

Model Consultation Framework for the Development of Australian Animal Welfare Standards: Part 1 - Evaluation

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Summary

One of the key aims of the Consultation Project is to evaluate select activities in the consultation processes for the revision of the Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – Pigs 3rd Edition (‘the Pig Code’) and the development of the Draft Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock (LTS). Eleven principles and criteria were used in this evaluation based on the minimum formal requirements for consultation on national regulations and a range of best practice recommendations for stakeholder and community consultation. Information about consultation activities and tools was gathered using multiple (largely qualitative) data collection methods, including key stakeholder interviews, survey questions, documentary analysis, direct observation, and consultation with the Australian Government’s Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (DAFF) and Animal Health Australia (AHA).

The findings of this evaluation primarily represent the opinions of the consultants, and should be shared and tested with members of the LTS Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) and other interested parties. The evaluation has identified several areas of achievement, as well as areas in which improvements can be made to the design and implementation of consultation processes.

While the task of developing the Land Transport Standards is complex – given the multiple, sometimes conflicting issues and interests to reconcile – it has provided considerable opportunities to learn about and improve consultation process for future animal welfare initiatives.

Achievements

- The consultations conducted during the development of the LTS (e.g. the SRG) demonstrates considerable improvements in the transparency/accountability and feedback provisions of animal welfare decision making.
- The Pig Code Writing Group and the LTS Stakeholder Reference Group has been an inclusive process involving a wide variety of peak interest groups.
- Key stakeholders and the general public were provided with a wealth of information which assisted them to provide input into the Draft LTS and the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS).
- During the lead up to and immediately after the public consultation for the Draft LTS and RIS, there were improvements in the quality and timing of the feedback provided to key stakeholders (regarding how their input will inform revisions).
- The public consultation process (call for submissions) was informative and provided flexibility and clarity on the issues for stakeholders: the website provided stakeholders with context about the consultation as well as a choice of formats in which to make their submissions.
- DAFF and AHA demonstrated their leadership in animal welfare by taking up the recommendations to improve animal welfare consultation (Neumann 2005) and then commissioning this review, as well as seeking professional facilitation support for later SRG meetings.

Areas for improvement

- More proactive and comprehensive consultation planning will enhance all phases of future animal welfare standards development process, particularly
 - determining what aspects of the Standards development process should/should not be included in the consultation,
 - specifying methods for engaging people at different stages of that development process, and
 - understanding and identifying the range of relevant stakeholders as early as possible.
- Given the requirement for public consultation, the process should be designed to obtain the most useful information possible for decision makers. There should be increased efforts placed on scoping and deliberating on key, controversial, and/or as yet unidentified issues *earlier* in the Standards development process.

- The relatively long drafting process for the LTS raises questions about the utility and efficiency of trying to achieve consensus among SRG members *prior* to releasing the Draft Standards for public consultation.
- Decision makers should continue to improve their efforts to provide clear feedback to stakeholders (key and public alike) about how their input has influenced (or not) the Standards development process. Such efforts are likely to result in improved perceptions of the transparency and accountability (and therefore perceived sincerity) of animal welfare consultation initiatives.
- The utility of providing interested parties with the option to submit structured submissions (e.g. the ‘survey’ approach) is not clear. It appears that those submissions have not provided critically important information for decision makers, other than some indication of levels of support for the Draft LTS and RIS among those choosing to make their submission this way. In future, the use of consultation tools – such as the structured submissions – should be determined by the consultation goals and objectives chosen for each of the future Animal Welfare Standards development processes.

Introduction

The principal aim of the Consultation Project has been to assist AHA and DAFF to meet their formal obligations for public consultation during the conversion of the various Animal Welfare Codes of Practice relevant to the transport of livestock into one overarching national standard. Towards that end, a key component of the Consultation Project has been to evaluate some of the consultation undertaken as part of this conversion process. The findings of this evaluation will be used to develop a model framework for consultation that can be applied to the conversion of the remaining Animal Welfare Codes of Practice into National Standards and Guidelines.

This report presents the findings of that evaluation, which was focused on stakeholder and public consultation undertaken as part of:

- revising the Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (the Pig Code) in 2006; and
- developing the Draft Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock (LTS), in particular – key stakeholder consultation leading to the commencement of the public consultation and the implementation of the public consultation.

