

Port Phillip Bay Coastal Hazard Assessment

Communication Reference Pack Tool #7: Internal engagement



A coordinated and well-designed engagement approach to help communicate and plan for coastal hazard adaptation within an organisation

Building capacity, awareness and relationships within an organisation is an essential element in planning coastal hazard management and adaptation approach. The design and implementation of successful coastal hazard adaptation planning requires input and perspectives from a range of levels across an organisation, from CEO and executive, general managers, through to project officers and on-the-ground staff.

A coordinated approach to planning engagement across the organisation is critical, to ensure clear and consistent messaging and targeted discussions, with session and activities tailored to the needs and interest of each group, and their role in the organisation.

There are a variety of IAP2 participation goals, which shift throughout the project.



Purpose

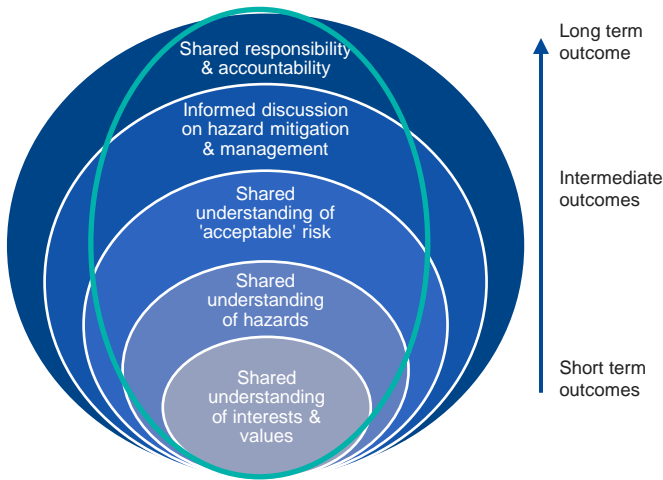
The purposes of internal engagement are to:

- Build relationships and encourage knowledge sharing, including gathering information on issues, priorities, changes, lessons learnt, risks etc.
- Build internal capacity for staff actively involved in the project and coastal management.
- Assist different departments/agencies in meeting their own corporate requirements/objectives.
- Inform budgets and future planning initiatives.
- Build awareness of the project within management organisation and ensure consistency in messaging to the broader community.
- Coordinate strategic decision-making, including opportunities for inter-department collaboration, mutual benefit, partnerships, funding streams, etc.
- Agree on decisions, promote internal 'buy-in' and ownership of actions.



Desired outcomes

Internal engagement is important for all engagement outcomes and can be tailored to each desired outcome. It is important to build the foundations at each phase internally before rolling out to the broader community.



Engagement outcomes

Key outcomes of internal engagement are:

- Shared understanding of interests and values relevant for each department/team.
- Understanding of coastal processes, hazards and risk and confidence to deliver information to other stakeholders.
- Shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- Informed discussion on hazard mitigation and shared ownership of decisions.
- Stronger working relationships and ongoing collaboration including opportunities for collaboration and cost-sharing.



Key technical messages

Technical key messages will vary through various stages of the project. However, overall key messages include:

- Coastal areas are dynamic and ever changing, this change becomes a hazard when it intersects with our values and assets.
- Hazard magnitude, frequency and impact may potentially increase due to climate change.
- Building our understanding of coastal hazards and risk will help us to proactively plan for the future through adaptation.
- Decisions must reflect the *Marine and Coastal Act (2018)*, Policy and Strategy.
- We are working together, there is no right or wrong, we will collaboratively make decisions.
- Coastal hazard management and adaptation is a shared responsibility and we all have a role to play across our organisation.
- We will have to work collaboratively with other organisations and agencies as part of our adaptation approach.

Process

NB. A stakeholder engagement plan can be developed to plan and guide the broader engagement approach, identifying the timing, purpose and audience of necessary activities. This can be helpful if there is likely to be multiple sessions and different levels of engagement.

1. Identify key staff or departments and their level of existing knowledge, capacity, authority and desired involvement. This may include those directly involved in the project, those from other departments or officials such as Councillors. Include a broad spectrum of staff from operational staff to managers and decision-makers.
2. Map how the Coastal Hazard Assessment aligns to different corporate outcomes/objectives, and accountabilities/responsibilities. This can be done using a program logic or simple matrix and can be updated as internal engagement occurs.
3. Clearly define the purpose, audience and required outcomes of the engagement at each stage of the project.
4. Decide on appropriate formats for your desired audience and outcome, for example:
 - a. Study tours, site visits and timeline activities can help build an understanding of shared values and interests.
 - b. A 'lunch and learn' or internal pop up could be used to build understanding of coastal hazards.

