&view=

Government of Western Australia, *Working Together*, 2006

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 1.6 How can I better understand the community that I'm working in? Developing a community profile

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide a guide to develop a profile of your community. This will help you gain a greater understanding of the community in which you are working, and enable you to select appropriate public participation levels, tools and communication approaches.

What is a community profile?
A community profile is a 'snapshot' that brings together qualitative and quantitative data from a range of sources to provide an overview of a particular community. It is important to build a community profile to understand your community. Defining and understanding a community is an ongoing process, as communities are dynamic and change over time. Also, the definition of your community might change throughout the project as you gain more information about your community.

Compiling a community profile will:

- help you to define who you need to talk to or consult with;
- provide you with information that you can use to inform your recruitment activities for staff, volunteers, 'friends' groups, etc, by enabling you to identify different characteristics of the population;
- help in the development of particular areas of work, e.g. research;
- provide information about potential partner organisations; and
- help you identify and address gaps in public participation by providing knowledge and information about communities who are currently under-represented.

(EMMLAC, 2007)

How do I develop a community profile?
To get started, decide or clarify your aims and objectives in developing a community profile, as this will guide what information you require.

While there are no rules about what should be included when you design your community profile, a good starting point is to compare the basic, free Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census Data (www.abs.gov.au) against a larger comparative population; e.g. Fremantle, Western Australia (WA) compared with entire metropolitan Perth, WA. This will tell you how the smaller geographic area differs from or is similar to the wider general population i.e. is the smaller population younger? better educated? lower income? paying higher rent? higher proportion of English as a second language households? This may inform you of what other types of information you need to seek. What you include or focus on will be driven by what you're trying to achieve through your objectives.

Census data is unique in that it is the only data source self-completed by the entire population. If you are willing to pay, the ABS or a consultant can focus on particular aspects of this data in great detail. Postcodes or local government areas are popular ways to gain information about your community, but it is also possible to deliberately compile the smallest areas called 'collection districts' (on average only 225 people) to develop a more detailed profile of your community. Other data which can provide good additional support to the census is usually collected by agencies (health, education etc) for their own purposes. This information is often restricted to their district boundaries.

Depending on the resources you have access to, much of the data available is already able to be viewed via computer maps – geographical information systems (GIS) or can be viewed in a table form (which can ultimately be expressed on GIS mapping e.g. population facets as shapes of darker or lighter, schools as symbols etc). You can spend a lot of time and money on preparing a detailed community profile, or find an agency (e.g. local council community development staff) that has already completed some of this work.

When asking agencies to access their data, be aware that they may fear misuse of their client or member data and have a policy of not providing it to anyone. In some cases, it may be possible to negotiate access to some of this information through building a relationship and improving their understanding of your project. Inviting these groups to information sessions/ events may build a path to opening dialogue. Fact sheet 2.11 – *How do I build relationships/partnerships with the community and successfully maintain them?* discusses the importance of relationship building.

However, don't just create a profile based on a particular set of geographic boundaries – other characteristics which define your community such as age, occupation and culture should also be considered.

Also see fact sheet 1.7 – *How do I identify project stakeholders?*

The following table provides a guide on what you may include in your community profile, where to find the information and how it may be useful:

Aspect of the community	Explanation	Where to find it	How to use it
People and places	Demographics, geography, ethnicity, socio-economics (employment, income), education, housing, household structure, car ownership and much more.	Free Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) or fee for service from consultants. Local Shire or Council	Compare your community's statistical features with another population e.g. suburb compared to whole of metropolitan area. From this you will ascertain characteristics unique to your community against the 'average' e.g. more or less families, more people with English as a second language, more or less education or income etc.
Education and skill development	Education and child care facilities, adult learning opportunities	GIS, maps, UBD, TAFE/universities, informal interviews with key staff.	By viewing these facilities as maps you can see whether your community would consider particular venues and locations where you might hold meetings etc to be conveniently accessible. Some institutions may also provide basic postcode data of their enrolments, especially if they are a project partner.
Communities, culture and community capacity	Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage, community service and cultural organisations, local media	Local government websites, libraries, government agencies, peak bodies. ABS does surveys on volunteering and other specific activities e.g. access to the internet etc.	Most local government authorities collate databases of contact details for a wide range of community and recreation groups. Government agencies often collate contact details for groups with a specific interest in their core business (e.g. Agriculture, multicultural groups etc). Peak bodies exist in most states for community services such as; aging, youth, volunteering, ACOSS (Australian Council of Social Services), environment groups etc and they are often able to help you find and connect with local interested groups and key individuals.
Environment	The natural environment including air, land and water quality, previous studies within the area.	State and local government libraries, websites, universities, journals.	If your community has been exposed to similar issues in the past, their experiences will help assess their capacity and interest in the project.
Healthy, safe and caring communities	Health statistics and programs, medical facilities.	Community health services often collate data about population and well being Health Atlas of Australia (ABS).	If you are investigating a topic which has potential health implications, health statistics and programs can provide data on the health of the community and programs already in place to work with your community.
Community and business leadership	Community aspirations, achievements, growth etc.	Elected councillors, members of Parliament, Senators, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, service groups (Rotary etc)	You can informally interview key representatives who understand that your program will be of benefit to your community and are willing to divulge the important history, issues, achievements and hope for the future of your community. They should be asked to not discuss the project publicly until it is formally announced.

References

Department for Victorian Communities (DVC), Getting to Know your Community – A Guide to Using Local Data. DVC, Melbourne, 2004.

East Midlands, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (EMMLAC), How to Develop a Community Profile: A guide for museums, libraries and archives. Downloaded from www.emmlac-live.torchboxapps.com/document.rm?id=224 , March 2007.

Gould, J., Heylen, M., Carnegie, K., A Guide to Social Planning for Local Government in South Australia. Janet Gould and Associates, Adelaide, 2002.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 1.7 – How do I identify project stakeholders?

The aim of this fact sheet is to highlight the importance of correctly identifying and prioritising your project stakeholders and to help you do this.

What is a stakeholder?
A stakeholder is any person, group or organisation with an interest or 'stake' in an issue or project; either because they are affected, perceive they will be affected by a decision, or may have some influence or interest in the outcome. The identification and analysis of stakeholders in the early stages of your project is essential. Excluding an important stakeholder can weaken the process and reduce the quality and/or success of your project. While the term 'stakeholders' is often used as a generic term to describe all participants, a distinction needs to be made between stakeholders as representative groups and stakeholders as citizens or community (Working Together, 2006).

Members of interest groups are representing their group or organisation and therefore may be required to put forward a set position. They may have little room to move or negotiate (Working Together, 2006).

'Community' stakeholders, on the other hand, are usually engaged in participation exercises as deliberators. Their role is to debate and consider the issue in order to come up with what is in the interests of the 'public good'. Effectively, they are asked to put their own interest aside to come to a decision that is in the interest of the community. (Working Together, 2006). Therefore, it is important to include a range of interest group representatives and community stakeholders in any participation exercise to ensure a balanced approach.

Knowing who the stakeholders are and the relationship they have to each other and to the issue will allow for greater understanding of their differing concerns and how these perspectives might affect the project. (Working Together, 2006).

How to identify your stakeholders
Some things to think about to assist you to identify the relevant stakeholders in your project are:

- Who is affected by the issues (negatively or positively?)
- Who is responsible for the issue?
- Who are the representatives of those likely to be affected?
- Who are the often excluded groups for whom special efforts may have to be made before they can or will participate?
- Who is likely to mobilise for or against the issue?
- Who can make a contribution?
- Which government and non-government agencies are likely to have an interest in the project?
- Whose absence from participation would detract from the final results?
- Are there any key groups or individuals with the ability to block your project?
- Check the local government authority's community directory for relevant community/ environment/ conservation groups and speak to the Community Development/Services section for ideas on relevant stakeholders.
- Use key stakeholders to help identify other stakeholders you may not know about.

- Ensure that the process is open to anyone who is interested in participating, and that there is not a perception that some will be included and others excluded.

Types of stakeholders to consider

- Federal, State and Local Government agencies;
- non-government agencies and community groups (e.g. Rotary through to sport groups);
- peak bodies;
- environmental/ catchment/ conservation groups (e.g. 'Friends' groups);
- community groups (e.g. resident and ratepayers associations);
- utilities;
- land developers;
- land owners;
- industry groups;
- broad interest groups;
- professional institutions;
- education institutions;
- politicians;
- community leaders;
- media;
- schools (e.g. Parents and Citizens/Friends);
- Diverse or often excluded groups including:
  - Indigenous stakeholders/communities;
  - culturally and linguistically diverse;
  - people with disabilities;
  - children;
  - young people;
  - seniors; and
  - women.

Another way of categorising your stakeholders includes:

Localised stakeholders (those directly affected or invited to participate)

Relevant stakeholders (those who should be well informed to assist the above group and reassure those outside the geographic area)

Random sample stakeholders (those selected through the electoral role who will represent wider community and have no obvious vested interest)

'**For information' stakeholders** (those who should be informed only)

Implementation partners (e.g. other state government agencies involved in delivering the project/messages)

How to involve your stakeholders

A Communication Plan should be developed which defines the most appropriate way of communicating with these stakeholder groups and factors in a range of times or stages for participation (refer to fact sheet 2.5 – *How do I develop a Public Participation/ Communication Plan?*). People may need time to gain awareness and interest in the project or their involvement may be prompted by a particular event or milestone. Also see fact sheet 2.14 - *How do I introduce my project to the community and encourage involvement?*

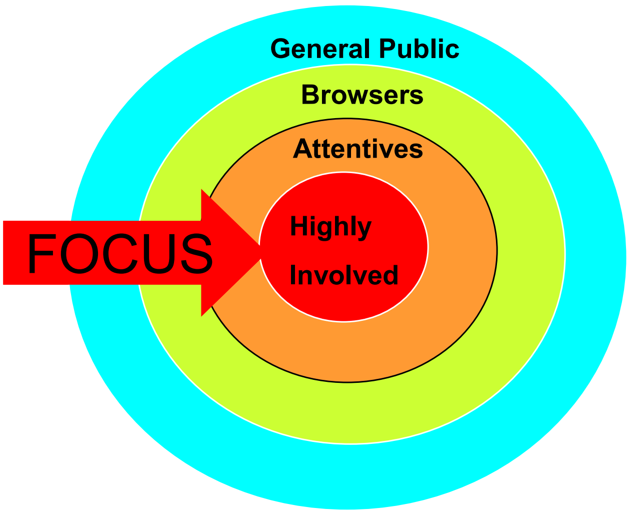
Prioritising your stakeholders
Prioritising your stakeholders helps you to allocate limited project resources more effectively. For any issue, stakeholders can be categorised into four broad 'types' as follows (Futureye, 2002):

1. **Actively involved** - those that seek to be actively and directly engaged in decision-making. They are likely to be already known to you and examples include activists, peak bodies and affected community members.

2. **Attentives** - these are likely to be informed observers and seek to be kept informed. They will rate your agency as one of their top 20 concerns. Examples may include community leaders, academics, media etc. They may be willing to engage in a limited way such as through focus groups and written submissions.

3. **Browsers** - those who will read about the issue in the newspaper, but won't investigate it themselves. They form their opinions based on what the highly involved and attentives think, and often what they may read in the newspaper.

4. **General public** - those who presently have no firm opinion about the issue.



The target groups

Stakeholders in each 'type' are important; they seek and often require different 'levels' of public participation. Importantly, depending on the issue and how you manage your stakeholders, they can rapidly move between 'types'. For example, concerned 'Browsers' can become 'Attentives' if their need for information seems unfulfilled.

See the Department of Environment and Conservation's *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement* on pages 14-15 for proformas on 'Identifying stakeholders' and 'Stakeholder relationship to issues':

http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/portal/page?_pageid=93,96391&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

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References

Department of Environment, *Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups, 2003*

Department of Environment, *Community Involvement Framework,* 2003

Government of Western Australia, *Working Together*, 2006

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 1.8 – Why should I define the scope of my public participation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to outline how to define the scope or parameters of your public participation by determining which elements of the project are negotiable and which are non-negotiable. It is important to be clear on this before inviting input by the public, so everyone understands what can and can't be influenced and people's time isn't wasted. The public can become very frustrated if they are asked to comment on or influence something and then discover that they can have no say as the issue is fixed in policy or legislation or has already been decided.

It also provides tips on things to consider when planning your public participation – looking at historical issues and community expectations and working with other state government agencies to streamline public participation processes.

Define the scope of your public participation – what aspects of the decision/proposal are negotiable/non-negotiable?
Be clear about the project negotiables (i.e. things that can be changed) and project non-negotiables (i.e. things that cannot be changed) before you engage with stakeholders/the public. A good project example is that the route of a proposed road is non-negotiable (i.e. fixed) but the location of noise walls, screening plants and a footbridge is negotiable and can be determined through consultation with the community.

Negotiables and non-negotiables need to be determined early by the project manager/senior executives so that there is a common understanding internally before we go public and are asked questions. Setting the boundaries of your public participation and providing clarity to stakeholders and the public about where they stand and when they have the opportunity to influence decisions and when they don't, will be appreciated by stakeholders and the public.

Always check what public participation has been done in the past

- Check previous public participation undertaken by either DEC or other government agencies and organisations that have done public participation in the community before you – what did they do? What tools and timeframes were used? What did they learn? What were the outcomes? It is important to remember that past public participation will have created a certain expectation in a community, and you need to ensure that you either maintain that level of public participation (if the community was satisfied) or exceed it.

- See what promises or commitments have been made previously to the community – it will be important to maintain these. You can do this by checking departmental records and data (such as the Complaints/Incident Management System); talking to other DEC staff, the DEC Public Participation Planning section and external agencies; and checking with key stakeholders.

- If the community's previous experience of public participation from other government departments or organisations has been poor, then you have some work to do to regain the community's trust. Remember – the public often perceives the 'State Government' as one entity and doesn't differentiate between departments. If faced with this situation it is best to listen to any grievances and acknowledge what has occurred. Try not to defend any past mistakes and work to ensure that any new commitments will be met.

Whole-of-government approach

- Check to see if other government departments at either a state or federal level are conducting public participation around the same time with the local community, as working together and coordinating activities may reduce the feeling of 'consultation fatigue'. A good start is to look at the ConsultWA website, which lists current and completed state government consultations:

http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?event=consultWaCatalogue

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 1.9 – What is Community Based Participatory Research?

The aim of this fact sheet is to outline Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR), an innovative, new model that you may wish to consider in the management of scientifically complex, contentious issues in the community, such as pollution.

What is CBPR?
CBPR is a partnership approach to research that involves community members, government and researchers in all aspects of the research process.

There is a growing expectation in the community for local people to be actively engaged in environmental monitoring, and CBPR is one approach to achieve this through the direct involvement of the community in the entire research process, from the initial development of the research questions to the interpretation and dissemination of project results. Unlike traditional research, CBPR focuses on issues identified by the community. Most importantly, the community participants provide the research findings to the broader community so they can be used to make changes and improve conditions in environmental and health policy.

How issues are defined and the research focus selected are key aspects of CBPR. Responding to the issues identified by the community will help researchers and government build mutual respect and trust with a community, which is important in ensuring the success of a research project. In order to receive community support for a CBPR project, the issues and research focus need to reflect issues of importance for community members and have a direct impact on improving the issues in the community – or in other words, provide tangible outcomes.

When could CBPR be applied?
DEC staff may need to make community members aware of CBPR if they present with an issue, as this model is not widely known or understood. It is likely you will need to arrange some training and guidance for the community to enable the effective use of the CBPR model. The Public Participation Planning section could assist with this.

As a guide, you could recommend using the CBPR model to the community in the following instances:

1. If the community needs to confirm whether an issue exists (such as odour).
2. If the community needs to determine the extent and nature of a known issue.
3. Scientific data from various sources is not consistent and needs to be verified by an independent source.
4. If there is community scepticism about the department's or a company's scientific monitoring results, and an independent source (i.e. the community) is required to undertake further monitoring to resolve the matter.

What are the benefits of CBPR?

- increased community support for and participation in the research, thereby increasing the quantity, quality and relevance of data collected
- utilisation of community knowledge on local issues
- utilisation of skills and resources within the community

- increased community support for and participation in the application of research findings, resulting in longer-term positive outcomes
- enhancement of skills, knowledge, strengths and resources within the community
- improvements in health and well-being of community members
- bridging cultural and other gaps between and within communities
- building stronger communities who take ownership of issues and their solutions

What are some things I need to consider when using CBPR?

- ensure that you have endorsement from DEC senior management to undertake a CBPR process for the issue
- ensure that the issues and research focus come from the community and are widely endorsed in order to maximise success
- ensure the department is able to support the process in the provision of staff, time and funding – often it is very expensive to hire monitoring equipment and analyse data, and without funds to do this, the process will fail. An alternative funding source is another consideration – i.e. Commonwealth, industry
- while the community is meant to drive the process, DEC staff may need to take on a highly supportive, collaborative role, and assist to guide the community through the process and act as an information resource

Where do I go for detailed information on how to conduct a CBPR process?
DEC's Air Quality Management Branch has produced a CBPR guide called *Community Based Participatory Research Guide for Air Quality Management*. This detailed, useful guide outlines the nine stages of a CBPR process and what needs to occur at each stage.

To view this guide, go to:

http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/portal/page?_pageid=54,6944179&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

The Public Participation Planning section can also provide advice and support to conduct a CBPR process.

References
Department of Environment and Conservation, *Community Based Participatory Research Guide for Air Quality Management*, 2007

Once you have determined the appropriate level of public participation on the IAP2 spectrum of participation (see fact sheet 2.2 *How do I choose the right level of public participation?*), you need to select the appropriate public participation tool, tools or techniques for your project. This fact sheet will guide you through a process to select the right tools.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 1.10 – Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Accountability	The principle that individuals, organisations and the community are responsible for their actions and may be required to explain them to others.
Acronym	A word formed from the initial letters of other words (e.g. *OHS, from the words Occupational Health and Safety*).
Advocate	A person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy.
Analogy	A comparison between two different things, in order to highlight some form of similarity.
Anecdote	A short tale told about an interesting, amusing, or biographical incident.
Autonomy	The freedom to determine one's own actions and behaviour
Communications	The action of communicating. The term 'communications' in this context is not about telephone lines or computers, but about stakeholder communication and messages for the community.
Community	The people of an area or country considered collectively; society. People define for themselves which communities they feel part of.
Community profile	Provides information relating to social and community planning, such as social-demographic data; details of community life, facilities and services (resources), events, leadership and community needs and priorities.
Conflict resolution	The process of attempting to resolve a dispute or a conflict. Successful conflict resolution occurs by listening to and providing opportunities to meet each side's needs, and adequately address their interests so that they are each satisfied with the outcome. Conflict resolution aims to avoid conflict before it starts, which unresolved, can lead to verbal, physical, or legal conflict.
Consultation	A process of two-way information sharing that leads to productive communication. It is an important contributor to building community social capital and fostering partnerships.
Demographic	The structure of human populations using statistics of births, deaths, socio-economic and cultural indicators.
Evaluation	Evaluation is a process of obtaining information and analysing it, to be able to make judgments about the value of the process or innovation being implemented.
Implementation	Implementation is the realisation, application, or execution of a plan, project, idea, model, design, specification, standard or policy.
Facilitate	The provision of assistance to a group to aid in decision-making. The process is guided by a facilitator who enables a group to work together to identify, examine, discuss and potentially determine ideas about appropriate action. Facilitators may be neutral outside third parties or community members trained in the process.

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Focus groups	A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which multiple groups of people are asked about their attitude towards a product, service, concept, or idea. The same questions are put to each group in an interactive setting where participants are free to talk with other group members. The resulting data is cross analysed to identify common themes across various groups or to determine differences where groups have deliberately been representative of target groups.
Framework	A supporting document which provides an introduction to and overview of a program.
Hazard	A hazard is the potential for harmful effects to occur from an activity or event. In risk communication, it is taken to mean the actual scientific (technical) risk of a hazard occurring versus the perceived risk, which is sometimes higher within a community.
Hypothesis	A tentative explanation for an observation, phenomenon, or scientific problem that can be tested by further investigation or research.
Jargon	Words or expressions used by a particular group that are difficult for others to understand.
Mediation	The act of settling a dispute between two parties.
Metaphor	A figure of speech in which an expression is used to refer to something that it does not literally mean in order to suggest a similarity.
Methodology	A set of procedures or methods used to conduct research.
Milestones	A significant event in a project.
Mitigation	Measures or actions taken to alleviate or reduce negative impacts.
Multi-criteria analysis (MCA)	A tool that has been developed for or by a community or decision maker to assist with transparent decision-making where there are a number of complicated issues to consider (e.g. project specific social, environmental and economic issues identified by a community).
Negotiation	A process of considering obstacles to agreement and resolving each one until agreement upon a course of action evolves.
Objectives	Objectives are statements describing the results to be achieved by a project and the manner in which these results will be achieved over a specified period of time.
Partnership	A cooperative relationship between people or groups who agree to share responsibility for achieving specific goal(s).
Project outcomes	The outcomes, actions and initiatives resulting from the project.
Public participation	Public participation is the process of involving community members in decision-making about issues that affect their lives. This could involve service planning and delivery, policy development and setting priorities.
Reporting	Presentation, formal or informal, of evaluation data or other information to communicate processes, roles, and results.
Risk communication	Risk communication involves informing individuals including the general public and/or public decision makers about a particular risk, for example an environmental or public health risk.
Risk management	The application of management policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of identifying, analysing, evaluating,

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	treating/reducing and monitoring risk.
Risk perception	Risk perception describes the appraisal of a risk situation on the basis of intuitive judgement, personal experience, and acquired information (e.g. from the media).
Stakeholder	A stakeholder is any person, group or organisation with an interest or 'stake' in an issue or project - either because they are affected, perceive they will be affected by a decision, or may have some influence or interest in its outcome.
Surveys and questionnaires	A process for gathering information through a set of written questions which calls for quantitative (able to be calculated as numbers) or qualitative (words, terms or text) responses. They may be self-administered (paper or electronic) or interviewer-administered in person or over the phone.
Tasks	Specific units of work assigned to individuals to be completed within an agreed timeline.
Timeline	A management tool which details the chronological schedule of project tasks and milestones to be accomplished, by whom, and over what period of time.
Transparency	Implies openness, communication, and accountability in the project's processes and outcomes.
Volunteer	A volunteer is someone who chooses to perform a task of their own free will, usually without payment.

Fact sheet 2.1 – How do I work with a concerned community?

The aim of this fact sheet is to inform you of the potential for community concern and outrage which may arise from issues associated with your project. The fact sheet suggests methods to reduce the risk of concern/outrage.

Community concern and perception

How contentious an issue will be, or is, depends upon how communities and stakeholders perceive the issue. A term used to describe this relationship is 'community concern.' It is important to understand that the level of community concern is often related to the unknown, less understood or technical aspects of the issue, often referred to as the 'hazard'. Regardless of whether a hazard is technically low, the community concern may be high. It is this perception of the hazard which needs to be addressed. If ignored, concern can increase to outrage very quickly.

Factors which cause outrage

Peter Sandman (1986) defines communication 'risk' as equal to the sum of the technical hazard posed by a situation and the outrage that the situation generates.

COMMUNICATION RISK = HAZARD + OUTRAGE

Mitigation of communication risk is possible if you assess the seriousness of the risk from the perspective of the most concerned community members, not from your own, more informed view point.

An expert's assessment of risk generally coincides with the hazard posed by that risk while a citizen's assessment is usually strongly affected by their perception (shaped by a combination of education, experience and social and cultural factors). It is important to recognise that community views and perceptions are equally as valid as technical assessments. In providing their views, people want to be taken seriously. Just as technical experts expect trust and respect for their position, so too do community members (Sandman, 1986).

The factors contributing to outrage are known, predictable and manageable. The 12 principal factors are listed below.

Table 1. The 12 Principle Outrage Factors

Safe	Risky
1. Voluntary	Coerced
2. Natural	Industrial
3. Familiar	Exotic
4. Not memorable	Memorable
5. Not dreaded	Dreaded
6. Chronic	Catastrophic
7. Knowable	Unknowable
8. Individually	Controlled by others
9. Fair	Unfair
10. Morally irrelevant	Morally relevant
11. Trustworthy sources	Untrustworthy sources
12. Responsive process	Unresponsive process

Sandman, 1993

Planning public participation - defining how

Once the factors contributing to community concern are understood, they can be used to inform the strategies of a successful public participation process. In general, the higher the level of 'Community Concern' the more important it will be to involve the community in decision-making and management of the issue. This corresponds to participation techniques higher up the public participation spectrum. See fact sheet 2.2 – *How do I choose the right level of public participation*? and fact sheet 2.8 – *Which public participation tools should I be considering?*

Recognising perception and mitigating outrage
The following strategies can be used to reduce and mitigate outrage (Sandman, 1993):

Acknowledge current problems – 'transparency'
Omissions, distortions, and 'spin' are almost as damaging to credibility as outright lies. The only way to build credibility is to acknowledge problems before you solve them and even before you know if you will be able to solve them. This means going beyond mere honesty to 'transparency.'

Acknowledge prior misbehaviour
The decision of when you can put your mistakes behind you belongs to your stakeholders, not to you. The more often and apologetically you acknowledge past mistakes, the more quickly others decide it's time to move on.

Increase certainty by ensuring information is accessible and timely
People are entitled to information that affects their lives. Early release of information sets the pace for resolution of the problem. If you wait, the story may leak anyway. When it does, you are likely to lose trust and credibility.

By presenting information early, you can better control the accuracy of information. If you are the first to present it promptly, you are more likely to earn public trust and there is more likely to be time for meaningful public participation in decision-making.

Less work is required to release information early than to respond to enquiries, attacks, etc that might result from delayed release. If you wait, people may feel angry and resentful or are more likely to overestimate the risk if you withhold information.

Also, your project is more likely to stay on schedule if you don't have to backtrack over steps you took without being transparent.

Be humble about achievements
Communities may assume that the odds are you resisted change until regulators or activists forced your hand. If this is true, have the grace to say so. Inappropriately attributing your good behaviour to your own natural goodness may trigger scepticism; attributing it to pressure greatly increases the likelihood that we'll believe you actually did it.

Be accountable and share control
The higher the outrage, the less willing people are to leave the control in your hands. Use public participation techniques which share the decision-making with the community.

References
Government of Western Australia, Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2006.

Sandman, P, Explaining Environmental Risk, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1986.

Sandman P, 'Responding to Community Outrage: Strategies for Effective Risk Communication', 1993.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.2 – How do I choose the right level of public participation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to help you to determine the most appropriate level of public participation for your project using the widely endorsed International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) spectrum of participation and some assessment questions.

It is important to make sure that you are operating on the appropriate level of participation (inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower) for your project – saying you are consulting a community when you are actually just informing them is likely to lead to community frustration and distrust. This fact sheet will assist you to make an informed decision about the level of participation required to increase the likelihood of your participation process being accepted by the community and therefore successful.

Remember, good public participation is about selecting the appropriate level of participation that is also (as much as possible) in line with the community's expectations of participation. A decision about selecting the appropriate level of participation will need to be made using professional judgement; knowledge of your community and the issues, and in accordance with the dynamics and context of your project. Also, depending on the project, you may use different levels of participation at different stages of your project, as well as differing levels with various types of stakeholders.

How do I determine the most appropriate level/s of public participation for my project?

- Read through the attached Table 1: 'International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of participation' to gain an awareness of the different levels of public participation and their objectives.
- Using Table 1, consider the objectives of your participation process? Do they fit with any of the objectives mentioned in the table?
- How much decision-making are you willing or able to share with your stakeholders? This needs to be discussed and negotiated with senior management. Will this differ at different stages of your project?
- Ask some key stakeholders (e.g. council staff, councillors, environmental/catchment/ conservation groups such as 'Friends' groups, community groups, resident and ratepayers associations, broad interest/action groups, peak bodies, local businesses/industry, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce etc) how they would like to get involved.
- To assist you to determine whether to use higher levels of participation than 'inform' and 'consult', consider the assessment questions at the end of this fact sheet.
- In general, the higher the community interest or concern surrounding an issue, the higher you need to go on the participation spectrum.
- Using your professional judgement, the questions above and the assessment questions at the end of the fact sheet, determine which level/s (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate or Empower) of public participation to operate on; at what point/s in the project and with which stakeholders.
- Communicate and negotiate your determined level of public participation with senior management before you start to talk to the community.

To assist you in choosing the right level of public participation, contact the Public Participation Planning section who are happy to assist you with ideas and point you in the right direction.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Table 1: International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of participation

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Objective To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, and/or solution	***Objective*** To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	***Objective*** To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	***Objective*** To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	***Objective*** To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public We will provide information (to stakeholders and the community) in an unbiased manner. We will keep you advised of what is happening. This level is appropriate when a decision has already been made and the public cannot have an influence.	***Promise to the public*** We will listen to your concerns and ideas.	***Promise to the public*** We will listen to you, and advise how your views have (or haven't) been incorporated into decisions and why.	***Promise to the public*** We will actively work with you in developing solutions.	***Promise to the public*** We will actively develop mechanisms that will enable you to make decisions. We will implement your decisions.
Example tools ▪ Fact sheets/brochures ▪ Web sites ▪ Open houses/open days ▪ Displays ▪ Community education campaigns	***Example tools*** ▪ Public comment ▪ Focus groups ▪ Surveys/questionnaires ▪ Public meetings ▪ World Café ▪ Open space technology	***Example tools*** ▪ Workshops ▪ Deliberative polling ▪ 21st Century Dialogue forums	***Example tools*** ▪ Citizen Advisory Committees ▪ Consensus-building ▪ Participatory decision-making	***Example tools*** ▪ Citizen juries ▪ Ballots ▪ Delegated decisions ▪ Consensus conferences
DEC example -DEC website -Community education-improve knowledge and support of the department's activities -Advise community members or landowners of small scale developments or initiatives. -Develop community understanding of land management issues.	***DEC example*** -Written consultation on EPP development or National/Marine Park management plans -planning for marine and terrestrial reserves -planning for visitor facilities and services and nature based recreation and tourism opportunities	***DEC example*** -Community liaison or advisory groups eg marine reserve advisory committees -forest management	***DEC example*** Good Neighbour Policy -conservation partnerships with the community, landholders and industry -develop partnerships to provide recreational and tourism facilities, services and programs.	***DEC example*** Some decisions of Natural Resource Management committees -'Friends Of' group activities -develop partnerships with and provide practical assistance to landowners.

