Contents

Foreword iv

Part A: Stakeholder Engagement in the Department
1. Benefits of stakeholder engagement 2
2. The Department’s definitions 3
3. Principles of engagement 5

Part B: The Stakeholder Engagement Guide
1. Guide overview 8
2. The stakeholder engagement process 8
3. Develop your Stakeholder Engagement Plan 9
4. Determine the purpose and desired outcomes of engagement 10
5. Identify the relevant stakeholders 11
6. Proposed method of engagement 14
7. Consider the logistics 15
8. Communicate consistent departmental messages 16
9. Manage risks 16
10. Evaluate the engagement process 17
11. Other important considerations 19

Part C: Additional Resources
1. Stakeholder engagement and policy work 22
2. Partnerships 23
3. Inclusive stakeholder engagement 24
4. Consistent communication with stakeholders 25
5. Methods of engagement 26
6. The Department’s use of Web 2.0 28
7. Case studies 29
8. References 36
Foreword

Stakeholder engagement is critical to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s (the Department) successful delivery of learning and development services for Victorian children, young people and adults. The Department comes into daily contact with its stakeholders, whether it be early childhood sector organisations, education and training providers, principals and teachers, the community sector, or business and industry. To achieve a high-quality, coherent, birth-through-adulthood learning and development system, the Department must work collaboratively and form and maintain inclusive relationships with its stakeholders. Engaging stakeholders with diverse experience, knowledge and opinions delivers strong outcomes for the Department that extend beyond what we can achieve in isolation.

In 2010 the Department’s leadership team identified the need for a more strategic and systematic approach to stakeholder engagement and management across the Department, and sought the development of a Stakeholder Engagement Framework. The Framework responds to findings from the 2010 DEECD Staff Survey, which recommended actions to enhance the Department’s stakeholder engagement strategies, systems and processes.

The Stakeholder Engagement Framework represents the Department’s ongoing commitment to work effectively with its stakeholders, learn from past stakeholder engagement experiences and continue to improve performance. It was developed in conjunction with our external stakeholders and the Department’s central and regional offices, and complements the extensive guidance that already exists across the Victorian Government, nationally and internationally on stakeholder engagement.

The tools and resources provided in the Framework will enable the Department to meet the Government’s commitment to increase stakeholder engagement and form genuine partnerships with families, communities, businesses and non-government organisations.

The Framework seeks to:

• ensure a customised and coherent approach to stakeholder engagement across the Department
• enable better planned and more informed policies, projects, programs and services
• position stakeholder engagement as core business for the Department
• facilitate effective collaboration and knowledge sharing
• communicate the Department’s commitment to and principles of stakeholder engagement to its stakeholders.

For these benefits to be realised, we recognise that stakeholder engagement must be embedded within the culture and core functions of the Department. Through this document and related staff capacity-building initiatives, we are seeking to integrate stakeholder engagement principles into the Department’s policies, strategies and day-to-day operations. This commitment and integration will lead to better outcomes for the individuals and groups that are affected by, or can affect, the Department’s activities.

We welcome your feedback on the Stakeholder Engagement Framework.

Richard Bolt
Secretary
September 2011
Stakeholder Engagement in the Department
1. Benefits of stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement enables better planned and more informed policies, projects, programs and services. Stakeholder engagement can be mutually beneficial for the Department and our stakeholders. For stakeholders, the benefits of engagement include the opportunity to contribute as experts in their field to policy and program development, have their issues heard and participate in the decision-making process.

For the Department, the benefits of stakeholder engagement include improved information flows by tapping into local knowledge and having the opportunity to ‘road-test’ policy initiatives or proposals with stakeholders.

The earlier stakeholders are engaged, the more likely these benefits are to be realised.

Some of the benefits of stakeholder engagement for both stakeholders and the Department are summarised below.

Table 1: Benefits of stakeholder engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits for the Department include:</th>
<th>Benefits for stakeholders include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Higher quality decision-making</td>
<td>• Greater opportunities to contribute directly to policy and program development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased efficiency in and effectiveness of service delivery</td>
<td>• More open and transparent lines of communication – increasing the accountability of Government and driving innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved risk management practices – allowing risks to be identified and considered earlier, thereby reducing future costs</td>
<td>• Improved access to decision-making processes, resulting in the delivery of more efficient and responsive services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Streamlined policy and program development processes</td>
<td>• Early identification of synergies between stakeholder and Government work, encouraging integrated and comprehensive solutions to complex policy issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greater engagement with stakeholder interests – ensuring services are delivered in collaboration with stakeholders and provide outcomes which meet community needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced community confidence in projects undertaken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced capacity to innovate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The Department’s definitions

Who are stakeholders?

The Department interacts with a broad range of stakeholders, from key stakeholders who have an interest in improving learning and development outcomes for all Victorians, to those who are recipients of our services or subject to our regulations.

Stakeholders may be central or internal to the Department, such as colleagues in regional offices, principals and teachers, or external to the Department, including other departments, different levels of government, the community sector, business and industry groups, education and training providers, children's service providers, children, students and their families. A list of the Department's key stakeholder groups is provided in Part B.

What is the Department’s approach to stakeholder engagement?

The Department's approach to stakeholder engagement is based on an adaptation of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum. The IAP2 spectrum is an internationally recognised framework, designed to assist organisations select the appropriate level of participation required for different stakeholder groups.

The spectrum has a flexible range of approaches and tools depending on the goals, timeframes and resources available and the interests of the other party. It recognises that different projects can require different approaches and that stakeholder needs can change over time. Stakeholders may also need to be engaged in different ways depending on the issues that have been identified. This approach has been adopted by a number of other government departments.

Additionally, the Department has drawn on of the Department of Sustainability and Environment's (DSE) ‘Effective Engagement’ toolbox. A reference is provided to these resources in Part C of the Framework.

What are partnerships?

Partnerships are collaborative relationships with a clear and shared sense of purpose involving key stakeholders focused on an agreed outcome. Effective partnerships are based on mutual trust and respect, and these mutually beneficial relationships achieve outcomes that extend beyond what organisations can achieve in isolation.

In the context of education, skills and early childhood development, an effective partnership provides opportunities to achieve improved learning and development for all Victorians and can enhance engagement and wellbeing.

Key Partnerships

The early childhood sector has traditionally worked in partnership with families, community organisations and local government to deliver services. More recently there has been increased partnership activity in the other sectors, including with business, the not-for-profit sector and local government.

For example, the Department has established the Business Working with Education Foundation to provide schools and businesses with opportunities to undertake activities that will enrich the learning and development of children and young people.

The Department has also forged formal partnership agreements with a range of key stakeholders including the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian community sector.

In relation to the tertiary education sector, the Department has close and regular engagement with a range of business and industry partners in order to facilitate training uptake in the new demand-driven VET market.

For example, the Department has a dynamic engagement with the AFL to reach its followers and encourage participation in VET.
Stakeholder engagement goals

- To provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist stakeholders to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- To obtain feedback from stakeholders on analysis, alternatives and/or outcomes.
- To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered.
- To partner with the stakeholder including the development of alternatives, making decisions and the identification of preferred solutions.
- To place final decision-making in the hands of the stakeholder. Stakeholders are enabled/equipped to actively contribute to the achievement of outcomes.

Promise to stakeholders

- We will keep you informed.
- We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the outcome.
- We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the outcome.
- We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the outcomes to the maximum extent possible.
- We will implement what you decide.
- We will support and complement your actions.

