

Best Practice Guide for Remote Engagement and Coordination

Focus	Engagement – Key Actions	Coordination – Key Actions
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out about the community, language, Aboriginal governance, cultural protocols, restrictions, local dynamics and any 'burning' issues bushtel.nt.gov.au. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal authorities, key stakeholders, other community members and regional staff who you should be informing, working with and learning from on the project or issue.
You	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider your self-awareness, engagement skills, cultural competency, basic skills and training and identify gaps in your knowledge and skills. Be aware of assumptions and cultural bias you may be bringing, or even whether you are suited to regional and remote work. Stay open to learning and reflect on your performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, organise and promote professional support, learning or training opportunities you may need. Record your reflections and evaluations.
Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the project, opportunity or issue as well as the objectives and outcomes. Clarify the decisions being made including negotiable and non-negotiables and who will make them, as well as any related decisions already made so that there is clarity on what can be influenced. Identify community and other stakeholders. Describe the role of the stakeholders and the intended relationship of the stakeholder with the government agency. Identify the level and goal of engagement for each stakeholder group (see Levels of Remote Community Participation spectrum). Identify the community engagement purpose, objectives, community expectations and outcomes (describe what success would look like if these engagement goals were to be met). Plan and use methods and tools that suit the engagement and ensure the full participation of all stakeholders. Identify risks and plan how to manage them throughout the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out what is already known about the project, opportunity or issue, knowledge gaps, relevant history, level of interest and potential conflict or risk. Use Remote Information Coordination Systems for planning, documenting and evaluating engagement, coordination and visit bushtel.nt.gov.au and bushready.nt.gov.au. Find out how to contact other stakeholders, and where opportunities for collaboration, coordination, challenges or conflicts may exist or arise. Develop, support and use community-based and regional processes (e.g. Aboriginal governance groups, inter-agency meetings, Regional Coordination Committees). Facilitate community members' understanding of government processes and responses. Establish a clear sequence of communications and engagement activities that aligns with the community's governance and protocols. Identify critical resources such as the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and other resources necessary for the engagement process.
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good relationships are essential – find ways to build understanding and trust with Aboriginal authorities, community members and other stakeholders. Respect and follow local cultural protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with community-based and regional staff and others who have well-developed relationships with community members. Keep everyone well informed at every stage of the project/process.
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid rushing – allow time and flexibility to build relationships and enable maximum participation. Allow time for community members and other stakeholders to understand and provide input into the project, opportunity or issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early pre-engagement planning is crucial for getting the community prepared and ready. Base the negotiation of timing and timeframes on both community and government parameters. Ensure all stakeholders are kept up to date and have time to respond when things change.
Communication and Close the loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate in ways that are appropriate and understood. Understand the diversity of the target audience, including those living in regional and remote locations with a disability. Where possible use a qualified Aboriginal Interpreter who can assist with communicating in first language. Ensure community members and other stakeholders are informed before, during and after the engagement. Follow up and close the loop with community members and other stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the Aboriginal Interpreter Service early in your project to understand what is needed to communicate your project or information effectively in first language. Help community members raise ideas and issues with the appropriate government agencies or organisations. Obtain and pass on responses to these.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before you start, plan evaluation of the engagement objectives, outcomes and process – from introducing the project, staying in touch and receiving feedback. As you go along, document, monitor and evaluate what happens, whether planned engagement objectives were met or not and any unplanned outcomes. Ensure evaluation process is relevant and meaningful to the stakeholders. Use evaluation to continuously improve engagement practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate input into the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy and the Remote Information Coordination System from community and other stakeholders at regional and executive levels.