Selecting the 'level' of public participation – assessment questions
The approach detailed below can be used to help guide your selection of the appropriate level of participation on the 'Spectrum of Public Participation' outlined in Table 1 (adapted from International Association of Public Participation 2003). The spectrum ranges from simply providing information and telling people about your proposal, through to empowering stakeholders to make the decisions that they are willing to live with.

To use the worksheet, rate how stakeholders will view the issues surrounding your proposal/the issue and how they will want to be involved. Feel free to consider additional questions that are important.

Worksheet assessment questions	**Very low**	**Low**	**Med**	**High**	**Very high**
Community perceptions and interest					
What is the level of interest in this issue?					
What is the level of existing controversy surrounding this issue?					
How significant are the potential impacts to the community?					
What is the level of significance of this issue to the major stakeholders?					
What level of involvement does the community appear to desire?					
What level of involvement do key stakeholders appear to desire?					
What is the probable level of difficulty in solving the issue?					
How important are the potential impacts to the immediate community?					
How important are the potential impacts to the wider community?					
How important are the potential impacts to the stakeholders?					
What degree of participation do you anticipate the community will want?					
What degree of participation do you anticipate the stakeholders will want?					
What level of media interest do you anticipate?					
What is the potential for close political attention?					
Influence					
What is the likelihood that the community will be invited to provide their input?					
What is the likelihood that decision-makers will give full consideration to community input?					
What is the likelihood that the stakeholders will be invited to provide their input?					
What is the likelihood that the community will be able to influence the final decision/outcome/plan?					
What is the likelihood that decision-makers will give full consideration to stakeholder input?					
To what degree are the options limited by existing undertakings, projects or priorities?					
Issue Complexity					
How technically challenging is the issue to resolve?					
How challenging are the environment considerations?					
How challenging are the social implications for this project?					
How diverse are the community views on the opinions in relation to this issue?					

How diverse are the stakeholder views on the opinions in relation to this issue?					
How diverse are the views within the Department on the options in relation to this issue?					
How diverse are the views between all these groups?					
What is the legally required level of stakeholder and community participation?					
How likely is it that the project has or will progress faster than participation can occur?					
What level of resources are likely to be available to support stakeholder and community participation?					
What is the level of divisive 'incidents' or 'events' involving this issue within the community?					
Total score					

Based on these responses, use the following to indicate an appropriate level of public participation.

If most responses are categorised as **Very low to Low**, public participation may not be needed at all. Work with key stakeholder groups to identify a comprehensive stakeholder information program to satisfy public concerns. 'Informing' people of your intentions may be sufficient.

If mostly **Low to Medium**, public participation is probably a good idea. Consider how the 'Consult' level of the spectrum will work with the issues and interests of stakeholders.

If responses are mostly **Medium to High** you should at least consider the 'Consult' level of the spectrum and probably the 'Involve' level.

If responses are generally **High to Very high**, evaluate how stakeholder issues and interests can best be accommodated in the 'Involve' or higher levels of the spectrum. If any marks are registered in the **Very high** column, careful consideration should be given to the level of public participation even if the average score was otherwise low.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.3 – How do I choose the right public participation tools and maximise participation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide information on how to determine the appropriate public participation tools to use to engage stakeholders/the community. It encourages the use of a range of participation techniques/tools in your project to accommodate and encourage participation by a broad range of individuals and groups within your community.

Once you have determined the appropriate level of public participation on the IAP2 spectrum of participation (see fact sheet 2.2 – *How do I choose the right level of public participation?*), you need to select the appropriate public participation tool, tools or techniques for your project. This fact sheet will guide you through a process to select the right tools.

How do I determine which public participation tool, tools or techniques to use?

- Look at the IAP2 spectrum of public participation on fact sheet 2.2 – *How do I choose the right level of public participation?* and look at the example tools listed under your selected level/s of participation. Also see fact sheet 2.8 – *Which public participation tools should I be considering?* for a more comprehensive list of tools. You should choose a range of ways for people to get involved to account for:
    - the extent people wish to be involved;
    - the time they have available to get involved;
    - participants' different learning styles; and
    - differing access to information technology.

  Are you familiar with and feel confident using these tools? If not, you might want to consider doing some background reading on how the tools work. See fact sheet 2.8 – *Which public participation tools should I be considering?* which outlines a description of a number of tools, their advantages, special considerations and recommended participant numbers. Also refer to the recommended public participation resources and training on fact sheet 2.12 – *What are some useful public participation resources?* The former Department of Conservation and Land Management's *Public Participation Manual* (http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/crd/index.html) has an excellent summary of tools and what form of participation they fall under on pages 95 to 141:

- If the issue is controversial and complex, and you have the budget, then another option is to engage an external public participation consultant to assist you to undertake the work. It is recommended that officers try to undertake the public participation work themselves or at least work collaboratively with a consultant, as this is a good opportunity to build relationships with the local community and immerse yourself in the issue first hand. Public participation is not complicated, it is about having good organisational, networking and interpersonal skills and getting in there and doing it will build your experience and confidence as you learn and improve. Speak to the Public Participation Planning section for advice.

- Will your budget cover the cost of implementing the tool, tools or techniques of choice?

- Do you have enough time and staff to implement the tool? It is better to be conservative and aim for a tool that is realistic and achievable in the available timeframe. Engaging with the public during December and January is generally not a good time as people are busy with end of school, Christmas and school holiday activities.

- Does the community have an existing expectation of tools that you will use from previous public participation processes undertaken by the council or elsewhere in the local community? Have these tools worked? Is it time for something new and innovative or is your community comfortable with certain ways of doing things?

Ask some key stakeholders (e.g. council staff; councillors; environmental, catchment and conservation groups such as 'Friends' groups; community groups; resident and ratepayers associations; broad interest/action groups; peak bodies; local businesses and industry; Rotary; and Chamber of Commerce etc) which tools they consider would be appropriate. Can you involve these stakeholders in the design of these tools/processes if they are interested?

How to maximise participation
Providing a range of participation options shows that you are committed to being inclusive and flexible, and will also ensure maximum opportunity for participation.

You should choose a range of ways for people to get involved in your project to account for:
- The extent people wish to be involved.
- The time they have to be involved (work, family commitments).
- Participants' different learning styles, needs and interests.
- Differing access to information technology.

From a project point of view, participation opportunities also need to reflect the timeframe, budget, resources and capacity available to conduct the process.

Participants should be able to choose from a range of participation opportunities that suit their needs, and they should ideally be able to come and go as they please (providing multiple entry and exit points to the project). Making involvement easy and flexible will encourage current and future participation. Participation techniques should range from less complex (written submissions, feedback forms) to more complex (workshops, advisory groups) to allow for different needs, capacity and levels of interest by community members. It also shows the community that you have thought your participation opportunities through and genuinely want their involvement.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.4 – Involving participants and volunteers in your project

The intent of this fact sheet is to provide guidance on when and why you might involve volunteers or participants in your project. It also outlines the difference between volunteers and participants, and which may be more appropriate for your project. The fact sheet further provides advice on your responsibilities in engaging these groups in your project.

When would it be useful to involve volunteers or participants in my project?

- When you require support in scientific data collection/research.
- When you require an independent source to collect and/or verify or validate scientific data. If a community is sceptical about the department's data collection methods, then having community members involved can help.
- To gain a cross section of views about a particular issue, which will greatly assist in better quality outcomes and decisions.
- To gain local knowledge and expertise on a particular issue – this can often be more useful than the theoretical knowledge of DEC staff!
- To educate and empower local communities to self-manage (i.e. rehabilitation, care and maintenance of national or marine parks or bushland) and develop stronger networks.
- To strengthen relationships and trust with your local community by working more collaboratively.
- To achieve environmental/conservation outcomes more efficiently and effectively.

What is the difference between participants and volunteers?

Participants
Participants will accept an invitation to participate in an activity or series of activities out of personal/professional interest in the topic, to gain further information, to lobby for a certain position or to learn skills for further involvement. They are not obligated or committed to the Department beyond the activity.

When participating in these activities, it is unlikely that they will be covered by the Department's insurance if injured, unless the Department is found to be negligent – then compensation may be sought. Often the owner of a facility, or someone erecting a temporary structure would have public liability insurance for this reason.

Volunteers
Volunteers play a vital role in contributing to the delivery of government services. They also enhance social capital as a vehicle for community education and behaviour change, and build the capacity and connectedness of individuals and communities in WA.

The Department for Community Development (DCD) defines volunteers as citizens who participate in activities and events:

- of their own free will;
- without financial reward (except for the reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred);
- to undertake clearly established tasks in positions not designated to paid staff; and
- in the delivery of government and non-government services.

(DCD, 2006)

In healthy democracies, volunteers fall into two categories; informal and formal. Informal volunteers help their neighbours and other people in the community and are very important for a community to be healthy. Formal volunteering is coordinated by organisations that recruit and train volunteers to fulfil specific functions. The organisation then has a duty of care for the volunteers, similar to employers (e.g. managing risk by addressing occupational and safety concerns with training etc). Volunteers participate of their own free will and without financial reward.

Early in the project, it is important to differentiate what facets of a project will be offered to participants and whether or not there are roles for volunteers. If there clearly are roles for volunteers that will not be filled by staff or project partners, it will be important to define the roles, coordinate the recruitment and training of those positions and clarify who is responsible for what.

Volunteer management obligations

The state government in Western Australia protects formal volunteers from public liability. DEC does provide insurance for injury or loss depending on the task (employers contribute to Workcover for employees).

If you wish to attract volunteers, then you should be aware of your obligations in relation to Occupational Health and Safety and associated legislation and guidelines. In particular, where volunteers are undertaking the delivery of services and established tasks, there is an obligation to ensure volunteers are trained and given the correct equipment to minimise risk and promote safety.

The Department for Community Development has prepared *Guidelines for Successful Partnerships between Public Sector Agencies and Volunteers (2006)*. These guidelines recommend good practice, principles and strategies for public sector agencies working in partnership with volunteers. They outline key legislation, policies and programs relevant to the management of partnerships with volunteers and provide links to further information. This document provides valuable information on minimising liability through occupational health and safety management.

References

Department for Community Development (DCD), Western Australia, 2006, Guidelines for Successful Partnerships between Public Sector Agencies and Volunteers, 3rd ed.
www.community.wa.gov.au/DFC/Communities/Volunteers/ProjectsandInitiatives/Guidelines_for_Successul_Partnerships_Between_Public_Sector_Agencies_and_Volunteers.htm

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.5 – How do I develop a public participation/communications plan?

The aim of this fact sheet is to help you effectively plan your project's public participation and communication by developing a 'public participation/communication plan'. Writing a plan does not need to be a long and arduous task. It will simply assist you to think through the issues and is also a good document to have in terms of accountability, record keeping and communicating with your colleagues, key stakeholders/project partners and the general public. A template for a plan is included in this document.

What is a communication plan and why is it important?
Before starting a project, it is important to create a framework for your public participation and project communication, called a 'communication plan'.

Well thought out plans help you to identify and maximise the use of available resources and minimise delays by ensuring that public participation and communication is coordinated with other project tasks and milestones. A plan helps to clarify the issues, the outcomes, who is involved and helps to reach agreement on how to proceed. A summary of the plan (including a project timeline/milestones) is a good communication tool and will provide interested individuals and groups with an outline of the process being undertaken. This will help enable people to plan their participation in accordance with the participation opportunities and the corresponding decisions that may be made at each stage. Additionally, the plan communicates that thought and rigour has been employed in the project development and this can assist you to secure funding and support for projects from external organisations.

How to develop a communication plan – example template
A communication plan should cover the following areas:

1. **Title of project**

2. **Public participation objective/s**

Setting your objectives:
For your project to be successful, you will need to set a number of objectives, or specific steps, that you are aiming to achieve throughout your project. The benefits of setting objectives are:
- they provide a target to aim for - therefore all actions and efforts can be focused on attaining the objective instead of being inefficiently used;
- they give participants a sense of direction and achievement;
- They can highlight any risks or challenges you may encounter in your project; and
- they provide a way of evaluating the success of your project.

Many projects are unsuccessful because their objectives are unrealistic, difficult to achieve/act on and evaluate or there are simply too many. It is important to have a broad vision, but to be effective, your project needs to focus on only a few achievable items at any one time (Robinson, 2002).

What do you want to achieve? This clearly sets out the communication objectives of the project as opposed to any technical or scientific project objectives. Will stakeholders simply be consulted and their feedback considered, or is there an undertaking to work collaboratively with the local community and to plan and implement their wishes? Other objectives might be to:

- raise awareness of issues in the community
- foster a partnership with the community
- gain or gauge public support
- contribute to the development of policy or strategies
- gather data in the form of statistics or opinions to guide future decisions
- resolve disputes

You can also outline how the success of each objective will be measured. Make sure that you are stating communication objectives not, the tools/techniques you will be using!

Clarifying your objectives
Once you have developed your objectives, it will be important to clarify them by asking the following questions:

Are my objectives:

Achievable – is there a reasonable chance of success given the context and history of players?

Targeted – is there an identified target audience, together with identified stakeholders, partners and advocates?

Realistic – are you and your stakeholders/partners likely to have the resources to achieve the objective?

Action-orientated – is there a definite measurable action or decision?

Timely – is there enough time to plan, implement and evaluate the objective?

Reflective – are the objectives in line with the overall aims of my project?

3. Background

Relevant background information may include key events and/or historical issues that have led to the development of the plan; community expectations; any relevant social/community data/statistics; level of interest and a summary of major issues/questions identified.

Understanding the issue is more important than trying to solve the issue. The questions that are asked are more important than the solutions proposed. The wrong question will usually be far harder to reach agreement on than a clearly defined question.

Consider any previous public participation conducted in the community by shire/council or State or non-government agencies and outcomes from this. See the State Government's ConsultWA catalogue at citizenscape.wa.gov.au. This website provides a record of state government consultations over the last few years.

4. Past or current commitments to the community

Ensure you do some background research and see whether there have been any pervious commitments made to the community – either formally or informally. It will be important to follow these through or at least address upfront why these can no longer be fulfilled. Part of your current work may involve commitments to the community, and these should be documented and completed by the end of the project.

5. Negotiable aspects of project versus non-negotiable aspects of project

This outlines the parameters and constraints of a project or the negotiable items (choices/options/outcomes that can be changed to reflect community input) and non-negotiable items (things that cannot be changed or negotiated).

For example, in draft management plans, the public may not be able to comment on fire management practices, as these are set in legislation and cannot be changed (non-negotiables). A negotiable element of a draft management plan may be the management or placement of recreation and tourism opportunities and public access (vehicle, boat, air, foot). Being clear and aligned on this internally before you start to communicate with the public helps avoid creating unrealistic expectations from the outset.

6. Key communication messages

These are the key project messages that are to be communicated to the public.
For example:

- We want to raise awareness of issue XXX in the community
- We want the community to be aware that their issues and concerns will be answered and may contribute to the development of policy and strategies
- We want the community to be aware hat we aim to foster a long-term partnership with them.

7. Level of public participation

Are you informing, consulting, involving, collaborating or empowering? To assist you to determine the appropriate level of public participation, see fact sheet 2.2 – *How do I choose the right level of public participation?*

8. Stakeholders

Identified stakeholders should be listed, which will include those likely to be affected or interested in the issue. This may include State government, local authorities, non-government organisations, local interest groups, landowners, schools, media and other interested groups or individuals.

The plan should outline the most appropriate time and method of communicating with these stakeholders. You can gain assistance with determining the most effective method of communicating with stakeholders through discussions with the Public Participation Planning section staff. Fact sheet 2.2 *How do I choose the right level of public participation?* should also assist. It is also valuable if the plan includes a detailed approach for communicating with and providing participation opportunities to those groups often excluded from participation projects, such as Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, people with disabilities, young people, seniors and women. See fact sheet 1.7 – *How do I identify project stakeholders* and fact sheet 3.3 – *How do I engage diverse groups?* for more information on identifying your stakeholders/community.

9. Public participation tools

A range of participation methods or tools should be available throughout the life of the project to cater for people's differing needs and capacity. A description of the participation processes could include workshops, training, comment periods.

It is important to consider how decisions will be made (consensus, majority vote) and who will make the final decision and how information will be endorsed prior to public release.

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10. Public participation opportunities, challenges and risks
Are there opportunities to collaborate/partner with other state government agencies that may be looking at similar issues? Coordinating with other agencies and identifying links between projects can be resource efficient as well as preventing overlap/duplication in public participation processes (which can be frustrating for public). It is important to identify potential risks to your project's communication and participation objectives, such as public outrage and perceptions, opposition to project (media, lobbyists) and what could 'go wrong'. It is also important to think about how you might manage these risks if they arise.

You could use a table such as the one below to document information:

Opportunities	**How could these opportunities be incorporated into the project?**
E.g. A camping expo is being run at a central community location during your public consultation process	E.g. Ensure that you book a stand at the expo to distribute information about your project.
Risks and challenges	**Risk management strategies**
E.g. Politics could be seen to be dictating the pace of the process (not the community)	Prepare key messages on the process and timeframes Prepare picture/diagram on process

11. Action plan

Outlines objectives, tasks, key people and their responsibilities and timelines. This information is often represented in a table form:

Objective/s	**Task/s**	**Who**	**When**

Please see fact sheet 2.6 - *How do I develop project action plan/timeline?* for assistance with completing the table above. Please note that a sufficient budget should be allocated to cover things such as advertising, venue hire, consultants and catering. You may wish to consider other resources, such as expert speakers or advocates that may be happy to assist.

An estimated project timeline should be made publicly available to ensure that people can plan their participation and understand the project milestones/stages of participation and the corresponding decisions that may be made at each stage. Include consideration of the realistic time required to collect, collate, analyse, interpret and disseminate data. It is better to overestimate the time it takes to get things done rather than underestimate.

12. Reporting back to community on public participation outcomes
How will you advise the community how their input was or wasn't used? Will you put information on your website? In the shire/council newsletter or local paper? Provide written feedback to those that participated? Hold a meeting? Or a combination of all these things?

It is important to publicly report the outcomes of your project, not only to be open, transparent and accountable, but also to respect and acknowledge the value of those who participated. People are more likely to get involved in future participation projects if they feel that their input was appreciated. You should state what reports/documents will be available, at what stage throughout the project, in what format and through what media. Publicly reporting your project outcomes can also assist other groups to improve their current or future projects. For more information, see fact sheet 4.3 – *Documenting and recording your public participation process through writing a final report.*

13. Evaluation Plan

Evaluation should occur at the beginning and throughout your project to see whether your communication and participation objectives are being achieved. These objectives, and how they will be evaluated, need to be determined at the start of the project. A formal, independent evaluation of the process at the end is a good idea for a complex, high profile project, and publicly reporting this evaluation is a good way to build public respect and trust. Refer to fact sheets 4.1 – *What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project* and 4.2 – *How do I conduct an end of project evaluation?*

To capture this information you can input information into a table such as the one below (for simplicity you can join the action plan and evaluation plan together). For assistance in filling out this table see fact sheet 4.1 – *What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project*

Evaluation plan					
Objective/s (can be the same as those within the action plan)	**Techniques**	**Indicators**	**When**	**Who**	**Benchmark**

References

Department of Environment, *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement*, 2003.

Government of Western Australia, *Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making*, 2006.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.6 – How do I develop a project action plan/timeframe?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide information on project action plans and timelines for your public participation - what they are, when they are required, why they are important, and how to effectively develop and manage timelines throughout your project.

What is an action plan/ timeline?
An action plan or timeline is a schedule of activities or events, similar to a timetable, which is used to guide and monitor the achievement of project objectives or milestones.

What is the purpose of developing an action plan/ timeline?
It is important to develop and redevelop action plans and timelines at various stages throughout your project because they assist you to:

- break down work into small, more manageable pieces and reduce the overall complexity of the project;
- Monitor the progress of objectives and determine whether you are on track;
- Communicate to stakeholders/partners and the public when objectives will be met;
- Manage your finances, including determining what resources are required and when, and helping you keep within your budget;
- Clarify actions, roles and responsibilities

When should I develop a timeline?
You should develop your action plan/ timeline at the start of your project in the scoping/planning phase. In order to successfully complete your project, a number of objectives will need to be developed at various stages throughout your project (refer to fact sheet 2.5 – *How do I develop a public participation/communication plan*?). An action plan/timeline will need to be developed for each set objective to outline the more specific tasks that need to be completed to achieve these objectives. Action plans and timelines will also be need to be developed in parallel to your budget (refer fact sheet 2.7 – *How do I manage my project budget?*).

How do I develop an action plan/ timeline?
Developing an action plan or timeline involves figuring out what the specific tasks are to achieve an objective, how long they will take, what resources they require, and in what order they should be done. When developing the plan, it is important to be honest, realistic and sometimes generous about how much time is required and when things can be achieved. In order to do this, you need to determine a realistic, achievable calendar and include everything from holidays to the competing responsibilities of stakeholders/participants.

An action plan/ timeline can be prepared by hand or by using a computer. A variety of computer software is available for creating and managing timelines (Microsoft Project is the most commonly used).

Developing an action plan/ timeline - Step by step
To develop a timeline, you will need to follow the steps outlined below:

1. Develop a table (as below)
2. List the objectives that you wish to achieve down the left hand side.
3. List the tasks that need to be completed to achieve the objectives in the next column

4. Next to each task, write the name of the person responsible (assign the tasks).
5. Mark on the calendar the deadline for each step, and the length of time the step will take.
6. Determine predecessors (what tasks must be completed before) and successors (tasks that can't start until after) for each task, and what tasks can overlap (happen at the same time).

Example

Objective/s	Tasks	Responsibility	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Steering Committee to develop draft document and gain feedback from community	Write draft	Bob Howard							
	Seek comments from Steering Committee	Jill Smith							
	Review comments and make changes	Bob Howard							
	Organise printing of draft document	Terry Hill							
	Provide draft document to community for comments	Terry Hill							
	Compile comments received	Bob Howard							
	Milestone								
	Steering Committee receive feedback on draft document								

So I've developed an action plan/ timeline, now what?

A timeline is not intended to be a static, one-time picture of how you will achieve your objectives. It is important that you constantly review and keep track of your progress against the timeline and regularly update it where required, ensuring this is communicated to all relevant parties.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.7 – How do I manage my project budget?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide an introduction on how to effectively manage your budget/finances (money received or spent) throughout your project; however, it is recommended that further resources are obtained to assist with this aspect of your project. This fact sheet also provides information on why financial management is important, who is responsible and how it can be achieved. Managing your finances well is essential for the survival and success of your project and your reputation in the community.

The role of a budget

Creating and maintaining a budget is an effective way to manage the money received and/ or spent throughout your project. A budget is a plan of expected income (money received) and expenditure (money spent) over a specific period. A budget should be developed in parallel with your timeline - refer to fact sheet 2.6 – *How do I develop a project action plan/timeline?*

A well managed budget will:

- give you clear guidelines about what you can and need to spend and when;
- assist you in achieving the objectives of your project;
- ensure accountability;
- ensure the money you receive and/or spend goes as far as possible; and
- allow you to keep good relations with your funders by providing accurate reports and spending their money as agreed.

How to create and manage a budget

The following steps should be followed to create your budget:

1) <u>Estimate your expenses</u> – Estimate the amount of money you expect to spend over the period of your project, broken down into the categories you expect to spend it in. You should also account for in-kind donations and volunteer hours. This is important to illustrate the real cost of the project when applying for grants and gives value to volunteers.

2) <u>Estimate your income –</u> Estimate the amount of money you know or can reasonably expect from each funding source, including grants, fundraising efforts, and sales of goods or services.

3) <u>Determine the relationship between your expenses and income</u> – specify what will get funded and from which source. For example, many funders may agree to provide money for specific activities or items. If funding comes with restrictions, it's important to build those restrictions into your budget, so that you can ensure you spend the money as the funder has outlined.

4) <u>Lay out your figures in a useful format</u> - You can have one budget for the whole project, with headings like the ones given in the example below, or you can have separate budgets for each section or each component of the project and a combined budget to sum them up. The easiest way to do this is by using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (see example of a budget spreadsheet below).

5) <u>Compare your total expenses to your total income</u> - If your projected expenses and income are approximately equal then your budget is balanced. If not, you will either have a budget surplus (estimated expenses are less than your estimated income), or a budget deficit (estimated expenses are greater than your estimated income). If this is the case, you will need to rework

your budget (either cut some expenses if you have a deficit, or allocate more money to an area if you have a surplus) to make it balance.

6) Regularly review your budget - You should review your budget regularly (once a month is usually reasonable) and make necessary changes to keep it as accurate as possible. For example, if you get a grant you didn't anticipate, or if your spending estimates are off, these things should be factored into the budget, and become part of a new, more accurate budget.

Example of a budget spreadsheet

The below example of a budget spreadsheet lists the funding sources along the top row and a list of expense categories down the first left-hand column. Where each column and row meet (called a cell), there is a number representing the amount of money from that particular funding source that goes to that particular expense category.

Budget: Period 1 July 2001 – 1 June 2002							
	University Funding	Government Funding	Fundraising	Community Grant	Volunteer hours	In-kind contributions	**Totals**
Salaries	15,000	2,500	2,500	21,000	7000*		**41,000**
Equipment	3,000	500	500	4,200		500	**8,200**
Sampling Analysis	1,500	1,500	0	0			**3,000**
Meeting costs	500	200	0	500		100	**1,200**
Rent	4,000	500	0	3,000			**7,500**
Sundries						250	
Totals	**24,000**	**5,200**	**3,000**	**28,700**			**$60,900**

* this figure is determined by multiplying the number of volunteer hours by an estimated dollar per hour e.g. 280 hrs were volunteered valued at approx $25/hr = $7000.

References and further reading

Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua. *CommunityNet Aotearoa: An internet resource for communities in New Zealand*. Retrieved 2 April 2007 from http://www.community.net.nz

Galbally, R., Guide for Community Treasurers. Retrieved 19 April 2007 from: http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/community_treasuers_guide.pdf

Our Community, Help Sheet for Preparing a Budget. Retrieved 19 April 2007 from: http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/management/view_help_sheet.do?articleid=69

University of Kansas. *The Community Tool Box: Bringing solutions to light.* Retrieved 2 April 2007 from: http://ctb.ku.edu

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.8 – Which public participation tools should I be considering?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide you with information that will assist you to determine the type/s of public participation tools that can most effectively be used to engage the community in your project, and the advantages and things to consider for each tool. There are some creative and innovative processes out there to explore – it's not just about public meetings! It is important to select tools that are appropriate to the level of participation chosen, the skills of the staff managing the public participation process and the resources (money and time) available. Please note that this is a list of the most commonly used tools and is not an exhaustive list – the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) lists 47 public participation strategies for you to consider. Griffith University's Urban Research Program's toolbox provides a comprehensive list of 63 possible participation tools in alphabetical order, together with instructions (see references at the end of this fact sheet).

Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
Displays	Displays are intended to provide project information and raise awareness about particular issues. They can be interactive or static, and can be used as part of a forum, workshop, conference, exhibition, community event or featured in a community space (i.e. council/shire foyer, library, shopping centre). Displays can include drawings, models, maps, posters, or other visual and audio representations relevant to community issues and interests. Feedback opportunities can also be provided, such as forms with questions and room for comment. Displays develop more concrete concepts of proposals or developments, and where these provide options for interaction, public opinions and feedback can be sought and incorporated into the planning and decision-making process.	▪ Focuses public attention on an issue. ▪ Can create interest from media groups and lead to increased coverage of the issue. ▪ Allows for different levels of information sharing. ▪ Provides a snapshot of opinions and community issues based on feedback. ▪ Gives public flexibility to attend in an informal setting.	▪ Public must be motivated to attend. ▪ A facilitator can encourage involvement and written feedback. ▪ Can damage the project's reputation if not done well. ▪ Displays need to be visually appealing and interesting, but not too glitzy or expensive-looking.
Internet	Can be used as a means to inform and gather feedback (e.g. calls for submissions, completing online questionnaires etc). Frequently asked questions and answers are useful to place on the web site. Online discussion forums, chat rooms, e-polling technologies and web questionnaires may	▪ Cost effective after initial outlay. ▪ Quick response rate. ▪ Easy to keep information current. ▪ Can incorporate large amounts of data.	▪ Will not reach everyone. ▪ Technical problems can arise. ▪ Requires expert staff. ▪ Can yield an unbalanced view.

Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
	be combined in more general e-consultation procedures to explore what people are thinking.		
Media/ Advertising	In most cases, a combination of promotional strategies for your public participation will be needed, and may include: - Paid advertising (guarantees a spot in a paper) in relevant papers such as The West Australian (Government Noticeboard) and community newspapers. You may also consider magazines, newsletters, websites and other community-based publications - Media releases and updates (radio, newspapers and newsletters) - Media kits and media launches; - TV; - Pamphlets/ flyers/ brochures/ fact sheets/ business cards - Signs - Reports and other 'official' publications - Exhibition / trade displays - Posters - Internet - Billboards and posters - Competitions	▪ Can be designed to suit the size and needs of the community and complexity of the project. ▪ A number of methods can be employed to reach different target audiences.	▪ Depending on the method of advertising used, it may only reach a section of your intended audience. ▪ Employs one-way communication, so there is little opportunity for meaningful dialogue.
Public comment and submissions	Inviting public submissions for written comments on specific proposals. Provide full details of issue for which views are sought, including the negotiable and non-negotiable aspects of your project. It is futile to ask for public comment on an issue/ area that cannot be changed/ influenced, and is also very frustrating for the public. Effectively publicise the	▪ Provides detailed information on the issue for those interested. ▪ Extracts a considered view from the public.	▪ May have poor response rate ▪ Lengthy process.