Stakeholder and public consultation for the Pig Code of Practice

The revision of the Pig Code of Practice included formation and operation of a Writing Group. This Group was comprised of a range of key stakeholders (13), and its activities included conducting:

- a scientific review of the previous Code of Practice;
- consultation with stakeholders outside the Writing Group (including public consultation); and
- overseeing the preparation of the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS).

A key component of the public consultation component was an on-line survey which targeted the general public and sought to elicit information about people's attitudes towards a number of aspects related to proposed changes to the Pig Code of Practice. This on-line survey was followed up by a telephone survey of a random sample of the general public to test for any changes in views collected prior to the public consultation.

Stakeholder and public consultation for the LTS

Similar to the Pig Code, a range of consultation activities were conducted as part of the development process for the Draft Land Transport Standards (see Appendix 1 – the LTS development process). That consultation process has included formation and operation of the Land Transport Standards Reference Group (SRG), which includes members of the Animal Welfare Working Group (AWWG)¹. The SRG has had a key role in drafting the Land Transport Standards, and will also be involved in considering the public submissions and determining further revisions to the Draft Standards. A report on the findings from the public consultation, along with the Draft Land Transport Standards will progress to the AWWG for consideration and progression through the Ministerial Council system.

The public consultation component sought views from a range of people interested in the land transport of livestock. This included those people directly or indirectly affected by the implementation of the Land Transport Standards and/or who did not previously have an opportunity to comment on the Land Transport Standards or the RIS. The call for submissions was issued on 27 March and closed on the 27th of May, 2008 (60 days). At the request of DAFF and AHA, the design of the public consultation included the use of web-

¹ The AWWG is a sub-committee of the Animal Health Committee (AHC), and is responsible for the development of national standards for animal welfare. It is comprised of representatives from the State and Territory agencies responsible for implementing animal welfare legislation. The SRG is comprised of key stakeholders who have formal responsibility for livestock transport and/or who would be most directly affected by the Land Transport Standards (representing the cattle, sheep/wool, pig, poultry, horse, goat, emu/ostrich industries; livestock transporters; saleyards; lot feeders; veterinarians; processors, livestock agents, animal welfare organizations; and government agencies).

based survey form to elicit comments on the Draft LTS and the RIS. Those wishing to make submissions were given the option of preparing their own submission or using the structured survey form.

Evaluation Methods

The evaluation for the Consultation Project has been designed with consideration of:

- the minimum formal **requirements for consultation** on national regulations (as per the COAG *Principles & Guidelines for National Standard Setting & Regulatory Action* by Ministerial Councils & Standard-setting Bodies (2004)); and
- a range of **best practice recommendations** for stakeholder and community consultation, including but not restricted to:
 - *Office of Best Practice Regulation Handbook* (OBPR 2006);
 - International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) values; and
 - *Review of the Australian Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals* (Neumann 2005)

Those requirements and recommendations were synthesised into a set of eleven evaluation principles, which were then applied as evaluation criteria to assess the achievements of various aspects of the consultation processes (see Table 1).

Table 1. Participation criteria applied to stakeholder and public consultation

Participation should be:	Description
<i>Clearly scoped</i>	Participation is planned and specifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what project processes are included and what are not; • how the involvement of participants will inform decision making; • how information will be gathered and analysed; and • how it will be used to inform decision making.
<i>Transparent & accountable</i>	People know what is happening and how their input is being used; processes and results are documented, audited, and readily accessible.
<i>Linked to decision making</i>	Input sought is gathered, analysed effectively, and used to inform decision making on processes and issues. Participants feel the process is worthwhile, because there is evidence that the process influences the outcomes.
<i>Representative/inclusive</i>	Diverse views from those who have an interest or are affected have a genuine opportunity to participate.
<i>Informative</i>	People have ready access to multiple sources of information that they need to participate meaningfully.
<i>Timely</i>	Opportunities provided early in the process for people to generate ideas and express their interests, not simply invite feedback on solutions/approaches already decided upon.
<i>Deliberative</i>	Conditions are established to enable sufficient time & appropriate environment for participants to share diverse views, respectively question each other, explore complex and challenging issues and differences of opinion, weigh up alternatives, identify solutions – in atmosphere of sensitivity and humour.
<i>Conducive to building relationships</i>	Opportunities provided to enable people to know each other, remain curious, and provide opportunities for participants to appreciate each other's perspectives; and Through their interactions, participants gain confidence in how decisions and rules are made and implemented.
<i>Provide feedback</i>	People are notified about how their contribution has made a difference.
<i>Accessible</i>	People are able to participate in the process as the methods being used are appropriate and available.
<i>Well lead & facilitated</i>	Skilled, neutral parties available to provide guidance on and/or to lead deliberative processes.