Methods of engagement

- Fact sheets
- Open houses
- Newsletters, bulletins, circulars
- Websites, external and edugate
- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings
- Ultranet
- Web 2.0 tools
- Workshops
- Deliberative polling
- Web 2.0 tools
- Forums
- Web 2.0 tools
- Reference groups
- Facilitated consensus building forums for deliberation and decision-making
- Experimental projects
- Dialogue with Government
- Local governance
- Joint planning
- Provision of data
- Shared projects
- Capacity building

What is stakeholder management?

Stakeholder management is one form of stakeholder engagement. The Department has a broad range of interactions with stakeholders and managing these relationships and stakeholder expectations is integral to the Department’s core business. Stakeholders vary in their impact, significance, interest, longevity and relevance in relation to the Department’s objectives. Effective stakeholder management supports the Department by interpreting the external environment and responding and influencing accordingly. It also enables a consistent approach across the Department by ensuring that an appropriate response, which is sensitive to particular policy or departmental issues and takes into account the stakeholders’ interests, is considered.
3. Principles of engagement

Guiding principles – CORE Values

The Department’s Organisational Development Framework outlines three pillars of capability: ‘Our People’, ‘Our Knowledge’ and ‘Our Culture’. It also highlights the Department’s commitment to a shared purpose and CORE values.

Effective stakeholder engagement aligns with several of the commitments under the three pillars including:
- effective collaboration and partnerships
- knowledge sharing and collective learning
- aligned and effective processes
- transparency
- a capable and empowered workforce.

As a learning organisation, the Department has committed to the following CORE values in its relationships with colleagues, children and young people, adults, parents and families, partners and local and global communities:
- Collaboration and knowledge sharing
- Outcomes
- Respect and diversity
- Empowerment.

The Department’s CORE values underpin the principles which guide its interaction with stakeholders.

Figure 1: Organisational Development Framework

Five guiding principles when engaging with stakeholders

Responsive and reciprocal
We understand that engagement is a two-way process and appreciate the benefits of mutual learning (between stakeholders and the Department). The Department values stakeholders’ contribution to improving outcomes.

Inclusive
We commit to seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially interested or affected by departmental work, including those that are harder to reach for reasons such as language, culture, age or mobility.

Impartial and objective
We will make efforts to ensure information is accessible and objective and facilitate engagement with all stakeholders who have an interest.

Open, transparent and trusting
We will provide information so stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way and will foster a culture of sharing ideas.

Respect
We will value stakeholders and use their input to improve policy and outcomes. The Department will actively listen to and understand stakeholder needs, seeking to understand how they want to be engaged, based on their particular circumstances.

Principles of mutual respect and trust are fundamental to establishing effective stakeholder engagement. To maximise the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, the Department expects our stakeholders to be open, transparent, trustworthy and respectful in all engagement processes.
What can inhibit effective stakeholder engagement?

As part of a departmental consultation project, key stakeholders were asked to identify issues that inhibit effective engagement and to outline how the Department could ensure more effective engagement going forward. Their feedback, outlined below, reflects the need for a coordinated and consistent departmental approach to stakeholders.

**Responsive and reciprocal**
- “The Department missed opportunities to collaborate with others... and to glean practical knowledge and experience”
- “…more like telling than consulting. The Department should not just inform but listen and be informed…”
- “It’s great being asked to contribute and provide feedback from a student perspective”
- “Break down silos”

**Respectful**
- “Value our contribution”
- “…they appeared to be surprised that we could make a valuable contribution to papers”

**Inclusive**
- “They forgot to consult us”
- “Schools need to be engaged in advance... be given the heads up. It’s schools that are impacted”
- “There was no opportunity to shape the proposal at the early stages”
- “the involvement of the community sector in improving educational outcomes for children and young people, was ‘a big step forward’ in the relationship between the sector and the Department”
- “Occasionally information is not consistent – different individuals are given different responses or asked for the same feedback”

**Open, transparent and trusting**
- “The Department needs to manage risk in a way that includes stakeholders and uses our knowledge. Trust us, pass risk onto stakeholders to manage”
- “We want a no surprises culture”
- “Engage as early as possible…”

**Impartial and objective**
- “Do not just communicate with the usual agencies”
The Stakeholder Engagement Guide
1. Guide overview

This guide will take you through a step-by-step process to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan. To assist you in developing your Plan, a number of worksheets and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan template are provided:

- Worksheet 1: Stakeholder Engagement Objectives
- Worksheet 2: Stakeholder Analysis Tool
- Worksheet 3: Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Plan
- Template 1: Stakeholder Engagement Plan

2. The stakeholder engagement process

There is no ‘one size fits all’ model for stakeholder engagement. The stakeholder engagement process described in this guide should be tailored to the particular needs of the project, stakeholders and the situation.

Ensuring appropriate engagement requires good judgement. Asking the ‘what’, ‘who’ and ‘how’ questions are essential in determining the most appropriate ways to engage stakeholders.

Poorly thought through engagement practice can create mistrust, waste stakeholders’ time and lead to ‘engagement fatigue’ – a reluctance to participate in future consultations.

Table 3 below provides an overview of the four key steps associated with stakeholder planning and highlights the supporting worksheets within the guide to assist with the completion of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Component</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td>Identify why engagement is important for your policy, project or service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the purpose?</strong></td>
<td>Identify what outputs or outcomes you want to achieve by undertaking stakeholder engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worksheet 1</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Template 1</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td>Create a list of relevant stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who to engage?</strong></td>
<td>Map each stakeholder onto the quadrants of the Stakeholder Analysis Tool to determine suitable level of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worksheet 2</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholder Analysis Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Template 1</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td>Choose suitable method of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How to engage?</strong></td>
<td>Plan engagement logistics (timing, resourcing and responsibilities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worksheet 3</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Template 1</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4</strong></td>
<td>Develop performance measures to assess each stage of the engagement process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate the engagement process</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Developing your Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The template for the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (below) highlights the issues that require consideration when engaging with stakeholders.

**(Template 1: Stakeholder Engagement Plan)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Objectives</th>
<th>List your key engagement objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Stakeholders</td>
<td>Who are the stakeholders?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Level of Engagement| What level of engagement is required?  
  *e.g.* consult, collaborate, empower? |
| 3. Proposed method of engagement | What method of engagement will you use?  
  *e.g.* workshops, forums, Web 2.0? |
| **How**               |                                    |
| 4. Timing             | What are the timing issues or requirements? |
| 5. Resources          | What resources will you need to conduct the engagement process? |
| 6. Responsibility     | Who is responsible for engagement?  |
| 7. Key messages to communicate | What are the key messages? |
| **Other considerations** |                                    |
| 8. Managing Risk      | What are the risks associated with the engagement? |
4. Determine the purpose and desired outcomes of the engagement activity

Before you plan your stakeholder engagement, you need to determine the objective of the engagement activity, know why you are engaging stakeholders and be clear on what you hope to achieve.

The context and the overarching rationale for the engagement process should reflect the objectives of the wider policy, program or service.

Identify the outcomes and outputs you want to achieve

To identify why stakeholder engagement is important for the policy, project or service, you should consider the following:

- What do you want to achieve at the end of the process? (outcomes – e.g. seeking local knowledge, obtaining buy-in from stakeholders)
- What tangible products do you want to produce from the stakeholder engagement process? (outputs – e.g. research, a report)

Do not underestimate the importance and the time it takes to define the purpose and what you want to achieve. This first step lays the critical foundation for the engagement process and is often overlooked, leading to problems later in the process.

Worksheet 1: Stakeholder Engagement Objectives

Stakeholder Engagement Objectives

Worksheet 1: Stakeholder Engagement Objectives will assist you to clarify the purpose of your engagement and establish what you want to achieve.