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Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
	comment period. May need to ask targeted questions on a draft document/ plan/ policy / guideline, and/ or divide it into sections that can be specifically addressed. Must allow ample time to respond (at least a month is preferable).		
Open or information days	These provide a forum to inform the public about a particular situation through informative, interactive displays and access to technical staff. There is a two-way exchange of information, with the public asking questions and putting their opinions forward. The event usually spans over several hours to allow an informal, 'drop-in' format for the public. Open days are usually held in a well-known public place, such as a council/shire, school or town hall, or could be incorporated in a community event. Feedback opportunities should be provided, such as the provision of 'graffiti' walls and/ or forms with questions and room for comment. Open days are a highly recommended tool for staff to use.	▪ Gives public flexibility to attend in an informal setting. ▪ Allows quality contact with public and can provide ad-hoc feedback. ▪ Promotes Department's work.	▪ Feedback may be limited and may not be representative. ▪ Effective promotion is required to motivate attendance – making an open day as part of an existing community event works well, as an atmosphere and numbers are guaranteed, and promotion is not your sole responsibility.
Printed material (e.g. fact sheets)	Printed material is an easy way to publicise and provide information on a project/ issue, or publicise a participation processes such as an event or meeting. Popular forms include: fact sheets, flyers, newsletters, brochures, issues papers, reports, surveys etc. These can be single purpose or be produced as a series for distribution (e.g. newsletters). Printed material can be distributed hand to hand, made available for the public to pick up, or mailed out either directly to a select mailing list or distributed to a specific geographic area via a distribution company (this is actually very cheap). Councils/ shires often have community directories on their websites, which is an excellent way to find relevant community groups. You can include printed material as an insert in the local newspaper.	▪ Provides an overview of information. ▪ Easy to read and understand. ▪ Economical to produce. ▪ Can combine the needs of publicity with information and allow for minor public input. ▪ Can reach a large amount of people. ▪ Can facilitate the documentation of the public participation process. ▪ Can include a tear-off /reply-paid feature to enable feedback from the public on an issue, or to register interest in attending an event, or being included on a database for future project updates and participation opportunities.	▪ Mostly one-way communication ▪ Limited space available to communicate complicated concepts. ▪ There is no guarantee that the materials will be read or how they will be interpreted. ▪ If mailed, the guarantee of being read is only as good as the mailing list itself; mailing lists need regular updating to avoid wasted time, energy and paper. ▪ Can be lost if included with many other flyers and 'bill

Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
			stuffers' ▪ Without visual elements, this can exclude those who are not print literate.
Surveys and questionnair e-s	Quantitative research in the form of questionnaires or surveys gives statistics in response to set questions. Can be administered through post, via telephone or face-to-face. Development of the questions should be undertaken in collaboration with a professional to avoid bias. Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys.	▪ Provides input from individuals who may not attend meetings. ▪ Provides input from a cross-section of the community. ▪ Statistically tested results are more persuasive with political bodies and the general public.	▪ Response rate is generally low. ▪ Usually requires specialist knowledge. ▪ For statistically valid results, can be labour intensive and expensive. ▪ It is difficult to establish why someone has answered a certain way.
Workshops	A facilitated workshop is an intensive session or working meeting attended by seven to 50 stakeholders with different fields of expertise or interests. The facilitator aids the groups' discussion and information sharing. The main points of the discussion are recorded and later circulated to workshop participants. Workshops are usually focused on a very specific set of issues to enable in-depth discussion.	▪ Allows for in-depth deliberation and discussion of complex issues. ▪ Can establish common ground among participants from which new ideas can be developed. ▪ Provides an opportunity to bring marginalised people and others together to generate ideas.	▪ Can be resource intensive to establish.
Public meetings	Formal meeting with scheduled agenda at an accessible and convenient public location. The format usually entails experts or project managers providing presentations followed by questions from the attendees. The meeting is best facilitated by a community leader, such as a councillor.	▪ Opportunity to provide consistent information and obtain feedback. ▪ Can build relationships with local community if managed well. ▪ Relatively inexpensive.	▪ Not representative. ▪ Localised knowledge only. ▪ Large group format may be a barrier to participation. ▪ Can become unmanageable and frustrating for all involved if vocal people dominate the meeting and it is badly facilitated.

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Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
Advisory/management groups & committees	8 to 12 stakeholders are selected to provide regular input into planning and policy making. It is important to develop appropriate selection criteria for members and Terms of Reference. The name of the committee should be in line with its role and decision-making ability. It is also important to define committee members' roles and responsibilities upfront and allow for the dissemination of information from the committee to the wider community.	▪ Provides for detailed analyses for project issues. ▪ Committee members gain understanding of other perspectives, making consensus easier to achieve.	▪ General public may not embrace committee's recommendations. ▪ Members may not achieve consensus. ▪ Time and labour intensive. ▪ Mis-management is common ▪ Difficult to achieve true representation.
Community education campaigns	Community education is a long-term strategy that seeks to change public behaviour, and can take considerable time and resources. The strategy is usually planned and implemented over 2 - 5 years.	▪ Implements various methods to reach the public who are from different stakeholder groups and backgrounds. ▪ Can reach a large number of people.	▪ Resource intensive. ▪ Requires long-term commitment and allocation of resources. ▪ Difficult to quantify outcomes.
Focus groups	Consists of eight to 10 people led by a trained facilitator in a one-off discussion on a particular topic. Selection of the group is of primary importance. Focus groups are chosen according to specific criteria, e.g. age, gender, user group. Individuals are usually strategically invited to attend the 'informal' discussion to talk about a particular issue following a pre-defined agenda. May need to have several groups to investigate views from different perspectives.	▪ Allows for brainstorming of ideas. ▪ Can include those who may usually be excluded. ▪ Allows in-depth discussion.	▪ May be costly. ▪ Lack of confidentiality. ▪ Qualitative information only. ▪ Difficulty in prioritising issues.
Citizen juries	A group of 12 to 24 people, as representative of the population as possible, are randomly selected to meet over several days as part of a jury. The jury listens to a series of expert presentations, usually with conflicting views, and ask questions, mediated by a facilitator. Juries are not open to public observation, although conclusions are published in a report. The objective is to reach a decision or formulate a	▪ Opportunity to develop deep understanding of an issue. ▪ Provides informed feedback. ▪ Public can identify with representative citizens on jury. ▪ Useful when advocacy groups want to take role of 'expert' and do not want to	▪ Resource intensive. ▪ Not suitable for all issues. ▪ Extensive preparatory work required. ▪ Expert presenters need to be chosen carefully, as ineffective speakers can skew the views

Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
	set of recommendations or a joint statement on an issue. The decision-making body should ideally follow recommendations or explain why they have not. Consensus is not required. Best for very contentious or divisive issues that are fairly 'black and white'.	compromise or participate in framing a solution.	of jury members. ▪ Small group size makes representativeness difficult to achieve.
Consensus conferences	A group of 10 to 16 participants that are selected to be representative of the general population, are brought together over several days with experts in a range of fields relevant to the topic being discussed. The experts, who may have conflicting views, inform participants about the topic and field questions. The discussion is facilitated by an independent party. Participants then discuss the case and come to some consensus. The meetings are open for observation to the wider public, experts, and media, and the results of the deliberation are published.	▪ Open to public – process is transparent. ▪ Provides informed deliberation.	▪ Time and cost intensive. ▪ Extensive preparatory work. ▪ Difficult to be representative. ▪ May be difficulty in reaching consensus
Open Space Technology	Open space technology allows participants to offer topics for separate, concurrent group discussions and for people to participate according to their interest. In other words, the community sets the agenda for the meeting and the Department steps back. The theory behind open space technology is that people will take ownership of issues they wish to address. The open space technology operates on the following four principles: ▪ Whoever comes are the right people ▪ Whatever happens is the only thing that could have ▪ Whenever it starts is the right time ▪ When it's over, it's over. (International Association for Public Participation, 2000)	▪ Appropriate for use where there is a need for new ideas and the prevailing climate is characterised by uncertainty, ambiguity and a low level of trust. ▪ Because there are a limited set of rules, the process is driven by the participants. ▪ Absence of 'control' of the process means participants must be prepared to go where the process takes them. ▪ Includes immediate summary and discussion. ▪ Provides a structure by giving participants opportunities and responsibilities to create a valuable product or an experience. ▪ Clearly demonstrates which issues are	▪ Facilities should be flexible to accommodate variable group sizes. ▪ A powerful theme or vision statement is needed to generate topics. ▪ A large number of participants can be involved in the process (up to 500). ▪ The most important issues can sometimes be lost in the discussion. ▪ It can sometimes be difficult to get accurate records of results.

Tools	Description	Advantages	Special considerations
		important/not important to participants.	
World Café	The World Café is a creative process for facilitating collaborative dialogue and the sharing of knowledge and ideas to create a living network of conversation and action. In this process, a café ambiance is created, in which participants discuss a question or issue in small groups around the café tables. At regular intervals, the participants move to a new table. One table host remains and summarises the previous conversation to the new table guests. Thus, the proceeding conversations are cross-fertilised with the ideas generated in former conversations with other participants. At the end of the process, the main ideas are summarised in a plenary session and follow-up possibilities are discussed.	▪ Ability to generate input, share knowledge, stimulate innovative thinking and explore action. ▪ Engages people in authentic conversation – whether they are meeting for the first time or have established relationships with each other. ▪ Can be used to deepen relationships and mutual ownership of outcomes in an existing group. ▪ Creates meaningful interaction, movement and energy, which stimulates discussion and ideas.	▪ Works best with groups larger than 12 people The Café is less useful when: ▪ You are driving toward an already determined solution or answer. ▪ You want to convey only one-way information. ▪ You are making detailed implementation plans.
21st Century dialogue	Participants are chosen via community outreach processes to represent diversity within the community. One way to get good representation is to have three distinct groups: key stakeholders, those who self-select and randomly selected participants. Participants work in groups of 10 – 12 at tables, each with a trained facilitator and scribe. A lead facilitator heads the forum. Group members are given background information on the issue to be discussed before the meeting and brief information sessions on the day. Networked computers at each table enable recommendations to be centrally collated quickly and shown to the whole room on large screens.	▪ Decision-makers are actively involved and find out about people's preferences and areas of consensus. ▪ Complicated, contested issues affecting a range of stakeholders can be explored. ▪ People can influence decisions that affect them. ▪ It can attract media/political attention to a particular issue. ▪ People learn about important issues from a range of perspectives. ▪ People's involvement is enhanced by the assistance of facilitators and scribes. ▪ Can potentially involve hundreds of people.	▪ Resource intensive. ▪ Experienced lead facilitator needs to be engaged. ▪ Table facilitators and scribes must receive training. ▪ Large reliance on technology – technical people are required to set-up and support during the event. ▪ Can be viewed as public relations exercise if used in isolation from other public participation tools.

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Fact sheet 2.9 – When and how do I engage an external provider to assist with a public participation process?

The aim of this fact sheet is to assist you to determine whether it would be appropriate to engage an external consultant to help conduct your public participation process. This fact sheet also aims to assist you to understand the considerations and types of questions to ask when seeking quotes for the external services and assistance that you require.

Do I really need to engage an external provider?

- have you spoken to staff in the Public Participation Planning Section of the Department first? They can assist you with advice and direction throughout your public participation process, and particularly in your initial planning stages to determine whether a consultant may or may not be appropriate.
- have you completed a Public Participation Plan and clarified the objectives and limitations of the project?
- have you reviewed the Department's Public Participation policy and relevant fact sheets to gain background ideas and information?
- is there capacity internally to undertake the work (through training or existing capacity – Public Participation Planning staff can refer you to trained staff)
- what aspects of the project can be managed internally (planning, logistics, overseeing process)? What aspects/phase/s of the project would require an external consultant (planning, scoping, implementing, evaluating)?
- is there sufficient budget for a consultant (can be up to $1000 per day)?
- is there sufficient time embedded in the overall project timelines to procure a consultant and manage them to achieve the desired outcome (working with community members tends to take a minimum of 3 - 6 months to plan, implement (promote/invite), analyse and evaluate)?Engaging the services of an external consultant can take up to 6 weeks.
- have you allocated a staff member to manage the day to day operations of the consultant throughout the public participation process?

Please note - Public Participation Planning Section staff can assist by working alongside an external consultant, guiding and assisting as required.

Yes, I want to engage an external consultant:

If after answering these questions you determine that contracting an external consultant is necessary, then you will need to consider the likely cost of the contract as this will dictate which departmental procurement process you will need to follow. You can seek further advice from the Financial Services Branch and the Public Participation Planning Section with choosing a suitable procurement process and completing necessary documentation.

For procurement matters, contact DEC's Procurement Manager in the Financial Services Branch.

DEC procurement rules can be found at: http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/csd/fsb/PR.doc

No matter which procurement process you choose, the following considerations will assist you to refine your consultant selection process further:

- what type of experienced consultant do you need (i.e. facilitator, consultation/community engagement consultant, public relations/communications consultant, social researcher, qualitative data analyst)? There are often large differences between public relations consultants and public participation /community engagement consultants – see fact sheet 2.10 – *What terminology should I choose when discussing public participation?*
- what stage/s of the public participation process is the consultant being engaged for? Scoping the project? Developing the public participation plan? Implementation of the public participation plan? Evaluating the community engagement process?
- completing the Consultant's brief (see template) will also assist you to focus your requirements. This information can then be modified to fit documentation required by your particular procurement process.

Remember, technical knowledge of the subject is not required for facilitation – community engagement skills are more important.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.10 – What terminology should I use when discussing public participation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to raise your awareness about the range of public participation terminology options. This will assist you in framing your public participation activities in both internal and external communication, and help you to identify the meaning of terms used by other government and non-government agencies and organisations. Another aim is to encourage you to question the real meaning of the words you choose, which should accurately reflect your intentions.

Engaging with the community, like many practices has experienced a wide range of terminology in the guise of being fresh, more genuine than previous terms and reflective of the latest technology.

DEC uses the term 'Public participation' in line with the terminology adopted by the Corporate Plan and International Association of Public Participation (IAP2).

Once you have decided on what terminology to use, be consistent and use plain, inviting English.

Regardless of the terminology, they all lead to one goal – to bring people together to interact and achieve results that are of benefit to all parties.

Consultation – traditional term possibly less popular due to lack of genuine processes. It is vital not to misuse the word consultation – often people are providing information to, or simply informing a community (one-way communication) and do not want any feedback – this is not consulting. It is dangerous to use the words 'consult' or 'consultation' unless you are genuinely going to consider the views of the community and it will be a two-way communication process. Consultation is just one facet of the IAP2's spectrum of participation, so the term public participation is actually broader.

Citizen/community engagement – community invited to be engaged in an issue consideration process. Currently a popular term used in the industry.

Community/stakeholder involvement – similar to the above definition.

Public participation – public invited to participate in processes to consider issues. This, and the two previous descriptions are broad, all encompassing terms.

Other relevant terminology

Community capacity building – identifying the capacity of a community and working to increase people's knowledge and abilities to enable a more articulate and empowered community.
Cultural community development (CCD) – the utilisation of art/creative techniques to involve a community in visioning and decision-making.

Community development – provision of social inclusion opportunities that enable social capital to increase and capacity building to occur.

Community ownership – an aspiration of projects where community involvement is an essential part of the success.

Corporate social responsibility – discussion about the ethics of operating a business and contributing to the social prosperity of that community.

Public deliberation/deliberative democracy – public invited to be informed and to deliberate over a period of time (e.g. Citizen's jury).

Public relations – perceived by communities as promotional, non-negotiable one-way communication or 'spin'. This term does not sit well in the area of public participation, as it is not perceived as being reflective of genuine, quality processes.

Social sustainability - assessment of social (as separate to environmental or economic) impacts of a project.

Social planning – is planning to improve the wellbeing and quality of life in local communities. Broadly speaking, social planning is similar in approach to any other form of strategic planning, however, it has a specific emphasis on social and community issues.

Social capital – a range of elements (e.g. volunteering hours) that enable communities to be compared in terms of resilience.

Triple bottom line decision-making – analysis of social, environmental and economic impacts of a decision.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 2.11 – How do I build relationships and partnerships with the community and then successfully maintain them?

The aim of this fact sheet is to highlight effective ways to build relationships with members of your community and other project partners before starting your project. Good relationships are an investment in the success of current and future projects. Relationship development and partnership formation is a vital aspect of public participation.

Why is relationship building important?
When you plan a project, you need to include the time it takes to build relationships into your plan. People need time to build trust. There is a natural tendency to 'rush in' and get started. However, do not underestimate the importance of spending quality time on relationship building to maximise your project's success. Good relationships are the means for achieving your goals. Often, relationships are the *key* to solving a problem or getting the job done.

When forming a relationship, the following questions should be asked: 'Why do we want to work with these groups or individuals? What are the benefits to us and what are the mutual benefits?'

Addressing historical issues
An important first step in relationship building is to identify and reflect on any historical issues and/or current relationships between project partners. A past or current negative relationship will need to be addressed and healed, and it could take a lot of time to rebuild trust and respect. Starting a project is always easier when there is a positive connection between individuals or groups, for example through previous partnerships or through reputation. When there are no previous connections, hard work and time will be needed to build the relationship.

How do I get to know my community?
In the project planning stage, it is important to spend considerable time getting to know the different aspects your community before individuals, groups or organisations are approached about their interest in participating. Honour the time it takes to build relationships. A good start is to talk to shire or council officers and councillors, local groups such as the Chamber of Commerce; Lions; Rotary; ratepayers and resident associations; environment/friends/catchment groups and seniors groups. Offer to speak at a group's meeting. Visit local community centres, events or gatherings to interact on a more informal level.

Issues scoping
This means talking informally to key stakeholders before the start of the project to get you 'up to speed' with 'where the community is at'. This is very beneficial, and can be done by phoning stakeholders with a list of prepared questions. 'Issues scoping' will enable you to see if you are on the right track with both the issues you have identified and possible public participation processes. This informal surveying of community views could potentially alter your entire plan and it's best to find this out earlier rather than later!

How do I successfully maintain a relationship or partnership once it has been formed?
The key to success in maintaining a relationship or partnership is good communication and clarification of expectations early on in the discussions. Partnerships can result in valuable advocacy from within the community or other bodies, or enable the attraction of resources, funding and time.

Successful partnerships can be maintained through:

- Providing adequate and timely guidance, feedback, and other resources.

- Maintaining honest, open, clear and timely channels of communication – for example:
    - regular meetings
    - update bulletins or newsletters
    - providing photographs of activities
    - invitations to sites so that partners can see progress occurring on a project
    - invitations to special events or events celebrating achievement

- Encouraging early involvement in activities.

- Fulfilling the commitments made. While this sounds simple, some potential partners may have had previous experiences where this was not the case and are consequently very cautious about partnering.

It may also be valuable to assign one staff member to provide regular communication with the partner. This will show the importance of the relationship and ensure it gets done.

Reference

Thomas Arcury, *Models of Successful CBPR,* 2000

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 2.12 – What are some useful public participation resources and training?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide a list of recommended resources (publications, websites, policies and training) to further your public participation knowledge and experience.

The (then) Office of Citizens and Civics, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Government of Western Australia

The following six documents promote a whole-of-government, best practice approach to planning, delivering and evaluating public participation:

Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making (2006) includes techniques and tools to help ensure that consultation processes are clear, fair and ultimately rewarding for all those involved.

The Western Australian Citizenship Strategy, A Voice for All: Strengthening Democracy, launched by the Premier, The Hon Geoff Gallop, MLA on Monday 24 May 2004.

e-Engagement: Guidelines for Community Engagement using Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (2005) provide a framework for online consultations and should be used with reference to the Consulting Citizens series of guides which can be found below.

Consulting Citizens: Engaging with Aboriginal Western Australians (2004) provides guidelines for consulting with Aboriginal Western Australians.

Consulting Citizens: Planning for Success (2003) directs its focus towards those elements of planning that are essential to the creation of effective and meaningful consultations. In particular, it includes material to assist in minimising risk - both project risk and during the consultation process itself.

Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide (2002) provides guidelines for consulting the community.

The above six documents can be found at:
http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?event=ccuPublications

The International Association for Public Participation

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (2000) Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation.

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (2000) Public Participation Toolbox.

Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment

This website contains some excellent public participation resources and a planning tool. DEC considers its Victorian equivalent to be leading edge in its practice:
http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/wcmn203.nsf/childdocs/0B996EB412EAB883CA2570360014F01A?open

Twyford Consulting

Beyond Public Meetings: Connecting Community Engagement with Decision-Making (2007) – Vivien Twyford, Stuart Waters, Max Hardy and John Dengate.

Urban Research Program Toolbox

This is a great website that has an alphabetical list of 63 public participation tools, descriptions of the tools and how to use them. It also has some great case studies: https://www3.secure.griffith.edu.au/03/toolbox/index.php

The (then) Department of Environment (archived documents for reference)

Community Involvement Framework (2003).

Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement (2003).

Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups (2003).

These documents can be found at:
http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/portal/page?_pageid=93,96391&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

The (then) Department of Conservation and Land Management (archived documents for reference)

Public Participation Manual (2000).

Recommended resources for working with Aboriginal communities

Department of Industry & Resources (1995) *Working with Aboriginal Groups: a Practical Approach:*
http://www.doir.wa.gov.au/documents/mineralsandpetroleum/WorkingWithAbComs2.pdf

ATSIC, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services, Department of Indigenous Affairs and Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Citizens and Civics Unit (2002) *Consulting Citizens: Engaging with Aboriginal Western Australians:*
http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/Publications/

Australian Heritage Commission (2002) *Ask First: A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values:*

http://www.ahc.gov.au/publications/indigenousheritage/index.html

Australian General Practice Network

This website has a very good, detailed overview of some key public participation tools:

http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=24317

NSW Department of Community Services

This website has some great case studies.

http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/getting_organised/message/cs_guide.html

Queensland Department of Communities

http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/share_your_knowledge/resources/guides_publications.html

Case studies

The Pipeline Project in Remote NSW
A public participation case study involving a small community under threat of having its water supply pipeline replaced with water tanks - written by Max Hardy.
http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/builder/participation/pipeline.html

Citizen's Jury Process - Wollondilly Shire Council
A public participation case study based on the Wollondilly Shire Council Social Planning Community Panel (Citizen's Jury) Process
– written by Max Hardy,Twyford Consulting and Sandra Ruecroft, Wollondilly Shire Council.
http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/builder/participation/cit_jury.html

Useful websites for creating databases

National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc	www.ncac.gov.au/Search/Search2.asp?cPage=1&Type=&PostCode=6056&Suburb=&Name=&State=
Official Government site w/links to aged care centres, homes and services	www.agedcareaustralia.gov.au
Find a school in WA - public	www2.eddept.wa.edu.au/schoolprofile/school_search.do?districtEntry=
Find a school in WA - independent	www.ais.wa.edu.au/search-school/
Find an NRM group • **Landcare** • **Coastcare** • **Indigenous Land Management**	 www.landcareonline.com/find_group.asp www.coastcare.com.au/FindGroup.aspx www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ilmf/wa.html

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Other DEC documents, policies and guidelines for public participation

- Good Neighbour policy;
- Media relations policy;
- Administrative Instruction no. 31 - operational guidelines for public participation in planning, and the management of advisory bodies; and
- Committee Establishment and Management policy.

Training offered by the Public Participation Planning Section

- Conversing with community;
- Facilitation skills;
- Effective conflict management;
- Presentation skills;
- Risk communication;
- Two-day public participation training;
- Working more effectively with groups – A public participation toolkit;
- Tools and techniques for public participation; and
- Introduction and overview of public participation.

For further information, please see the *Organisational Learning and Development Manual* at:

http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/csd/hrb/training/OLDM.pdf

External training

International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)

IAP2 Training Program offers a Certificate in Public Participation throughout Australasia, North America, Europe and Asia. IAP2 trainers have worked with practitioners from around the world to develop practical tools that transcend national and cultural boundaries and are suitable for the most advanced practitioners through to those just starting out.

The IAP2 Certificate in Public Participation consists of three courses:

- **Course 1:** Planning for Effective Public Participation (2 days)
- **Course 2:** Effective Communications for Public Participation (1 day)
- **Course 3:** Techniques for Effective Public Participation (2 days)

All three courses are presented in an experiential learning environment that provides students with the opportunity to explore their own public participation challenges with their instructor and peers. Interactive exercises and practical tips are used to enliven the theory and reference materials presented throughout each course and reinforce skills that participants can put to immediate use.

At the conclusion of each course, students will receive credit from IAP2 recognising the successful completion of that course. Upon completion of all three courses, students will be awarded a Certificate in Public Participation from IAP2 International. In Australasia, over 160 government organisations have had representatives receive training.

For further details, go to: http://www.iap2.org.au/training

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Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA)

IPAA offers a series of modules in community/stakeholder engagement:

1. Introduction to design;
2. Facilitation; and
3. Evaluation.

For further details, go to: http://www.wa.ipaa.org.au; phone 9221 1177 or email info@ipaawa.org.au.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.13 – What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project.

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide guidance on how to plan and conduct the evaluation of your public participation process - both at the beginning of the project and as an ongoing process. Fact sheet 4.2 – *How do I conduct an end of project evaluation?* will assist you to prepare an evaluation tool for the end of your project.

Why evaluate?

Evaluation can help you:

- learn from your experience
- record what you have learnt, and share it with others
- check your progress
- identify strengths and weaknesses in your project
- create a basis for future planning
- demonstrate whether you have used your resources – time and money –efficiently and effectively
- explain to funders, and others involved in your work, what you have achieved and how successful it is
- ensure that your project is accountable to the wider community
- encourage an honest appraisal of progress, so that you can learn from what has and what hasn't worked well.

Who should conduct an evaluation?

Depending on the size and difficulty of the project, an internal evaluation may be achievable by staff. This would usually be conducted by the project manager.

In other cases**,** evaluations cannot be undertaken without involving a high level of research. This is especially the case where the project's objectives require attitudinal or behavioural change. In these cases, it may be necessary to hire a market research company to conduct the evaluation to determine what has or hasn't been achieved. External research companies may also be appropriate where there is a contentious issue and a need to show independence, credibility and reduce public scepticism. Contact the Public Participation Planning section for a list of consultants.

Consideration of budget and staff capacity are likely to be crucial to the decision on who will conduct the evaluation and how it will occur.

When should evaluation occur?

Evaluation should be planned at the start of your project (see planning template below), and should be an ongoing process (not just one-off) which informs planning and delivery as the project develops in order for it to be more effective.

The advantages of ongoing evaluation include:

- highlighting and celebrating successes and achievements as they occur
- ensuring better understanding of the project
- allowing flexibility and tailoring to participants' needs
- showing how the project is impacting stakeholders/participants, partner agencies and the community

- showing how your project is being influenced/impacted by both internal and external factors (Kellogg Foundation, undated).

It is also critical that a full/report evaluation occur at the end of the evaluation – see fact sheet 4.2 – *How do I conduct an end of project evaluation?*.

Ways to evaluate your project

The template provided below (with an example included) will assist you with planning your ongoing evaluation. Each category heading is explained below.

Evaluation plan					
Objective/s (can be the same as those within the public participation/ communication plan)	**Techniques**	**Indicators**	**When**	**Who**	**Benchmark**
Example					
Joint decision-making with the community regarding project outcomes.	Development of a taskforce/ focus group to assist with decision-making	1. The number of times that consensus was gained in meetings. 2. The number of 'actions' implemented by the group. 3. The number of community members in attendance at taskforce meetings.	After every meeting (quarterly), review minutes to record the indicators.	Taskforce Executive Officer.	After the first six months of the taskforce in operation, review meeting minutes to ensure: 1. Consensus was gained at 90 per cent of meetings 2. All actions have been implemented by the group 3. At least 10 community members attended every meeting.

To focus your evaluation, start by writing down:

OBJECTIVES
The public participation objectives of your project should play a key role in your evaluation. An accurate and effective evaluation is not possible unless the objectives are relevant and appropriate to the project itself. Refer to fact sheet 2.5 – *How do I develop a public participation/communication plan.*

The evaluation techniques you use will differ according to the objectives you are evaluating. For example, if you are evaluating the success of a particular air sampling technology, this will differ from the method you use to assess meeting the public participation or communication objectives.

When determining your objectives consider: What are you trying to achieve? What are you going to evaluate? What questions will the evaluation seek to answer? Ensure that you include initial and ongoing objectives.

TECHNIQUES
Think about what methods you could use to measure the objectives. Evaluations can be carried out using a variety of techniques including questionnaires, surveys, market research, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, interviews, focus groups or stakeholder panels. Questions should be asked of the participants regarding the planning, implementation and

follow-up stages of their involvement (Were their expectations met? Were their recommendations taken on board? Did they receive feedback about how their involvement will be used? Would they participate in this type of process again?).

If possible, it is good to also interview members of the general public or relevant stakeholders who may not have been directly involved in the project, but who know about it, to ensure that a different viewpoint is obtained. Before implementing questionnaires and surveys, be sure to trial them to make sure they will make sense to participants and provide you with all the information you are seeking. You should also forward them to the Corporate Communication Manager for approval. More detailed information on how to conduct these techniques can be found in the Public Participation Manual's (former Conservation and Land Management's) *Guides to best practice*. The table below outlines some of the most commonly used evaluation techniques which you can use throughout your project.

A questionnaire survey – can be used to find out more about the views and experiences of stakeholders, the wider community, agencies etc. It is generally quantitative research in the form of questionnaires or surveys, providing statistics in response to set questions. Can be administered through post, via telephone or face-to-face. Development of the questions should be undertaken in collaboration with a professional to avoid bias. Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys.	**Public comment and submissions** – an analysis of public submissions for comments on specific proposals, plans, and policies could be undertaken as an evaluation technique. You could look at the number of submissions received and the content of submissions i.e. was there a broad range of issues? Was there general consensus on how these issues should be managed, or is the community divided on the matter? Are people generally positive or negative about the issue?
In-depth interviews – it is usually best to limit the number of in-depth interviews to those whose involvement with the project gives them particular insights or valuable experience. Try to talk to a range of people who are likely to have different perspectives and views on your project.	**Focus groups** – Consist of eight to 10 people led by a trained facilitator in a one-off discussion on a particular topic. Selection of the group is of primary importance. Focus groups are chosen according to specific criteria, e.g. age, gender, stakeholder group. Individuals are usually strategically invited to attend the 'informal' discussion to talk about a particular issue following a pre-defined agenda. May need to have several groups to investigate views from different perspectives.
Feedback forms (see example below) – you can find out whether people have found your meeting, workshop, training and other events useful by asking them to fill in a short form.	**Evaluation workshops and review meetings** – a facilitated workshop is an intensive session or working meeting attended by seven to 50 stakeholders with different fields of expertise or interests. The facilitator aids the groups' discussion and information sharing. The main points of the discussion are recorded and later circulated to workshop participants. Workshops are usually focused on a very specific set of issues to enable in-depth discussion.