(Source: adapted from IAP2, OBPR 2006, Nuemann 2005; COAG 2004)

Information about the stakeholder and consultation processes and tools used in the Pig Code revision and the development of the Draft LTS was gathered using the following data collection methods:

- documentary analysis;

- direct observation;
- regular consultation with DAFF and AHA;
- key stakeholder interviews²; and
- responses to evaluation questions from the Draft LTS structured submissions.

It is important to note that conclusions of this report are based on data and information most readily available within the given project parameters and resources. The information and data was analysed by the consultants, and have not been tested against the views of the full range of parties involved in different consultation processes for the Pig Code and Draft LTS and Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS).

Evaluation findings

The following provides a summary of the evaluation of select components of stakeholder and public consultation processes and tools used in the Pig Code and the Draft LTS, including:

- Pig Code writing group and public consultation processes;
- stakeholder consultation for the development of the Draft LTS (undertaken prior to public consultation); and
- public consultation for the Draft LTS and RIS.

Further detail on the findings is provided in Appendices 2-4. The consultation activities were evaluated by collating a range of data and information (key stakeholder interviews, evaluation questions from structured submissions, participant information, documentary analysis) and measuring their effectiveness against the participation criteria listed in Table 1. The overall results are summarised in Table 2, which shows the following levels of achievement against those processes and tools:

Low: √
Medium: √√
High: √√√
Very High: √√√√

Given the finite time and resources available for the Consultation Project, the consultants were not able to collect sufficient information to rate the following criteria: 7. Deliberative, 8. Relationship building, 9. Accessibility, and 11. Facilitation. In those cases, 'InI' appears in front of those criteria. In other cases, some of the criteria were considered not applicable ('NA') to particular consultation activities (e.g. survey instruments are generally not used to achieve deliberative processes).

Table 2. Evaluation criteria applied to animal welfare consultation.

Criteria	Pig Code	LTS SRG	LTS PC
1. Clearly scoped	√	√√	√√√√
2. Transparency & accountability	√	√√	√√
3. Linked to decision making	√	√√	√/√√
4. Representative/inclusive	√	√√√	√√
5. Informative	√	√√	√√√
6. Timely	√√	√√	√√
7. Deliberative	InI	InI	NA
8. Relationship building/trust	InI NA**	InI	NA
9. Feedback provision	√	√√√	√√√
10. Accessibility	√*/ InI	√√	√√
11. Facilitation/leadership	InI	InI	NA

** this rating applies to the public consultation component of the overall consultation process used for the revision of the Pig Code*

² For the evaluation of the Pig Code consultation, interviews were conducted with five members of the Pig Code Reference Group (three NGOs, one animal welfare regulator, and one veterinary practitioner), and for the Draft LTS, seven interviews were conducted with members of the SRG (six industry associations, one animal welfare researcher).

*** two ratings are given that apply to the broader consultation process and to the public consultation component.*

1. Clearly scoped consultation specifies what aspects of a program or project will be subject to consultation, what methods of engagement and analysis will be used, and how consultation will inform decision making (see Appendix 5 – the IAP2 spectrum of participation).

Overall, the evaluation data suggest a perceived lack of clarity regarding the purpose of the Pig Code consultation, particularly its public consultation component.

There were considerable improvements in stakeholder consultation as demonstrated in the operation of the LTS SRG. Some stakeholders were unclear about what their level of involvement was meant to be (see Appendix 5). In addition, the lengthy drafting process raises questions about the purpose and value of achieving consensus among SRG members *prior* to releasing the Draft LTS for public consultation. The public consultation for the Draft LTS and the RIS was much more clearly scoped than key stakeholder consultation processes for the LTS.

Generally, more consultation planning overall is needed as part of the development process for future animal welfare standards – particularly determining what aspects of the Standards development process should/should not be included in the consultation, specifying the methods for engaging people at different stages of that development process, and understanding and identifying the range of relevant stakeholders as early as possible as part of that development process.

2. Transparency/accountability in consultation is achieved when participants can see how the consultation is being conducted, those processes are well documented, audited/evaluated, and results are readily accessed.

