

MWRRG'S COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT GUIDE SUMMARY DOCUMENT

METROPOLITAN WASTE AND
RESOURCE RECOVERY GROUP





THE SUMMARY DOCUMENT

THE PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE:

This Community and Stakeholder Engagement Guide has been designed to assist the waste and resource recovery sector in metropolitan Melbourne to deliver meaningful and successful community and stakeholder engagement.

The Guide was developed with significant input from the industry, as well as community representatives.

Good engagement practice, where decisions are informed by the views of stakeholders and considers the needs of the community not only builds trust and understanding, but assists with managing risk.

Success can often be tied to the presence of robust and purposeful engagement, with the reverse leading to lost opportunities and potentially to project challenges.

Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group will use the toolkit to guide community and stakeholder engagement for our projects.

THE PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE GUIDE



THE GUIDE CONTAINS THREE PARTS:

- 1. Community and Stakeholder Guide:** establishes a high-level approach for designing and delivering engagement, including guiding principles.
- 2. Process for Developing a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy:** ten steps to develop strategies and implementation plans, including a range of methods to consider.
- 3. Engagement Methods Toolkit:** a reference guide of community and stakeholder engagement methods, describing how and when they can be used.

The six principles of engagement are:

1. Proactive
2. Fit-for-purpose
3. Trusting Relationships
4. Responsive
5. Informed
6. Accessible

LITERATURE REVIEW

An extensive literature review was conducted to review engagement within the waste and resource recovery sector, and to identify definitions and examples of leading practice in engagement more broadly which may apply to the sector.

The analysis of academic research, industry papers and examples and case studies from the sector explored the current state of practice, as well as exemplar policies and projects.

The research was based on an analysis of documents across three areas:

1. Engagement practice within the waste sector;
2. Community engagement best practice from engagement industry associations; and
3. Academic literature.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Increasing Community Expectations for Engagement

2. Social Acceptance:

- A project's "social licence to operate" plays an equally important role to legal licences.
- Trust (or lack thereof) is a critical component of social acceptance.
- Public participation strategies can be guided by a "trust" framework.
- Engagement and collaborative processes on waste policy improves social acceptance.

3. Community Activism and Outrage:

- NIMBYism can be the result of poor trust or perception of risk.
- Society's expectations are broad and varied.
- Risk and hazard assessment needs to consider community involvement.
- Compensation is an emotive topic and is something that means different things to different people.

4. Community Engagement Guidelines:

- Community engagement frameworks and guidelines founded on IAP2 principles and spectrum.
- Government departments and organisations provide guidelines for their industry partners to follow to assist them to undertake effective community engagement.
- Greater work is needed on evaluation measures across all engagement.
- Community engagement templates usually provided.

5. Methods:

- Choosing methods based on purpose.
- Use of deliberative engagement on controversial matters.

6. Communication:

- Community engagement messaging should be consistent across all materials, including strategic partners' materials.



INDUSTRY STOCKTAKE

The stocktake involved two levels: an analysis of community expectations, as well as in-depth interviews and surveys with industry representatives.

Industry representatives from across corporate, operational and community engagement roles participated. The stocktake showed that skills and understanding of engagement vary greatly across the industry.

In their current practice, industry's overwhelming engagement focus was on sharing information and using traditional techniques.

Generally, industry was highly reactive, stepping up engagement in response to issues that might impact operations, and often requiring the most time and resource-intensive techniques as well as crisis management approaches.



Many participants understood that government and community expectations for quality engagement are increasing. Getting the engagement equation right is increasingly perceived as being essential to minimise impacts on operations.

Industry asked for greater clarity about the expectations for community and stakeholder engagement.

They universally welcomed resources that make it easier to plan and execute engagement to a standard that meets government and community expectations and help them operate effectively.

“By genuinely engaging with community and stakeholders, we can build better understanding, acceptance and trust. We can be better neighbours, and make better decisions for our facilities, our communities and our future.”

Waste Industry Representative

“It’s not enough any more to educate the public about what goes in what bin. They want to be engaged in decisions that effect them. They want to know where the waste goes, how it gets there, who manages it and how they can take responsibility in their households and communities to create less waste.”

State Government Waste Representative

“Legitimate engagement will potentially reduce the likelihood of a protracted and financially escalated dispute and increase the likelihood of a mutually beneficial outcome for both the business and community.”

Waste Industry Representative

“If you do things that impact people’s lives you need to involve them in an authentic way. There is an expectation from people and government that the community will have a meaningful way to influence decisions that impact their lives.”

Waste Industry Representative