To help you complete Worksheet 1, reflect on the following questions and determine if the stakeholder engagement process provides:

- Better awareness of issues?
- A mechanism for shared responsibility and problem solving?
- Greater understanding of on-the-ground issues?
- Early warning of problems, or affirmation that relevant issues are being addressed?
- Better decision-making based on local knowledge from those who will be impacted by the decision?
- Early identification of potential problems and pitfalls and a forum for comments and suggestions for alternative options?
- Improved communication?
- Better risk management?
- Opportunities to develop long-term and trusting relationships?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective of project, policy or service; or aspect of project</th>
<th>Why engage? Overarching rationale for undertaking engagement process</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: To implement a new student attainment assessment process in schools.</td>
<td>Example: To ensure stakeholders contribute to: • knowledge and understanding • development of solutions • improve the ultimate delivery of the project.</td>
<td>Example: To produce a high quality document outlining options based on shared research.</td>
<td>Example: Smoother adoption of assessment process. Teachers are better able to assess student attainment within required timeframe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action:** Enter objectives into the Stakeholder Engagement Plan
5. Identify the relevant stakeholders

Identifying the stakeholders who need to be engaged is one of the most difficult and important parts of the planning process and likely to be the key to the overall success of engagement.

The Department has interactions with an extensive range of stakeholders who hold varying levels of interest and influence in relation to the Department’s policy and project objectives. Stakeholders’ interests and influence can change depending on the issue, at what point in the process they are being engaged and who is affected.

To identify the relevant stakeholders you need to create a list of stakeholders and then analyse each stakeholder’s interest and influence.

Create a list of relevant stakeholders

There are no absolute rules in terms of selecting stakeholders for engagement. Sometimes, it is important to be as open and inclusive as possible. At other times, it is important to target engagement, to create a cohesive group that builds strong relationships and ownership. The selection of stakeholders will depend on the purpose of the engagement and the wider policy and project objectives.

Whilst every engagement process is unique, there are some general questions that will assist you in identifying appropriate stakeholders.

These include:

• Who is responsible for the wider project or policy?
• What individuals or groups have a stake or an interest in the issue?
• Who is influential in the policy arena?
• Who makes the decisions?
• Who can influence decisions?
• Who is critical to delivery?
• Who will potentially be impacted by the outcomes?
• Who will contribute resources?
• Who can slow or stop the project?
• Who is excluded and may not have been considered?
• What point in the process are stakeholders being engaged? (e.g. development of policy or a response to policy)
• Have you considered the voiceless, marginalised and harder to reach stakeholders who may include those with limited ICT literacy or access, Indigenous groups or those from culturally and linguistic diverse groups with low English language proficiency?

(For further advice, see Part C: Resources).
In addition to these questions, it is also useful to consider existing categories of stakeholders with whom the Department engages. The following list provides some of the Department’s key stakeholder groups and could be used as a prompt for the identification of stakeholders.

**Key Stakeholders:**
- Local Government and Federal Government
- Principals and teachers (school and early childhood)
- Parents, families and students
- Peak organisations (e.g. the Municipal Association of Victoria, Kindergarten Parents Victoria, the Victorian Council of Social Service, Victorian Principals’ Association, Victorian Association of Secondary School Principals and Parents Victorian, Victorian TAFE Association)
- Catholic Education Office, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, and the Association of Independent Schools Victoria
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (e.g. Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.)
- Local community members and community organisations
- Non-government organisations and not-for-profit sector
- Higher education and training providers
- Business and industry
- Adult community education providers
- VET Directors and tutors
- Unions and professional associations
- Special interest groups and experts (e.g. academics and research organisations)
- Colleagues in central and regional offices and statutory authorities
- Other State government departments.

**Action: Complete Box 1 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan**

**Stakeholder mapping and analysis**

After you have identified your list of key stakeholders, it is important to consider the stakeholders’ expectations and their levels of interest and influence in relation to the issue they are being engaged on. Stakeholder analysis is an essential step in the process of developing a useful engagement plan. For engagement to be effective, it is necessary to understand the complexities of the relationships between the stakeholders and the project.

Use **Worksheet 2: Stakeholder Analysis Tool** to map each stakeholder onto a quadrant reflecting their level of influence and interest. This will determine the level of engagement (inform, consult, involve, collaborate or empower) that is required with each stakeholder.

**To map your list of identified stakeholders the following questions need to be considered:**
- What stake or interest does the stakeholder have in the policy, project or service?
- How will the stakeholder be impacted by the policy or project?
- What influence does the stakeholder wield regarding the policy, project or service?
- How much ‘noise’ would they make if their views/concerns were not taken seriously?
- What is the existing relationship with the stakeholder like?
If a stakeholder has high levels of influence over and interest in the project’s outcomes they should be placed in the top right quadrant. Conversely, if they have a low level of influence and low interest they should be placed in the bottom left quadrant. The level of interest and influence of stakeholders will depend on a range of issues, such as the nature of the policy or project, the timing and extent of their involvement and their potential ability to impact on the effectiveness of the outcomes.

It is important to keep in mind that the interest or influence of a stakeholder may change as the policy or project progresses. Therefore, there is a need to continuously reassess and identify new stakeholders and the level of stakeholder engagement at different stages of the project.

**Action:** Complete Box 2 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for each stakeholder
6. Proposed method of engagement

Once you have identified and analysed your stakeholders, and selected the level of engagement required, it is then possible to determine the most appropriate method of engagement.

Choose a suitable method of engagement

The Stakeholder Engagement Spectrum below outlines suggested ways to engage stakeholders according to each of the five engagement levels (inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower). Select the corresponding engagement method/s you plan to utilise and populate these into your Stakeholder Engagement Plan. More information on methods of engagement, including their benefits and limitations, is provided in Part C.

Table 4: The Stakeholder Engagement Spectrum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder engagement level</th>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder engagement goal</td>
<td>To provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist stakeholders to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</td>
<td>To obtain feedback from stakeholders on analysis, alternatives and/or outcomes.</td>
<td>To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered.</td>
<td>To partner with the stakeholder including the development of alternatives, making decisions and the identification of preferred solutions.</td>
<td>To place final decision-making in the hands of the stakeholder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of engagement</td>
<td>• Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses • Newsletters, bulletins, circulars • Websites, external and edugate</td>
<td>• Public comment • Focus groups • Survey • Public meetings • Web 2.0 tools</td>
<td>• Workshops • Deliberative polling • Web 2.0 tools • Forums</td>
<td>• Web 2.0 tools • Reference groups • Facilitated consensus building forums for deliberation and decision-making • Experimental projects</td>
<td>• Facilitation of direct dialogue between stakeholders and government • Local governance • Joint planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum (2007). See www.iap2.org

There is no one right stakeholder engagement method and you may choose a number of different methods at different stages of the policy or project process. Selecting the appropriate method of stakeholder engagement and the relevant tools and techniques to facilitate the engagement process can vary according to the situation, time, skills and budget. All engagement methods have their benefits and limitations and it is important to select the right one for the particular context.

Action: Complete Box 3 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan
7. Consider the logistics (timing, resourcing and responsibilities)

In selecting the method of engagement, you also need to consider a number of logistical factors. You need to ensure that the methods you are selecting fit with the project timelines, are adequately resourced, and that responsibility for the engagement process is clearly identified.

The following questions are important to build into your Stakeholder Engagement Plan:

- Are the timeframes reasonable, and do they provide an opportunity for early engagement?
- What budget or resources are available to undertake the particular engagement method?
- Who will be responsible for the project?
- How will you action the Stakeholder Engagement Plan?
  - Have you planned a venue?
  - Will the engagement process be fully documented and how will you record the consultation with stakeholders?
  - How will you be providing feedback to the participants?