- c. Meetings and workshops can be used to have informed discussion on hazard mitigation.
- d. Noticeboard, intranet or email updates help keep staff informed and promote upcoming opportunities.

The program of internal engagement may be dictated by resources and budget available.

5. Deliver the internal engagement program using tips and tricks from this factsheet and other tools where necessary.
6. Regularly touch base with attendees to evaluate success of the program and maintain involvement.

Tips and tricks

Tips and tricks to make internal engagement successful include:

- Develop a clear plan for engagement activities including the purpose, desired outcomes and audiences relevant at each stage.
- Utilise other tools in the Reference Pack such as pop-ups, timelines and the wave tank to build internal knowledge and capacity. These tools can sometimes be ‘tested’ on internal staff before rolling out to the broader community. Staff members are members of the community as well.
- Include relevant presenters such as technical experts, with necessary expertise (if needed).
- Use existing internal networks to gather information and knowledge – what has worked elsewhere?
- Build into existing meetings and working groups such as local disaster management groups or infrastructure planning groups.
- Capitalise on existing internal communication and engagement – e.g. updates via internal email, intranets or notice boards, presentations at staff meetings, etc.
- Recruit the most relevant people from each department/organisation to be involved, but open some activities to all staff to foster broad interest.



Ensure your messages are appropriate for the desired outcome and audience.

Use your organisation’s engagement plan/principles and local context to tailor messaging.

Seek input from delivery partners to ensure messaging is consistent, coordinated, and up to date.

Accessibility

Options to improve accessibility could include:

- Online format for some meetings/workshops to encourage regional partners to participate without travel limitations.
- Utilise existing internal networks to broaden reach.
- Providing materials ahead of time for people to digest before key discussions.

Potential risks

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of internal interest.	Capitalise on existing engagement methods such as staff meetings, intranets, notice boards, to foster interest. Reinforce that even those not directly involved can bring value. Demonstrate where the CHA aligns to different corporate outcomes / objectives, and accountabilities / responsibilities and why it is important.
Time delays due to internal processes and delays in decision making.	Clear project outcomes agreed timeframes and empowerment for decision-making fostered early. Allowance in timelines for some delays. Project plan, including dependencies and demonstration of impacts on project due to delays.
Time delays leading to rumour / speculation in community.	Preparation of engagement plan, including regular updates and staged release of information. Proactive and positive messaging.
Inconsistent messaging.	Make key messages available to all participants, reiterate messages at beginning of all meetings.
Staff turnover.	Detailed minutes and documentation of meetings and workshops to allow efficient handover to new or replacement staff. Readily available factsheets and technical information.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Can draw upon a variety of knowledge and experiences within the group.	Can be difficult to schedule and get everyone together or get the right people.
Builds relationships between a range of teams/departments.	Can be conflicting priorities between teams/departments.
Promotes in-depth discussion and shared exploration of ideas and opportunities.	Can be time intensive.
Build internal capacity broader than the immediate project team.	

Indicative cost:	Low	\$
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Tools, materials and resources

The tools, materials and resources required to run internal engagement include:

- Staff time for planning and scheduling of meetings.
- Materials to inform discussions (pre-reading).
- Catering/workshop materials at in-person workshops.

- Resources for use of other tools (e.g. timelines, wave tanks, etc.).

Difficulty level:		Easy to moderate (depending on level of engagement)
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Alternative for online delivery

- Use online meeting platforms such as Zoom™ and MS Teams™.
- Capitalise on online workshopping tools such as MURAL™ and Jamboard™.
- Use existing online platforms for advertising e.g. intranets and internal communications systems.

Evaluation

Success of the internal engagement can be evaluated through:

- Participant feedback (formal and informal).
- Quick polls or general reflections on sessions.
- Number of attendees at internal popups, workshops, etc.

Examples and references

- Other activities that could be undertaken through internal engagement may include the wave tank (see Tool #1) and coastal timelines (See Tool #2).

We acknowledge Victorian Traditional Owners and their Elders past and present as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters and commit to genuinely partnering with them and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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