Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Guideline, work instruction and template for customer funded works

Commercial-in-confidence



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1. Glossary

Term	Definition				
Customer	A person or organisation that has a job to do that requires us to do something that completes the job, i.e. they are buying a service				
Stakeholder	A group, organisation or individual who represents or is a proxy for a group of constituents or member, e.g. Local Government, Farmers Federation				
Community	Consumer of electricity in the SWIS and / or impacted by our activities				
IAP2	The International Association of Public Participation is the peak body for the community and stakeholder engagement sector, IAP2 Australasia.				
Engagement Plan	A strategic plan which identifies affected communities and stakeholders in the project area who are interested in and/or impacted, outlines the approach and details the activities for engaging with them.				
Social Performance	Social Performance is the outcome of Western Power's engagement, activities and commitments that can directly and indirectly impact stakeholders or affect the quality of its relationships with them. Achieving excellence in Social Performance requires strong leadership, integrated management systems and the capability and culture to identify, address and report social risks and impacts.				
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction with Western Power products, services, employees, contractors or our complaints handling process, where a resolution is being specifically sought.				



2. Community Engagement – Guidelines

2.1 Customer responsibility

The stakeholder and community engagement required for the Western Power works should be incorporated into the Customer's engagement plan for the overall project. The Customer is required to provide an engagement plan and send all engagement materials and communications that reference Western Power to the Western Power community engagement representative for review prior to use. The Customer should allow Western Power a minimum of five working days for review and to provide feedback.

If the customer follows the Western Power community and stakeholder engagement guidelines, and work instruction in this document when creating an engagement plan, then it is likely that Western Power will deem the engagement requirements for this project to be satisfied.

3. What is community engagement?

Community and stakeholder engagement is a necessary and expected component of any project likely to have a real or perceived impact on a community. It is required as much as traditional disciplines such as project planning, risk and compliance, and construction management.

Western Power's engagement approach is guided by the core values of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)¹. Community engagement is defined as "any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decisions."

The IAP2 has a range of useful tools and resources available on their website, which we recommend utilising while preparing your engagement plan. Community engagement practitioners typically possess specialist skills including facilitation, negotiation, advocacy, communication, and outrage management.

3.1 Principles – the Public Participation Spectrum

The principles for community engagement describe how we conduct our community engagement activities. Using these principles, Western Power is stating that Western Power and our Customers will:

- Assess and engage our communities, stakeholders, and customers as early as possible.
- Communicate and respond to communities, stakeholders, and customers in a timely and appropriate way.
- Design a process that matches the level of desired engagement and is accessible to all involved.
- Ensure the investment in engagement delivers maximum benefit for Western Power, the customer, and the community.

The IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum is a commonly used tool used to define and select the different levels of community participation in the engagement process. The spectrum covers five levels of engagement including: inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower.

For more information on IAP2 visit <u>www.IAP2.org.au</u>



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3.2 What are the benefits of engaging with the community?

In today's economic and social climate, a meaningful demonstration of social performance is an increasing expectation of our customers and communities. Social performance is the outcome of a company's engagement, activities and commitments that can directly and indirectly impact community and stakeholders or affect the quality of its relationships with them. Community engagement increases the visibility and understanding of issues and enables communities to have their say over decisions that affects them. Benefits include:

- Minimising risk (e.g., project delays, increased costs, outrage) by identifying emerging issues so they can be managed proactively as they arise.
- Informing and improving the quality of the decision-making process.
- Maintaining social license to operate in the community by being open, accountable, and willing to listen and respond.
- Developing a relationship of trust and understanding with the community.
- Providing opportunity to work more closely with the community on issues of concern to reach better outcomes.

4. The engagement approach

The engagement plan outlines the approach that will be used to engage with impacted community and stakeholders. It should include information on the relevant landowners/residents and stakeholders that will be impacted by the Western Power component of the project. The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan Work Instruction (see page 4) provides guidance on the elements that need to be considered when planning your engagement approach.

Impacted landowners/residents and stakeholders must be identified by the Customer and appropriate engagement activities should be outlined to ensure that their concerns and needs are addressed. These activities might include public consultations, information sharing meetings, and regular updates on the project's progress. Additionally, it is crucial to develop a feedback mechanism that allows stakeholders to voice their opinions and receive timely responses. Effective communication and collaboration with all parties involved will help to mitigate potential conflicts and ensure the successful delivery of the project.