INDICATORS

Indicators assist you to measure progress and are often useful for senior management or funding bodies, who like to see tangible indicators of success.
Examples of the types of indicators that can help to measure your evaluation objectives in a quantifiable way are:

- the number of participants in attendance (e.g. at a workshop/open day)
- the level of interest amongst participants
- the extent of knowledge change as a result of the activity
- information, suggestions and recommendations that have been implemented (i.e. fencing, revegetation, behavioural change)

- the attendance numbers at events/meetings/workshops
- registrations of interest in the project (e.g. to be on a database for more information and to attend workshops)
- public queries, requests for information, complaints and compliments
- media coverage (number of stories printed and letters to the editor)
- ministerial enquiries
- website page hits
- numbers and content of public submissions received
- responses received formally from feedback and evaluation forms and informally through conversations.

Qualitative ways of collecting evidence include:

- People's opinions, views and experiences (for example, people's stories about their experience on the project, photos of the area 'before and after', people's views on whether they think they have more power).

BENCHMARKS

How will you know when you have achieved your goals? What will be different about the original problem at the end of the project, if you are successful? How will you report back to the community? Benchmarks assist you to answer these questions and to determine when you have achieved your project objectives. For example 50 per cent of people will commit to changing their behaviour as a result of the workshop.

Benchmarks should ideally be set in conjunction with participants and stakeholders where appropriate – i.e. when a committee has been set-up.

Feedback form example

Below is an example of a simple, easy-to-use feedback form for participants to fill out at the end of an event such as a meeting or workshop. The form's simplicity has made it very successful in soliciting information and is usually completed by most people.

Workshop feedback

Content (please circle)

Too much	Just about right	Too little

Pace (please circle)

Too fast	Just about right	Too slow

Format (please circle)

Too loose	Just about right	Too structured

What was the most beneficial aspect to you?

____

____

What could have been improved?

____

____

Any other comments?

____

____

References

Website link to *Evaluating Community Projects - a practical guide*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation: http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354157.pdf

Department of Environment and Conservation, *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement*. 'Evaluation Pro-forma' page 22, 2003.

Government of Western Australia, *Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making*, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2006.

Keating, C.D, *Facilitation toolkit: A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups*, 2003.

Kellogg Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook, 2007 http://www.wkkf.org/pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf

Victorian Government, *Communication Evaluation Guidelines*, 2007 http://www.commstoolkit.dpc.vic.gov.au/downloads/R74_Evaluation_Guidelines.doc

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.14 – How do I introduce my project to the community and encourage involvement?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide guidance on effective ways to introduce and promote your project to the community in order to attract participation, support and interest.

How do I introduce my project?
There are many ways to introduce your project to the community, or more specifically, to communicate your project's messages and participation opportunities. It is recommended that a range of promotional methods are used, which cater for different needs and accessibility, to ensure that as many individuals and/or groups within your community as possible receive the information.

Examples of ways to introduce your project to the community and encourage involvement include:

Open days or information days
These are events where people can drop in at a central location (such as a town hall, council office or school) during specific times (usually evenings or weekends, times that are convenient to most people) to view displays, take away printed materials and publications, and ask questions or discuss issues with project officers/partners. It is a great way to provide an informal, unstructured, non-threatening and interesting avenue for community members to interact with the project team on a one-on-one basis. This is a powerful relationship-building technique.

It is recommended that an opportunity for people to register their interest in the project and also to provide any feedback is provided at an open day. A large aerial map of the area is helpful to use as a talking point or to identify areas of concern, whatever the issue may be. For example, you could provide community members at open days with the opportunity to place sticky, coloured dots on a map of the local area at locations where they feel air quality monitoring points should be located.

Another way of conducting an open day is to incorporate it as part of an existing local event, fair or the local markets. This way, you are guaranteed of attracting a crowd and having an atmosphere. Having children's activities is always a great way to attract and retain people.

Media releases, advertising and updates (TV, radio, newspapers and newsletters)
Sending a clear, concise and interesting media release with eye-catching photos to a local paper is the best way to have an article published, though there are never any guarantees. This needs to occur through DEC's Public Affairs Branch. Or you can ring a newspaper reporter directly to cover the story (again, with authority from the Public Affairs Branch). A newspaper article is a high impact way to communicate the project objectives and public participation opportunities to the community and is also free. You can also send media releases to radio and television stations.

Alternatively, you may wish to place advertisements in newspapers. In general, local newspapers are a lot cheaper to advertise in than major newspapers. The relevant local government authority may also have a supplement in the local newspaper in which they advertise events and local projects. Negotiating with local government to have your advertisement included may give it greater coverage and interest. Ensure information is clear, simple, accessible and with minimal text. Using graphics or photos is also recommended to attract readers.

Another worthwhile opportunity is to have an article in other bodies' newsletters, such as councils (usually occur on a quarterly basis), resident/ratepayers associations and environmental groups.

Often groups have electronic newsletters and a large email database which you could negotiate to access.

Brochures/pamphlets/flyers
A brochure is a good way to communicate your project's messages and public participation opportunities. Like a media release, it should contain clear, concise, accessible and interesting information with lots of images and/or graphics. The initial brochure does not necessarily need to look too glossy or be overly expensive, as you may want your audience to know that the contents are still negotiable. Brochures can be distributed in a number of ways including:

- mass letterbox drops through a distribution company (this is quite affordable);
- targeted mail out - see what databases exist internally (The Public Participation Planning section may be able to assist). You may also be able to use existing databases from local groups or find them on the internet – for example, local government and catchment groups often have community databases or contact details that you may freely access. The brochure could also be accompanied by a letter;
- placement on noticeboards in local libraries, council foyers, community centres and other prominent community spaces such as shopping centres. A poster version of the brochure could also be placed in community spaces.

Internet
The Internet should never be used as the only method of communicating project information, but rather as a supporting function. This is because not everyone in your community may have access to the Internet. Placing your web address on brochures, cards, postcards, posters and other promotional material is a good way to direct people to more detailed and different information on your website. Your web pages should be accessible, appealing and easy to read and navigate.

Public presentations
Speaking at local groups' meetings, such as schools – Parents and Citizens/Parents and Friends; resident/ratepayers associations; Rotary; Lions; Chamber of Commerce and environmental groups, is an effective and targeted approach to gain interest and participation in your project. Often these groups are seeking a presenter for their meetings, so it is mutually beneficial. The talk must be well-prepared, interesting, not too long, focused and delivered effectively, with visual material to accompany the presentation. Try not to overuse PowerPoint, and allow sufficient time for discussion about your presentation with the group. For further information on presentation skills, refer to fact sheet 3.7 – *How do I deliver an effective presentation?*

Advocates, allies and partners
Utilising networks and working partnerships already formed and requesting advocates to start 'spreading the word' within your community can also be an effective way to start publicising your project and getting community interest. It can also be useful to invite advocates to public presentations and community workshops/ meetings so that they can support you at these functions. See fact sheet 1.3 – *How do I get project partners and advocates on board?* for more information.

References
Department of Environment, *Community Involvement Framework,* 2003

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 2.15 – How do I gauge the issues and register interest from the community at the start of the project?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide information about how to collect information and register interest from your community at the start of your project through the use of feedback forms. This is a good way to help plan your public participation by determining potential community interest and level of involvement.

What is a feedback form?
A feedback form is a great way of attracting and registering interest from community members to become involved in your project. DEC's 'Have Your Say' brochures are a good example. Below is a pro forma that can be used at the start of your project (possibly at an information session or open day) to gauge interest in participation. It will also identify the issues which the community is interested in and therefore what you should focus on in your communication. The form could either be the last section of a project information brochure or on an A4 page.

Example:

Prefix the form with the name of the project and some general project information.

How can I get involved?

Would you like to receive general information on XXX in the XXX area?

Yes No

If yes, what is your preferred way of receiving information and frequency?

Postal	Fortnightly
Email	Monthly
Local newspaper	Quarterly
Other ___________	Other_____________

Are you interested in becoming actively involved in the X program/project?

Yes No

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide your details:

Name: ____________________

Postal address: ____________________

Email: ____________________

Are you interested in attending an information session/open day?

Yes No

If so, detail the types of issues you would like addressed at the open day:

____

____

Are you interested in attending a workshop on this issue?

Yes No

Are there any comments you would like to make about this issue?

____

____

Thank you for taking part

Tips on maximising feedback through a feedback form
To maximise feedback from the community, try the following:

- On the back of the form provide a reply paid address (this can be organised with Australia Post);
- Hand out the forms whenever you have an opportunity, e.g. at open days, information stalls etc;
- Post out to residents and businesses in the targeted areas;
- Leave the forms with community groups, local government, local libraries and schools; and
- Have the form available on the internet for increased accessibility.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.1 – Working with adults and groups – how can we make it more successful?

The aim of this fact sheet is to help you to work more successfully with groups, and specifically with adults, throughout your project. Understanding adult learning styles and principles will help you to more effectively plan and implement your public participation activities, making them more accessible and beneficial.

Working with groups
A group is two or more people who can or need to do something together, such as gain an understanding of an issue or make decisions. Most of us are members of some kind of group, such as our work team, organisation, family or a local environmental group. There can also be groups within groups.

While not all groups are effective all the time, groups can achieve almost anything if they function well. Groups usually form as a result of needing or wanting to achieve something, perhaps in response to a decision or an event, or with the aim of making a difference. Group processes can be both complex and ever-changing.

Groups achieve by:

- having a clear purpose;
- valuing differences;
- encouraging contributions from all members;
- listening;
- challenging assumptions;
- seeking 'outside group advice' when appropriate;
- making joint decisions;
- sharing and allocating tasks among many (ensuring a few are not always doing everything);
- providing honest, constructive and sensitive feedback;
- using efficient and transparent (open) processes;
- committing to action; and
- following through.

Refer to 'The Group Effectiveness Model' (DoE, Facilitation Toolkit, 2003, p.8).for an illustration of group elements and interrelationships:
http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/portal/page?_pageid=93,96391&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Adult learning styles
When working with or within a group, it is important to understand how adults interact and learn, why people get involved with groups and what maintains their interest and involvement.

There are some key differences between how adults and children prefer to learn. These can be expressed in terms of participation, demonstrating that adults:

- have a need to know why they should participate;
- have a need to be self-directing and decide for themselves when they want to participate;

- have a far greater volume and variety of experiences than young people – therefore, connecting learning experiences to past experiences can make the participation experience more meaningful; and
- become ready to participate and learn when they experience a life situation where they need to be involved.

Research has shown that there are measurable differences in the way people learn.

There are four key learning styles:

- **Dynamic learners** - activists, who learn through having a go and seeing if things work – learning through trial and error.

- **Imaginative learners** - reflectors, who learn by observing and reflecting, learning through listening and sharing ideas.

- **Analytic learners** - theorists, who learn by wanting to understand the underlying reasons, concepts and relationships by thinking through ideas.

- **Common sense learners** - pragmatists, who learn by using the experience they have already gained, testing theories and applying common sense.

Adult participation and learning principles
The following principles will help create a positive atmosphere during group work:

- set a positive climate for participation/learning;
- clarify the purposes of the participants/learners;
- organise and make available participation/learning resources;
- balance the intellectual and emotional components of participation/learning; and
- share feelings and thoughts with participants/learners, without dominating them.

Incorporating adult participation principles
As you begin working with adults in your project, it's important to be aware that adults prefer participation situations which enables the integration of new ideas with existing knowledge and allows for choice and self-direction, for example:

- help them recall what they already know, that relates to the new ideas or situation;
- build your plans around their needs (including future goals and present situation);
- share your agenda and assumptions and ask for input on them;
- ask what they already know about the topic;
- ask what they would like to know about the topic;
- build in options within your plan so you can be flexible;
- suggest follow-up ideas and next steps for after the session; and
- match the degree of choice to their level of development.

Show respect for the individual participant
It is important to show respect for the individual participant to create a positive atmosphere during group work. In order to do this, you will need to:

- provide a hospitable environment, including breaks, snacks, coffee and flexibility for them to maintain their own comfort;

- provide a quality, well-organised experience that uses time effectively and records outputs/ progress made;
- avoid jargon and acronyms and always speak with people as your equal (never 'talk down' to participants or treat them as though they will never understand);
- validate and affirm their knowledge, contributions and successes;
- ask for feedback on your work or ideas and provide input opportunities;
- let people know that they are joining the process to discover more (possibly not all of the answers) and that no-one knows everything; and
- watch your choice of words - ensure they are mostly positive and where you must speak bluntly, ensure you give more context to the information you are providing to avoid any negative perceptions.

Reference

Department of Environment, Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups, 2003

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.2 – How do I create and maintain good relationships? Interpersonal skills that can help you

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide tips on interpersonal and networking skills that will help you build good relationships throughout your project.

Some of the most important ways to build and maintain relationships
You don't need to be particularly charming, witty or even talented to build good relationships! The following tips are provided to assist you in the development and maintenance of relationships throughout your project:

Listen up!
Listen to what people have to say. You need their thinking. They will grow in confidence and become more engaged if they know their opinions are valued.

Let the person talk about their issue for as long as they need (within reason – or at least until there is an obvious pause) – don't interrupt them or try to impose or respond. This often makes people agitated, and will make them feel like you're not listening. Let them say what they need to say even if it is a monologue! Use your active listening skills. When they have finished, try to paraphrase/summarise what they have said/asked and use phrases like 'What I'm hearing you say is that…is this right? (it's good to check in with them to see if you're on the right track)'; 'So what you're asking is…'; 'I'm sensing that you're feeling pretty concerned about this'.

People do not always expect or want you to solve their issue. Sometimes people just want someone to listen and empathise (not sympathise!).

Being able to learn what people think and need will depend on trust. People need to trust that they won't be criticised or ridiculed if they speak up.

Build relationships one at a time
There are no short cuts. When building relationships, sending out a newsletter helps you keep in touch with lots of people, but it's no substitute for getting to know the people on an individual level.

Be friendly and make a connection
This may seem obvious, but a friendly word or smile can make someone's day. When you meet someone, smile, be friendly, introduce yourself and find out their name. Try to remember their name and address them by their name as often as you can – people like to be remembered! Try to find something in common - all of us want to have connections with our fellow humans. Praising people also goes a long way - everyone likes to be appreciated. Also, by verbally assuming the best about the other person, you give them something to live up to.

Ask people questions
People love to talk about things they enjoy, and rarely get to talk about them enough. Be interested in *their* interests. Asking people about themselves and what they enjoy, and then taking the time to listen attentively can build your relationship. Next time you see them, it's a good opportunity to ask them how things are going with their particular interest/ passion. This shows you have remembered and is also a catalyst for conversation.

Tell people about yourself
People won't trust you unless you are willing to trust them. Tell them what you genuinely care about and what you think. This will give you credibility and show your commitment and courage. To trust you, people have to know that you say what you believe and act accordingly. If people trust you, they are more likely to work with you to achieve mutual goals.

Accept people the way they are
You don't have to agree with people all the time in order to form a relationship with them. No one likes to be judged. Be careful of criticism.

Be persistent
People are often shy and suspicious. It takes a while to win trust. You can usually form a relationship if you stick with it.

Invite people to get involved
People usually want to become part of something bigger than themselves. Many people are looking for an opportunity to meet other people who share common goals. At worst, people will be flattered that you invited them to join.

Enjoy and care about people
If you genuinely enjoy and care about people, others will be attracted to your attitude. People will more likely want to be around you. People will trust you if they know you care about them and about others. The greater your ability to care about all types of people, the more confidence they will have in you.

Be accessible
People are more likely to be drawn to you and your cause if you are approachable and available. Your body language plays a big part in this – if you stand openly and confidently with a smile, you will more likely be approached.

Be flexible, positive, creative and interesting
Every situation will call for a different response. Be ready to change and come up with new solutions. Think outside the square and make things fun. People would much prefer to be enjoying themselves!

Being flexible is always a good idea. It's certainly true for times when you are trying to convince people of a certain thing. If you go into a meeting with a hard-line, 'we'll do it my way or no way at all' attitude, you may well find yourself leaving empty handed. This will also affect your future ability to engage with the people involved.

Ways to influence people
Network
If you want to build relationships, you have to go where the people are: conferences, events, fund raisers, picnics etc.

People are always more willing to listen to and help someone they consider a friend or an ally. Even if someone who doesn't know you is willing to talk, he or she probably won't listen as well as they would if you had a strong connection - there is less invested in the relationship.

Learn what your audience wants and believes
That is, try to understand where they are coming from *before* you start. Do your research before you meet with them, and ask questions when you are together. Otherwise, your suggestions and ideas might be ignored or misunderstood for reasons you aren't even aware of.

Understand that credibility counts
Credibility relates to whether other people believe what you have to say. Credibility can be increased by appearing to know what you're talking about, having high status in the community, being trusted by the audience, being liked by the audience and being similar to the audience, e.g. expressing opinions and/or values that are shared by the audience.

Be trustworthy in your personal and professional affairs
Remember: the ability to influence others is not a one-time event, or even something you work on occasionally. It's *not* separate from what you do in your 'normal' life: how well and easily you will influence others is directly related to how you act all of the time.

Be open to suggestions and possibilities
Make it a point to listen to people's ideas and thoughts and to consider what they have to say. In doing so, you'll become a better communicator, because you'll be able to make connections and specific points to persuade the person you're talking to from things that they have said. What's more, you may get some very good new ideas.

Speak logically and with emotion
Some people will respond best to statistics; others to emotions. By using both, you will appeal to the largest number of people possible.

Speak up!
This point is especially important for people who want to influence others in group settings, such as at meetings and forums.

If you're wrong, admit it
Admitting when you're wrong or don't know something gives you greater credibility as people will trust you more.

Remember that people hear what they want to hear
That is, they generally won't go out of their way to listen to an opposing opinion.

Tell people what they'll get out of it
Explain clearly the benefits of doing what you ask. Most people when asked to do something want to know, 'What's in it for *me*?' That may seem somewhat self-centered, but it's a natural question. If you think about it, all of us do things for a reason.

Don't argue, if at all possible
Generally speaking, you can't win an argument. Even if you win, you may lose. People don't like to be wrong. By arguing, you're telling other people just that - they are wrong. This could seriously harm the relationship, especially if you don't know the person very well. People's core values cannot usually be changed, so it is pointless to try to do so and damage the relationship in the process. All you can do is present information and the facts.

Don't expect overnight results
Building relationships takes time.

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Thank people
This is something you should *never* fail to do. Even if something didn't work; even if you felt like it was a waste of time, it's very important that people feel acknowledged and appreciated. Thanking them is a way to keep the lines of communication open for the next time you want to communicate with your audience.

References
The Community Toolbox – Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development, University of Kansas, USA, 2003

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.3 – How do I engage diverse groups?

The aim of this fact sheet is to alert you to the variety of diverse stakeholders that are often hard to reach and therefore difficult to engage in a public participation process. The involvement of these stakeholders will contribute to a much richer level of knowledge and experience, and therefore, quality participation outcome. It may be harder to reach these groups and have them attend your participation process, but with a little creativity and effort, it will be worth it.

Groups that are often hard to reach and therefore difficult to engage in participation processes include:

- Aboriginal stakeholders/communities
- Culturally, socially and linguistically diverse groups
- people with disabilities and differing skills
- children
- young people
- seniors
- women
- people from different family structures
- people from all different educational levels

The broad definition of diversity builds on the concept of equal opportunity. Just because diverse or ‘often excluded’ groups such as Aboriginal groups, people with a disability and seniors don’t participate in your process, it doesn’t mean they are not interested in being involved. Often you will need to tailor participation processes and activities to enable some groups to fully participate. Traditional participation methods can often be intimidating to some groups, especially where a certain level of English or knowledge is required. You may need to go to their ‘local area or spaces’ for a meeting/workshop or provide transport to a venue. ‘If you want to treat me equally, you may have to be prepared to treat me differently’ (Substantive Equality Unit, 2004).

It is important that the tools and methods selected provide a range of opportunities to participate. Different communication styles may be required to cater for those with limited English, cultural sensitivities and previous experiences with government or your organisation. For further information and assistance on engaging diverse stakeholders, see the then Office of Citizens and Civics’ guide *Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making* (2006), which is available at www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au. The Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment also has some excellent tips for engaging diverse groups (see references).

Working with Aboriginal groups
Often it is a legislative requirement to talk with Aboriginal groups. Cultural awareness training will provide you with important knowledge and understanding, which will assist you when engaging with Aboriginal communities. This is available through the department - see the Organisational Learning and Development manual at:
http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/csd/hrb/training/OLDM.pdf

It is important to note that when working with Aboriginal communities, there are often more than one group with traditional links to, or interests in an area. Rarely does one person or group speak for all of the Aboriginal groups affected, so it is important to take all potential stakeholder views into account as one would in any type of community. If more than one group is affected, meeting(s) will need to be organised with representatives from each group. Otherwise, discuss compatible arrangements separately. Different groups may be in conflict and this needs to be factored into a participation strategy. The earlier the process begins, the better.

You may also like to consider the following information before beginning your consultation process with Aboriginal stakeholders:

- contact and utilise DEC Aboriginal Heritage Unit and Liaison Officers (on the south coast and south west) for their experience and knowledge.
- if you are located in the south west, you may wish to notify the Representatives of Native Title holders and the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALASC - contact details available through the South West Aboriginal Liaison Officer) to request an opportunity to present to the SWALASC Working Party. Generally, communities should have equal family representation on the working parties.
- check the Department of Indigenous Affairs website for Registered Site Informants to determine which Aboriginal stakeholders you should be engaging with.
- consult with local community custodians (you may be able to find out who the local community custodians are by contacting the local DEC office or the local Aboriginal Corporation).
- establish and maintain good working relationships by including provisions such as ‘Welcome to Country’ fees, consultation/sitting fees for cultural input/information, transport, catering and accommodation.

DEC has several policies which provide useful information:

- liaison, consultation and joint management (CALM Act 1984)
- nature conservation on Aboriginal owned, reserved, or leased lands (CALM Act 1984 and Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972)
- employment and training http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/edo/mab/policies/ps35.htm
- it may also be worthwhile reviewing any existing management plans for your particular district or region to seek more specific information on how your region approaches Aboriginal involvement

As a first point of contact it is worthwhile speaking with the DEC Aboriginal Heritage Unit and the DEC Policy and Diversity Coordinator.

Additionally, it may be worth seeking guidance from the Department of Indigenous Affairs if you need to consider Heritage, Native Title, legislative issues or receive policy advice. Under Section 18 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 1972, the consent of the Minister for Indigenous Affairs is required before proceeding with a development that will disturb a heritage site (Department of Industry and Resources, 1995).

Useful guides for working with Aboriginal communities include:

- Department of Industry & Resources (1995) *Working with Aboriginal Groups: a Practical Approach*
  http://www.doir.wa.gov.au/documents/mineralsandpetroleum/WorkingWithAbComs2.pdf

- ATSIC, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services, Department of Indigenous Affairs and Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Citizens and Civics Unit, *Consulting Citizens: Engaging with Aboriginal Western Australians,* 2004
  http://www.dia.wa.gov.au/Publications/

- Australian Heritage Commission, *Ask First: A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values, 2002* http://www.ahc.gov.au/publications/indigenousheritage/index.html

Disability Services Commission has produced a checklist in a document called 'Creating Accessible Events' to assist in planning events, meetings and functions that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities. See:

http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/DSC:STANDARD:1065356640:pc=L5C4C8

DEC has also produced a useful reference policy - the Equity and Diversity Management Plan - 2007 – 2012, available at http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/csd/hrb/index.html

References

Department of Environment, *Community Involvement Framework,* 2003

Department of Environment, *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement, 2003*

Department of Environment and Conservation, Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2007 –2012 (DAIP) – available from Corporate Services

Department of Sustainability and Environment, *Effective Engagement: Building Relationships with Community and Other Stakeholders – Book 1 – An Introduction to Engagement*, 2005

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.4 – How do I effectively plan and run a meeting or workshop?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide information and tips on how to effectively plan and run a meeting or workshop with stakeholders and/ or the public. Positive experiences will encourage people to engage with you again in the future. Also see the worksheet/template *Workshop planning checklist.*

Meeting/workshop planning checklist

- determine if the meeting/workshop is necessary and valuable
- clearly define the meeting objectives
- what are the desired outcomes?
- establish meeting date and time;
- select a suitable and accessible meeting location
- identify approximate number of meeting participants – who are they and why have they been chosen? What roles/behaviour are they likely to exhibit?
- inputs – what information is being brought to the meeting e.g. presentations (and does this information fit with the objectives?)
- meeting process – agree on a possible process which supports the meeting objectives
- attendees input – ensure a balance between whole-of-group and break-out sessions
- determine room set-up, seating arrangements (classroom, theatre, banquet, circle) and any equipment required
- advertise and promote meeting
- prepare agenda. Provide copies to participants
- prepare pre-meeting materials (such as visuals, handouts/information or labelling blank sheets to be used during workshop)
- determine if you require an independent facilitator (an independent person who assists the group to achieve particular objectives at the meeting or session). For more information, refer to fact sheet 3.5 – *How do I effectively facilitate a meeting or workshop*?
- consider catering requirements
- pack supplies (clock, masking tape, markers, names tags etc)
- confirm all details with venue, including equipment required on the day (such as extra tables, chairs, easel, audio/visual equipment, microphone, podium, whiteboard)

Day of meeting/ workshop checklist

- plan to arrive at least thirty minutes prior to the start time
- allow time in advance to check the room
- meet and greet venue staff at agreed upon time prior to meeting/workshop
- set up registration or welcome area. Place any brochures/business cards or information on the registration table
- make sure signs are posted directing participants to workshop area
- make sure seats in room have clear visibility to presenter
- remove any chairs that are dirty, crooked or wobbly
- have someone available to register late arrivals and check room temperature
- have a small table for extra supplies, water, remote and clock
- have a designated person to bring people back into the room after the break

- check that all cords/wires are taped securely to the carpet/floor
- set up sound/mikes and do a sound check (if appropriate)
- good lighting on presenter during presentation
- set up screen, projector or any equipment that will be used
- test equipment location for visibility
- set up water break station (if appropriate)
- be clear about toilet facilities and break/ lunch options

Tips for creating an agenda

Design

- do you have a clear message you want this meeting/ workshop to convey? What message do I want the group to leave with? Consider your audience and their interests, motivations and concerns – then seek a common denominator that will inspire them all
- does your agenda contain no more than three key items per hour?
- are your agenda items action-oriented? The most effective form of agendas are action-based (i.e. add, recommend, rank, rate, classify, select, evaluate, solve, summarise)
- does each item give participants enough information to allow them to do any necessary preparation and to understand what you hope to achieve? Do you note the purpose of each item: for information, discussion, action or all three?
- do your items look to a positive, possible future vs problems and the past?
- does your plan account for the agenda bell curve, placing lighter issues in the first and last 20 minutes, saving the most difficult items for the middle?
- have you provided your participants summaries prior to the meeting to give them the background they need to make informed and enthusiastic inputs?
- have you specified the actual clock time allotted to each item?
- have you inserted recap and assign entries every 30 minutes?
- have you planned short breaks every hour or so?
- are you starting and ending with brief positive items?

Execution

- start on time
- seek approval or changes to agenda before proceeding
- address all items on the agenda
- do not address items that are not on the agenda – write these down on a ‘side issues’ board (see ‘Managing side issues’ further on)
- move away from the agenda if there is general consensus that a deviation would be in everyone’s best interest
- end on time

Other tips for effectively planning and running a meeting/workshop

Venue selection and timing

Meeting venues should be chosen that are accessible (e.g. close to public transport, child care facilities and parking and that cater for people with a disability) and have suitable room sizes and facilities. It is ideal to have used or visited the venue previously so you are familiar with it and know how it works. This enables you to visualise how the space can be used, to discuss first-hand your requirements (room layout, equipment, refreshments) and to predict limitations that you may need to manage.

The timing of the meeting should also be convenient for people that work full-time or that have child care commitments.

Room layout
Seating and/or table arrangements are one of the most powerful influences on group 'mood' and interaction. Comfort, eye contact and a clear view of the facilitator/presenter as well as any presentation materials are critical. In many situations, it is important for all participants to have eye contact with one another. You may need a flexible layout where participants can move easily from listening to a central person to forming small discussion groups. It is important to get to the venue earlier, even if the venue staff have set up the room, as often you can make some small changes to improve the seating if required.

When organising a meeting or workshop, it is important to plan the layout of the room/s so you avoid 'them and us' (such as classroom-style rows of chairs in front of a stage/lectern – this is a classic 'hierarchical' layout that can promote feelings of powerlessness and inequity) and can split easily into groups. It is important to have a lot of natural light in the room to lift the mood of the group and to maximise positive, energetic involvement.

See DEC's Facilitation Toolkit (pages 40 – 42) for detailed information on room layout types:

http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/portal/page?_pageid=93,96391&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Venue facilities
Venues provide a range of facilities and services including:

- Whiteboards (electronic ones are excellent for recording information)
- Flip chart holders
- Pin-up boards
- TV and DVD/video players
- Slide/PowerPoint projectors
- Projection screens
- CD or cassette players
- Kitchens and/or refreshments (welcome cuppa, tea/coffee/meals)
- Tables and chairs – ask for them to be set up in a particular design suited to your purpose
- Toilets

Be sure you know what facilities and services are available, so that you can choose the most appropriate venue or provide those facilities or services that the venue does not.