Action: Complete Box 4 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan
Complete Box 5 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan
Complete Box 6 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

8. Communicate consistent departmental messages

Before implementing your engagement plan, you should consider the promise you are making to the stakeholder and determine the key messages to be communicated. This will ensure the Department is communicating a consistent message to stakeholders throughout the engagement process.

Considerations for consistent messaging include:

- What can actually change as a result of engagement and what will not change
- Whether stakeholders will be involved in the final decision making or as input only
- Expectations of the level of input required of stakeholders
- How the outcomes of the stakeholder engagement process are to be communicated
- What the benefits are for the stakeholders.

Action: Complete Box 7 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan
9. Manage risk

Stakeholder engagement, like many aspects of policy or project work, can be complex and present varying levels of risk. The more effectively these risks are managed, the more successful and effective the stakeholder engagement process will be for both the Department and stakeholders. Some risks that are common to the stakeholder engagement process include:

- stakeholders having a different understanding of the engagement objectives and different expectations about the outcomes of the engagement process
- stakeholders feeling excluded from the process, for example, if they are unable to attend engagement activities due to their geographic location
- stakeholders having insufficient time to contribute fully or to raise concerns, for example, due to short project timelines.

Risks can be managed by developing strategies to stop them occurring, or by developing contingency plans to reduce their likelihood and/or impact. Following the steps outlined in this Framework, particularly around communication, will help you to overcome the potential risks associated with stakeholder engagement. Further, early engagement helps to minimise risk as potential issues can be identified and addressed prior to the development and implementation of the policy, program or service.

If engagement is a large part of your policy or project, or if the potential consequences of poor engagement are significant, it is recommended that a full risk analysis be conducted separately for the stakeholder engagement process.

Action: Complete Box 8 of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

10. Evaluate the engagement process

Stakeholder evaluation:

Stakeholder engagement is integral to the Department’s work. Accordingly, there is a need to assess the effectiveness of how we engage and to learn from those experiences.

Stakeholder evaluation should address the following questions:

- Was the planning process effective?
- Has the engagement process worked well?
  - Has it delivered the intended outputs?
  - Has it delivered the intended outcomes?
Plan your stakeholder evaluation

*Worksheet 3: The Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Plan* should be completed before the engagement process begins. It will ensure you have:

- Determined the key evaluation questions you need to answer to measure the success of the engagement process and degree of achievement of outputs and outcomes
- Decided what type of data is required to be collected:
  - Do you want quantitative data (e.g. numbers of attendees at event) or qualitative data (e.g. specific views or quotations)?
  - What methods should you employ to collect data? (e.g. observation attendance at workshops, listening to debates at meeting, questionnaires etc.)
  - Who will collect the data?
  - The timeline of when you should collect data, (e.g. at the beginning of the process to obtain a benchmark for measurement).

When do you need to evaluate?

Evaluation of your engagement activities should be incorporated into your normal operations. This will enable you to reflect and re-think your engagement practices as you go through the wider project or policy process. It also reduces the burden on busy stakeholders, and helps you to maintain stakeholder relationships.

What comes next?

Once your evaluation has been completed, you should review and then share the key learnings. Reflect on the expectations of stakeholders, the Department’s promises, the difference the engagement has made and how to best provide feedback to stakeholders. Consider the Department’s intentions for future work and how we can continue to strengthen our stakeholder engagement practices.
### Worksheet 3: Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you want to know?</th>
<th>What evaluation methods will you use?</th>
<th>How will the evaluation be conducted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List your evaluation questions for each stage of the engagement process. The number of questions you include should depend on the size/complexity of the engagement process.</td>
<td>List the methods you will use to evaluate each stage of the engagement process.</td>
<td>Describe how each engagement method will be carried out, by whom and by when.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Planning Process

**Examples:**
- What planning processes worked well?
- What could have been improved or done differently?
- Was there adequate time and resources for planning?
- Did we forget any stakeholders?
- Were the stakeholder groups representative?

**Example:**
- Interviews
- Observations and reflections
- Online surveys
- Feedback sheets
- Focus groups
- Quantitative data collection

**Example:**
- Work team to meet one week after conclusion of policy/project to share observations about the engagement process.
- Project manager to conduct one-on-one interviews with selected stakeholders two weeks after engagement.
- Stakeholders asked to complete feedback sheet immediately following the conclusion of the engagement process.
- Stakeholders asked to complete an online survey to assess satisfaction with relationship two weeks after engagement.
- Project team to collect and analyse data on number of stakeholders who participated in engagement activities.

#### Engagement

**Examples:**
- What engagement methods worked well?
- What could have been improved or done differently?
- Did we have enough time and resources?
- Did we adequately identify and manage logistics and risks?
- Were the stakeholders supportive/were they adequately engaged?
- Were the numbers of stakeholders involved sufficient?

#### Benefits/Outcomes

**Examples:**
- What has changed in terms of policy or project intentions?
- How has the quality of services, projects or programs improved?
- How did commitment to the wider policy or project change?
- How has the relationship with the stakeholder changed?
- What is the likely nature of any future relationship with this stakeholder?

**Example:**
- Work team to meet one week after conclusion of policy/project to share observations about the engagement process.
- Project manager to conduct one-on-one interviews with selected stakeholders two weeks after engagement.
- Stakeholders asked to complete feedback sheet immediately following the conclusion of the engagement process.
- Stakeholders asked to complete an online survey to assess satisfaction with relationship two weeks after engagement.
- Project team to collect and analyse data on number of stakeholders who participated in engagement activities.

### Action: Complete Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Plan
11. Other important considerations

Outlined below are a number of other important considerations for developing your Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Use existing networks, relationships and relevant activities
Consider how to best utilise existing networks, events and relationships within the Department to be coordinated and avoid duplication. Stakeholders are busy and want their time to be valued so utilising existing networks or engagement processes from across the Department coordinates effort and reduces the burden on external stakeholders. This will also help to build relationships.

Look at the historical context
It is useful to reflect on the historical context and how the current situation with each stakeholder was reached. Consider whether there has been previous engagement on the same issues; examine what went well, what were the lessons learned and the final outcomes.

Not everyone has to be involved
Not all stakeholders need to be involved in all activities and at all stages of the engagement process. With good planning, different stakeholders can be involved effectively in different parts of the process in a way that is efficient and relevant to them.

Don’t just reach the ‘usual suspects’. Be inclusive
Stakeholders who are responsive and make an active contribution are often engaged more frequently. However, relying on these stakeholders may mean that stakeholder engagement is not fully representative and insufficiently informed by diverse perspectives.

Engaging effectively with those seen to be marginalised or ‘harder to reach’ often requires particular or different efforts. The Victorian community is diverse and there are different characteristics between people, such as ethnicity, sex, age, values, mental and physical ability, and socioeconomic background. Being inclusive is not just about ensuring policy and projects are representative or that the outcomes address inequality, it is also about valuing difference. Additional information regarding the Department’s engagement with Indigenous communities, those who are linguistically diverse or those who have disabilities can be found in Part C: Resources.
Engage stakeholders who are opponents

Do not exclude those organisations that are opponents or are in contention with the Department. Involving these groups often means receiving advice on the risks and subsequently means better risk management and a better outcome. Their involvement also creates ownership and greater commitment to getting the process right.