Some stakeholders' lack of clarity regarding the purpose of the consultation for the Pig Code and LTS described above suggests that people were not as well informed about the consultative processes being used as they could have been. Stakeholders commenting on the Pig Code processes felt there was scope for greater openness and shared understanding about the consultation objectives and activities, particularly the use of a 'survey' for the public consultation phase.

During the SRG process, some stakeholders were frustrated by how contested issues were seemingly resolved and then continually revisited. While there was considerably greater transparency around *what part of the decision process* submissions from the public consultation for the Draft LTS and RIS were meant to inform, there has been much less clarity about the *degree of influence* of those submissions, particularly the structured submissions, and their influence on further changes to the Draft LTS. However, more recent communications with the SRG have provided further information to *key* stakeholders about their role in the final revisions to the LTS.

3. Linked to decisions – Consultation for the Pig Code rated low, because there was evidence to suggest that some of the structured submissions and all the surveys from the public consultation process had little or no input into decision making.

While the LTS SRG process performed better, doubts about the genuineness of seeking input from stakeholders persisted during the lead up to the public consultation phase. The public consultation process for the LTS made further improvements in demonstrating how submissions were linked to the decision process. All issues raised by stakeholders in a public consultation process will not always be directly reflected in the final decision process, however they do alert decision makers in the various jurisdictions about the issues that are of concern. While it may not have been feasible to incorporate all input into the decisions, there may have been additional steps taken to ensure greater transparency around what suggested changes would and would not be incorporated into the final Standards and the reasons for doing so (see above).

4. Representative and inclusive consultation processes seek the views of and offer genuine opportunities to a diverse range of parties interested in and/or affected by animal welfare policies and programs.

The Writing Group process for the Pig Code and the LTS SRG both succeeded in bring a wide range of key stakeholders to the table. It remains unclear *how representative* these peak groups/organisations are of the full range of interests they purport to represent. The Pig Code process overall rated lower, because the survey process used for the public consultation sent a message of exclusion: that is, only people with a certain level of technical knowledge and experience were eligible to offer their views.

The LTS public consultation process was a considerable improvement, however there are further opportunities to facilitate the participation of some unrepresented interests (e.g. community groups, emergency authorities, livestock producers not represented by peak bodies, etc.).

Overall the Pig Code and LTS consultation processes have achieved strong representation of key (horizontal) interests. Improvements could be made in soliciting the more views of other stakeholders along the land transport of livestock 'supply chain' (e.g. emergency authorities, producers not members of peak agricultural bodies).

5. Informative consultation processes enable people to participate by providing a diverse range of materials and using multiple channels of communication.

Stakeholders reported that the Pig Code and LTS writing/reference group processes provided a wealth of materials for them, although there were some concerns about working through the considerable volume of (technical and other) information. There were also concerns raised about insufficient documentation of how consultation was being conducted (for the reference group and public consultation). Analysis of the Pig Code public consultation survey revealed a lack of information provided to respondents about the purpose of this approach to seeking views and how their input would inform the decision making process.

The LTS/RIS public consultation process provided an opportunity to be much clearer with those making submissions about the goals and objectives of the consultation process.

6. Timely consultation ensures that people's input is elicited as early as possible in the decision making process and people have sufficient time to respond.

For both the Pig Code and LTS, some stakeholders felt concerned that the early phase of drafting process was being rushed and that they were not being/might not be consulted during the latter phases of the drafting process (e.g. deciding how information from the public consultation would be used to finalise the Draft Codes/Standards, changes that might be made once the Standards entered the ministerial council system).

Best practice recommendations for public consultation processes, such as open calls for submissions, typically run for 90 days. The public consultation for the Draft LTS/RIS was reduced to 60 days. It is not clear what impact this may have had on those wishing to make submissions. A longer time may have allowed organisations to use their networks to notify a greater number of constituents.

7. Deliberative consultation activities are those where participants are able to thoughtfully explore challenges and a range of solutions in a supportive environment.

While there were some indications from stakeholders that group dialogues were sometimes stifled by un-reconciled differences of opinion, generally there was insufficient information to adequately assess the deliberative quality of the Pig Code and LTS reference group processes. The deliberative criteria does not apply to consultation processes inviting written submissions (see Appendix 2 – IAP2 criteria and methods).

8. Relationship building and increased trust among interested parties often results from sound and engaging consultation processes.