It should be noted that the use of visual aids (TV and DVD/video players, projectors and pin-up boards) greatly assist participation and learning. It is believed that people gain 75 per cent of what they know visually, 13 per cent through hearing and 12 per cent through smell, taste and touch. Therefore, the visual aspect should be carefully considered when choosing a venue.

Welcome cuppa and visual/resource displays
These are gentle ways to welcome participants to the session.

Being available before the session
It is important to be available for participants at least 15 minutes before the session. This enables you to welcome people as they arrive, introduce yourself and address any of their concerns before the session. It also gives you time to relax and give confidence to participants that you are prepared.

Name tags
Being informed of whom you are working with is a simple courtesy that should be extended to all participants. Name tags are often a relief for people who may have met before but can't connect the face and name. This enables them to relax and participate more fully. Use simple name tags; even hand written sticky labels as a minimum. Use large print so they can be read from a distance.

Start on time
In respect of people's time and to honour those that did make it on time, it is important to start the meeting at the advertised time, unless the group decides that it is ok to delay the start.

Introductions
At the start of the session, quickly go around the room and get participants to state their name. If the group size is manageable, they could also state their reason for attending and any expectations.

Managing side issues
Often people want to discuss issues not relevant to the topic of the meeting. One way to manage this is to record or 'park' the side issues on a piece of butcher's paper, whiteboard or post-it notes. That way you are acknowledging the issues, but not dealing with them in the allocated timeframe. At the end of the session, it may be appropriate to go back to these issues and ask the group whether there are any issues they now wish to discuss or put on the next agenda. Side issues may need to be referred to another government department, organisation or to local government.

Summarising and clarifying
Often there will be a lot of information generated by a group and it can be important to take stock of the data e.g. *"Let's see what we have so far".* Read out all the points if they are recorded – and refocus the group. This helps people who may have lost track and it can re-invigorate a group if they can again see a clear focus.

Attention span, breaks and refreshments
The average attention span for adults is believed to be 15-20 minutes. A break to revive or recapture attention can be as simple and subtle as a slight change in pace, asking the group a question, or introducing a visual aid – so include some type of break at least every 20 minutes. Always have water available and ensure jugs on tables are re-filled. Having mints or healthy snacks on the table can also make people feel more positive about the environment Be clear about what time the session will re-commence as the group moves into the break.

Evaluation
It is useful to get feedback on the meeting to gauge the value for participants and to help guide future sessions. This may occur as a group, for example, to discuss whether expectations were met, and/or could happen anonymously through written feedback forms. For guidance on creating feedback forms, refer to fact sheet 2.5 – *How do I gauge the issues and register interest from the community at the start of my project?* For a simple yet effective workshop feedback template, see fact sheet 4.1 – *What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project*

Reference

Department of Environment, *Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups, 2003*

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.5 – How do I effectively facilitate a meeting or workshop?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide an understanding of how to effectively facilitate a meeting. An effective facilitator will ensure meeting/workshop objectives are achieved in a focussed, structured and yet stimulating and energetic environment.

What is facilitation and why is it important?
Facilitation involves a person (facilitator) assisting a group to determine or achieve a particular task or objective such as clearly identifying and solving a problem or making a decision. Without effective facilitation, participation exercises are likely to become unfocussed and open-ended, which will make them ineffective and a high source of frustration for participants. Effective facilitation will ensure a well-structured process in relation to the objectives, a clear focus and will enable the constructive participation of all participants. Effective facilitation of a meeting or workshop is a key skill which underpins all successful public participation projects.

The role of the facilitator is to:

- Clarify the purpose of the participation both in terms of outcomes (results) and in terms of process (what is gained and how it is done);
- Create an environment for constructive and cooperative interaction based on mutual respect and shared concerns;
- Use processes, methods and tools appropriately and responsibly;
- Open and close the meeting/workshop with purpose;
- Honour contributions of participants;
- Cater for different learning styles;
- Respect the culture, rights and autonomy of the group;
- Understand the needs and processes of group development and effectiveness;
- Listen and reflect back to ensure understanding;
- Engender trust;
- Create an interesting, fun, energetic environment where people want to participate and feel safe and valued
- Encourage participants to challenge ‘the data’ or ‘the issue’ and not ‘the person’;
- Focus on the process and be impartial/neutral towards the content;
- Clarify the data by checking back with participants;
- Respond to the group through flexibility of format and process;
- Manage conflict with sensitivity;
- Encourage participation from all group members;
- Maintain confidentiality of information; and
- Maximise the productivity of the group’s work and participation.

There are three modes of facilitation:

1. Hierarchy Facilitator directs the process

Here you, the facilitator, direct the learning process, exercise your power over it, and do things *for* the group: you lead from the front by thinking and acting on behalf of the group. You decide on the objectives and the programme, interpret and give meaning & challenge resistances, manage group feelings, provide structures for learning and honour the claims of authentic behaviour in the group. You take full responsibility, in charge of all major decisions on all dimensions of the learning process.

2. Cooperative Facilitator shares power with participants over the process

Here you share your power over the learning process and manage the different dimensions with the group: you enable and guide the group to become more self-directing in the various forms of learning by conferring with them. You prompt and help group members to decide on the programme, to give meaning to experiences, to do their own confrontation, and so on. In this process, you share your own view which, though influential, is not final but one among many. Outcomes are always negotiated. You collaborate with the members of the group in devising the learning process: your facilitation is co-operative.

3. Autonomous Facilitator respects the freedom of the group to determine their own actions and behaviour (autonomy)

Here you respect the total autonomy of the group: you do not do things for them, or with them, but give them freedom to find their own way, exercising their own judgment without any intervention on your part. Without any reminders, guidance or assistance, they evolve their programme; give meaning to what is going on, find ways of confronting their avoidances, and so on. The bedrock of learning is unprompted, self-directed practice, and here you gave space for it. This does not mean the abdication of responsibility. It is the subtle art of creating conditions within which people can exercise full self-determination in their learning.

Who should facilitate a meeting?

Facilitators may be neutral, outside third parties (independent, paid consultants) or community members trained in the process. It is often helpful to use an independent facilitator for a meeting or participation process that is complex or where there is potential for conflict between participants. An independent facilitator should:

- Have no vested interest in the outcome of the process;
- Be independent and considered neutral by the community; and
- Be involved in the design of the participation exercise.

If an independent facilitator is going to be engaged, this should occur as early possible in the process so they are familiar with the background issues and can contribute to the planning process.

Facilitation skills

As a facilitator, you need to think about how each individual is affecting the group. Are there individuals whose knowledge/skills are not being well used? Is someone acting in a way that is divisive or is draining the group of its energy? Is there a person who needs some help learning how to work in a team? Is the group uniting? Do people in the group have a shared vision? Is there trust and a sense of mutual support? Does the group need some training to help it function better? Are there some ground rules that the group needs to strengthen it?

The following are some communication skills that can be used to assist in facilitation and conflict resolution activities (extracts from International Association of Public Participation):

Skill	Use of skill	How to use
Reflective Listening/Feelings	• To diffuse the situation • To reflect feelings back to person • To show understanding	Listen to tone of voice. Observe body language. Hunch feelings and reflect them back. "*You sound disappointed...*"
Paraphrasing	• Indicates you are listening • Lets you check for understanding	Say back your understanding of what they said, in your words. "*You thought the traffic light would...*"
Questioning	• To gather information • To focus discussion • To expand understanding	Use open ended questions – beginning with what, how, when, where. "*How did the new road surprise you?*"
Summarising	• To bring important points out • To review progress • To bring closure to move on	Restate the main points of the discussion, facts and feelings. "*Your main priorities were...*"
Validating	• To show what people say is important	Acknowledge issues and feelings as valuable. Appreciate efforts. "*Thanks for explaining the impact on the children...*"
Encouraging	• To show interest • To encourage discussion	Body language, nodding. Ask probing questions. Avoid agree/disagreeing. "*And then what happened?*"
Clarifying	• To ensure you understand • To clear confusion	Ask questions. Ask if interpretation is on track. "*By impacts, you mean...*"

The Public Participation Planning section offers training courses on Facilitation Skills.

References

Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development, The Community Toolbox, 2003.

John Heron, Facilitator's Handbook, 1989.

Department of Environment, *Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups,* 2003.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.6 – How do I distribute scientific results to the community?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide useful tips on how best to disseminate or distribute results from scientific studies to the broader community (where appropriate or deemed necessary in the public interest) to ensure that the information is understood and useful.

It is important to consider the following:

- Allow for individual/community preferences in receiving information – whether it be email, website, postal, newspaper, face-to-face/meetings or a combination of these. This can be decided during the scoping phase of the project by asking your community. Refer to fact sheet 2.15 – *How do I gauge the issues and register interest from the community at the start of the project?* which provides a pro-forma to collect information (such as issues of interest to the community) and register interest from the community in the early phase of the project.

- Be realistic about the time required to collect and analyse the data and distribute the information. Let people know approximately when to expect information or why it may take time to receive updates (don't make promises that you can't keep). Where sporadic sampling technology is used, it may take time to gather a statistically valid number of samples to be able to analyse and identify trends.

- Even if you have no data available yet, you can still keep in touch with the community by letting them know about your progress or project milestones. Hearing from you that work is in progress is much better than hearing nothing from you for a long time.

- Don't wait until you have all the scientific results/ definitive answers before communicating with the public. This could take years. It is best to admit the areas where the department doesn't have all the answers and that these are being sought. It is also good to communicate the approximate timeframe of when these results are expected to be available. Don't be afraid to admit you don't have all the answers - this builds trust with the community, as it sees that you can acknowledge that you don't know everything and are not trying to fabricate. After all, no-one can know everything!

- When you don't have all the scientific data, it is not an excuse to 'not act' because you don't know everything. The department must operate on the precautionary principle and prepare for worst case scenarios in the absence of data.

- It is usually best to make a commitment to the community to distribute scientific results as soon as the department receives and analyses them. Holding onto results makes the community nervous and sceptical. Often, the Department of Health will also need to view and interpret the results, which will take extra time. Be upfront about the approximate time it will take.

- Balance being as transparent as possible with assisting the community to interpret the data. Communities have varying levels of scientific understanding, and while you can't assume that everyone is a scientist, if you leave information out or over simplify, this can result in scepticism or lack of trust.

- To give people the best opportunity to understand the data, provide easily accessible information in the form of graphs, charts and tables, with easy-to-read summaries of what the data means. Don't use jargon or acronyms. Ensure the raw data is available for those who wish to scrutinise it.

- Allow a 'non-scientific' person who is removed from the work/project to critique your publication or presentation so they can give you feedback on its user-friendliness.

- If possible, ensure analysis of data is carried out by an independent body or one that has no conflict of interest, to assure the community of the information's credibility.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.7 – How do I deliver an effective presentation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide tips on how to give an effective presentation. Good presenters are able to get their points across clearly and concisely and engage well with the audience. This goes a long way in building relationships of trust and respect. A bad presentation can potentially damage the organisation's credibility, the public participation process and future processes.

How to prepare and deliver an effective presentation
There are some basic principles to preparing and delivering an effective presentation:

- Know your audience and its needs – do some research by ringing a selection of people who will be attending the presentation and ask what they'd like out of the presentation.
- Determine your presentation objectives - is it to inform, persuade, invite discussion/ideas or entertain? It may be a mix of all three. Being entertaining does not decrease your credibility – it helps get your message across – look at David Suzuki!
- Consider what messages you want the audience to walk away with.
- Open the presentation with something to captivate your audience e.g. a personal, interesting experience that relates to your messages.
- Deliver your messages concisely.
- Identify your main points and avoid writing your presentation word for word. Write each point down and sub points underneath – this will be easier to refer to if you lose your place during a presentation.
- Work out how you can demonstrate your main points. This could include analogies, anecdotes, metaphors, case studies, graphs, maps, photos or illustrations. Visual aids will enhance your presentation.
- Don't use acronyms or jargon.
- Don't pace around the room when presenting – this distracts your audience. Stand still and confidently.
- Develop questions to focus your audience.
- Use group processes to encourage participant interaction and develop understanding.
- Facilitate group discussion by listening actively to your audience.
- Prepare for managing difficult people and situations that may occur during a presentation by anticipating difficult questions/comments and potential conflict and preparing appropriate responses; if a department position/response is required, this will need to be approved in advance by senior management.
- If you are using PowerPoint, keep the presentation simple, by turning off all sound effects (unless it is used to illustrate a point) and keep the transition between slides simple. Less is more. Minimise the amount of text on each slide (30–36 words) and try to demonstrate with illustrations and photos where possible. Any text on the screen should be an ample size (Ariel font - 30–36 pt) so that the audience at the back of the room can see.
- Plan your sequence of points, it may be chronological or logical or neither.
- Ensure your message is clear in your mind and that it is introduced at the beginning, illustrated through the presentation and referred to again at the end.
- Finish your presentation by linking your message with the conclusion.
- Rehearse - edit - rehearse – edit – rehearse – rehearse.

The Public Participation Planning section offers courses on Effective Presentation Skills.

Reference

Price, D, *10 Steps to Prepare and Deliver a Powerful Presentation*. Perth, Walk Tall International, 2006.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.8 – How and when do I hold a stakeholder or community workshop?

The aim of this fact sheet is to encourage the use of stakeholder and community workshops as a public participation technique. A workshop is an intensive tool that enables the wider community to engage in quality discussion; jointly discuss results of a project, own a decision on how to move forward and identify solutions. Workshops may also be used to gain public input into forming policies, legislation and guidelines and initiating and managing projects. Often the community has good ideas and local knowledge that can greatly assist the process. View your stakeholders and community as a valuable resource.

When should a community workshop be used?
Where appropriate, project or study results that may be considered contentious in any way should ideally be taken to a community workshop for deliberation and identification of solutions. Your community should share ownership of the process of solution identification and formulation of recommendations, and this needs to be skilfully facilitated, ideally by a professional, independent facilitator.

A workshop is quite different from an information session or seminar. Information sessions are focused on providing information, whereas a workshop is more of a two-way process, focused on receiving information from participants that can feed directly into the decision-making process, through having them work in small groups on defined assignments. Make sure you are not calling something a workshop when really you are just providing information. Participants will just get frustrated if they have come along thinking they were going to have genuine input.

Workshops are most effective when designed to generate a group product, such as lists of issues, alternatives, impacts or a mutually acceptable plan of action that is fed directly into the decision-making process.

Participant numbers at a workshop need to be manageable – usually 12 to 20 people. Expressions of interest to attend could be collected, and based on numbers of interested people, more than one workshop could be held.

Workshop techniques
There are a large number of techniques that can be used within a workshop, such as multi-criteria analysis, which are decision-making tools developed for complex problems. The start of the workshop should provide an overview of the project followed by the presentation of scientific results in an easy-to-understand, accessible format. Using guest presenters to provide different viewpoints is another good way to initiate discussion and ideas on how to move forward.

Advantages of a workshop:
- Maximum flow of information.
- Solutions to problems can be explored.
- Allows exchange of ideas between participants.
- Ideal where input is sought.

Disadvantages of a workshop:
- Can be resource-intensive to establish and follow-up on.
- Can only cater effectively for up to 20 people.

- Needs good and possibly professional and/or independent facilitation to successfully achieve the outcome.

General tips on organising a workshop

- Publicise your workshop widely – use adverts and articles in local papers, council and other relevant publications, community noticeboards, libraries, targeted mail outs and other groups' databases.
- Have an agenda – try to keep to the subject and to time as much as possible.
- Ensure the ground rules and guidelines for participation are understood and agreed upon by workshop attendees.
- Be sure to foster trust within the workshop group so that people feel comfortable. For tips, see fact sheet 3.1 – *Working with Adults and Groups – how can we make it more successful?*
- Try to agree with participants on what is going to happen before the session – if you don't and participants are not happy with what is proposed, then the process will be derailed.
- Design the workshop so that it generates a group product.
- Use highly visible recording techniques (e.g. thick dark coloured markers and large sheets of paper) and progressively hang information recorded around the room. Ideally, people can read them from their seats or over discussion during breaks. This helps the group see how much they have accomplished and that their input is being valued. This information can be typed up as a record of the event and distributed.
- It is preferable to hold additional workshops to meet demand rather than restrict participation.
- Make sure you provide feedback on the outcomes of the workshop session to participants and the broader community – even just as a record of what took place.

Outcomes of the workshop could include:

- formulation of recommendations to government (local, state and federal);
- actions to be carried out, such as preparing a report, applying for funding;
- creation of a committee/lobby group;
- raising community awareness and knowledge;
- encouraging community behaviour change; and
- conducting further research.

You may like to refer to DEC's Facilitation Toolkit (Keating, 2003) at www.dec.wa.gov.au for more detailed information on workshop techniques. Also see fact sheet 3.5 – *How do I effectively facilitate a meeting?* and fact sheet 3.4 *How do I effectively plan and run a meeting or workshop?*

References

Department of Environment, *Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups,* 2003

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

- Accept responsibility for the problem and keep trying to see a solution.
- Prepare to help, ask questions and convey personal caring.

The following phrases can help to diffuse and clarify the situation:
- I can see/hear (why you feel that way).
- I can feel (how frustrated you are feeling).
- I assume (from what you have said that you want ……..).
- I want (to understand your problem and work with you to resolve it).

An angry or frustrated person usually wants two things: first to express their feelings and then to have their problem solved. However, people sometimes just want to vent, rather than have their problem addressed. Ask what they want from you: Can you do that? Try to see a solution. You could ask 'What would I need to do for you to accept the process we have to follow for this?'

Letting a person vent their anger and taking the time to empathise in the beginning saves time, since any interruption is likely to start the whole download over again. Taking notes will help you focus on the facts among the emotions and will help you remain cool.

When someone is fixed in their position, it is virtually pointless and even counterproductive to try to change their mind. People's core beliefs are deeply ingrained perceptions that cannot be changed - but they can be modified. The best thing you can do is to provide factual, non-emotive information in a calm, non-defensive manner and back-up your information with examples.

Volume and Pitch
People who are angry tend to speak faster and to raise both the volume and pitch of their voices. You can help the person calm down by:
- Keeping the volume of your voice normal
- Slowing your speech down just a bit
- Bringing down your pitch

This also marks you as being in control of the discussion as well as yourself, and the angry speaker will tend to respond in kind to regain authority.

If you are on the telephone, remember they can't see you. Try to convey that you are professional, calm and controlled through your voice.

In a face-to-face situation, try to control the setting. If you can, try to get people to sit down; it is much less confronting and helps equalise size.

Always ensure there is a conclusion (what is the next step?); don't leave it hanging. If you make a commitment to seek further information/clarification and get back to the person, always ensure you fulfil this commitment. You don't want to give an angry person a reason to become angrier!

Further information
There are many guides that explore individual and group behaviour as well as how to effectively and sensitively manage interactions and conflict in individual and group situations. It is an area that requires some in-depth exploration, along with specialised training and development. It is recommended you follow up the Conflict Resolution Network www.crnhq.org for up-to-date, practical guidance and also training and development opportunities.

There are several models of individual natural operating styles which help us to better understand and appreciate what contribution individuals bring to groups. Models include:

- Personal Operating Styles (Institute of Cultural Affairs *Technology of Participation and Personal Operating Styles)* www.icaworld.org
- DiSC Operating Styles - Perfomax www.perfomax2000.com
- Myers Briggs Indicator Type - Consulting Psychologists Press Inc www.teamtechnology.co.uk
- Enneagrams (Palmer 1995, *The Enneagram in Love and Work – understanding your intimate and business relationships) www.enneagraminstitute.com*
- Human Operating System (HOM - Peter Burow www.pubbys.com/hos/?cat=1

These models can also be explored using the Facilitation Toolkit (Keating 2003), available on the website of the Department of Environment and Conservation www.dec.wa.gov.au. Many of these models require further specific training to ensure they are understood and used both correctly and with sensitivity.

Pike and Arch (1997) also provide practical strategies on how to work with people when they are behaving inappropriately.

Also see fact sheet 3.5 – *How do I effectively facilitate a meeting or workshop?* for more information on communications skills that can be used in conflict resolution and facilitation.

The Public Participation Planning section offers courses on Effective Conflict Management; Conversing with the Community and Working More Effectively with Groups.

References

Department of Environment, *Facilitation Toolkit – A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups, 2003*

Peter Burow, The Human Operating System (HOS) www.pubbys.com/hos/?cat=1

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 3.9 – How do I manage conflict or sticky situations?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide an understanding of how to effectively manage situations involving conflict. Conflict is bound to occur when a diverse group of people are trying to gain consensus on an important issue. However, when managed well, conflict is a healthy and even essential part of any quality public participation process.

Understanding human behaviour
The aim of most public participation projects is to work within a community to bring about social change. This will involve a number of people from different backgrounds and with different agendas working together for a period of time, and occasionally there may be conflict. In order to understand how to manage this conflict, we first need to understand human behaviour and how people operate.

Everybody is different and unique – we all come from different places, backgrounds and have had different experiences. How many times have you been frustrated because someone doesn't understand something quickly enough or doesn't do something the way you would? Although we are proud of our uniqueness, we often fail to accept the individuality in others.

Working with difficult people – or are they passionate?
People often want to know tips for 'working with difficult people'. Often what are considered 'difficult people' and/or ''difficult situations' should actually not have those negative connotations attached. Highlighting this, Jenny Crisp from the Department of Agriculture WA, shares two of her greatest learnings as a facilitator:

'Open conflict and disagreement in a facilitated session is not necessarily a bad thing. For many situations, it is healthy and vital that group members come to some level of conflict or disagreement for them to be aware of, and start to understand each other's perspectives. This is a good first step in the convergence of group ideas. So don't be afraid to let it all come out – an easy facilitation is not always the best!'

'Those difficult, dominating participants are not all bad. They are also often the participants with the most passion and energy on the subject, and your facilitation and process should aim to harness and direct this, rather than squash it. All too often, facilitation is aimed at keeping the dominator quiet for the benefit of the rest of the group. Think of the dominator as a positive participant, and manage their contribution, rather than exclude it!'

People often behave inappropriately because their needs are not being met either during the facilitation activity and/or outside of it. If a situation is expected to have high levels of conflict for which you do not have the necessary skills or experience to facilitate, be responsible and engage another person who has. Also, if a situation develops that you do not have the skills or experience to manage, look for options to close the session and organise for a more senior officer or a conflict resolution practitioner to be involved in ongoing resolution.

Techniques for talking with angry people (by Stephen Goode Consulting, 2007)

- Listen and don't interrupt. Remember their anger is not personal; they are angry at the problem.
- Stay calm and remain professional. Use factual, non-emotive language.
- Empathise and draw out what the issue is.

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Fact sheet 3.10 – How and when should I seek public comment?

This fact sheet aims to provide guidance on how to effectively utilise public comment periods as a tool to gain valuable information and involve the community on issues that affect them.

When are public comment periods used?

- as part of the planning process for management planning (terrestrial and marine)
- when there is a statutory requirement to do so i.e. reviewing of legislation
- when community feedback will be useful for the improvement of your plan, project, policy etc
- when the issue associated with your plan, project or policy is contentious or of high interest to the community

Important: Public comment should only be sought when the public can have some affect on the outcome of the project and there is a genuine commitment to consider their feedback carefully.

Make sure you check whether there are any statutory requirements for your project that relate to public comment periods.

Seeking public comment falls under the 'consult' and 'involve' levels of the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) spectrum of participation (see fact sheet *How do I choose the right level of public participation?*).

What should I ask the public to comment on?

The public should be able to comment on any issues that interest them and which they can potentially affect the outcome of. The negotiables (i.e. things that can be changed or are open for negotiation) and the non-negotiables (i.e. things that cannot be changed, that are not open for negotiation due to legislation or departmental decisions) of your project/document should be clearly outlined at the outset to avoid people commenting on things they cannot change or affect.

Ensure that you ask specific questions of the public if you want specific feedback. It does not work as well to provide the public with a document and then request general comments on the content of the document.

How can the public provide comment?

The public should be able to comment via email and/or hard copy correspondence. Sometimes it is a legislative requirement that feedback is submitted in a hard copy format only. However, you are more likely to receive comment if you provide opportunities for feedback via the internet and email.

Another option is to post an online feedback form on the department's website (adjacent to the document on which you are seeking comment). This allows you to tailor some questions or headings in the form which can guide people and help them understand what they can and can't have influence over. It also helps you to elicit the type of information you are seeking. Make sure you provide an opportunity for general comments too.

Recommended approaches for seeking public comment

- provide a cover letter or email to stakeholders with a link to your online form, or if you don't have an online form for comment, simply provide the user-friendly url where your document is located on the website.

- Clearly outline in a cover letter, or at the start of your document for comment (in bold), the date when the comment period closes.
- nominate a generic email address (if appropriate; this can easily be created) i.e. airquality@dec.wa.gov.au) and a postal and street address (sometimes people may hand deliver their submissions) where public submissions can be sent.
- Contact details should also be provided for public queries and information. Preferably, a person's name, position title and phone number, should be given.
- Invite people to provide their contact details with their submissions if they would like you to provide feedback after the public comment period closes and analysis of information is completed. Give yourself a realistic timeframe to respond.

What time period should be provided for public comment?
A four-week minimum submission period is recommended.

Generally, it is not advisable to have comment periods in December or January, as people are usually very busy with the festive season and are often on holiday, so they may miss out on the opportunity to comment. This could make the department look unprofessional and as though it is trying to 'fly under the radar'.

How should I publicise public comment periods?
How widely you advertise your public comment period depends on the scope of your project, plan or policy and the issue you are dealing with. Generally, it is worth considering the following options:

- Placing advertisements in local, community newspapers. Try to have them placed in the early general news section. Community newspapers are very cheap to advertise in. Run ads several times if the issue is of high importance/profile. Ads should include the name of the document; where to access the document; the timeframe for public comment; email/postal/street address for submissions and contact details for public enquiries.

- Placing advertisements in the West Australian newspaper. Ads for State Government must go in the Government Noticeboard section, appearing Wednesday and Fridays, located towards the back of the paper. This is generally not the best way to get publicity. If you wish to place ads in the early general news (better for publicity), you must first seek an exemption from the Government Media Office which can take several months!

- Letters or emails to stakeholder lists (make sure these are current/updated) advising them of the comment period and either advising of the location of the document (website and/or hard copies in the DEC office, local library or other relevant locations for those without internet access) for comment or attaching the document to your letter/email. Encourage your stakeholders to submit their valued feedback.

- targeted phone calls to key stakeholders

- community notice boards (shire office, library, shopping areas, businesses etc)

- Utilisation of key stakeholders' or other organisations' networks, mailing/email lists and newsletters.

What happens after the public comment period has closed?
After you have analysed your feedback, it is common courtesy, and a frequent legislative requirement, to provide timely feedback to people that provided comment, regarding:

- how public input will or won't be used and why
- how/whether public feedback influenced decision-making/the plan/document etc
- how the broader community will be provided with feedback (i.e. website, open days, presentations etc)

Rather than responding individually to people, it is more efficient (and ensures consistency of information) to write a document that summarises the breadth of feedback received and which covers the above points. All those that provided comment should be sent this document. The document should be made available on the department's website, located with your project information.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Fact sheet 3.11 – How do I develop a public survey and questionnaire?

The aim of this fact sheet is to assist you to determine when it may be useful to use a public survey as a tool; how to design a public survey; how to determine the target audience for your survey; how to distribute your survey and where to seek further assistance.

What is a public survey?
A public survey is list of questions aimed at obtaining targeted information from a group of stakeholders within the community. Surveys may be conducted by phone, post, via the internet and sometimes face-to-face in public locations or in people's homes.

When is a public survey appropriate?
To determine whether or not it is appropriate to conduct a survey, it is worth considering your answers to the following questions:

1. What are your time constraints? Does the decision need to be made immediately? If so, a public survey is not appropriate.
2. What data is available to you? Do you already have enough information to make a decision without extra research? If so, a public survey is not appropriate.
3. Is this a routine decision or a decision of considerable strategic/tactical importance? If it is a routine decision, a public survey is not necessary.
4. Does the cost of conducting the research exceed the value of the research? If so, a public survey is not appropriate.
5. Is your target group unsuitable for a survey? i.e. low literacy levels, non-english speaking background. If so, a public survey is not appropriate.

How do I determine my target survey group?
The choice of the target population group will be based on what information you are hoping to obtain. You may want to ask yourself whether the age, gender, location, etc of your target group are a factor and then determine your survey group based around these factors. Also consider how large a sample group needs to be to be statistically valid (if applicable).

What sort of questions should I ask in my survey?
Firstly, determine what information you want to gain from the survey and base your questions around the information you require from your sample group.
Questions can be asked in a variety of different ways. Questions can either be open-ended or closed questions.

<u>Open-ended questions</u> can be helpful as they allow the respondent to give a written response expressing their opinion completely. Unfortunately this makes it very hard to input or analyse your data quickly as each response is different; therefore open-ended questions are generally not recommended for public surveys unless you have a very small sample size.
Example: What environmental issue concerns you the most? Please clearly state one issue and then briefly describe it.

<u>Closed questions</u> are preferable for public surveys as they only allow the respondent to choose one answer, which makes it easier for you when you are analysing your data.

There are three ways to ask a close-ended question:

1. Nominal, such as asking a yes or no question
2. Ordinal, which arranges the response in an ordered manner such as:

What do you feel is an appropriate or comfortable cost for a fundraiser (per person)?

- $0 to $20
- $21 to $50
- $51 to $100
- Potentially more than $100

3. Interval, which allows you to rank your satisfaction or how much you agree with a statement (Likert scale).

Please rate your agreement with the following statement:

I would pay more for products whose packaging does less damage to the environment.	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

A few tips when developing survey questions:

- If your questions are of a personal nature, it can be less threatening to ask the question in the third person, for example, ask: *'How do your colleagues feel about management?' rather than 'How do you feel about management?'*
- Ensure that your questions are not **double barrelled** i.e. that there are not two questions within one statement.
- Try not to bias the respondent.
- Don't use **leading questions** – for example the question 'Which day of the month is best for the newly established company-wide monthly meeting?' This leads respondents to pick a date without first determining if they even want another meeting.
- Don't make the list of responses to a question **too long!**
- Avoid **difficult concepts** and don't use overly scientific language.
- Avoid difficult **recall questions** such as, *'in the past 6 months how often have you …'* This involves more exertion on the behalf of the respondent and may result in them giving up before finishing.
- It is important to take note of the time of year in which you will be surveying - Christmas and holiday periods may not always be the best time, as many families will be going away and may not have time to complete your survey properly or at all.