Consult with stakeholders on methods of engagement

Reflect on the extent to which you have considered the stakeholders’ objectives and enquired as to how they want to be engaged. It is important to consider these objectives as a mutual goal that can help to deliver better results. Equally, the Department engages with organisations that operate with different levels of funding and their capacity to participate in engagement processes can sometimes be limited. Listen and try to understand stakeholders’ constraints as this is important in developing long-term and effective relationships.

Make good engagement ‘core business’

Establishing strong and ongoing working relationships with stakeholders is crucial. This requires building trust and genuinely valuing stakeholders’ involvement. It is important to use judgment and empathy to understand the stakeholder’s role and needs and to ensure interaction is part of daily work.

Maintaining the relationship

In some instances stakeholder engagement will have a discrete beginning and end, but in many cases the engagement will be part of a longer term relationship with your stakeholder. Throughout the engagement process you should be mindful of how the engagement can serve to enhance this relationship. Once you have completed the engagement process you should reflect on:

- the likely nature of any future relationship with the stakeholder
- how you will manage the ongoing relationship.

Utilising third parties

You may be required to engage stakeholders who are hard to reach or who do not have an existing relationship with the Department. In these instances you may wish to consider utilising a third party who is involved with your targeted stakeholder group to help with the engagement process. Utilising a third party can help you to understand the best approach to engaging the stakeholder group, and enable you to draw on their existing relationship and methods of communication.
The Department has responsibility for developing policy advice and implementing the Victorian Government’s policies in relation to early childhood development and children’s services, school education and post-compulsory education. Engaging with stakeholders to seek their ideas and views is a critical component of policy development and implementation. Stakeholder engagement can take place at any or all stages of the policy cycle. The diagram below shows the contribution stakeholders can make at each stage of the cycle. Note that the level of stakeholder engagement (inform, consult, involve, collaborate or empower) will depend on the particular circumstances of policy development.

1. Stakeholder engagement and policy work

**Agenda setting**
Establish need for policy or project, define problems and identify issues.
Stakeholders involved in developing ideas, expressing their views, and helping to set the agenda.

**Policy review and evaluation**
Evaluation and review might involve collating feedback and informing stakeholders of progress or barriers.
Stakeholder feedback on implementation. Any issues identified fed back into the policy cycle.

**Analysis**
Research and investigate, discuss possible policy responses.
Stakeholders and decision-makers come together to identify challenges and opportunities and explore possible policy responses.

**Implementation**
Develop a policy delivery and implementation plan.
Seek stakeholder views on implementation approach. Use feedback to refine the policy.

**Policy formulation**
Develop workable solutions by discussing a range of policy options and gaining feedback.
Opportunity for stakeholders to discuss policy options and comment on the detail of proposals.

2. Partnerships

The Department recognises that it cannot deliver its ambitious reform agenda alone and is committed to work in partnership with parents, families, local communities, the community sector, business, industry, local government, non-government schools, TAFEs, VET providers, universities and other government agencies.

The early childhood development portfolio has traditionally worked in partnership with local government in the delivery of early years services. For example, the Maternal and Child Health Service (MCH) is delivered in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, local government and the Department. Best Start, an early childhood program to support communities, parents and service providers to improve universal early years services so they are responsive to local needs, is also centred around local partnerships.

A range of partnership arrangements are also in place with community organisations, business and industry associations, and sports and cultural groups to encourage deeper engagement with the Victorian training market.

Partnership arrangements can be formal or informal. The Department has developed formal Partnership Agreements with some key stakeholders. These Partnership Agreements are based on a shared commitment to work collaboratively to sustain and improve outcomes for children, young people and families across all Victorian communities. These agreements are seen as integral to ensuring better understanding of cross cutting issues and they enable awareness of synergies between organisations and foster opportunities to be more effective and cohesive.

**Partnership Agreements**

The Department’s formal Partnership Agreements include:

- The DEECD/Victorian Community Sector Partnership Agreement 2010-2014
- Wurreker: The Koorie Community and TAFE in Victoria in Equal Partnership (Victorian Government and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.).

The Department is also working in partnership with the Commonwealth Government in its delivery of a range of National Partnerships including:

- Early Childhood Education National Partnerships – These seek to increase access to preschool programs, improve the outcomes of Indigenous children in their early years, and establish a National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care.
- Smarter Schools National Partnerships – These are a series of intergovernmental agreements aimed at improving educational outcomes for young Australians by lifting literacy and numeracy, improving teacher quality and addressing disadvantage in low socioeconomic school communities in all three schooling sectors. The Low SES Smarter Schools National Partnership has a particular focus on engaging with parents, community and business in schools around student learning.
- Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership – Seeks to increase participation of young people in education and training, increase attainment levels nationally and improve successful transitions from schools.
3. Inclusive stakeholder engagement

As one of the five guiding principles of inclusive engagement, the Government is committed to work with stakeholders who are difficult to reach. Some of the priority stakeholders targeted for inclusion are highlighted below.

Partnerships with Indigenous stakeholders

The Government is improving engagement with Indigenous Victorians to make engagement meaningful, transparent and designed to achieve improvements against agreed outcomes. To improve quality of life outcomes for Indigenous people, and to meet DEECD objectives to improve education and training for all Indigenous Victorians, the Government is:

- Providing a holistic community centred approach, locally and regionally driven, that includes a ‘ground up’ process for planning and priority setting
- Developing partnerships within and across Indigenous services, communities and government, and enabling better joint planning across government agencies and sectors to promote community wellbeing
- Engaging in a process of community participation that actively engages and supports community leaders and stakeholders at the local level
- Ensuring ongoing training and development of Indigenous personnel.


Engaging culturally and linguistically diverse communities

The Government recognises that, as our population becomes more diverse, services should be responsive to the cultural needs of Victorians and that our institutions need to become more culturally competent.

Under the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2004* (amended 2008), all departments are required to develop Cultural Diversity Plans to address the provision for culturally sensitive service delivery to Victoria’s culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

The Department’s Cultural Diversity Plan identifies a wide range of strategies to facilitate greater responsiveness to CALD communities in Victoria, including:

- Ensuring that information on the Department’s services is readily accessible to CALD communities
- The development of a strategy for engagement with CALD communities.

The Department also has a responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, which sets out a framework for continuing to strengthen and promote multiculturalism across the state.

Enabling those with disabilities to participate in consultation

The *Disability Act 2006* (Vic) requires government departments to implement Disability Action Plans to enable people with a disability to participate more actively in all aspects of the community. A key outcome to be addressed by Disability Action Plans is Outcome 3: Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability. This requirement ensures that people with disabilities are included in the Department’s consultation processes – whether internal or in its dealings with the wider community.

The Victorian Office for Disability website has a range of resources designed to assist in effectively consulting people with a disability – http://www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au/research_and_resources.htm#communication

Engaging young people

Youth engagement is about actively supporting the contribution and participation of young people in decision-making about the issues that affect them. Meaningful engagement with young people has a number of important benefits:

- enables sharing of diverse points of views, beliefs and experiences
- utilises their particular skills and expertise
- raises awareness of issues that affect them and helps them to take action
- leads to more open and democratic decision-making.

Engaging young people in planning, delivery and evaluation can also result in services that are more effective, relevant and better able to meet the needs of young people. The following principles should be considered when engaging young people:

- Empowerment – young people having greater control over their lives through participation
- Purposeful engagement – young people taking on valued roles, addressing relevant issues, influencing real outcomes
- Inclusiveness – ensuring that all young people are able to participate.

