



STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Introduction

This information sheet discusses the importance of early and ongoing involvement of the community and stakeholders in decision-making during the project development process.

It provides information about resources available to help design and conduct effective and appropriate engagement processes.

“Public deliberation and participation are essential parts of policy and decision making and implementation”
 A Voice for All:
 WA Citizenship Strategy 2004

The Integrated Project Approvals System

The Integrated Project Approvals System (IPAS) applies to development proposals within the State Development portfolio - typically mineral and petroleum resources projects and related developments.

The objective of the system is to improve the timeliness of approvals processes while maintaining appropriate standards of government scrutiny of proposals. To achieve this objective, joint action is required by proponents and government to conduct rigorous and timely scoping of the approvals requirements of the proposal.

IPAS identifies three phases in the process of gaining government approvals - ‘proponent consultation’, ‘agency scoping’ and ‘development assessment’. These phases are outlined in Figure 3. Further information about IPAS and approvals processes is available at: www.doir.wa.gov.au/approvalsprocesses

Defining stakeholder consultation

The stakeholders in a project are people who have an interest in the outcome of the project, in addition to those directly involved.

Stakeholders may include local residents, relevant landholders, non-government organisations, representative groups, local government authorities, State government agencies, Commonwealth government agencies and members of the general community.

Figure 1 illustrates the typical stakeholders for a project.

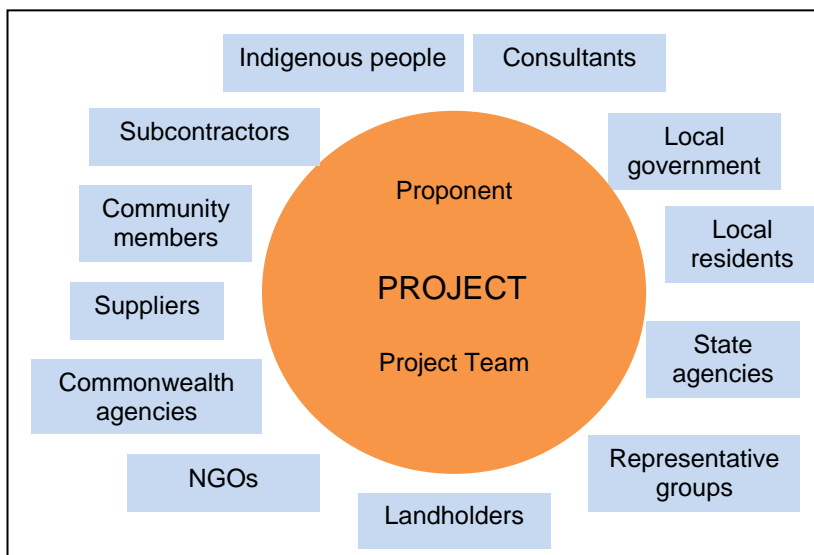


Figure 1: Stakeholders in a project

Consultation is about establishing a two-way communication channel with these stakeholders. The degree of dialogue and influence (i.e.: the level of engagement) this communication channel has will vary within and between projects. Consultation approaches cover a spectrum from low levels of engagement (providing information to stakeholders) through to empowering stakeholders in decision-making, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

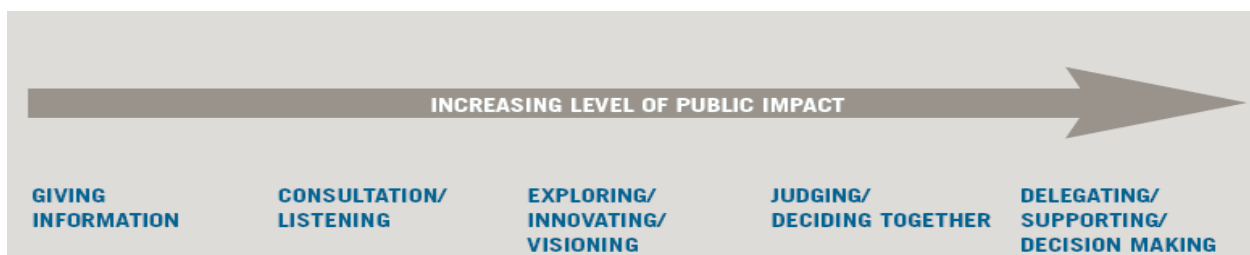


Figure 2: The spectrum of consultation (from *Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide*, DPCWA)

Selecting the appropriate stakeholders and the manner in which these stakeholders will be consulted/engaged is a key consideration for project proponents.

Benefits of effective stakeholder consultation

Whether a proposal is straightforward or complex, effective stakeholder consultation, particularly prior to initiating the formal approvals process, is a key factor in achieving timely completion of the government approvals process.

Regardless of the strategy chosen, effective consultation requires that stakeholders, once engaged, are part of some form of feedback loop.

Appropriate stakeholder consultation will enable proponents to:

- Identify the key issues involved with the project and the likely impacts. Early identification of these matters allows the opportunity to consider alternative approaches with less impact.
- Obtain information as to how best to manage any adverse impacts. Early discussion on management approaches will reduce the time required for negotiation on these matters during the formal assessment.
- Be aware of information that will need to be provided in support of the formal approvals that will be required to allow the project to proceed. An early understanding of information requirements will help ensure that information gathering processes do not cause delay.
- Establish two-way communications channels that may be useful into the future.

Note: In some instances proponents need to provide evidence that consultation with relevant stakeholders has occurred e.g. in relation to impacts on Aboriginal heritage.