How should the survey be formatted?
When you are developing a survey, it is critical that it is both clear and simple to use – so make it as user-friendly as possible. Ensure that you:

- Start your survey with an interesting question as a heading in order to attract the respondents' attention.
- Always include a short introduction to briefly explain the purpose/aim of the survey and thank the participants for their time.

- Advise the approximate time period of completing the survey at the start of the survey.
- Use large, legible font (at least 12 font size).
- Use wide page borders.
- Do not clutter the survey with imagery or decorative prints as this only distracts respondents.
- Put your questions in a logical order.
- Don't let questions break over pages - This can make answering the questions difficult for the respondent.
- Ask demographic information at the end of your survey - some people feel uncomfortable answering personal questions (such as their income bracket) and may be more willing to answer more personal questions once they know the purpose of the survey.

What is survey pre-testing and do I need to do it?
Pre-testing is a very important step in the development of your survey and must be done before the final copy of your survey is distributed. Pre-testing involves two steps:

1. Make sure that you have read through the completed survey several times and have asked a colleague to read through the document also. This is to make sure the wording is understandable, the questions have a logical order and to ensure that there are no spelling mistakes. The project manager should also ensure that the questions will elicit the information the project is seeking – otherwise further questions may need to be developed.

2. Pre-test the survey with a few participants to ensure everything makes sense before the surveys go to print.

How should the survey be distributed?
There are many ways to distribute your survey to your survey group:

- If you have internal, current mailing lists, send out surveys to all on the list - with reply paid envelopes! Make sure you clearly nominate the required return date for the survey, as otherwise you may get it back long after you wanted! Giving people two weeks is usually a good timeframe.
- Mail drop to local communities or target areas using a distribution company. This ensures that every household in your target area receives the survey in the mail – and make sure that you provide a reply paid envelope! Stipulate to the distribution company that 'no junk mail' letterboxes are to be included in the mail drop. Keep in mind that the general response rate for surveys is better for online surveys than those received by mail.
- Hire a market/social research company to conduct your survey (usually by phone). Contact the Public Participation Planning section for an up-to-date list of companies. This is a good way to have a survey completed and analysed quickly (within a month or two). This could cost anywhere from $10,000+. A sample size of 400 could cost anywhere between $18,000 - $30,000, as an estimate.
- Go to local supermarkets or libraries and hand out your survey to the public. You will be more successful obtaining data if you go through the survey with the person and complete it for them, rather than getting them to take it away and send it back.
- Make an online survey. Try www.surveymonkey.com – you can create and publish custom surveys in minutes, and then view results graphically and in real time! There is a small, monthly subscription fee to access this service.
- Door knock in the target area.

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To see examples of survey templates and online surveys, access www.surveymonkey.com. There is an array of different survey types including environmental, consumer satisfaction and school program.

Can I get assistance to develop a survey? Can I get assistance with the collection, input and analysis of my data?
Yes, there is a list of up-to-date market/social research companies which you can access from the Public Participation Planning section in the Public Affairs Branch.

References

How to write a Good Survey. 1998. http://www.accesswave.ca/~infopoll/tips.htm (accessed December 16, 2008).

Zikmund, W. G, S. Ward, B. Lowe, and H. Winzar. 2007. *Marketing Research Asia Pacific Edition*. Melbourne: Nelson Australia Pty Limited.

Public Survey, 2008. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_survey (accessed December 23, 2008).

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 4.1 – What is evaluation? Planning your evaluation throughout your project

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide guidance on how to plan and conduct the evaluation of your public participation process - both at the beginning of the project and as an ongoing process. Fact sheet 4.2 – *How do I conduct an end-of-project evaluation?* will assist you to prepare an evaluation tool for the end of your project.

Why evaluate?
Evaluation can help you:

- learn from your experience
- record what you have learnt, and share it with others
- check your progress
- identify strengths and weaknesses in your project
- create a basis for future planning
- demonstrate whether you have used your resources – time and money –efficiently and effectively
- explain to funders, and others involved in your work, what you have achieved and how successful it is
- ensure that your project is accountable to the wider community
- encourage an honest appraisal of progress, so that you can learn from what has and what hasn't worked well.

Who should conduct an evaluation?
Depending on the size and difficulty of the project, an internal evaluation may be achievable by staff. This would usually be conducted by the project manager.

In other cases, evaluations cannot be undertaken without involving a high level of research. This is especially the case where the project's objectives require attitudinal or behavioural change. In these cases, it may be necessary to hire a market research company to conduct the evaluation to determine what has or hasn't been achieved. External research companies may also be appropriate where there is a contentious issue and a need to show independence, credibility and reduce public scepticism. Contact the Public Participation Planning section for a list of consultants.

Consideration of budget and staff capacity are likely to be crucial to the decision on who will conduct the evaluation and how it will occur.

When should evaluation occur?
Evaluation should be planned at the start of your project (see planning template below), and should be an ongoing process (not just one-off) which informs planning and delivery as the project develops in order for it to be more effective.

The advantages of ongoing evaluation include:

- highlighting and celebrating successes and achievements as they occur
- ensuring better understanding of the project
- allowing flexibility and tailoring to participants' needs
- showing how the project is impacting stakeholders/participants, partner agencies and the community

- showing how your project is being influenced/impacted by both internal and external factors (Kellogg Foundation, undated).

It is also critical that a full/report evaluation occur at the end of the evaluation – see fact sheet 4.2 – *How do I conduct an end-of-project evaluation?*.

Ways to evaluate your project

The template provided below (with an example included) will assist you with planning your ongoing evaluation. Each category heading is explained below.

Evaluation plan					
Objective/s (can be the same as those within the public participation/ communication plan)	**Techniques**	**Indicators**	**When**	**Who**	**Benchmark**
Example					
Joint decision-making with the community regarding project outcomes.	Development of a taskforce/ focus group to assist with decision-making	1. The number of times that consensus was gained in meetings. 2. The number of 'actions' implemented by the group. 3. The number of community members in attendance at taskforce meetings.	After every meeting (quarterly), review minutes to record the indicators.	Taskforce Executive Officer.	After the first six months of the taskforce in operation, review meeting minutes to ensure: 1. Consensus was gained at 90 per cent of meetings 2. All actions have been implemented by the group 3. At least 10 community members attended every meeting.

To focus your evaluation, start by writing down:

OBJECTIVES

The public participation objectives of your project should play a key role in your evaluation. An accurate and effective evaluation is not possible unless the objectives are relevant and appropriate to the project itself. Refer to fact sheet 2.5 – *How do I develop a public participation/communication plan.*

The evaluation techniques you use will differ according to the objectives you are evaluating. For example, if you are evaluating the success of a particular air sampling technology, this will differ from the method you use to assess meeting the public participation or communication objectives.

When determining your objectives consider: What are you trying to achieve? What are you going to evaluate? What questions will the evaluation seek to answer? Ensure that you include initial and ongoing objectives.

TECHNIQUES

Think about what methods you could use to measure the objectives. Evaluations can be carried out using a variety of techniques including questionnaires, surveys, market research, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, interviews, focus groups or stakeholder panels. Questions should be asked of the participants regarding the planning, implementation and follow-up stages of their involvement (Were their expectations met? Were their recommendations taken on board? Did they receive feedback about how their involvement will be used? Would they participate in this type of process again?).

If possible, it is good to also interview members of the general public or relevant stakeholders who may not have been directly involved in the project, but who know about it, to ensure that a different viewpoint is obtained. Before implementing questionnaires and surveys, be sure to trial them to make sure they will make sense to participants and provide you with all the information you are seeking. You should also forward them to the Corporate Communication Manager for approval. More detailed information on how to conduct these techniques can be found in the Public Participation Manual's (former Conservation and Land Management's) *Guides to best practice*. The table below outlines some of the most commonly used evaluation techniques which you can use throughout your project.

A questionnaire survey – can be used to find out more about the views and experiences of stakeholders, the wider community, agencies etc. It is generally quantitative research in the form of questionnaires or surveys, providing statistics in response to set questions. Can be administered through post, via telephone or face-to-face. Development of the questions should be undertaken in collaboration with a professional to avoid bias. Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys.	**Public comment and submissions** – an analysis of public submissions for comments on specific proposals, plans, and policies could be undertaken as an evaluation technique. You could look at the number of submissions received and the content of submissions i.e. was there a broad range of issues? Was there general consensus on how these issues should be managed, or is the community divided on the matter? Are people generally positive or negative about the issue?
In-depth interviews – it is usually best to limit the number of in-depth interviews to those whose involvement with the project gives them particular insights or valuable experience. Try to talk to a range of people who are likely to have different perspectives and views on your project.	**Focus groups** – Consist of eight to 10 people led by a trained facilitator in a one-off discussion on a particular topic. Selection of the group is of primary importance. Focus groups are chosen according to specific criteria, e.g. age, gender, stakeholder group. Individuals are usually strategically invited to attend the 'informal' discussion to talk about a particular issue following a pre-defined agenda. May need to have several groups to investigate views from different perspectives.
Feedback forms (see example below) – you can find out whether people have found your meeting, workshop, training and other	**Evaluation workshops and review meetings** – a facilitated workshop is an intensive session or working meeting attended by seven to 50

events useful by asking them to fill in a short form.	stakeholders with different fields of expertise or interests. The facilitator aids the groups' discussion and information sharing. The main points of the discussion are recorded and later circulated to workshop participants. Workshops are usually focused on a very specific set of issues to enable in-depth discussion.

INDICATORS
Indicators assist you to measure progress and are often useful for senior management or funding bodies, who like to see tangible indicators of success.
Examples of the types of indicators that can help to measure your evaluation objectives in a quantifiable way are:

- the number of participants in attendance (e.g. at a workshop/open day)
- the level of interest amongst participants
- the extent of knowledge change as a result of the activity
- information, suggestions and recommendations that have been implemented (i.e. fencing, revegetation, behavioural change)
- the attendance numbers at events/meetings/workshops
- registrations of interest in the project (e.g. to be on a database for more information and to attend workshops)
- public queries, requests for information, complaints and compliments
- media coverage (number of stories printed and letters to the editor)
- ministerial enquiries
- website page hits
- numbers and content of public submissions received
- responses received formally from feedback and evaluation forms and informally through conversations.

Qualitative ways of collecting evidence include:

- People's opinions, views and experiences (for example, people's stories about their experience on the project, photos of the area 'before and after', people's views on whether they think they have more power).

BENCHMARKS
How will you know when you have achieved your goals? What will be different about the original problem at the end of the project, if you are successful? How will you report back to the community? Benchmarks assist you to answer these questions and to determine when you have achieved your project objectives. For example 50 per cent of people will commit to changing their behaviour as a result of the workshop.

Benchmarks should ideally be set in conjunction with participants and stakeholders where appropriate – i.e. when a committee has been set-up.

Feedback form example

Below is an example of a simple, easy-to-use feedback form for participants to fill out at the end of an event such as a meeting or workshop. The form's simplicity has made it very successful in soliciting information and is usually completed by most people.

Workshop feedback

Content (please circle)

Too much	Just about right	Too little

Pace (please circle)

Too fast	Just about right	Too slow

Format (please circle)

Too loose	Just about right	Too structured

What was the most beneficial aspect to you?

____

____

What could have been improved?

____

____

Any other comments?

____

____

References

Website link to *Evaluating Community Projects - a practical guide*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation: www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859354157.pdf

Department of Environment and Conservation, *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement*. 'Evaluation Pro-forma' page 22, 2003.

Government of Western Australia, Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2006.

Keating, C.D, Facilitation toolkit: A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups, 2003.

Kellogg Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook, 2007
www.wkkf.org/pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf

Victorian Government, *Communication Evaluation Guidelines*, 2007
www.commstoolkit.dpc.vic.gov.au/downloads/R74_Evaluation_Guidelines.doc

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 4.2 – How do I conduct and end-of-project evaluation?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide guidance on how to conduct an 'end of project' evaluation of your public participation process. While a simple, internal evaluation may be enough, often large, complex and controversial projects may require a more formalised, external evaluation that provides a level of independence and credibility. A market research or social research company may be best placed to undertake your final project evaluation if accountability to the community is of particular importance in a project.

Regardless of the size or complexity of a public participation project, some measure of its success against well-defined criteria is necessary. An evaluation of the participation processes will identify the main problems encountered, whether the target group was reached, and the level of participant satisfaction. Evaluating the outcomes of the public participation will help determine whether participants' input had an identifiable impact on the content of the final policy decision. Evaluation and results should be communicated widely and may, in turn, prompt useful debate on the benefits and difficulties in public participation.

End of program evaluation
An 'end of program' evaluation must assess both the *products* (e.g. scientific data collection) and the *process* (public participation) of the project. Evaluation of your project is not simply a technical assessment of the products, but also considers the impact of the process itself on participants. Involve people in your evaluation that directly participated in your process as well as key stakeholders that did not participate for comparison.

An evaluation of the process will need to take account of the following:

- that the credibility, purpose and objectives of the process were clear at the outset to all participants;
- that stakeholders affected by the project had an equal opportunity to take part and that a representative portion of them did so;
- that the process was transparent;
- that all communications were effective and inclusive, covering all necessary information;
- that the process was adequately resourced;
- that the process achieved its objectives and stakeholders were satisfied with the process and end of project feedback;
- that the techniques used were appropriate and effective;
- that the process contributed to the development of long-term relationships between all parties involved; and
- that the process effectively informed the decision-making

A final evaluation will show:

- the resources required to conduct the project;
- the activities undertaken to seek public participation;
- the participation rate, demographic, frequency and level of involvement;
- the reactions towards the project, including degree of interest and level of satisfaction;
- the learning, knowledge, opinions and skills of participants that enabled their participation;

- the actions taken following the project (outputs);
- the impact or benefits of the project; and
- successes or failures of the project.

Below is an example template of an end of project evaluation you could do internally.

1. **Project title**

2. **Project start and finish dates**

3. **Project background**

4. **Objectives of project**

5. **Public participation objectives of project**

6. **Time allocated for public participation**

7. **Officers involved**

8. **Stakeholders involved**

9. **Tools/techniques used for public participation**

10. **Were stakeholders involved in the planning stages of your project?**

11. **Did you involve the community to identify and involve local people and local knowledge?**

12. **Did you achieve broad representation of stakeholders/the community?**

13. **Did you make information easily available and understandable to all stakeholders?**

14. **Did you adequately promote/advertise your public participation opportunities?**

15. **Did you provide feedback to the community on how their input was or wasn't used, and why?**

16. **As a result of the public participation, have issues been resolved or consensus reached?**

17. **Have the objectives of the public participation been met? How do you know? (e.g. number of participants; level of interest among participants; participants' comments/suggestions)**

18. **In the future, can improvements be made to the process?**

19. **Could the available budget have been used more efficiently?**

20. **What other external factors could have been taken into consideration?**

21. **What other departmental support could have been used (e.g. regional offices)?**

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22. What external relationships have been developed as a result of this project?

23. What follow-up work needs to be done to ensure these relationships are maintained?

24. What processes have been put in place to conclude the program? (i.e. winding up committees, letters of thanks etc)

25. Have you documented your public participation process in a final report and made this information accessible to other staff?

References and additional resources

Department of Environment and Conservation, *Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement*. 'Evaluation Pro-forma' page 22, 2003.

Government of Western Australia, Working Together: Involving Community and Stakeholders in Decision-Making, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2006.

Keating, C.D, Facilitation toolkit: A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups, 2003.

Kellogg Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook, 2007
http://www.wkkf.org/pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf

Victorian Government, *Communication Evaluation Guidelines*, 2007
http://www.commstoolkit.dpc.vic.gov.au/downloads/R74_Evaluation_Guidelines.doc

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 4.3 – Documenting and recording your public participation process through writing a final report

The aim of this fact sheet is to encourage you and guide you to write a public participation report at the end of the project, which serves as a record to you and the department. Producing a final report is important to summarise your process and share your project evaluation with senior management, other staff, funding bodies and other interested parties. The report should flow from information contained within the Public Participation Plan. A publicly available final report will assist in maintaining transparency and accountability with the community.

It is useful to document your public participation process so that other DEC staff can learn from your experience and follow-up and carry on your project work with some continuity.

A final report is a written summary of a real-life situation based on data and research.
It shows what is possible and provides inspiration. It is also a very effective communication and promotional tool, perhaps to attract funding and resources.

Recording and documenting your process – a suggested template

1. The title of the project and project start and finish dates.

2. A history of the issue.

3. A list of the stakeholders and participants.

4. The purpose of the public participation program.

5. The process/tools used to enable public participation.

6. The content of the public participation program (i.e. how many people were involved, how many requests for information were received, the number of submissions received; a summary of comments and views received; other issues that were raised, resources used etc).

7. How and whether your public participation influenced decision-making and how feedback was provided to the participants and broader community on how input was or wasn't used and why.

8. Findings from the public participation evaluation process, including any challenges, successes, lessons learnt, recommendations/proposals/amendments that have been made as a result.

9. Other outcomes of the program (e.g. plans for future community partnerships).

10. Any relevant documentation for the project, including advertisements, promotional materials, brochures, media statements, quotes from participants and photos. Make sure you have permission from the people involved to use their quotes/ photos if the case study

is likely to become a public document. Also ensure that you have the consent of all project partners or key stakeholders before submitting your case study as a public document.

11. Provide a contact name and details so that people may contact someone for more information about the project if desired.

Not all reports need to be colourful and appealing professional publications, however if time and resources are available to produce reports of a high standard, this will likely be valued by the project partners, participants and the public.

*** Please forward your final reports to the Public Participation Planning section so these can be kept as an agency record.**

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 5.1 – Do I need to set up a committee?

The aim of this fact sheet is to help you decide whether a committee is the appropriate public participation tool for your project. It looks at the advantages and disadvantages of committees, and provides some questions to assist you to determine whether establishing a committee is the best way forward.

Assessing the need for a committee

The International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) toolbox identifies 47 strategies for managing public participation. Of these 47 strategies, only one involves the use of an advisory committee. Given the potential risks (i.e. mis-management of committees and ineffective establishment practices) and resources required to sustain a committee, it is worth considering for each issue whether the use of a committee in isolation from other forms of public participation is necessarily the most appropriate tool. If a decision is already made or the action predetermined, then a committee is not needed.

The choice of 'committee' over other forms of public participation appears to be predicated by the following needs:

- providing a delegated authority for decision-making, where there is not an existing authority
- providing education to build self-management ability within a community
- dealing with issues that have a recurrent and/or long timeframe.

Advantages of committees

- Committees provide a forum for two-way exchange of views.
- A small group can fully investigate all the relevant issues, and alternatives and suggestions can be put forward by members of the group.
- Members of the group will become knowledgeable about the project which will allow them to provide useful input.
- Participants gain understanding of other perspectives, potentially leading toward consensus and compromise.

Disadvantages of committees

- Committees have limited power if they are not decision-making bodies – this can frustrate participants. Committees usually only provide an advisory function.
- They may be difficult to represent the full range of interests.
- There may be substantial differences in the level of expertise of members, which will have to be accommodated.
- The views of members may moderate throughout the process. The group may therefore be viewed as elitist and become less representative of the interests for which they were appointed to the group.
- Information does not always get passed on to the broader community or groups that members represent.

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Is a committee an appropriate public participation tool to use? Some threshold questions below may assist you to determine this:

- **Has a decision already been made?** If yes → STOP – A committee is not appropriate
- **Do we need a delegated authority for decision-making, where there is not an existing authority?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate
- **Do we want to provide education and to build self-management ability within the community?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate.
- **Are we dealing with issues that have a recurrent and/or long timeframe?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate
- **Do we need to build relationships over a sustained period of time?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate
- **Do we need to have divergent opinions consistently represented?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate but also consider a combination of:
    - Charrettes - a charrette is an intensive, multi-disciplinary design workshop designed to facilitate open discussion between major stakeholders of a development project.
    - Citizen's jury – Citizen's juries use a representative sample of citizens (usually selected in a random or stratified manner), who are briefed in detail on the background and current thinking relating to a particular issue, and asked to discuss possible approaches.
    - Panel discussion/forums
    - Workshops
    - Debates

* For more information about particular public participation tools, refer to fact sheet 2.8 – *Which public participation tools should I be considering?*

- **Do we need a focal point for monitoring and functioning?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate but also consider a combination of:
    - departmental staff member or unit
    - existing agencies or bodies.
- **Do we need a focal point for information to go to and for deliberation that is more than a single staff member or existing body?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate but also consider a combination of:
    - citizen's jury
    - 21st century dialogue - Participants work in groups of 10 to 12 at tables, each with a trained facilitator and scribe. A lead facilitator heads the forum. Group members are given background information on the issue to be discussed before the meeting and brief information sessions on the day. Networked computers at each table enable recommendations to be centrally collated quickly and shown to the whole room on large screens

- **Do we need to keep a group of stakeholders informed of progress?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate but also consider a combination of:
  - charrettes
  - citizen's jury
  - panel discussion/forums
  - workshops
  - debates
  - open days
  - newsletters
  - website.

- **Do we need provision of advice and idea generation?** If yes → a committee may be appropriate but also consider a combination of:
  - charrettes
  - citizen's jury
  - panel discussion/forums
  - workshops
  - debates.

References

Aha! Consulting for Department of Environment and Department of Water, *Review of Committees End of Project Report, 2006*.

Department of Environment and Conservation, *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

Administrative Instruction No. 31 - Operational guidelines for public participation in planning, and the management of advisory bodies.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 5.2 – How do I choose a committee ‘type’ and name?

The aim of this fact sheet is to assist you to select an appropriate ‘type’ of committee and to name the committee appropriately. An inappropriate committee type and name can create unrealistic stakeholder and community expectations, which have the potential to damage ongoing working relationships. In this fact sheet, ‘committee’ is used as a collective term for advisory and working groups, councils, taskforces etc.

Selecting the ‘type’ of committee

To assist with clear delineation, the role of committees could be defined into three categories in the environment and conservation sector:

1. Advisory (on local issues, state strategies or policy matters)
Committees generally have an ‘advisory’ or consultative function. If the basic function of the department’s committees is stripped to its core, it becomes evident that regardless of terminology the majority of committees are ‘advisory’. This means that the majority of committees have a role to provide feedback and advice to the department whose role is to integrate this feedback back into operations as is appropriate.

The following committee types could all be considered advisory:

- liaison
- recovery
- coordinating
- steering
- consultative
- evaluation
- reference.

2. Regulation (monitoring, enforcement etc)

3. Implementation (initiatives, project etc)

There are also expert committees with a specialist, scientific or research role, such as the *Threatened Species Scientific Committee*.

While there may be benefits in creating a strict guide on how groups are to be named, it is also important to note that the naming process can be an important step in a group establishing its identity. As such, it may be prudent to allow committees to retain a level of flexibility with their naming, while instituting some parameters that clarify the specific functions and constructs of a committee. These can be captured in the Terms of Reference to avoid confusion into the future.

In the instance where committees/boards are established by an Act of Parliament, there is often no discussion about the name. This is not to say that the name is accurate, rather that the name is set in legislation.

As there is no legal requirement or convention for the use of these terms, the selection of a name becomes arbitrary. However, to avoid role and name confusion some form of consistent logic should be considered in the naming process.

The following representation is provided to demonstrate the two main differentiators in committee function – timeframe and independence (delegate authority).

Projected lifespan

Level of delegated authority	**Short**	**Long**
Low	*Group* *Network*	
High	***Initiative taskforce***	*Committee* *Board, Council*

In many instances, the determination of life span and delegated authority can vary and the use of the nomenclature for the entity may have little bearing on the committee, as long as the naming of the activity is clear.

Naming committees

Care must be given to ensure that the name chosen for the committee accurately reflects its purpose and level of decision-making. Given the large diversity of committee names, it is important for committees to be clear on why they have chosen a certain name and that the naming is reflective of the committee's scope and Terms of Reference. In the establishment of a committee, the temptation is to create a name that bears a certain status to attract members or to pick a name 'out of a hat'. This may lead to false expectations that need to be managed into the future.

References

Aha! Consulting for Department of Environment and Department of Water, *Review of Committees End of Project Report, 2006*

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 5.3 – How do I establish and maintain a successful committee?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide a checklist of considerations for the successful establishment and ongoing management/maintenance of a committee.

Checklist to establishing and maintaining a committee
All committees need to be established and operated according to any relevant statutory requirements. The committee establishment checklist below can be used as a best practice guide in addition to any statutory requirements, or where statutory conditions are not applicable.

The checklist has been formed to give direction when forming committees and sub-committees and to assist with their effectiveness and efficiency. Consider the following:

1. Is a committee required? Refer to fact sheet 5.1 – *Do I need to set up a committee?* and speak to DEC's Public Participation Planning Section to determine the need for a committee and to identify possible alternative or additional public participation tools.

2. Resourcing considerations:
   - funding – payment of committee members (sitting fees if applicable), travel expenses, project work, public participation
   - administrative and project and executive officer support
   - visible interest and support from DEC senior management.

3. Committee naming – ensure that the name chosen for the committee accurately reflects its purpose and level of decision-making (see fact sheet 5.2 – *How do I choose a committee 'type' and name?*

4. Life span of committee – when the committee can be dissolved.

5. Decision-making ability of committee – what decisions, if any, is it going to be given autonomy to make?

6. Committee meeting times and venue/s.

7. How meetings will be run (protocol, format, ground rules, making decisions).

8. Roles and responsibilities of committee members (similar to a job description). See fact sheet 5.5 – *How do I recruit committee members?*

9. Define the community the committee will serve in order to establish membership criteria and ensure representativeness.

10. Selection/recruitment and representativeness of committee members – avoid domination by any one interest group. Publicly advertise for committee members. Let community and stakeholder groups choose their own representatives. Urge and support group members to maintain regular communication with *their* members. See fact sheet 5.5 – *How do I recruit committee members?*

11. Selection of Chairperson – a Chairperson should ideally be as independent as possible. Depending on the issue, having a technical Chairperson and a 'process' Chairperson for

the running of the meetings may be appropriate. Get consensus within the group on who the Chairperson should be – let the group/community choose. Sometimes, a DEC staff member is the most appropriate Chairperson.

12. Endorsement of committee members and Chairperson.
13. Creation of a Terms of Reference - essential for the successful operation of a committee. See fact sheet 5.4 – *How to keep my committee on track? Creating a 'Terms of Reference'*
14. Creation of a Code of Conduct. The Office of the Public Sector Standards Commission (PSSC) has developed a Code of Conduct template for Government Boards and Committees. Also consider the DEC's Code of Conduct.
15. Use an external meeting facilitator where suitable, to ensure the transparency of the group process.
16. Accountability and reporting relationships.
17. Training for Executive Officer, Chairperson and committee members.
18. Parameters for formation of sub-committees.
19. Induction process for new committee members.
20. Resignation/replacement process for committee members.
21. Acknowledgment of departing committee members.
22. Reporting/documentation procedures.
23. Strategic/business planning
24. Public participation role of committee – make sure the group isn't the only channel for public participation.
25. Liaison with other bodies (including the media).
26. Grievance/conflict resolution procedure.
27. Evaluation procedures.

Please note that many of the above considerations may be incorporated in a Terms of Reference.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 5.4 – How do I keep my committee on track? Creating a Terms of Reference

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide information about a committee's Terms of Reference, which is an essential guideline, document or framework for the successful operation of a committee. A Terms of Reference document should be as specific as possible. It is the base document for the creation and ongoing operation of the committee, and will be referred to and updated throughout the life of the committee.

What is a Terms of Reference?
A Terms of Reference provides guidance for the creation and ongoing management of your committee. It enables the establishment, documentation and communication of the agreed approach to things such as the group's purpose, delegation of powers and life span. A Code of Conduct may form part of the Terms of Reference, or be a separate document that outlines the expected conduct and role of group members, such as how they may communicate with the media or general public. Ideally, the committee and the broader community should agree on the Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference should be drafted by the Department and then refined and mutually agreed to by committee members at the first meeting. Ideally, the committee and the broader community should agree on the Terms of Reference. Regular evaluation of the Terms of Reference is advisable to ensure it remains relevant to the committee's objectives.

Terms of Reference template
It is worthwhile to consider each heading of this Terms of Reference template in order to maximise your chances of running a successful committee. The following template is not a one size fits all, but represents a series of 'sign-off' points that should be considered in the establishment of a your group:

ESTABLISHMENT

1. **History/preamble:** Describe the context behind why this group has been/was established.

2. **Purpose of the group:** Outline what your group is aiming to achieve (mission). A strategic plan should be formulated in a table outlining the names of projects/core business, people responsible and timeframes for completion.

3. **Name and function category:** Define the 'given name' of the group and how this links to its specific function.

4. **Delegation of powers:** Outline the specific powers and actions the group is able to take, through a 'delegation statement'.

5. **Management authority:** Define who your group is directly responsible to (who they report to, who can wind-up the group).

OPERATIONS

6. **Objectives:** Describe the areas of focus/actions the group would be taking to achieve its purpose.

7. **Assistance:** Outline the funding and assistance provided by other parties. An attachment could provide a specific budget for areas such as training, research and public participation.

8. **Reporting:** Outline what is required to be reported on, to whom, by whom and how frequently.

9. **Evaluation:** Describe what is evaluated (group functioning, decision-making, progress towards objectives), when and by whom – i.e. committee, independent auditor.

10. **Life span of group/winding-up:** Define when the group is expected to reach its goals and under what circumstance the group can be wound-up.

11. **Conflict resolution:** Describe how disputes are to be managed and resolved. Ideally this would include a series of steps.