(Youth Affairs Council of Victoria – 2004)

4. Consistent communication with stakeholders

The Department administers an extensive range of programs and policies. It also has a wide range of stakeholders with diverse needs and interests in the outcome of a policy or service. Meeting the Department’s vision and mission requires that all departmental staff work collaboratively and ensure key departmental messages are consistent. This means paying particular attention to ensuring the Department’s messages to stakeholders are consistent and only making commitments to stakeholders that can be fulfilled.

It is important to consider the key messages you are communicating to stakeholders in the context of the Department’s other priorities, including:

- How these messages strategically align or intersect with the work of other areas in the Department
- Collaborating with colleagues to determine which messages are appropriate to communicate to stakeholders.

Communication with relevant areas within the Department should occur before policy, projects and intended outcomes are communicated to external stakeholders. Managing the messages stakeholders receive is crucial to ensure that the Department is able to deliver on any undertakings made. It also ensures stakeholders interact with a unified Department, clear on its messages and intentions.

Communicating with Stakeholders

Tips for when communicating with stakeholders:

- Verify the accuracy of your message with colleagues across the Department
- Messages should be clear, concise and delivered in a timely manner
- Be open and honest about your objectives and planned activities
- Do not make promises that are not achievable
- Be direct in addressing key concerns
- Use plain language and minimise jargon
- Share your key messages with colleagues who might be engaging with the same stakeholders to ensure they are informed
- Ensure the message is targeted to the relevant audience.
- Understand your target audience and the context in which they’ll receive your messages.
## 5. Methods of engagement

The table below provides some examples of different methods of engagement, outlining their benefits and limitations. For training and detailed support material, you can refer to the DSE Effective Engagement Toolkit.

**Table 5: Methods of engagement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inform</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact sheets</td>
<td>• Able to reach a large number of stakeholders in a simple, efficient way</td>
<td>• May not be accessible to people with visual impairment or low literacy levels</td>
<td>Should be tailored to the relevant needs of the recipients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can be targeted to a particular stakeholder group and developed into languages other than English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>• Able to reach a large number of stakeholders.</td>
<td>• Written material may not be accessible to people with visual impairment or low literacy levels</td>
<td>Method and content should be tailored to the stakeholder group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can be targeted to specific stakeholder groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>• Straightforward</td>
<td>• Difficult to gather qualitative information</td>
<td>Always include open-ended questions and space for fuller comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Forcussed and specific</td>
<td>• Answers may be irrelevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can gauge a large number of opinions</td>
<td>• Delivery methods can affect results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Easily adapted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion polls</td>
<td>• Quick and cheap</td>
<td>• May be too brief for people to provide their full opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides a snapshot of opinions at a certain time</td>
<td>• Results may be influenced if questions are worded incorrectly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Straightforward and accurate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>• Discussing complex issues, analysing competing options and generating ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitation is crucial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourages joint working and problem solving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Builds ownership of results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert panel</td>
<td>• Focus intent on a specific subject</td>
<td>• The process needs to be carefully focussed</td>
<td>If the group is large, facilitation will be necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Produce in-depth analysis</td>
<td>• Breadth may be limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experts can often be objective</td>
<td>• May be too ‘exclusive’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public meetings</td>
<td>• Opportunity for stakeholders to raise issues and ask questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Opportunity to gather support for new ideas and build relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communicate with large groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>• Best way to obtain qualitative information from an individual</td>
<td>• Necessitates sensitivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can produce highly accurate results</td>
<td>• Large numbers are required to ensure accurate results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adds a personal dimension</td>
<td>• Careful preparation necessary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web 2.0</td>
<td>• Useful for diverse and extensive input</td>
<td>• Participation limited to those with access to IT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enable access to views and ability to provide feedback</td>
<td>• Can be expensive to develop and maintain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Measuring website statistics can also track stakeholder interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>Provides good qualitative data</td>
<td>Difficult to gather qualitative information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is inclusive</td>
<td>Answers may be irrelevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is flexible and responsible and has the ability to support problem</td>
<td>Delivery methods can affect results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>solving and solution testing as the process evolves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory committees</td>
<td>Value a wide range of technical and local expert knowledge</td>
<td>May be too brief for people to provide their full opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support a range of engagement processes (ie. research)</td>
<td>Results may be influenced if questions are worded incorrectly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enables information to be distributed to different stakeholder groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space technology</td>
<td>Allows a bottom-up agenda to emerge</td>
<td>May not be accessible to people with visual impairment or low literacy levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inspires ownership and action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enables new alliances to form</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensures follow-up reflects the wishes of those who have high interest or might be impacted by outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future search conference</td>
<td>Can drive stakeholder and government action</td>
<td>The process needs to be carefully focussed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involves a broad range of relevant stakeholders</td>
<td>Breadth may be limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develops stakeholder support and agreement</td>
<td>May be too 'exclusive'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory editing</td>
<td>Builds ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflects their informed views and contributes to the quality of a</td>
<td>Need to consider of the stakeholder's organisational structures and resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>document/proposal etc.</td>
<td>May attract criticism if final result is not reflective of input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder visioning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large numbers and diverse stakeholders can be involved</td>
<td>Requires a number of facilitators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship building exercise</td>
<td>Generates a lot of information and data for collation &amp; analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utilises the expertise and knowledge of stakeholders</td>
<td>Requires careful documentation and clarity of purpose to ensure sound links to concrete outcomes</td>
<td>Community visioning can be expanded to accommodate a wide variety of people, i.e. younger people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generates forward planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-design</td>
<td>Diverse contribution</td>
<td>The process needs to be carefully focussed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Builds relationships and increases commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enables experimentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. The Department’s use of Web 2.0

The term Web 2.0 refers to a perceived second generation of web development and design that facilitates communication, information sharing and collaboration online. Web 2.0 tools allow for rich use of multimedia and do not require specialised skills or knowledge to use. Users can share, comment, create their own content, connect with others, work collaboratively or organise information, depending on the specific program. Web 2.0 concepts have led to the development and evolution of web-based communities, hosted services, and applications such as social-networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis and blogs.

Web 2.0 provides considerable opportunities for communication, creation and collaboration with stakeholders. The Department is using a range of Web 2.0 tools in innovative ways to engage, collaborate with and listen to its stakeholders. Some examples are provided below, and further information can be found at [www.education.vic.gov.au/researchinnovation/technology](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/researchinnovation/technology).

- **Educator’s Guide to Innovation ning**
  The Educator’s Guide to Innovation ning ([http://guidetoinnovation.ning.com](http://guidetoinnovation.ning.com)) is a professional networking site that brings together people from across Victoria who are interested in innovative practices in education. The site features user profiles, blogs, discussion forums, an events calendar, project groups, the Virtual Conference Centre, photos and videos. The site currently has 2,600 members.

- **Facebook**
  The Department has created accounts on the social networking site Facebook (e.g. ‘Performing Arts Unit’ and the ‘Real Skills Pilot’) to connect with stakeholders, share information and promote collaboration.

- **Learning On Line website**
  The Department’s Learning On Line website has been developed to help schools make the most of the opportunities presented by new developments in, and increased accessibility to, digital technologies. At the same time, the website aims to support schools to minimise risks that may arise through the use of these technologies. It provides advice for schools on cybersafety and educates young people to be responsible users of mobile and digital technologies ([www.education.vic.gov.au/management/lol](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/lol)).

- **Twitter**
  The Department uses the ‘microblogging’ platform Twitter to share resources, links and ideas (e.g. ‘@innovatehere’). Twitter is being used increasingly by government agencies, Members of Parliament, businesses, non government organisations and individuals. The Department also uses external advocates (such as AFL ambassadors) whose twitter feeds reach key stakeholder groups, to share information on our behalf.

