

4.1 Communication strategy guide and template

Background

Briefly summarise the background and issues relating to a project or problem that the Department is addressing. Please make sure that this section covers:

- What is the issue we need to address?
- Will the public be interested in this issue and why?

After reviewing this section, the reader should have a high level of understanding of the issue and the public considerations we need to tackle.

Business Line Proposal

Brief explanation of how the Business Line is proposing to address this issue/s (e.g. Introduction of Combustible Cladding regulation that will require building owners to register buildings that are two storeys and above that have combustible cladding, complete a fire safety assessment.)

Communication Strategy

Outline the communication strategy we are recommending to the Minister or Business Line that will help to address the issue. The strategy should outline the high-level approach, why we are proposing this approach and if there are many scenarios to manage. If so we should identify these, and provide multiple strategies where needed. Do not list all activities you are planning in the Communication Strategy section, these should be included in the communication activity plan.

E.g. The launch of a new greenfield development code will require a communication approach that:

- 1. Ensures developers are aware of their obligations under this new code*
- 2. Informs potential buyers of greenfield sites of the impact on costs*

The communication strategy we are proposing is built in three phases to align the reform process. They are:

Phase 1 – informing stakeholders of the proposal and gathering feedback

Phase 2 – media and advertising campaign to announce the policy and raise awareness

Phase 3 – community and stakeholder engagement program to support its implementation

Communication Goals

In three to five bullet points explain the goals for the strategy and, where possible, please make them measurable.

E.g. The communication goals for the launch of the new greenfield code includes:

- *Increased awareness among key stakeholders as measured by number of people of people visiting the codes section on the internet*

- *Media coverage on the announcement of the code is positive or neutral and stories contain our key messages*
- *Stakeholder groups provide feedback that consultation was effective*
- *Advertising on the codes reaches XXX people*

Key messages

Please detail the key messages you need to communicate and when. These may vary depending on the communication strategy (e.g. the messages on consultation for a new policy or code will be slightly different to what we say when announcing the new code or policy). The messages should be framed around what we want the community/stakeholders to think, hear and do with the information we share and have a call to action. We should have facts and proof points that help to substantiate the messages.

Keep your messages short, clear and simple. Key messages should be around 15 words. The messages should be reinforced in all communication activities such as speeches, written responses and media releases. (*E.g. Plague locusts pose a serious threat to pastures and crops once hatching begins.*) Too many messages are an indicator of a fuzzy strategy.

Consider the value of a tagline. A simple, memorable slogan usually used in key communication and marketing material. *E.g. Look. Check. Ask a vet.* To be effective, one or two catchy taglines should be used tirelessly on all communication materials. Tag lines are inspired by key messages.

Stakeholders and Issues

The following tables identify stakeholders to be targeted, what their issues might be and the communication channels we are proposing to reach them. Note any key issues and perceptions in relation to your communications activity, based on your knowledge of the target audience. Please keep in mind groups such as ethnic communities or people of a non-English speaking background, Aboriginal groups, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities or other community sectors. It is particularly important to think through how the different channels will be linked in a fully integrated plan. How will publications be linked to website content and how will awareness activities link people to any additional information they might need?

Useful questions to ask in the identification of stakeholders - Who is impacted on by the activity? Who makes decisions that affect the activity? Who wishes not to be impacted on by the activity? Who would be affected by a change in the activity? Who might perceive that they have a role in influencing the activity?

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Stakeholder	Issues	Key Message	Communication channels
Row for each audience or stakeholder group	Identify key issues for the group	What are the messages we need to share with them	List the communication channels/methods that will be most effective in reaching the group
<i>Example: Peak NSW property industry bodies</i>	<i>Concerned about impact of the impact of new changes on their industry from the new greenfield code</i>	<i>Code introduces no new charges</i>	<i>Press & radio Website Publications Face-to-face E-mail updates Hotline Industry liaison</i>

Risks and contentious issues

For issues that maybe contentious (e.g. introducing a new policy that will have significant stakeholder concerns) or high risk (e.g. high value project with lots of interdependencies which might not be able to control) we should identify these and call them out for the Minister or the Business Line. We should identify what could go wrong and do an assessment on each risk. Think about the likelihood of each problem and the consequences if it happened. Where a problem is likely to happen or there are extreme consequences, you should identify communication tactics to manage the risk. Where required complete a risk table and attach this as appendix.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

The following plan should set out the communication actions you are proposing to deliver the strategy. It is about sharing information with the Minister and Business Line not how we will manage the activity. We can use this information for our own action tracking but our clients do not need to know who in the team is delivering on each piece of work.

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Activity	Channel	Audiences	Timing	Cost	Measurement
<i>Eg Advertising Campaign to raise awareness of the draft code</i>	<i>Targeted campaign through industry publications and social media and some billboard in new housing estates</i>	<i>Developers, homes buyers in greenfield estates</i>	<i>In line with the consultation period</i>	<i>\$50K</i>	<i>Views, click throughs, downloads of the draft code</i>
<i>Media launch</i>	<i>Press conference to launch the announcement of the code</i>				

Evaluation

How will we determine if our goals are achieved?

Analyse actions and indicators to assess delivery of objectives.

How will the outcomes be shared with others?

When will a report on campaign be available?

Appendix

Please consider whether the following pieces of information should be included. It is worth noting that some may be required at a later time (e.g. Event Brief or Media Pitch) in order to get the agreement of the Business Line or Minister of our proposed approach.

Examples Copies of draft collateral

Copies of draft advertising
Event run sheet
Risk Table
Talking Points
Contentious Issues Brief
Media Pitch
Q&As