There was insufficient time and resources available to determine how much trust was built through the Pig Code reference and writing group processes. The methods used to conduct the public consultation process for the Pig Code (quantitative surveys) are generally not chosen if a key goal is to build relationships with stakeholders, hence no rating per se was given. However, it is worth noting that there was strong evidence

suggesting that trust declined among a range of stakeholders seeking to and participating in the public consultation process, which in turn may have a negative effect on relationships (see No. 10).

Stakeholder interviews and observations of LTS SRG meetings (prior to public consultation) were not directed at identifying whether relations among members had been strengthened. The LTS public consultation process relied on tools that are not designed to build relationships with stakeholders, although a sound and transparent process may help to improve trust in authorities. However, feedback from those making submissions did not ask people to evaluate the consultation process according to this criteria.

9. Feedback provision is a critical component of consultation processes, keeping people informed about how their input has been used to inform decision making.

There was strong evidence that stakeholders were dissatisfied with the lack of feedback on how their public submissions informed final revisions to the Pig Code.

As it proceeded, the LTS SRG process made substantial improvements in informing participants about how their contributions were informing the development of the Draft LTS. Stakeholders (including the public) may have had greater confidence in the design and implementation of the public consultation process, given that all submissions were acknowledged upon receipt. SRG members have been provided with highly detailed information about proposed changes (including decision making criteria) and all (written) submissions and the consultation results report were being posted on the consultation website. Decision makers also plan to provide additional information about final revisions to the LTS once it has entered (and passed through) the ministerial council system (e.g. directly contacting SRG members about those decisions and posting the final documents on the public consultation website).

10. Accessible consultation processes are designed to maximise the ease with which people can participate in them: activities are as convenient as possible, materials are readily available and relatively easy to understand, and some level of influence is possible to obtain.

The survey used in the Pig Code public consultation appeared to make it quite difficult for people to make their views known, it primarily used closed questions and targeted participants' technical knowledge about pig husbandry. No information was provided to them about how their input would be used. There was insufficient time and resources to extensively examine the accessibility of other consultation processes. Some members of the Writing Group reported that they felt they had inadequate access to/input into or clear information about decisions on finalising the Code once the public consultation process had been completed.

The LTS SRG process has appeared relatively easy for most stakeholders to participate in. There were some comments made suggesting that smaller, less-well resourced groups or organisations found it more difficult to take part in the meetings. In addition, while the peak groups/organisations had good access to decision making, it is unclear how well *non-peak* groups were able to provide input. This is somewhat dependent on how representative the peak groups are, and how well they consult with their constituents.

Participants who made public submissions on the Draft LTS and RIS by using the survey form had never participated in an animal welfare consultation process before. Yet most of them were able to complete their forms in 30 minutes or less. They found the form easy to use, and supporting information helpful. Few people had heard about the public consultation via the media, suggesting that greater effort could be made to notify more people about the public consultation process through stakeholder networks.

11. Facilitation and leadership are important to enable effective participatory processes. Facilitation helped groups to be more effective and strategic in their thinking. Facilitators are able to draw out those who are less assertive, and can direct the energy of those who are very assertive to help the whole group move forward. Facilitation skills can also involve working with people who are not meeting face to face. Various techniques (like the Delphi process) can enable a range of people to actively participate collaboratively toward shared outcomes. Leadership to build support for consultative processes is also critical. It helps to build confidence in the process, and to mitigate against the tendency of some participants to either sabotage the process or directing most of their energy outside of the process.

Generally, there was insufficient information and resources to assess in detail consultation achievements of the Pig Code and LTS/RIS development processes against this principle. It is fair to say that DAFF and AHA exercised leadership by following the recommendations of the Neumann (2005) review to improve consultation, commissioning this review, and seeking professional facilitation support for later SRG meetings. Potential areas of improvement are for DAFF and AHA to seek clearer purposes for future consultation processes (including specifying levels of stakeholder involvement, Appendix 5) used during the development of the remaining Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Welfare. Such leadership and professional facilitation may help the Drafting process to move forward more efficiently (e.g. conflict resolution processes, Draft Standards moving to public consultation earlier).