- **Ultranet**
  The Ultranet is a statewide online learning environment that connects students, teachers and parents within and across the government school system, and enables sharing of ideas, knowledge and resources. Students are able to use Web 2.0 tools such as wikis, blogs, polls and discussion boards to collaborate and communicate with students and teachers within their school. Teachers can access digital learning resources and collaboratively design and share content with colleagues across Victoria. Parents can access up-to-date information about their child, including their attendance, timetable, homework and teacher feedback ([www.ultranet.vic.gov.au](http://www.ultranet.vic.gov.au)).

- **Virtual Conference Centre**
  The Virtual Conference Centre provides free web conference sessions for meeting, learning and collaborating online. It can be used by Victorian educators in government, catholic and independent schools, and departmental staff in regional and central offices. Participants interact using a variety of features such as audio, video, instant messaging, shared interactive whiteboard, polling, file and application sharing ([www.education.vic.gov.au/researchinnovation/virtualconferencecentre](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/researchinnovation/virtualconferencecentre)).

- **VPS Hub**
  VPS Hub provides an online platform for collaboration across government on cross-sector initiatives and for sharing information, resources and good practice. The Department uses VPS Hub for various engagement and collaboration activities, including establishing online working groups, providing updates on cross-departmental projects, and sharing information on standards, guidelines and frameworks ([www.vpshub.vic.gov.au](http://www.vpshub.vic.gov.au)).
7. Case studies

The Department uses effective stakeholder engagement every day through its work with colleagues across government, local government, community organisations, education and training providers and members of the community. A number of case studies are provided for your reference to illustrate the different methodologies the Department has used to inform, consult, involve and collaborate with and empower its stakeholders to ensure better education and training outcomes for all Victorians.

FUSE Portal – FUSEing mutual benefits

The Context

The FUSE Portal (www.education.vic.gov.au/FUSE) enables educators to Find, Use and Share quality Educational resources and learning content anywhere and anytime in a secure, online environment. FUSE is a publicly accessible site, which sets a new benchmark in the digital education revolution. The FUSE Portal provides teachers with tools and pathways to learning, leadership, professional learning, whole of school improvement and community partnerships.

Engagement

Consult
To inform the development of FUSE, a wide-ranging consultation process took place which included teachers, students, Victorian cultural agencies and other cross-jurisdictional agencies and departments. This process was to inform the functionality and features of the portal, ensure they met the needs of all stakeholders and achieved maximum value for educators. A carefully selected combination of Web 2.0 tools and traditional consultation methods were used throughout the consultation process.

Collaborate
Face-to-face events and synchronous web conferencing enabled stakeholders to be informed and involved in the development of the product and the policies over the course of the project. A combination of Web 2.0 tools such as nings, blogs and wikis allowed ongoing collaboration to take place with content providers and end users.

Outcome
Input from all of these forms of engagement not only informed the functionality of FUSE but the process involved stakeholders in working collaboratively to co-create a powerful tool for educators.

Methods
• Face-to-face events
• Synchronous web conferencing
• Nings, blogs and wikis
Smarter Schools National Partnerships – Sustaining effective stakeholder engagement through planning, governance and implementation

The Context
The Smarter Schools National Partnerships are a series of intergovernmental partnership agreements which seek to improve educational outcomes for young Australians by lifting literacy and numeracy, improving teacher quality and addressing disadvantage in low socioeconomic school communities in all three schooling sectors.

Engagement
Consult
An initial requirement of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships (the Partnerships) was the development of a Victorian plan for the implementation of wide reaching reforms. Consultation and collaboration across the public service and education sector ensured that all key stakeholders were appropriately informed and able to contribute to the planning of the Partnerships. Workshops were held with the not-for-profit sector, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI), Victorian Government departments and all three school sectors. This engagement was, and continues to be, a key factor in the success of the Partnerships in Victoria.

Collaborate
A key component of the planning of the Partnerships was the cross-sectoral working groups established for each Partnership agreement to bring together representatives from the three schooling sectors, the Department, the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance. The working groups were overseen by a central committee chaired by the Secretary of the Department and had representatives from the heads of each of the school sectors.

These governance arrangements enabled stakeholders to contribute directly to the development of the plan, and resulted in a high quality and comprehensive implementation strategy which addressed the reforms from a whole of Victorian government perspective.

Outcome
Now that the National Partnerships have moved into their implementation phase, the cross-sectoral working groups have been restructured to ensure that the strengthened partnerships, communication and collaboration which began in the planning phase can be continued through the remainder of the reform process. In particular, representatives have committed to sharing information on the development, implementation and outcomes of their initiatives to facilitate best practice across Victoria.

Methods
• Face-to-face conversation
• Working groups
Trade Training Centres in Schools Program

The Context

The Commonwealth Government’s Trade Training Centres in Schools program was launched in March 2008. The program aims to provide $2.5 billion over 10 years in capital funding to build trade training centres in secondary schools. Schools from all sectors can apply for up to $1.5 million for capital works or equipment to deliver trade qualifications in skill shortages areas.

The aim of the program is to address skills shortages in the traditional trades and emerging industries and to improve Year 12 or equivalent completion rates. The program is managed in partnership with the states and territories.

An analysis was undertaken at the beginning of the program to develop five key strategic objectives for Victoria, which have underpinned partnership activity.

Engagement

Consult

The development of projects was devolved to the Department’s regions. Regions were authorised and encouraged to take a facilitation role in establishing and negotiating partnerships involving government and non-government schools, Registered Training Organisations, including TAFEs, and other local stakeholders. This ensured that projects were consistent with regional provision planning as well as ensuring that projects best met local needs. Consequently, projects tended to develop organically rather than following a set model.

The regional planning process was supported by system consultation between DEECD, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria to gain higher level stakeholder authorisation for the local partnerships.

Inform

Formal and informal communication channels were established. These included small discussion groups, larger information sessions, a significant state-wide conference, the creation of a website, and meetings with individual and groups of stakeholders at key milestone points in the annual program cycle.

Outcome

Sharing of information between stakeholders was critical. This included sharing of ideas and not just outcomes. The emphasis was on sharing the broadest range of information with the broadest audience/s rather than being selective about narrowing the information flow to particular audiences. This created an openness and honesty about information exchange between stakeholders.

Methods

- Meetings/discussion groups
- Conference
- Information sessions
- Workshops
- Website
Co-design of Certificate III in Aviation Manufacturing (Composites) with Boeing Aerostructures Australia

The Context
The Department works collaboratively with industry to ensure training qualifications meet skills and workforce needs.

In late 2010, Boeing Aerostructures Australia (BAA), who manufacture parts for Boeing civilian and defence aircraft internationally, relocated its NSW operation to Victoria and began preparations for a significant increase in production to meet global demand.

BAA utilises a sophisticated production process involving composite materials. This process depends on skills and competencies beyond the traditional manufacturing of metallic products. Therefore, the existing Certificate III in Manufacturing was no longer meeting their needs. Boeing approached the Department through the Department of Business and Innovation (DBI) to co-design a Certificate III in Aviation Manufacturing (Composites).

Engagement

Consult
The Department met with BAA and industry liaison staff at DBI several times to clarify the company and industry’s needs, resourcing and timeframes. BAA had been working on getting a Certificate III in Aviation Manufacturing accredited in the 1990s but had stopped because the process was ‘too difficult and complicated’. They also confirmed that they were still interested in developing a training product that met the specific needs of their company particularly in manufacturing with composite materials.