MEMBERSHIP

12. **Membership criteria and ratio:** Describe who is eligible to be on the group and the desired ratio of representation (i.e. community, researchers, government). Consider if membership is awarded to an individual or an organisation.

13. **Membership selection:** Outline how members are selected initially and into the future. Also consider areas such as: term of membership, rotation of membership, whether members leaving the group determine their replacement and how members are taken off the group. Also consider the minimum attendance of members to meetings.

14. **Liability of members:** Clarify the liability of group members for decisions taken.

15. **Remuneration:** If applicable, describe what fees are paid to whom and for what functions.

CONDUCT

16. **Conflicts of interest:** Describe how the group members and the group should deal with conflicts of interest.

17. **Code of conduct:** Describe the expected conduct and role of the group, group members and specific positions.

18. **Confidentiality:** Describe how information provided at meetings is to be treated.

19. **Media:** Clarify the process of who talks to the media on particular issues and on whose behalf.

MEETINGS

20. **Meetings procedure:** Outline how meetings are to be run, when agenda and briefing notes are to be circulated, how minutes are taken, whether visitors are allowed and how they can interact with the group.

21. **Decision-making:** Outline how decisions are to be made (e.g. Consensus, majority voting), disagreements managed and votes taken (if required). How many members need to be present (quorum) to pass an action.

22. **Public participation:** Describe the role of the wider community in the group's decision-making process. Consider what other participation processes might be used and the resources required. Determine how information and feedback to the broader community about the committee's activities will be disseminated.

23. **Meetings schedule:** Clarify how often meetings are held and the minimum frequency.

References

Aha! Consulting for Department of Environment and Department of Water, *Review of Committees End of Project Report, 2006*

Department of the Premier and Cabinet, *Public Sector Management web site*, www.dpc.wa.gov.au/psmd 1992

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 5.5 – How do I recruit committee members?

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide tips on how to recruit members of a committee, ensuring representativeness and appropriateness of membership. It also covers the types of roles that committee members can fulfil.

Selection of group members/representativeness

In order to determine committee membership criteria, it is important to define the community the committee will serve. Communities may be defined in terms of ethnicity, language, age, gender, socio-economic status and geography. Well-designed committees are carefully balanced by interests, demographics, geographic locations and/or organisational representation. However, it is unlikely that you can ever achieve true representation of any community.

For your committee to be credible within your community, it is important that the membership is a balance of representing stakeholders, such as community, business and industry, government, academia and the wider community demographic (young people, women, cultural groups etc). Avoid domination by any one interest group. Membership needs to be considered carefully and be in accordance with any statutory requirements. Regardless of the representativeness of the group, it should not be assumed that it speaks for the whole community. Rather, the group should be clear that its role is to provide a communication link between the wider community and the group.

A prescribed membership ratio can be helpful – for example, a committee may consist of three local government representatives, three State Government representatives, three community members and three agriculturalists. Or, there may be clear guidelines that a majority of members, or at least 50 per cent, must be community representatives. The number of members should be sufficient to achieve objectives and manageable to ensure that decisions can be made easily and meetings arranged efficiently. An ideal number for a committee is eight to 12 members. If a large group is unavoidable, then smaller working groups within the larger group may need to be formed.

Recruiting members

In seeking members to join the committee, the process is similar to advertising for job candidates. A roles and responsibilities description, like a job description form, should be developed and publicly advertised for expressions of interest. Selection of members should be considered carefully. Other methods of selection include inviting representatives of groups or organisations that have shown an interest in the issue; accepting self-nominated participants and random selection. Commonly used recruitment methods include network referrals, direct mail, advertising, registers, general publicity and interviews.

Committee members should be chosen for their knowledge and skills, not just for their representation of a particular group. It is also helpful to clarify whether members will help to make decisions on the committee as individuals, or as part of the organisation/group they represent. It is usually more time efficient for people to make decisions as individuals, so they don't have to regularly consult with their organisation and the committee can move forward without constraints. Let community and stakeholder groups choose their own representatives. Urge and support committee members to maintain regular communication with their members.

The following list outlines some skills and attributes that members should ideally have to assist with effective committee performance. This list could form the selection criteria for potential committee members:

1. **Accountability –** Ability to understand accountability requirements and uphold ethical standards.
2. **Strategic thinking –** Ability to contribute to strategic planning and goal setting.
3. **Monitoring –** Ability to analyse, assess and review performance.
4. **Policy development –** Ability to establish and review policy objectives and resource priorities.
5. **Decision-making –** Ability to adopt ethical decision-making processes.
6. **Networking –** Ability to access networks and promote the committee's objectives and activities.
7. **Advising –** Ability to provide information and advice, make suggestions and recommendations.
8. **Teamwork –** Ability to work cooperatively with members to achieve agreed goals.
9. **Commitment –** Ability to attend meetings and fulfil committee requirements for a particular timeframe.

Roles of members

There are two key roles that will need to be established and fulfilled in your committee – Chairperson and Executive Officer/Secretary. The following outlines the general roles of each of these positions:

The role of a Chairperson is to:

- leads and directs the activities of the committee
- set meeting agendas in consultation with the Executive Officer/Secretary.
- facilitate meetings and ensures that meeting rules and the Code of Conduct are followed, for example, not allowing one person to dominate. However, sometimes it may be appropriate to engage an independent facilitator for activities such as the formulation of Terms of Reference or meetings with the broader community
- facilitate decision-making.

The Chairperson should be as independent as possible. They should be independent in the eyes of the broader community and as much as possible, endorsed by the broader community. Often, depending on the issue, having a technical Chairperson and a 'process' Chairperson for the running of the meetings may be appropriate.

Get consensus within the group on who the Chairperson should be – let the committee/community choose. Sometimes, a departmental staff member is the most appropriate Chairperson.

The role of the Executive Officer/Secretary is to:

- provide general administrative support, such as managing correspondence and record keeping, and may also have a coordination or project management role
- induct new committee members and ensuring compliance with Terms of Reference
- organise meeting invitations and sending out agendas
- arrange venue and catering
- formulate and dissemination of meeting minutes and any other relevant documents.
- writing evaluation reports.

Other committee roles may entail:

- treasurer
- sponsorship
- partnership
- marketing/promotion
- education/advocacy
- events
- stakeholder/public engagement

Also refer to fact sheet 3.5 – *How do I effectively facilitate a meeting or workshop?* for skills in running a committee meeting and fact sheet 3.4 – *How do I effectively plan and run a meeting or workshop?* for selection of appropriate venues, room layout and set-up for meetings.

References

Aha! Consulting for Department of Environment and Department of Water, *Review of Committees End of Project Report, 2006*.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Public Sector Management: Getting on Board: Guide to Recruitment and Induction of Members of Western Australian Government Boards and Committees, 1997.

Community Advisory Committee Guidelines – Non-statutory guidelines for Metropolitan Health Services (VIC), 2000.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 6.1 – Why should industry involve the community?

The aim of this fact sheet is to assist industry in planning for public participation in their projects and to illustrate to industry the benefits of doing public participation well. Some of these benefits include the facilitation of shared understanding of issues and dilemmas and bettwe relationship and partnership development between industry and the community.

Why should industry involve the community?

Leading industries know that conducting good public participation is imperative and integral to operations. Below are some quotes to illustrate this thinking:

> "The Australian Minerals Industry strongly supports the role of a 'social licence to operate' as a complement to a regulatory licence issued by government. This is about operating in a manner that is attuned to community expectations and which acknowledges that businesses have a shared responsibility with government, and more broadly society, to help facilitate the development of strong and sustainable communities." (Harvey, 2005)
>
> "The successful minerals company of the future needs to be more that just technically and commercially proficient; it must be just as competent in social science, relationship management and community development as it is in engineering, financial planning and environmental science." (Harvey 2005)
>
> "A shift from two-way interaction between corporates and government to three-way corporate, community and government has meant that corporate entities are now obliged to develop direct relationships with local community and local government, and are increasingly pushed to do so by communities with access to the internet."

What is public participation in industry?
Public participation in industry includes any communication activities initiated by industry with stakeholders, public or members of communities of geography (local people) or interest (those with an interest in the site, process and potential environmental, social or economic impacts of a project).

This communication may range from one-way to two-way communication depending on the scope of the proposal and the needs of the community and the proponent.

The International Association of Public Participation (www.iap2.org) describes the five 'levels' of public participation as 'informing, consulting, involving, collaborating to empowering' (See general fact sheet series which covers questions such as fact sheet 2.2 – *How do I choose the right level of public participation?*)

The Office of Development Approvals Coordination (ODAC) recommends two phases where proponents should consult with stakeholders:

1. Preliminary consultation – proponents are advised to consult with stakeholders, including the community and government agencies, to identify and discuss the issues involved with the project, likely impacts, potential means of addressing these issues and the likely approvals required.

2. Detail proposal – proponents consult further with stakeholders as appropriate and prepare and submit detailed assessment documentation to government agencies

What are the benefits to industry of going above the statutory requirements for public participation?
The *Environmental Protection Act* 1986 establishes statutory public participation requirements for proponents requiring project approval or a works approval licence. DEC also has public participation standards when undertaking projects which have the potential to impact a community. Committing to involving the community over and above statutory requirements has multiple benefits for the community as well as the proponent.

An early, proactive approach to public participation requirements is likely to create a smoother approvals process and potentially less work for the proponent in the future. If public participation is not undertaken from the start of the process and in a way that satisfies the community, the proponent is likely to have to go into 'damage control' mode and spend more time and money on public participation and possibly even litigation. This is likely to cause project delays and frustration. Building a positive relationship with the community has many benefits for the proponent, not just an easier approvals process.

Other benefits of quality public participation include:

- assistance in decision-making and the achievement of sustainable outcomes – the community can offer new perspectives and solutions on issues, which may even result in financial savings;
- increased industry knowledge of perceived and actual environmental impacts prior to applying for approvals and licences;
- the opportunity to increase community understanding in relation to actual impacts;
- the time taken to plan, finance, insure and regulate any operation has increased substantially in the past few decades, particularly in the case of large-scale mines – in these circumstances, developing better public participation processes has the potential to deliver real financial returns for a company;
- the opportunity to maintain relationships with community and strive for continuous improvement;
- the planning, development and implementation of projects attuned to community expectations;
- relationship/partnership development;
- increased openness and trust;
- demonstrated commitment to accountability, democracy and transparency;
- empowered citizens and promotion of environmental protection;
- greater legitimacy for decision-making;
- facilitates shared understanding of problems and dilemmas;
- less resistance to appropriate proposals; and
- community pride in organisations that work collaboratively with the community.

What are the risks of not conducting effective public participation?
- time delays for a project, requiring additional studies/investigations and/or consultation to be undertaken, hence incurring greater project costs;
- community outrage;
- potential litigation;

- media scrutiny;
- damage to a company's reputation and future ability to conduct business;
- one-off, inconsistent and *ad hoc* public participation approaches reduce community commitment to a process if there is a belief that a company is not committed to the community's long-term well-being;
- if a company shows a lack of flexibility when the public needs time to absorb complex proposals or scientific information, then attempting to move forward without providing an additional session, information or assistance may be detrimental to relationships;
- lack of consistency throughout project processes – what you did last time may be considered the benchmark for future processes so, if you build expectation in a community of the way you work, it must be maintained; and
- where lack of information and participation occurs, perceived impacts of a proposal may become contentious, which may have been avoided.

Perceived impacts are just as important as actual impacts for those who are concerned, until their concerns can be alleviated by additional information and reassurance. It is much more difficult to dismiss long-held perceptions than to proactively inform communities and stakeholders of the actual impacts, attempts to mitigate, and limitations of the mitigation that will need to be accepted by a community if the project is to go ahead.

Even if a proponent believes its project contains no negotiable elements, it is important it conducts issues identification (environmental, social and economic) with the potentially impacted public, and offer participation opportunities. Issues that are ascertained should be documented and, where possible, mitigation of them exhibited. This information should be included with any project proposals seeking approvals and licenses from all levels of government.

What are some useful references for industry when considering public participation?
The Environmental Protection Authority has released some public participation documents for industry, which include:

- Guidelines for Preparing a Public Environmental Review/ Environmental Review and Management Programme; and
- Environmental Review Document Release and Public Review Guidance to Proponent.

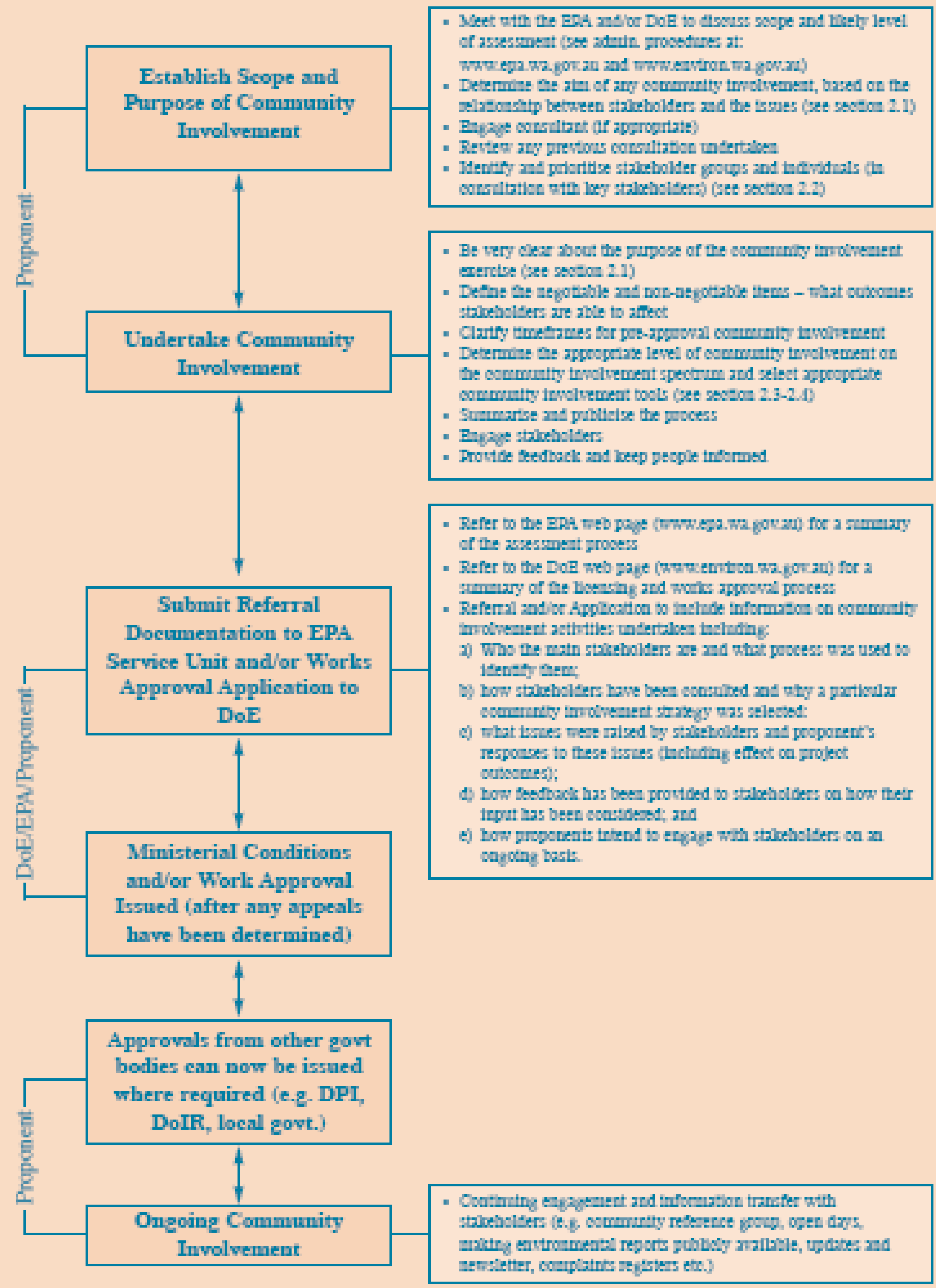
Other useful documents include:

- Department of Environment and Conservation, *Guide to Works Approvals,* 2004;
- Office of Development Approvals Coordination, *Integrated Project Approvals System*, 2006; and
- Department of Health, *Public Health Consultation: A Guide for Developers*, 2006.

Public participation resources developed by government and non-government organisations are relevant to industry. Quality public participation processes are conducted using the same principles regardless of the issues and who is driving the process.

Figure 1 below is a process map/ flow chart that illustrates how proponents should undertake public participation in an Environmental Approval Application process:

Figure 1: Community Involvement and the Environmental Approval Application Process



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What are some useful public participation techniques, approaches and tools that industry could use?

1. Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)
CBPR is a partnership approach to researching, monitoring and data collecting that involves community members in all aspects of the process. There is a growing expectation in the community for local people to be actively engaged in environmental monitoring. CBPR is one approach to achieve this through the direct involvement of the community in the entire process, from the initial development of the research questions to the interpretation and dissemination of project results. Unlike traditional research, CBPR focuses on issues identified by the community. For more details on CBPR, see fact sheet 6.4 – *What is Community Based Participatory Research?*

2. Environmental Improvement Plans (EIPs)
An EIP is a proactive, voluntary agreement, or a tripartite process, between a company, its community and the environmental regulator and represents a commitment by all parties to abide by the spirit and intent of that agreement.

EIPs have been used successfully in Victoria and South Australia as an effective tool to guide continuous improvement of a company's environmental performance to achieve outcomes determined by the licensee, the environmental regulator, and in Victoria, the community.

For more details on EIPs, see fact sheet 6.3 – *What is an Environmental Improvement Plan?*

3. Open days, site visits and site tours
Open days, site visits and site tours are a good way for industry to involve and communicate with the community. By allowing people into your site, you are demonstrating a willingness for openness and transparency, which will go a long way towards building relationships and trust.

To be successful, open days should be conducted on a regular basis (i.e. monthly, quarterly and yearly) so people get to know when they are held. Open days are a great, informal and fun way to educate the local community about your company's activities and are also an opportunity for an ideas and information exchange. By being proactive with your local community, you are more likely to positively manage any future crisis or incident through having increased community understanding and appreciation of your operations.

References
Emerging Models of Community Engagement in the Australian Minerals Industry, Harvey, Bruce, Chief Adviser Aboriginal and Community Relations, Rio Tinto Australia and Brereton, David, Director, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, presented at the International Conference on Engaging Communities, 14-17 August 2005, Brisbane: an initiative of the United Nations and the Queensland Government.

Office of Development Approvals Coordination, An outline of the Integrated Project Approvals System process, 2006 www.odac.dpc.wa.gov.au/documents/IPASBrochure.pdf

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 6.2 – Public participation references in the *Environmental Protection Act 1984* Administrative Procedures part IV

This fact sheet lists the references to public consultation/stakeholder participation in the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* section 'Environmental Impact Assessment (Part IV Division 1) Administrative Procedures 2002' to assist proponents when undertaking an environmental approvals process.

The Administrative Procedures outline the basic, legislative requirements of proponents, which must be met and even exceeded in an environmental approvals process. It is critical to note that these requirements do not prevent proponents from taking a more proactive, creative approach towards a public participation process. The benefits of such an approach are outlined in Fact Sheet 6.1 – *Why should industry involve the community?*

Section of Environmental Impact Assessment (Part IV Division 1) Administrative Procedures 2002	**Reference to community/stakeholders, public consultation and related matters**
2. Objectives of Environmental Impact Assessment	Proponents are also encouraged to engage in consultation with State and local government authorities and members of the public who may be interested or affected by their proposal early in the EIA process, to ensure that people are informed about the proposal and its impacts, and to enable the proponent to respond to issues and make appropriate adjustments to their proposals during planning and design.
2.1 (c) Objectives	To provide opportunities for local community and public participation, as appropriate, during the assessment of proposals.
4.1.2 9 (viii) Decision on whether or not to assess a proposal	The authority will take into consideration the environmental significance of a proposal when deciding whether the proposal will be assessed. This will include 'The likely level of public interest, and the extent to which the proponent has consulted with interested and affected people and responded to issues raised'.
5.3.1 Environmental Protection Statement (EPS)	This level of assessment will typically be applied to proposals of local interest that raise a number of significant environmental factors which can be readily managed, where it is considered that environmental conditions under Part IV of the Act are required to ensure the proposal is implemented and managed in an environmentally acceptable manner, and where in the judgement of the authority, a formal public review period may be unnecessary because the proponent has adequately consulted with stakeholders.
5.3.2 (1) Environmental Protection Statement (EPS)	The proponent refers the proposals to the EPA. Based on the information contained in the referral, the EPA determines that it may be appropriate to assess the proposal through the EPS process. The Chairman of the EPA discusses this with the proponent and where the proponent agrees to proceed with assessment through the EPS process, the EPA provides guidance, where appropriate, on the further information required in an EPS document. The EPA may also provide suggestions about the people or groups that the proponent should contact for consultation purposes
5.3.2 (2) Environmental Protection Statement (EPS)	The EPA will advertise its intention to set an EPS level of assessment on the proposal and indicating: 'That anyone interested in the proposal should contact the proponent if they require information or wish to be part of the consultation process'.
5.3.2 (3) Environmental Protection Statement (EPS)	Proponent prepares EPS document in consultation with stakeholders and other interested parties.
5.3.2 (6) Environmental Protection Statement (EPS)	Proponents make the EPS document available for public inspection, as required by the EPA.

5.3.3 Environmental Protection Statement (EPS)	Where proponents have been given an indication that this level of assessment may appropriate, they should consult with DMAs, other relevant agencies and other identified stakeholders in the preparation of the EPS document. For some types of proposals, preparing an EPS should be straightforward. However, because of the necessity to consult with stakeholders and the public in the preparation of satisfactory EPS documentation, the fact that a proponent has undertaken to prepare an EPS should not be taken as a prior commitment by the EPA that this level of assessment will be applied when the proposal is finally referred. For this level of assessment to be set, a proponent's EPS document will need to demonstrate to the EPA that: (a) the community and key stakeholders, including DMA's, have been adequately consulted and their views taken into account.
5.4.4 Public Environmental Review (PER)	When the EPA is satisfied the PER document has adequately addressed all of the environmental factors and studies identified in the Environmental Scoping document, the proponent will be required to release it for a public review period, normally between four and eight weeks.
5.4.5 Public Environmental Review (PER)	The EPA will provide copies of the submissions (with the names of private individuals removed) to the proponent. The proponent will be required to prepare a summary of the pertinent issues and matters raised in the submissions. The proponent will then be required to respond to issues and matters raised in submissions on the PER document to the satisfaction of the authority.
5.4.6 Public Environmental Review (PER)	The authority will assess the PER document, submissions, proponent's response to submissions, and obtain advice from any other persons it considers appropriate and submit its report to the Minister in accordance with section 44.
5.5.2 Environmental Review and Management Program (ERMP)	The EPA may require the proponent to make the Environmental Scoping document available for public review for a period of two weeks and to modify the document based on submissions as appropriate.
5.5.4 Environmental Review and Management Programme (ERMP)	When the EPA is satisfied the ERMP document has addressed all of the environmental factors and studies identified in the environmental scoping document, the proponent will be required to release it for a public review period normally between 10 and 12 weeks.
5.5.5 Environmental Review and Management Program (ERMP)	The EPA will provide copies of the submissions (with the names of private individuals removed) to the proponent. The proponent will be required to prepare a summary of the pertinent issues and matters raised in the submissions. The proponent will then be required to respond to issues and matters raised in submissions on the ERMP document to the satisfaction of the authority.
5.5.6 Environmental Review and Management Programme (ERMP)	The authority will assess the ERMP document, submissions, proponent's response to submissions, and obtain advice from any other persons it considers appropriate and submit its report to the Minister in accordance with section 44.
5.6 Public Inquiry	Section 40 (2) (c) allows the authority to seek agreement from the Minister to conduct a Public Inquiry in relation to the assessment of a proposal and sets out the powers that a public inquiry has.
5.6.1 Public Inquiry	The authority may initiate a public inquiry, with the approval of the Minister, to assist in the assessment of a proposal which is very complex and of intense public interest or such other reason determined by the authority.
6.1.2 Environmental Scoping Document	An Environmental Scoping document shall include – (iii) a preliminary impact assessment with identification of the environmental issues/factors arising from the project and their relative significance. In doing this, the proponent should have preliminary discussions with DMAs and any other relevant agencies, regarding issues/factors they consider should be addressed, and any specific requirements they may have; (iv) a planned program of consultation with the public, key stakeholders and relevant government authorities, as appropriate.

6.1.3 Environmental Scoping Document	The authority will maintain a publicly available database of generic environmental factors, and associated broad EPA environmental objectives, as a guide to proponents for preparing their Environmental Scoping document and PER/ERMP.
6.3.1 Environmental Review Document	The EPA will maintain a set of publicly available generic guidelines for the form and content of environmental review documents.
6.3.5 Environmental Review Document	The proponent should ensure that an environmental review focuses on addressing the more significant environmental issues/factors and should include but not be limited to – (g) details of public and government agency consultation and how comments received have been responded to.
6.4.2 Assessment of Proposals by the Commonwealth Government or other State Governments	Where another State Government has a decision-making role in relation to a proposal that is also being assessed by the authority, the authority will endeavour to establish – (c) a common public review period, according to the Basis for a National Agreement on Environmental Impact Assessment (ANZECC 1997).
7. Public Release of Environmental Review Document	All Public Environmental Review and Environmental Review and Management Programme documents will be subject to a public review period prior to the authority preparing its report and recommendations to the Minister. Issues may be raised in public or technical comment that necessitates the provision of information additional to that provided in the environmental review document.
7.1 Public Release of Environmental Review Document	The proponent shall not publish or publicly distribute an environmental review document required by the authority for review without the approval of the authority.
7.2 Public Release of Environmental Review Document	The proponent shall submit a draft of an environmental review document to the authority for it to decide whether the document is suitable for public release and review.
7.3 Public Release of Environmental Review Document	The authority may circulate the draft environmental review document to relevant decision-making authorities and government agencies for comment before deciding on the acceptability of the document.
7.4 Public Release of Environmental Review Document	The authority will decide upon the acceptability of an environmental review document for public release and review on the basis of the following criteria – (a) whether the environmental issues/factors in the Environmental Scoping Document have been adequately addressed; (b) whether the document appears technically sound; (c) whether the document is understandable; (d) the acceptability of the document to relevant decision-making authorities and other government agencies; and (e) whether the format, content and style are appropriate.
8. Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The environmental impact assessment process is designed to be transparent and accountable, and includes specific points for public involvement, including opportunities for public review of environmental review documents. The public review of the proponent's document ensures that the community, decision-making authorities and government agencies are informed about a proposal, have the opportunity to comment, and that their comments are considered by the authority, before a decision is made by the State Government. Sections 40 (4) and (6) provide the power for the seeking of comment on environmental review documents.
8.1 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The authority will require the proponent at the commencement of the review period to – (a) advertise the availability of the environmental review document; (b) ensure the environmental review document is available to the public; and (c) supply copies of the environmental review document at no cost to specified government agencies, libraries and public interest groups; in accordance with the requirements of the authority.
8.2 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The proponent shall advertise, in a form and content agreed by the authority, the availability of the environmental review document in the news section of the main local newspaper, and a State-wide daily newspaper. The advertisement should appear at the commencement of the public review period and again two weeks before the closure of the public review period.

8.3 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The authority shall also advertise the availability of the environmental review document and the review period in a State-wide daily newspaper.
8.4 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The proponent shall ensure the environmental review document is available to the public throughout the review period, in accordance with the requirements of the authority. Proponents are encouraged to make the environmental review document available on the internet and/or CD.
8.6 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The proponent may make public presentations and hold open days on the environmental review during the public review period.
8.7 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The authority may request relevant government agencies and expert persons to provide comments on the environmental review document within a specified time.
8.8 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The authority shall accept all submissions received by it within the public review period if made in writing or such other form as determined acceptable by the authority.
8.9 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The authority may extend the public review period or accept submissions beyond the review period where: a) the review period coincides with lengthy public holiday periods; b) the receipt of public comments may be delayed because of infrequent mail services; c) there are delays in the environmental review document being reasonably available; or d) the authority considers it necessary.
8.10 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	The information in submissions shall be deemed public information, unless a request for confidentiality of the submission is made in writing to and accepted by the authority but the identity of private individuals remains confidential to the authority, unless the submitter agrees to be identified. Access to public submissions will, however, be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
8.11 Review of Environmental Review Documents By The Community, Relevant Decision-Making Authorities and Government Agencies	Written submissions from government agencies are deemed public information unless that agency specifically requests that the submission be confidential. Access to government agency submissions will, however, be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
9.1 Persons to Provide Information	*Section 40(2)(a) provides for the Authority to 'require any person to provide it with such information as is specified in that requirement'.*
9.1.1 Persons to Provide Information	The authority may request any person to provide information to assist the authority in the assessment of a proposal within a specified time.
9.1.2 Persons to Provide Information	The authority may engage expert persons to provide advice to the authority and conduct investigations on specific matters associated with a proposal to assist the authority in its assessment.

9.2 Proponent's Response to Issues	The proponent will be required by the authority to provide a written response to issues raised during the public review. This is an opportunity for the proponent to clarify or review and modify aspects of the proposal to address environmental issues and to meet the authority's environmental objectives.
9.2.1 Proponent's Response to Issues	The proponent will be required to prepare a summary of the pertinent issues raised in public and government agency submissions.
9.2.2 Proponent's Response to Issues	The proponent shall then respond in writing to the summary of issues and any other issues the authority may consider need to be addressed and where appropriate, amend the proposal and change environmental commitments.
9.2.5 Proponent's Response to Issues	The proponent shall ensure that the response to issues – a) is prepared; and b) is available publicly and at no cost at the publication of the authority's assessment report, in accordance with the requirements of the authority.
9.3.1 Public Inquiry	In accordance with Section 42(2), the authority will incorporate the findings resulting from a public inquiry in its report to the Minister
9.4.1 Information used in the Authority's Assessment	The authority may consider information from one or more of the following sources in assessing the proposal - d) issues raised in public submissions or meetings; e) reports from any public inquiry; f) advice from DMAs and relevant government agencies; g) proponent's commitments, proposed management measures and response to issues

DMA – decision-making authority

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 6.3 – What is an Environmental Improvement Plan? An industry consideration for public participation.