4.1 Face-to-face engagement

Western Power requires that any landowner and/or resident who will be directly impacted by the Western Power works be **met in person**. The Customer must use **reasonable endeavours** to contact landowners and residents to explain the details of the project and its impacts. A signed feedback form (see Appendix 1) shows they understand and have expressed or had the opportunity to express their concerns to the proposed new Western Power infrastructure. Engagement should be conducted early, and high-level project details should be clearly communicated with all impacted landowners, residents, and stakeholders, so that their concerns can be understood before proceeding past the initial scoping phase of the project. This information includes, but is not limited to:



- The location and nature of the new Western Power infrastructure, and the potential visual impacts.
- Details of the new and temporary poles / facilities, including heights.
- Likely construction impacts such as traffic management, noise, dust, and any vegetation clearing requirements.
- Expected timeframes of the project.
- Ongoing maintenance and property access requirements.
- Any potential easement requirements (see Easements).

Western Power strongly recommends the use of visual aids such as maps and artist impressions when communicating visual impacts to landowners and/or residents. All communication regarding Western Power works must be approved by Western Power prior to being sent.

4.2 Documentation of engagement activities

Western Power requires documentation of all conversations and communication relating to the works to ensure a record is kept of the engagement throughout the duration of the project. This ensures any concerns or issues are captured and raised through the appropriate channels. (See Appendix 2 for Stakeholder Register)

In the event community concerns or issues arise regarding the works, this record will support the Customer in showing that genuine attempts to discuss the project with the impacted resident/landowner have been made and that these stakeholders have been kept informed throughout the process. These engagement activities should be highlighted in your **implementation plan**, and evidence of communications will help demonstrate the execution of the implementation plan.

4.3 Impacted stakeholders and community

The Customer must meet with the landowners and residents of properties who will experience the greatest impact to ensure they fully understand the impact of the new line route and pole location in relation to their property. An appropriate feedback mechanism, such as a feedback form, must be used to obtain acknowledgement they fully understand the project and have expressed their concerns for the proposed line route, pole location and construction impacts.

Often there are visual impacts and other associated impacts to other properties with new infrastructure installations. Other landowners of surrounding, less impacted properties should also be engaged. Feedback mechanisms can also be used to demonstrate that these landowners have been notified of the project and it provides them with an opportunity to raise any concerns they might have.

Western Power recognises that the Customer may also wish to engage with the wider community regarding the overall project as well.



5. Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan – Work Instruction

An effective engagement plan is essential for the success of any project involving multiple stakeholders and community. It provides a clear framework for how to communicate, consult, and collaborate with all parties affected by, or interested in the project. The purpose of this work instruction is to guide you through the process of developing an engagement plan, ensuring that all community and stakeholders are adequately informed, their concerns are captured, and their input is valued. By following these instructions, you will be able to create an engagement plan that promotes open communication, builds trust, and facilitates the successful delivery of your project.

5.1 Purpose

Purpose of the Engagement Plan: Clearly state the reason for the engagement plan. Objectives: Define specific goals you aim to achieve through engagement.

Example: The purpose of this Engagement Plan is to outline our approach for engaging with all impacted landowners, residents and stakeholders affected by the Western Power component of the project. This plan aims to ensure that community and stakeholders are informed, consulted, and actively involved in the decision-making processes. By engaging early with open communication, we aim to identify and address concerns, gather valuable feedback, and build strong, collaborative relationships. This engagement plan seeks to support the successful implementation of the project by ensuring that community and stakeholder needs and expectations are met, potential conflicts are mitigated, and community trust is maintained.

5.2 Project overview

Consider history of the project in the area, if relevant. Expand on research done during your desktop analysis for the project. This section should give readers a summary of the project's history and objectives.

Example: The Smith Street zone substation is an integral part of the electricity network in the City of Ausprings, servicing more than 17,000 customers. The condition of the existing indoor switchboard at the substation is deteriorated, increasing the potential for faults and supply interruptions. The existing switchboards at Smith Street substation is a "pitch filled" insulated type. These switchboards are now obsolete with no manufacturing support or spare parts available for their continued operation. To address the deteriorating asset condition, we will be replacing the 11kV indoor switchboards with 2 new GIS single bus switchboards. Additionally, project T0530874 will be done in parallel to install a new relay room and project N0413749 will replace the feeder exit cable. The existing brick relay room building will be retained until all assets have been replaced in the new relay room.

The benefits of the project include increased reliability and safety of employees and the community. The impacts of the project to nearby community and stakeholders will include an increased visible presence of street poles. During construction nearby residents and businesses may experience dust, noise and vibration.