Appendix 1. Decision process for the development of the Land Transport Standards (livestock)



Appendix 2. Evaluation data from Animal Welfare Code of Practice (Pig Code)

Satisfaction with consultation

Stakeholders were asked to comment on their overall satisfaction with the consultation processes they were involved in. Generally, most of those consulted believed that the stakeholder reference group covered a good range of stakeholders with an interest in the Pig Code of Practice. There were also some concerns with both the stakeholder consultation (e.g. reference group process) and the specific public consultation. Those issues included:

- Poor management of polarised views within stakeholder reference group;
- Lack of follow up involvement/consultation with all members of reference group after completion of the public consultation and revision of later and final drafts of the Code;
- Lack of consultation with full range of stakeholders during development of the RIS;
- Lengthy, complex information documents; and
- Overly complex and scientifically-flawed survey instrument with questionable benefits for consultation process

Understanding of consultation objectives

Interviewees were asked how well they understood the objectives of the consultation processes used and what part of the decision process their input was meant to inform. They were also asked to comment on what degree of influence they felt that had into that process. Two interviewees felt they had a clear understanding of the consultation objectives and where they fit into the decision-making process, and were largely satisfied with their degree of influence. One of these interviewees qualified that position by noting that not all reference group members – those people who were “2nd order” stakeholders - would necessarily feel the same. Indeed, three other interviewees felt that the objectives of the overall consultation process were not clear, made assumptions about their role in the stakeholder reference group (to help prepare a revised Code), and believed the purpose of the public consultation component of the Pig Code review was very unclear and/or not entirely genuine. One of these interviewees had a general awareness of the decision process they were contributing to. These three interviewees also felt they had little or no influence in the broader decision-making process, and two felt that most of the key decisions were already made by the time the Code was out for public review.

Satisfaction with information

Interviewees were also asked about how satisfied they were with the information they received as part of the consultation process. Overall interviewees seemed satisfied with the information they received. There were concerns about the time allocated for providing feedback on drafts prior to them being put out for public consultation and having to print out lengthy documents.

Feedback on consultation

Interviewees were asked about what kind of feedback they received on their input and their degree of satisfaction with that feedback. Three interviewees were highly dissatisfied with what they felt to be a total lack of feedback on their input as members of the reference group or as respondents to the public consultation. After being involved in the earlier drafting process, they were disappointed by not seeing the results of the public consultation process and not getting information on how those results were incorporated into subsequent versions of the Pig Code. One interviewee felt that ‘mistakes’ they had pointed out were never corrected.

Preferences for future consultation

Stakeholders were asked how they would like to be consulted if they were involved in subsequent conversions of Codes of Practice into Australian Animal Welfare Standards. Three interviewees wanted more time to review drafts and related documents and to consult with their constituents, access to results of public consultation processes, and input throughout the entire drafting process. There were also calls for

greater clarity about the relationship between Codes/Standards and regulatory impact statements, opportunities to rank difference preferences, and ensuring that all consultation was genuine.

Three interviewees suggested different processes for consultation, drawing on overseas and national examples. Generally, an improved process would have the following features:

- Full documentation of (stakeholder and public) consultation processes;
- Start with broad scale 'public' scoping of issues;
- Followed by drafting of the Standards;
- Proceed to detailed consultation with key stakeholders and those most directly affected by changes;
- Prepare and distribute issues paper showing changes;
- Provide sufficient time for stakeholders to consult with constituents before finalizing draft Standard/RIS;
- Then commence with statutory requirements for public consultation;
- Include key stakeholders in discussions about subsequent revisions to draft Standards/RIS.

Appendix 3. Evaluation data from Draft Land Transport Standards – SRG process

Satisfaction with consultation

SRG members were asked to comment on their overall satisfaction with the consultation processes.

Five of the seven interviewees felt satisfied with their role as members of the SRG to date. They were pleased with being involved at the beginning of the revision process, the wide representation of different stakeholders in the Group, flexible meeting times, and instances of being consulted ‘one-on-one’. There were some concerns about over-ambitious meeting agendas that failed to be met, the cost for smaller organisations of attending meetings, ‘old’ issues resurfacing after supposedly reaching agreement on how to resolve/address them, the overall degree of haste felt in the process, and a perceived lack of sincerity in hearing opinions from all stakeholders.

Understanding of consultation objectives

Members of the SRG were asked to how well they understood the objectives of the consultation processes used and what part of the decision process their input was meant to inform. They were also asked to comment on what degree of influence they felt that had into that process.

Four of the seven interviewees felt clear about the objectives of the overall consultation process. Generally those interviewees felt they understood what part of the decision process their input was meant to inform and felt satisfied with their degree of influence. One interviewee pointed out that they did not believe that all members of the SRG would necessarily feel the same, particularly those that had less ‘power’ in this particular community of interest. There were concerns about how stakeholders’ input would inform decisions about the Standards:

- after the public consultation was completed;
- particularly how to balance commercial and animal welfare interests;
- and the relationship with the RIS and how impacts are determined.