This fact sheet outlines the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) model for Western Australia and highlights this as an opportunity for increased public participation between industry, local communities and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).

Background
Western Australia's environmental protection laws, like legislation in most other industrialised nations, have focused considerable attention on regulating industrial activities.

While regulatory approaches have proven to be successful in halting and preventing excessive emissions of wastes from industries, the community expects industry of all sizes to move beyond a mind-set of minimal compliance to a more proactive approach. This expectation introduces a new element of social responsibility where there is genuine engagement with a company's community, rather than a detached legal relationship with the government.

EIPs represent one tool that industry may voluntarily develop as a commitment to extend their environmental performance beyond compliance. However, EIPs can also be used more widely to address sustainability issues or to contribute to the development of Industry Sustainability Covenants.

What is an EIP?
An EIP is an agreement between a company, its community and the environmental regulator. It represents a commitment by all parties to abide by the spirit and intent of that agreement.

EIPs have been used successfully in Victoria and South Australia as an effective tool to guide continuous improvement of a company's environmental performance to achieve outcomes determined by the licensee, the environmental regulator, and in Victoria, the community.

In their simplest form, EIPs are a schedule of prioritised projects designed to achieve specific environmental objectives. Each project is clearly defined in terms of a series of objectives, actions and anticipated improvements or outcomes by which performance can be measured.

To give an EIP appropriate status, it is intended that EIP documents be signed off by a senior company representative, a community representative and the Director General of DEC.

As the process of developing an EIP will consist of representatives from three different groups – the licensee, community and DEC – it can be referred to as a tripartite process. The purpose of tripartite processes is to make better decisions that reflect the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders.

What are the benefits of an EIP?
Key benefits to industry, community and DEC include:
- improved environmental performance
- an agreed framework for licensee's to extend public participation processes beyond compliances
- the development of more sustainable business practices

- a closer match between community expectations and industry performance
- improved financial performance. This is due to the fact that some improvements through the EIP process can be achieved through the implementation of waste minimisation and cleaner production principles which can result in cost savings
- flexibility to take an integrated approach to environmental improvement or to concentrate on the improvement of particular areas of performance
- improved relationships with the community through a mutually agreed plan for environmental improvement
- in some instances, less prescriptive licence conditions, although key aspects requiring licensing under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* will remain embedded within licence conditions

Common issues that EIPs can address, include:

- identification, assessment and evaluation of options for improved environment performance;
- an integrated approach to achieving better environmental outcomes;
- application of waste minimisation and cleaner production technologies;
- water and energy efficiencies;
- assessment of new and emerging technologies;
- the resolution of complaints from the public;
- provision for contingency or emergency plans;
- community relations, health and safety issues; and
- community reporting requirements on progress.

How will EIPs be related to a licence?

Although the EIP model presented in this fact sheet may be undertaken by a company on a voluntary basis, it is still important that the EIP be treated as a serious commitment. EIPs will be referenced in the licence assessment report that will accompany each licence so it is clearly recognised that the company has committed to a program, beyond compliance requirements.

Licences will continue to focus predominantly on emissions and discharges from prescribed premises within the scope of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986.* However, as a non-regulatory tool, EIPs will provide a more appropriate framework for describing the management of other issues and agreed improvement targets that support the conditions of the licence.

Failure to meet commitments in an EIP will not be treated as a breach of licence condition, noting that the general intent of the EIP process is to move away from the need to use coercive enforcement as a means of achieving improved environmental outcomes. In such an event, a review of the EIP would be triggered and DEC would also give consideration as to the relevance of the failure to the existing licence.

For ideas and literature on how to develop an EIP, contact the Public Participation Planning section.

Reference

Department of Environment, Environmental Improvement Plans – Western Australian model, August 2004

* As a visual for this fact sheet - Use Appendix A – Proposed Licence and EIP Structure (process map taken from above document). See below.

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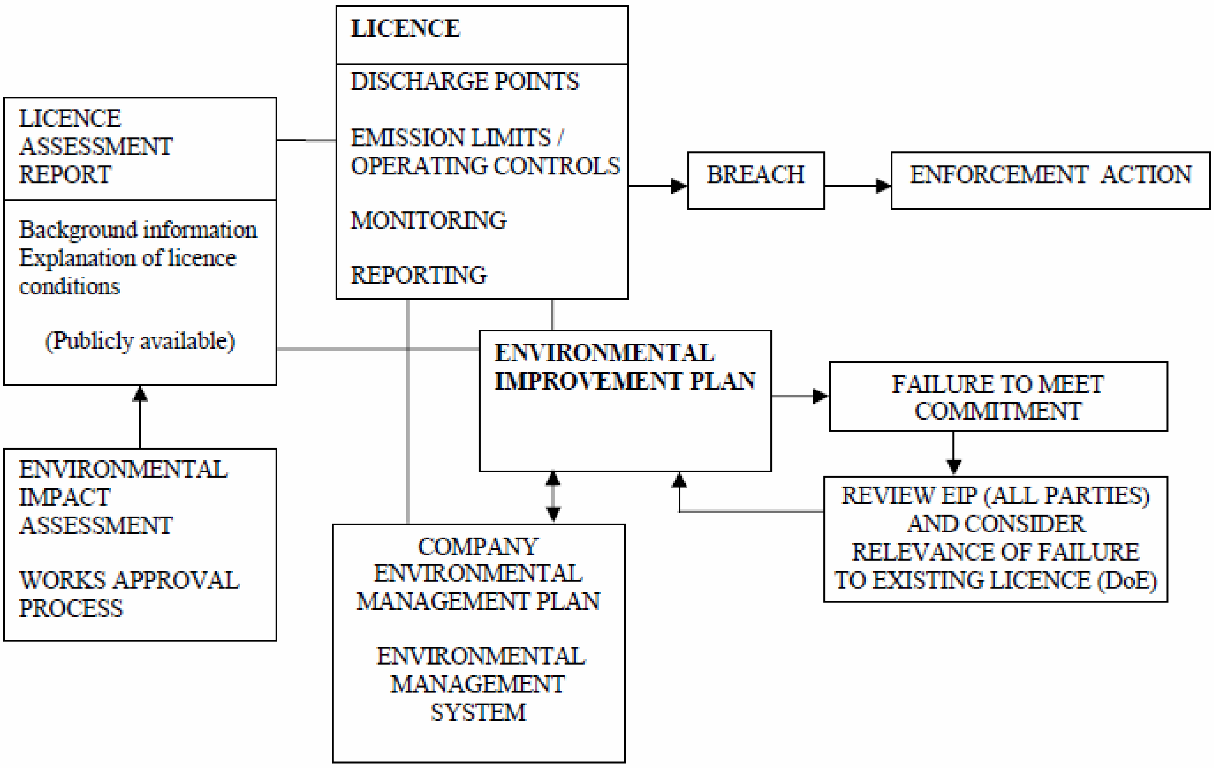
APPENDIX A

PROPOSED LICENCE AND EIP STRUCTURE



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Fact sheet 6.4 – What is Community Based Participatory Research?

The aim of this fact sheet is to outline Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR), an innovative, new model that you may wish to consider in the management of scientifically complex, contentious issues in the community, such as pollution.

What is CBPR?
CBPR is a partnership approach to research that involves community members, government and researchers in all aspects of the research process.

There is a growing expectation in the community for local people to be actively engaged in environmental monitoring, and CBPR is one approach to achieve this through the direct involvement of the community in the entire research process, from the initial development of the research questions to the interpretation and dissemination of project results. Unlike traditional research, CBPR focuses on issues identified by the community. Most importantly, the community participants provide the research findings to the broader community so they can be used to make changes and improve conditions in environmental and health policy.

How issues are defined and the research focus selected are key aspects of CBPR. Responding to the issues identified by the community will help researchers and government build mutual respect and trust with a community, which is important in ensuring the success of a research project. In order to receive community support for a CBPR project, the issues and research focus need to reflect issues of importance for community members and have a direct impact on improving the issues in the community – or in other words, provide tangible outcomes.

When could CBPR be applied?
DEC staff may need to make community members aware of CBPR if they present with an issue, as this model is not widely known or understood. It is likely you will need to arrange some training and guidance for the community to enable the effective use of the CBPR model. The Public Participation Planning section could assist with this.

As a guide, you could recommend using the CBPR model to the community in the following instances:

1. If the community needs to confirm whether an issue exists (such as odour).
2. If the community needs to determine the extent and nature of a known issue.
3. Scientific data from various sources is not consistent and needs to be verified by an independent source.
4. If there is community scepticism about the department's or a company's scientific monitoring results, and an independent source (i.e. the community) is required to undertake further monitoring to resolve the matter.

What are the benefits of CBPR?

- increased community support for and participation in the research, thereby increasing the quantity, quality and relevance of data collected
- utilisation of community knowledge on local issues
- utilisation of skills and resources within the community

- increased community support for and participation in the application of research findings, resulting in longer-term positive outcomes
- enhancement of skills, knowledge, strengths and resources within the community
- improvements in health and well-being of community members
- bridging cultural and other gaps between and within communities
- building stronger communities who take ownership of issues and their solutions

What are some things I need to consider when using CBPR?

- ensure that you have endorsement from DEC senior management to undertake a CBPR process for the issue
- ensure that the issues and research focus come from the community and are widely endorsed in order to maximise success
- ensure the department is able to support the process in the provision of staff, time and funding – often it is very expensive to hire monitoring equipment and analyse data, and without funds to do this, the process will fail. An alternative funding source is another consideration – i.e. Commonwealth, industry
- while the community is meant to drive the process, DEC staff may need to take on a highly supportive, collaborative role, and assist to guide the community through the process and act as an information resource

Where do I go for detailed information on how to conduct a CBPR process?
DEC's Air Quality Management Branch has produced a CBPR guide called *Community Based Participatory Research Guide for Air Quality Management*. This detailed, useful guide outlines the nine stages of a CBPR process and what needs to occur at each stage.

To view this guide, go to:

http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au/portal/page?_pageid=54,6944179&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

The Public Participation Planning section can also provide advice and support to conduct a CBPR process.

References
Department of Environment and Conservation, *Community Based Participatory Research Guide for Air Quality Management*, 2007

Once you have determined the appropriate level of public participation on the IAP2 spectrum of participation (see fact sheet 2.2 – *How do I choose the right level of public participation?*), you need to select the appropriate public participation tool, tools or techniques for your project. This fact sheet will guide you through a process to select the right tools.

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.

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Fact sheet 7.1 – Consultant brief template

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide a recommended template for the preparation of a brief to engage an external consultant to conduct your public participation process. This template would be filled in as part of an RFQ/tender process once you have determined that you require a consultant and have the appropriate budget. See fact sheet 2.9 *When and how do I engage an external provider to assist with a public participation process?*

Insert date……

Below: Explanations are provided in **black** and an example is provided in **grey**, when relevant.

Request	Ensure that you outline the consultant's role and function and whether any DEC staff will work with the consultant and/or oversee their activities. **For example** - the consultant is invited to submit a detailed proposal and quotation to the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) to undertake a public participation process for project X. As part of this brief the consultant is requested to: • Present a 'Plan B' i.e. if they fall ill, how will the job be completed? • Challenge us on timeline/budget if they feel a better quality outcome could be achieved – but they need to clearly demonstrate this.
Background	• You will need to provide a brief background to the project i.e. any issues, the history, a summary of events that have occurred until now. • It may be useful to provide background on your division and its role in the project • Provide a public participation/communication plan (See fact sheet 2.5 *How do I develop a public participation/communication plan?* • Briefly outline why community engagement is sought – what input are you seeking from the community and stakeholders?
Objectives of project:	State to the consultant what it is you are trying to achieve by conducting the project. See fact sheet 2.5 - *How do I develop a public participation/communication plan?* for more information on developing objectives.
Constraints/sensitivities	Outline to the consultant any time or budget constraints and political or other relevant sensitivities. **For example** - this project needs to be completed within a two to three week period from 30 June 2008, as it is imperative that the DEC project results are released as soon as possible.

	In addition, there are also some political sensitivities between X and DEC as the regulator of the facility. X officers/ representatives are not to be contacted as part of the project.
Timeframe/s	Outline all of the relevant project deadlines to the consultant. **For example:** • Brief to consultant by **Monday 30 June** • Question and answer session with DEC on **Wednesday 2 July** • Written proposal and quotation from consultant due **Friday 4 July** • Successful consultant notified **Monday 7 July** • Refined consultant proposal due at DEC by **Wednesday 9 July** • Project completed by **Wednesday 16 July** • Debrief and draft report due by **Friday 18 July** • Final report due **Tuesday 22 July**
Proposed methodology	Make sure that the consultant demonstrates a sound methodology that will ensure that your objectives will be met (you could include the Public Participation Planning staff in determining this).
Proposal requirements (outline project and its key components)	Your proposal to the consultant will need to consider DEC's proposed methodology and objectives. You may like to include some of the following points: • You can request that the consultant analyse and produce a report of the results for distribution back to participants along with any information from the project team about how the results will influence the project. • Ask that outputs include the presentation of majority views and divergent minority views, as this information can be key/insightful that may not be represented by the majority view, yet valuable to the project. • Social researchers and engagement consultants 'should' collect, collate and even analyse information from the public and present it to you as an output of the process. • Articulate everything you want from the consultant in detail, don't assume they understand what you want and don't let them drive what they think you need! • All raw data, tools/ideas and reports from the consultant should become intellectual property of DEC – this should be clearly stated in your brief/contract documents.
Opportunities, challenges and risk management strategies	Make sure that you outline any challenges and opportunities that you can foresee throughout the life of the project and outline risk management strategies that you have already considered to mitigate challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

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	The external consultant will need to incorporate these risk management strategies into any plans/programs that they develop. See fact sheet 2.5 - *How do I develop a public participation/communication plan?* for a table format to present this information.
Deliverables	You may like to consider the following as examples of deliverables that you could request from a consultant: • Make sure you request a copy of the raw data from anything that the consultant analyses so your project team can cross check the results and ensure they haven't missed anything valuable. • Request that the report headings the consultant writes are appropriate to your requirements (e.g. you might want a heading to be 'solutions', 'recommendations' or 'ideas'). • Ensure that the report does not inappropriately build public expectations (e.g. a list of recommendations from a consultant is not good if this creates public perception that management will implement everything without regard for executive/resources etc. • Evaluation can partially be achieved by seeking the participants' feedback about their experience of the process. If you want this evaluation done you must request it from the consultant also.
Selection criteria	You may like to consider some of the criteria examples below when selecting a consultant. **For example:** • Understanding of project and DEC's requirements. • Proposed methodology/tools/techniques and their appropriateness. • Experience and expertise of the consultant's organisation (examples of similar or relevant projects that they have undertaken; qualifications; previous experience in developing and delivering stakeholder/community workshops and facilitation). • Value for money. • Ability to meet timing or propose alternative timing, including demonstrated staff capacity to complete the project if the assigned representative is unable to complete the work due to unforeseen circumstances. • Knowledge of government policies and processes in relation to public participation and its interaction with environmental legislation.

	• Qualifications of staff assigned to the project and examples of previous public participation work (e.g. public participation plans and final reports/evaluations; government versus non-government experience).
Proposal format	Outline the proposal format that you require a consultant to adhere to, if desired. **For example** - your proposal should be no longer than 10 single-side A4 pages. An appendix with company and team information may be attached to your proposal.
Security, confidentiality and copyright	You may like to include the example wording below: **For example** - the consultant and other persons working on this project will be bound by Commonwealth regulations/laws with respect to confidentiality and privacy. All information gathered in relation to the project, including the raw data, is the intellectual property of DEC. The successful market researcher is not at liberty to disclose any of this information to any other party.
Conflict of interest	You may like to include the example wording below if conflict of interest is an important consideration for your project. **For example** - the consultant proposing to undertake this project must declare that no conflict of interest exists or is likely to arise during the course of the research. Additionally, if during the course of the research a conflict of interest does arise the consultant must notify the DEC contact officer in writing about the conflict of interest.
Conditions of contract	**For example** - this contract is subject to the '*General conditions of contract for the supply of goods and services*' (April 2007 version), which is available on request. In addition, the following key provisions should be noted: (XXX)
Proposal submission date	**For example** - your proposal must be received by email no later than ……(date)
DEC contact for this project	

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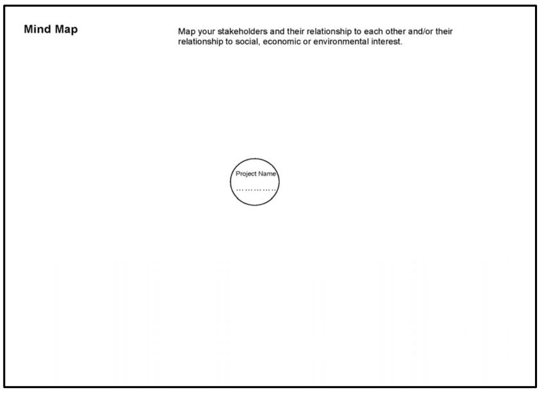
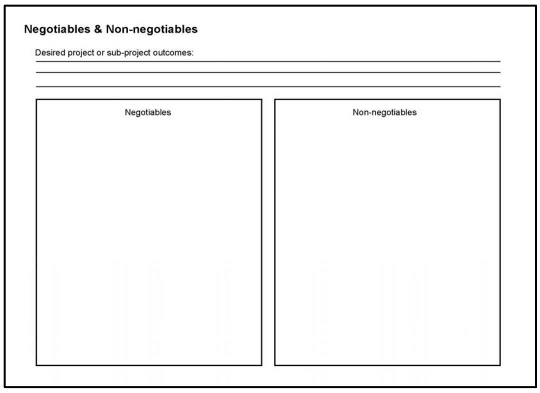
Fact sheet 7.2 – Department of Sustainability and Environment (Victoria) public participation worksheets

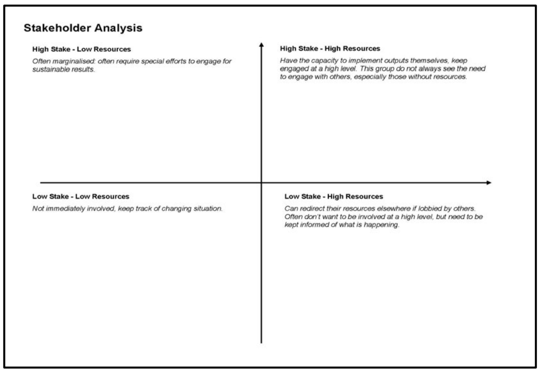
This fact sheet provides a number of different worksheets to assist you to effectively plan your public participation activities.



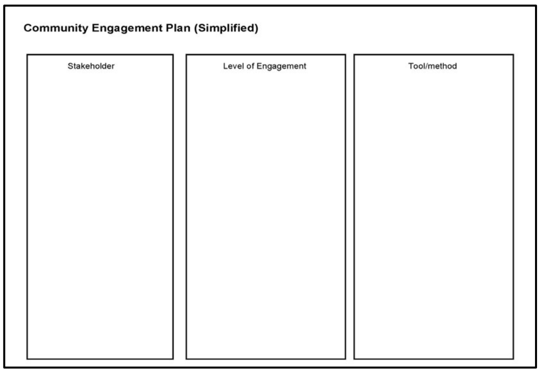
Mind Map: a tool to assist with the mapping out of stakeholders and their relationship to each other or particular interests.



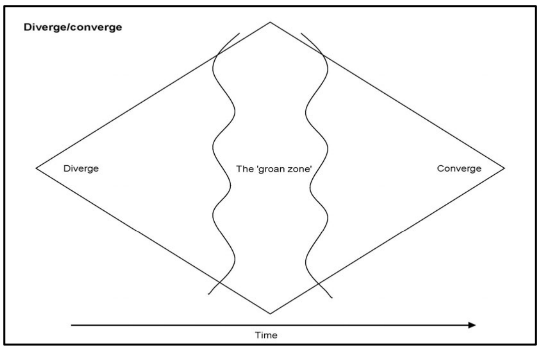
Negotiables vs Non-negotiables: a tool to assist with outlining a project's parameters and constraints. It assists you to determine which aspects of your project can be altered by stakeholder feedback and those aspects of your project that cannot change.



Stakeholder analysis: a tool to assist you to determine your primary and secondary stakeholders.



Community engagement plan: a tool to assist you to differentiate between each of your stakeholder groups and the appropriate engagement levels and tools for each group.



Diverge/converge diagram: a tool to assist you to determine what public participation activities are appropriate at different stages of your project. The planning stage of your project relates to the "diverge" section of the diagram, the implementation stage relates to the "groan zone" and the evaluation stage relates to the "converge" section of the diagram.

Mind Map

Map your stakeholders and their relationship to each other and/or their relationship to social, economic or environmental interest.

Project Name

....

Negotiables & Non-negotiables

Desired project or sub-project outcomes:

Negotiables	Non-negotiables

Stakeholder Analysis

High Stake - Low Resources
Often marginalised: often require special efforts to engage for sustainable results.

High Stake - High Resources
Have the capacity to implement outputs themselves, keep engaged at a high level. This group do not always see the need to engage with others, especially those without resources.

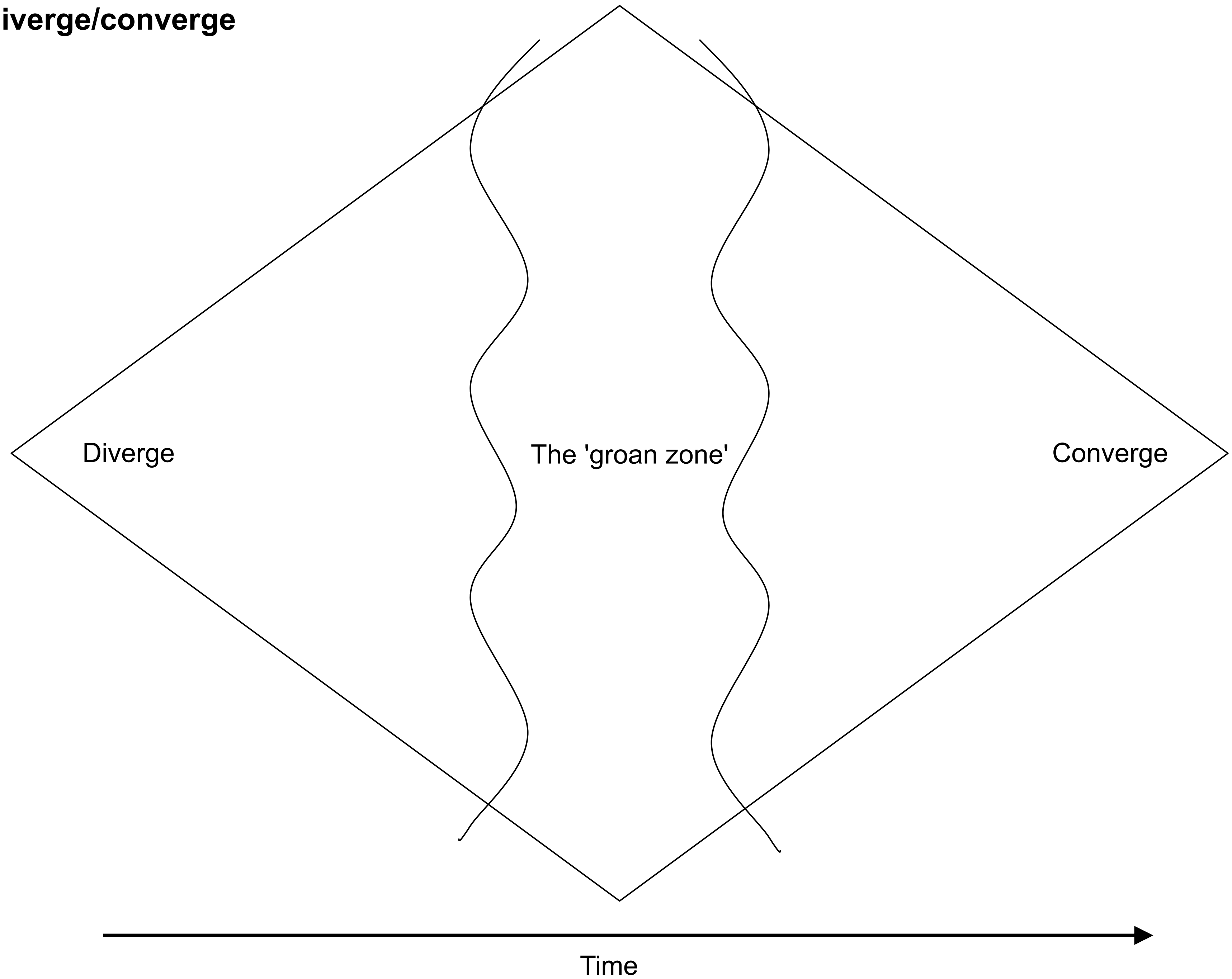
Low Stake - Low Resources
Not immediately involved, keep track of changing situation.

Low Stake - High Resources
Can redirect their resources elsewhere if lobbied by others. Often don't want to be involved at a high level, but need to be kept informed of what is happening.

Community Engagement Plan (Simplified)

Stakeholder	Level of Engagement	Tool/method

Diverge/converge



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Fact sheet 7.3 – Workshop planning checklist

The aim of this fact sheet is to provide a template to assist you in planning a workshop. This important exercise will assist to clarify the workshop purpose, structure, and logistics; desired outcomes; decision-making process; roles and responsibilities.

1. Why do we need this workshop?

The purpose of this workshop is to:

The client's most important outcome is:

Review the workshop purpose and check all of the following relevant objectives, customising them as required. Then rank them from most to least important.

____analyse issues, approaches

____brainstorm new ideas and explore innovative approaches

____clarify values

____conduct a consultation

____create a vision

____develop a plan, e.g. operational, strategic, account

____develop policies

____develop recommendations for action

____do some problem solving

____enable education, learning and skill development

____enable networking

____enhance group functioning

____explore ethics

____generate a list of key questions

____make decisions

____motivate improved performance

____share information

____support behaviour change

Other: ______________________________

Other: ______________________________

2. Workshop coordinates

Name of the session	
Date	

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Location	

3. Type of session

____Annual General Meeting
____Chartered forum
____Colloquium
____Conference
____Consultation
____Forum
____Kick-off meeting
____Roundtable
____Search conference
____Seminar
____Summit
____Symposium
____Town hall meeting
____Think tank
____Workshop
____Other/combination:__________________

4. Roles, responsibilities, accountability

Client (for accountability)		Phone: Email:
Contact person (for liaison)		Phone: Email:

Planning structure

____Client
____Voluntary staff planning committee
____Designated staff planning committee
____Volunteer planning committee
____Volunteer planning committee with a small core working group
____Program committee providing input to the agenda
____Steering committee providing oversight to the workshop
____Expert advisory panel providing input on the agenda
____Geographical teams, e.g., by province, state, region or municipality
____Divisional teams, e.g., by corporate sector
____External meeting planner

Other: ____

Facilitation	
Type	**Who**
Chair	
Co-chairs: volunteer chairs working together	
Co-chairs: volunteer chair and professional facilitator working together	
External volunteer or professional facilitator	
Internal volunteer or professional facilitator	
Table facilitators	
Other:	

Management	
Type	**Who**
By the facilitator	
Volunteer(s)	
Contractor	
Secretariat, e.g. government, not-for profit	
Committee	

Key deliverables		
Description, e.g. questionnaire, reports	**When**	**Who**
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

5. Participants

Total number expected	Number of local participants	Number requiring travel and accommodation

Invitations

____By invitation only

____Limited by categories, e.g. 25 per cent professionals, 25 per cent advocates

____Mandatory

____Open to all

____Invited by categories, e.g. age, gender, profession, qualifications, interest areas, geographical location

____Restricted to membership

____Restricted to specific groups and organisations

____Voluntary by categories, e.g. sales managers and accountants

Other:

Participation

____Have equal status in discussion and decision making.

____Maintain positional influence and authority in the organisation during the workshop.

____Represent organisations.

____Represent different perspectives.

____Participate without prejudice, i.e. they share information or provide input without commitment to outcomes.

____Participate without prejudice but with a commitment to possible action depending on outcomes, i.e. they provide input and commit to (a) sharing the workshop outcomes with their groups or organisations, and (b) asking how the organisation might like to be involved in the future.

____Collaborate on planning the workshop, e.g. providing input on purpose, agenda, outcomes, reports, implementation, through prior consultations.

____Are resource persons or in participant-observer roles; they do not influence discussion or decision making.

Other: ____

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6. Context
Who initiated this workshop?
What motivated the development of this workshop?
What is the justification for the time and expense required to do this workshop?
Who will use the results of this workshop and for what purpose?
What amenities will participants need to feel comfortable being away from their workplace or home for this period of time?
What are the biggest stressors that these participants are likely to experience in their day-to-day lives? Which of these stressors could we ameliorate during this session?
Are there any accepted ground rules for meetings that they would like to follow during this workshop?
Who else might be interested in what happens at this session?
How will the results of the workshop be shared?

What related initiatives and documents (meetings, reports, surveys, polls, organisational processes, plans, etc) are going on or planned for the near future?
Initiative:
Purpose and objectives:
Links to this workshop:
7. Pre-session package
What existing or new information/documentation needs to be included to enable attendees to participate fully and with confidence? Consider supportive pieces such as lists of key terms, acronyms, websites, organisations and networks, as well as relevant publications and bibliographies suggested in section six - Context.
8. Best scenario
Imagine that this workshop was carried out a week ago and you are delighted with how everything turned out. The workshop exceeded both your expectations and those of participants. What happened that made this session so successful from your perspective?
If this is what you would like to see happen at this workshop, what are the main management challenges that need to be addressed? For each challenge, discuss options for action.
Challenge:
Options for action:
Challenge:
Options for action:

If you would like more information, clarification or support, please contact the Public Participation Planning Section in the Public Affairs Branch. Also refer to the department's *Committee Establishment and Management Policy*, 2008.