5.3 Area profile

Consider the impacts of other projects in the area, the demographic of the community, the social and political landscape, culturally significant landmarks, heritage, and environmental concerns.

Example: Located in the Whadjuk region, Wundowie is a town in the Shire of Northam, located approximately 70km east of Perth on the Great Eastern Highway and is named after the nearby Woondowing Spring. In 2011 the Town of Wundowie was granted Heritage status by The National Trust of Australia; this designation reflects the towns commitment to preserving its cultural and heritage roots. The town has a population of around 1469 people, and like most small towns it is likely to be a tight-knit community. The town's heritage status has not only helped preserve its historical buildings and landmarks but has also fostered a sense of pride and unity among its residents.

The town is surrounded by native flora and fauna, including several conservation areas that protect local wildlife and plant species. Environmental conservation is a priority for the community, with ongoing efforts to maintain the health of the Woondowing Spring and other natural features.

The local economy traditionally revolves around agriculture, but Wundowie has diversified in recent years. The town is known for its iron industry, with the Wundowie Foundry being a significant employer and contributor to the local economy. The presence of small businesses, local markets, and community events further adds to the town's vibrant social fabric.

5.4 Project milestones

Track important milestones and schedule engagement activities to be completed by their respective start dates.

Milestone	Estimate date	Engagement activity
Kick-off meeting		
Site surveys (flora, fauna, heritage, dilapidation etc)		
Vegetation clearing		
Civil construction works begin		
Civil construction works complete		
Electrical construction work begins		
Electrical construction work completed		
Reinstatement if required		



5.5 Site photos maps and diagrams

It is expected that you visit the site, take photos of potential line routes, proposed asset locations and any other points of interest (see site visit checklist). Maps and diagrams are useful engagement materials as impacted landowners, residents and stakeholders are likely to understand the impacts better with visual aids.

5.6 Engagement methods

Effective community and stakeholder engagement involves providing information about project developments, but also actively involving the community in the decision-making process, where possible. Engagement methods are the tools and techniques used to interact with stakeholders, ensuring their voices are heard and their input is integrated into the project. Some examples of common engagement methods are included below, feedback mechanisms should also be used when engaging with stakeholders (see section 5.1).

Face-to-face meetings

The community engagement practitioner and/or other senior project members can provide in-person briefings to those directly impacted by the project, including stakeholders and the community to provide timely information on construction activities, traffic impacts and to respond to questions and concerns.

Information sheets

An information fact sheet explains key aspects of the project, including timeframes, construction, traffic management and other potential impacts on the community. These documents are usually enhanced by a graphic designer, to make the content easier to understand, and more engaging.

Briefing notes

A concise summary document identifying key pieces of information relating to a certain issue.

Advertising

Advertisements in local newspapers and relevant community publications can be used to provide general and specific project information.

Website

You can develop a project description for your external website. The page should include key dates, community engagement activities and who to contact for more information.

Letterbox and email notification

Information can be provided to stakeholders and the community via direct mail, letterbox, or email notification.

Project signage

Appropriate signage can be erected to provide information about the project – for example it could be placed on barrier fencing when trenching and can also be used for traffic management.

Door knocking

The community engagement practitioner and/or other senior project members go door-to-door to liaise with impacted landowners/residents.



Social Media

Proactive and targeted social media posts to audiences within the project area will be used to promote engagement opportunities and information about the project.

Direct email, SMS and e-newsletters

Inviting community and stakeholders to sign up for project updates via SMS, email or e-newsletter is an effective and efficient way of distributing project information, especially when construction schedules may be subject to change.

Videos

Videos can help to communicate project messages and distil complex information into an easy-to-understand format. These can be made available on the project website or online engagement channel, used at community information sessions or online community presentations.

5.7 Stakeholder identification and analysis

List all relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- Federal, State and Local Government e.g., Dept. of Fire and Emergency Services, Dept. of
- Planning department at the Local Government
- Local Members of Parliament
- Authorities and other service providers e.g., WaterCorp, Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority
- Land developers
- Businesses (small, medium, and large)
- Residents and landowners
- Community representative groups
- Community members who travel to, through, or visit an impacted area.

Assess the influence, interest, and needs of each stakeholder group to prioritise engagement efforts. Consider using an influence/interest matrix to help prioritise engagement and categorise stakeholders.

SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS	PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS
High Power/Influence	High Power/Influence
Low Impact/Interest	High Impact/Interest
Monitor closely	Engage closely
TERTIARY STAKEHOLDERS	PRIMARY/SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS
Low Power/Influence	Low Power/Influence
Low Impact/Interest	High Impact/Interest
Minimal effort	Show consideration



5.8 Stakeholder classifications

Classifying stakeholders is essential for effective project management and community engagement. This process helps identify and organise individuals, groups, or organisations that have an interest in or are affected by your project. By categorising stakeholders based on their influence, interest, and involvement, you can tailor engagement strategies to address their specific needs and concerns. The influence/interest matrix above is a helpful tool when classifying stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Interest	Influence	Stakeholder Classification
Federal, State and Local Government			
Govt Dept e.g., Department of Communities			
Member of Parliament			
Utilities, Authorities or Service Providers e.g., WaterCorp, Landgate etc			
Land Developers			
Professional Associations and Industry Groups e.g., WAFarmers			
Businesses			
Landowners/Residents			
Community Groups			



5.9 Implementation plan

The implementation plan is a critical step that outlines the communications outputs necessary to successfully execute the engagement plan from start to finish. It provides a detailed roadmap, specifying tasks, timing, resources, and responsibilities, ensuring that all team members are aligned and aware of their roles in the engagement plans execution. This step defines the outputs required to put the Stakeholder Communication Plan into action. See **Appendix 3** for implementation plan template.

5.10 Stakeholder communications register

The stakeholder communications register is an essential tool for planning and tracking communication throughout a project's lifecycle. It outlines the strategies, channels, and protocols for distributing key messages, keeping everyone informed, engaged, and aligned with the project's objectives. This step outlines who, how and when you're engaging. See **Appendix 4** for Community and Stakeholder Communications Register template.

5.11 Community consultation and feedback

Community consultation and feedback are essential for the success of any project, ensuring that the perspectives of all affected parties are considered. This process involves actively seeking input, addressing concerns, and integrating feedback into project planning and decision-making. Effective consultation goes beyond informing residents; it requires meaningful dialogue and participation.

Open communication allows project leaders to gain insights, identify issues early, and work with the community to find solutions. All feedback from directly impacted parties must be provided to Western Power before proceeding to planning. In this section, we will outline some practices for conducting community consultation and methods for collecting feedback.

5.12 Feedback mechanisms

Feedback mechanisms should be implemented to ensure effective communication and engagement with community and stakeholders, some examples of feedback mechanisms include:

- Surveys and questionnaires: Distribute surveys to gather quantitative and qualitative data on stakeholder opinions and concerns. Microsoft Forms is a useful tool for creating and hosting surveys.
- 2. **Feedback forms:** Provide physical or online forms for stakeholders to submit their feedback at any time. This method is the most simple, common, and often effective feedback mechanism when trying to demonstrate acknowledgement from an impacted stakeholder. **See appendix 1.**
- 3. **Public meetings and forums:** Hold regular in-person or virtual meetings where stakeholders can voice their opinions and ask questions. Records should be kept of attendees, questions/concerns raised and community sentiment, so the input can be incorporated into your engagement plan.
- 4. **Email and online portals:** Create dedicated email addresses or online portals where stakeholders can submit their feedback electronically. This makes individual touchpoints easy to track and respond to.
- 5. **Stakeholder meetings:** Conduct one-on-one or small group interviews to gather detailed feedback and insights from key stakeholders. It's important to engage stakeholders face to face, when an understanding of the overall project, and its impacts is required.



- 6. **Feedback Kiosks:** Set up kiosks in public areas where stakeholders can easily submit their feedback in person. This is useful for areas where the demographic is more inclined to respond anonymously, using analogue methods.
- 7. **Regular Newsletters:** Distribute newsletters that include updates on the project and invite stakeholders to provide their feedback through various channels (such as QR codes to online surveys).

5.13 Feedback and issues register

An issues register is a document used to record and track issues or concerns. It serves as a centralised repository for identifying, documenting, and managing various issues. Regular updates and monitoring of the issues register help ensure that issues are addressed promptly and effectively, minimising the impact on project progress and outcomes.

A copy of the issues register must be provided to Western Power at regular intervals. Urgent complaints and issues should be discussed with Western Power immediately, or as soon as practical.

Issue	Issue type	Status	Date Raised	Date Closed	Raised by	Notes
Title of the issue	Issue category (noise, visual amenity, loss of business, loss of land use etc)	Resolved	[Insert date]	[Insert date]	[Insert community / stakeholder name]	Responded to community member via email, evidence sent on dd/mm/yyyy



6. Appendix

6.1 Appendix 1 - Example feedback form

Thank you for discussing the proposed works with [INSERT THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTACT], who is the representative of [INSERT COMPANY NAME], the party seeking these works and the party responsible for this engagement.