Identifying stakeholders

Officers in the Department of Industry and Resources (DoIR) can help proponents to identify stakeholders and liaise with other government agencies. For further information please contact DoIR Investment Facilitation Division: (08) 9222 3333.

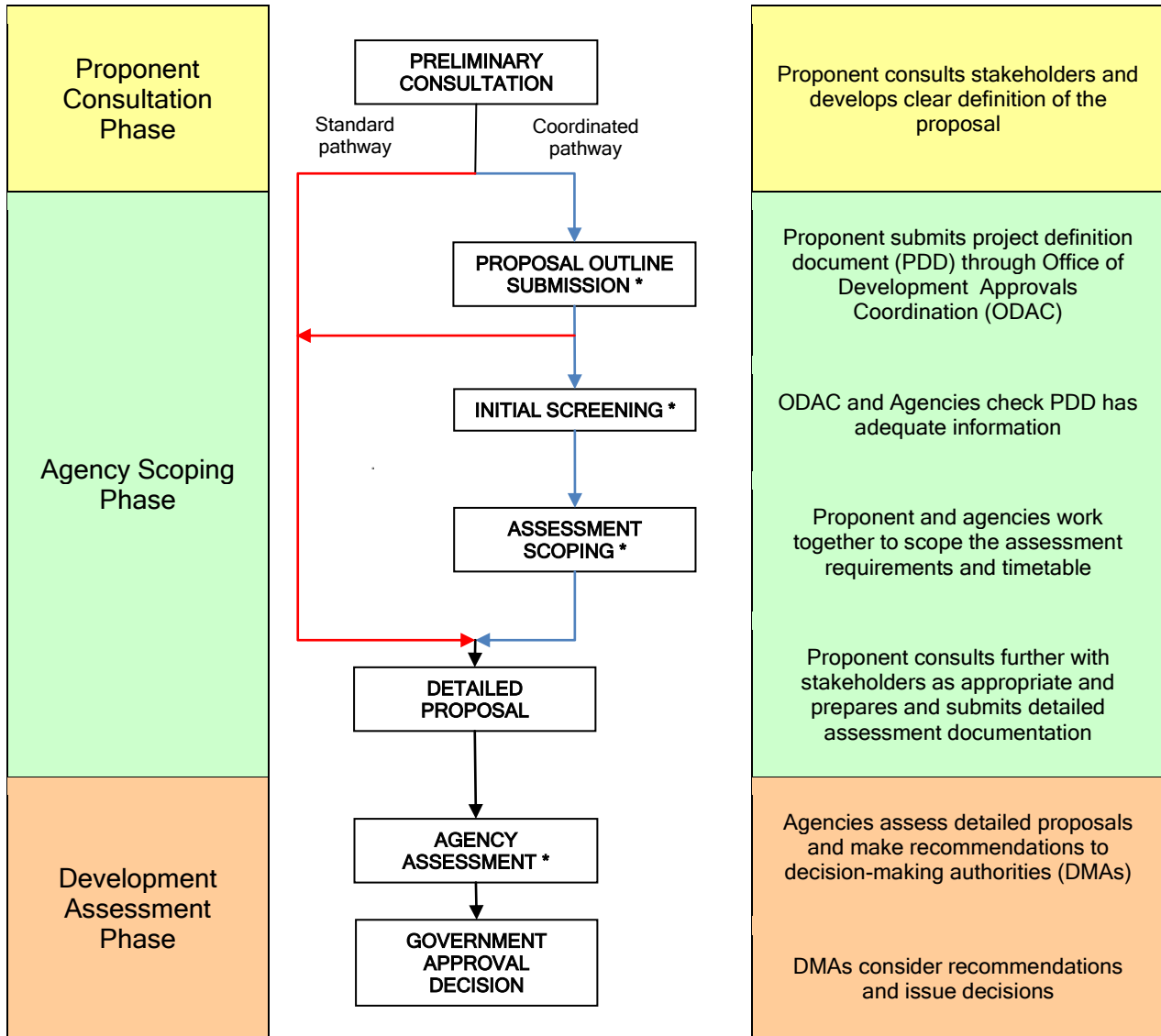
Drawing up a consultation program

The nature and level of stakeholder consultation that is appropriate will differ depending on the particular proposal, including such factors as the scale of the project and its potential social or environmental impacts.

The following information resources can help with the design of an appropriate consultation program:

- Department of Premier and Cabinet: <http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au>
Refer to the Publications area for access to key "Consulting Citizens" guides, covering consultation with the general community and a specific guide on engaging with Aboriginal Western Australians.
- Environmental Protection Authority: <http://www.epa.wa.gov.au>
Follow the menu to Environmental Impact Assessment/Community involvement for the Interim Industry Guide to Community Involvement. The guide is provided to assist Western Australian business with the community involvement process by outlining the tools that can be applied at the proposal planning stage and throughout the life of the development.

Outline of Integrated Project Approvals System Process



* Coordination and Monitoring by Office of Development Approvals Coordination

For straightforward projects the same phases apply but it would be unusual to prepare a Project Definition Document, with subsequent coordination of the approvals process through ODAC. ODAC's role in straightforward projects is to provide advice on approvals processes and monitor reporting by agencies on adherence to the agreed timelines.

Figure 3: Outline of IPAS Process

Other information on project approvals processes

General information on Project Approvals Processes is available:

- Online at www.doir.wa.gov.au/approvalprocesses
This site includes links to relevant State and Commonwealth agencies.
- Or from:

Office of Development Approvals Coordination
Level 19, 197 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Telephone: + 61 8 9222 8753
Facsimile: +61 8 9222 8755
Email: odac@dpc.wa.gov.au