Involve and Collaborate
A collaborative project was established to co-design the Certificate III in Aviation Manufacturing (Composites) between BAA, the Department and the curriculum development service at Box Hill Institute of TAFE. The Department provided guidance to BAA to help simplify and get the most from the co-design process.

Outcome
Through the co-design of the Certificate III in Aviation Manufacturing (Composites), BAA and other industry sectors now have a customised and accredited qualification to drive workforce development into the future.

The BAA project will facilitate the up-skilling of up to 300 new and existing Boeing staff in advanced manufacturing with composite materials, commencing with new apprentices in 2012.

Methods
• Meetings
• Cross-sectoral working group
• Co-design
Participation goes virtual in Gov 2.0

The Context
The Department's Organisational Development team brought together central and regional office staff to discuss the 2010 Staff Survey using the Virtual Conference Centre.

Engagement

Involve
Participants used an online polling feature to identify the issues which they believed were most important. They were then divided into two virtual breakout rooms to suggest actions to address these issues and make a measurable difference. All participants could contribute to the forum without leaving their desks, and they agreed the experience was valuable as it improved communication between regional and central office staff.

Consult and Collaborate
In another application of the Virtual Conference Centre, experts in the field of digital literacy attended a virtual roundtable. Professor Yong Zhao, Associate Professor Kathryn Moyle, University of Canberra and Paula Christophersen from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority met with departmental staff and interested teachers as part of a horizon scanning exercise for a potential field trial.

Outcome
Staff across the Department are using the Virtual Conference Centre informally and easily to engage stakeholders around the state and beyond. This tool has the capacity to inform, consult, involve and collaborate with stakeholders. As an example of new Web 2.0 tools, the Virtual Conference Centre also has the potential to empower stakeholders by sharing the role of decision-making.

As an engagement tool, the Virtual Conference Centre provides the capability for educators to meet, learn and collaborate online. Using simple web conferencing software, the Virtual Conference Centre is available for use by Victorian educators in government, Catholic and independent schools, and staff in regional and central offices. It is a powerful means of engaging stakeholders.

Methods
• Web 2.0
• Virtual Conference Centre
Bairnsdale Aboriginal Children and Family Centre

The Context
Local and state government and community organisations are successfully working together to plan and construct an Aboriginal Children and Family Centre in Bairnsdale. As a result of early and honest discussions, and with the support of a cross-sectoral working group, community stakeholders were able to take ownership of the project and drive the development of the Centre to meet community needs.

Engagement
Consult
Extensive and innovative community consultations have been a central part of the project to date. For example, preliminary planning sessions involved local Aboriginal families drawing their hands and writing on these drawings to describe what services they wanted the Centre to deliver.

Outcome
Emerging from these consultations was a strong desire for the Centre to be built on a scale and design in keeping with traditional concepts of family and community. This has resulted in a shift away from the adoption of the usual early learning centre model in favour of a new approach likely to create a vibrant and welcoming environment which will form an important part of that community’s future.

Methods
• Cross-sectoral working group
• Planning sessions
School-related Implementation Taskforces

The Context
The Department established three taskforces to implement the Government's election commitments relating to school education. Two consultation groups were then formed to provide input into policy development: the Stakeholder Consultation Group (SCG) and the Principals' Reference Group (PRG).

Engagement

Involving
The SCG consists of key departmental stakeholders, including professional associations, parent and principal groups and relevant community sector organisations (e.g. VCOSS). The PRG is made up of principals from government primary, secondary and specialist schools in metropolitan and rural locations. Regional Directors also have the opportunity to provide feedback to peer representatives on each taskforce through their regular fortnightly meetings. The non-government sector has also been engaged through the Cross-Sectoral Committee meetings to provide input to the development of the taskforce initiatives that relate to non-government schools.

Consulting
The two groups meet separately on a fortnightly basis at face-to-face meetings and communicate between meetings via the Ultranet. An independent facilitator has been engaged to listen to and synthesise the views of the SCG and PRG and provide feedback to the Ministers and taskforces. The taskforces engage with the consultation groups through detailed briefings and policy proposals which are further developed following feedback from the consultation forums. In response to requests from the consultation groups, the taskforces also provide background research and contextual papers on particular topics or nominate subject matter experts to give brief explanatory presentations at the consultation forums.

Collaborating
The Ultranet has been utilised to support the consultation process with dedicated Design Spaces created for each consultation group. The Design Spaces incorporate wikis, blogs and other Web 2.0 tools which allow members to continue consultation discussions between meetings, provide additional comments on election commitments and work collaboratively on responses to policy proposals. Each space also houses a document library where members can easily access papers distributed to their group and which provides an evolving record of the consultation process.

Outcome
The consultation process has enabled the taskforces to engage with key stakeholders throughout the development of policy implementation proposals. This has given the taskforces the opportunity to test policy options with stakeholders and to identify and address implementation risks early in the policy cycle. This ensures that the Government's election commitments are informed and supported by key education stakeholders.

Methods
- Facilitated face-to-face conversations
- Web 2.0
- Ultranet Design Spaces
8. References

Victorian Government sources

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
2. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) (2009), Partnership Agreement DEECD/MAV
5. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (DEECD), Office for Policy, Research and Innovation (OPRI), Community Engagement Guide

Department of Planning and Community Development
6. Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) (2008), Evaluation Step-by-Step
7. Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) (2009), A guide to planning your community and stakeholder engagement strategy
8. Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) (2009), Stories of community and stakeholder engagement

Department of Sustainability and Environment

State Services Authority

Australian sources

International sources

International organisations
34. ICMM, World Bank, ESMAP (2005), Community Development Toolkit, Pioneering New Approaches in Support of Sustainable Development in the Extractive Sector
35. International Association for Public Participation IAP2 www.iap2.org

US, Caribbean, Canada
38. Action for Kids (Canada), Engaging school leaders as partners in creating healthy schools
44. Ontario’s Local Health Integration Network (Canada), Engaging with impact, targets and indicators for successful community engagement
45. Publications from Centre on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University
46. Sheldon, S. (June 2003), Linking School–Family–Community Partnerships in Urban Elementary Schools to Student Achievement on State Tests Urban Review Journal, Springer Netherlands
Europe

47. Cabinet Office and HM Treasury, British Government (2009), Power in people's hands: learning from the world's best public services


49. Cabinet Office, Office of the Third Sector, British Government, Better Together, improving consultation with the third sector – A handbook


51. Communities and local Government, British Government, Empowering Communities to influence local decision making, evidence passed lessons for policy makers and practitioners (2009)


54. Demos (2004), Everyday Democracy, Land & Unwin, Towcester


60. Involve (2005), People and Participation. How to put citizens at the heart of decision making

61. Torfaen County Borough Council and REVIT (Interreg IIIB project), Working Towards More effective and Sustainable Brownfield Revitalisation policies, a stakeholder engagement toolkit


63. Lindsey Colburn Associates (2010), Organisational Learning and Change for Public and Stakeholder Engagement

64. ODI, Stakeholder analysis, successful communication tools. Available at: www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Tools/Toolkits/Communication/Stakeholder_analysis.html

65. Participation.net Making a difference, A guide to evaluating public participation in central government. Available at the www.peopleandparticipation.net

66. PEFC Stakeholder Engagement guidelines. Available at: http://www.pefc.org/

67. Scenario Plus (2003), Scenario Plus stakeholder analysis template. Available at: www.scenarioplus.org.uk/stakeholders/stakeholders_template.doc

68. ScienceWise ETC, A toolkit for departments wanting to change their engagement

69. South Holland District Council (2008), Draft Community Engagement Strategy


71. UK Sustainable Development Commission SDC Response to National Framework for Greater Citizen Engagement