This form has been developed to gather feedback from those stakeholders who may be impacted by the Western Power component works for the [INSERT THE NAME OF THE PROJECT] project. Feedback received will be used to further assess the most reasonable and practicable manner for the planned works to proceed.

Western Power works

[INSERT INFORMATION ON THE WESTERN POWER ASSET TO BE CONSTRUCTED].

[INSERT IMAGE OF THE WESTERN POWER ASSET AND IMPACTS INCLUDING ACCESS REQUIREMENTS]

[INSERT THE PROJECT SCHEDULE INFORMATION].

As an owner or occupier of land in the vicinity of the proposed works we ask that you complete and sign this form and return it to [INSERT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTACT] representing [INSERT THE COMPANY NAME], who will provide it to Western Power to review.

1. Name:										
2. Address:										
3. Status in relation to property: (please select one)										
Residential – tenant	Commercial – tenant									
Residential – owner	Commercial – owner									
Other specify										
4. Please select the option which best desc	cribes your view on the proposed works:									
I have no concerns about the proposed	works									
I have concerns but these are being, or	have been, addressed									
I have minor concerns about the propos	sed works									
I have significant concerns about the pr	oposed works									



5. Please outline any concerns or comments that you have in relation to the proposed works:
I confirm the following:
I have had the proposed works described to me.
I have been shown on the above map where the works will be located. I have been shown an image of the size and type of the infrastructure.
 I have been shown an image of the size and type of the infrastructure. I understand that my privacy is important and that my details will only be provided to those who are directly involved in the works.
SIGNATURE:
PRINT NAME:
DATE: /
For further information on this project please contact [INSERT THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTACT], on [INSERT CONTACT DETAILS].



6.2 Appendix 2 - Stakeholder Register

A stakeholder register is a document that identifies and details all individuals, groups, or organisations who have an interest in or may be affected by a project. It serves as a tool for managing stakeholder information throughout the project lifecycle. The register typically includes stakeholders' names, roles, contact details, interests, as well as their influence and impact on the project. Regular updates to the stakeholder register ensure that project team maintains accurate information, enabling effective communication, engagement, and management of stakeholder relationships. A copy of your Stakeholder Register must be provided to Western Power at initiation and scoping.

	Stakeholder Contact Register											
Name	Ψ.	Role/Interest in project	Premise address	Stakeholder Classification	Phone	T	Email 🔻		Postal	Ψ.	Contacted 🔻	Comments
				450			600					
W						3				- 2	9	
8					2	2				(8)		



6.3 Appendix 3 – Implementation Plan

Engagement objective	Stakeholder	Engagement activity / channel	Timing	Notes	Accountable	Status
Draft Newsletter	Landowners, LGA and Community Groups	Email, letters	Jan 2025	Draft newsletter introducing project. Newsletter to be sent to landowners, LGA and Community groups and will include a QR code to online survey	CE Specialist - My Company	Complete
Meet with LGA and discuss project at a high level, and seek feedback	City of Ausprings	Email and face to face meeting	Early Feb 2025	Provide copy of newsletter, discuss findings from site visit, and seek input on preferred route	CE Specialist - My Company	Incomplete



6.4 Appendix 4 – Stakeholder Communications Register

Stakeholder	Stakeholder Classification	Engagement							
Stakenolder		Contact	Channel	When / Frequency	Responsible				
(Stakeholder as Identified above)	(Stakeholder classification, as determined above)	(Stakeholders preferred contact information)	(Emails, newsletters, social media, face to face meetings, public notices, site signage, phone call, Information session)	(Specify how frequently you will be engaging with stakeholder. Consider the above analysis to determine frequency.) (Specify when a stakeholder will first be engaged, consider when in the project timeline they should be engaged)	(Specify who is responsible for the engagement)				



- 6.5 Appendix 5 Community Engagement Plan Blank Template
- 1. Purpose
- 2. Project background
 - 2.1 Area profile
- 3. Project milestones
- 4. Engagement methods
- 5. Site photos maps and diagrams
- 6. Stakeholder identification and analysis
- 7. Identification
 - 7.1 Analysis
 - 7.2 Stakeholder classifications
- 8. Stakeholder communications plan
- 9. Implementation plan
- 10. Community consultation and feedback
 - 10.1 Feedback mechanisms
 - 10.2 Feedback and issues register
 - 10.3 Feedback summary and evaluation