Satisfaction with information

Interviewees were also asked about how satisfied they were with the information they received as part of the consultation process.

There was a degree of satisfaction with the information received, particularly the media template and meeting minutes prepared by AHA. People had concerns about the volume of email correspondence, the large size of the draft Standards and having to print them out and/or make them more accessible to a lay audience.

Feedback on consultation

Interviewees were asked about what kind of feedback they received on their input and their degree of satisfaction with that feedback.

Four of the interviewees were satisfied with the feedback on their input received to date (e.g. they could see suggested changes being made) – with two of those interviewees also feeling happy with their degree of influence. For the other two interviewees and those not happy with the degree/quality of feedback received, their concerns included:

- having to search for changes to Draft Standards that do or do not get included;
- sometimes feeling told what will happen versus being asked for opinions; or
- not being included/sufficiently consulted in the post-public consultation decision making.

Preferences for future consultation

Stakeholders were asked how they would like to be consulted if they were involved in subsequent conversions of Codes of Practice into Australian Animal Welfare Standards.

Members of the SRG listed the following preferences for being consulted in the future:

- Consistent involvement of key stakeholders throughout entire drafting process (e.g. including ‘post’ public consultation);
- Greater transparency throughout process, particularly in decision-making after public consultation;
- Scoping of issues ahead of drafting process;
- Continued use of key stakeholder groups to broker consultation with the wider industry;
- Better support for smaller, under-resourced stakeholder organisations (e.g. provide hard copies of materials, provision of some one-on-one consultation, financial support to attend meetings)
- Development and use of more accessible documents for lay-audience (e.g. summaries of drafts, users manual for implementation phase).

Appendix 4. Evaluation data from Draft Land Transport Standards – Public consultation

Animal welfare stakeholders and the general public were invited to make submissions on the LTS and/or RIS between 27th of March and the 27th of May, 2008. As noted earlier, this process was part of broader consultative and collaborative activities undertaken with key animal welfare stakeholders which commenced in November 2006.

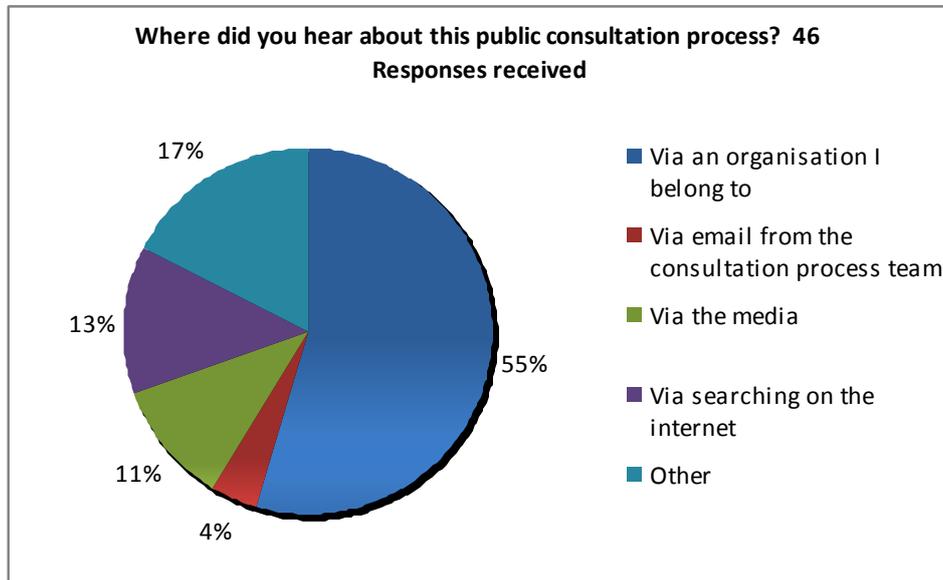
A total of **116 submissions** were received, with the majority originating from from Victoria and NSW. Most of the submissions received were from the livestock sector (28%, 33), followed by individuals not specifying their occupation (26%, 30), and the animal rights (8%, 9) and animal welfare sectors (6%, 7). 61% (71) of the submissions were *written* and the remaining 39% (45) were *structured* submissions. All of the structured submissions were completed by individuals (as opposed to representatives of formal organisations).

Structured submission process evaluation

Those making submissions using the structured form were asked several questions about:

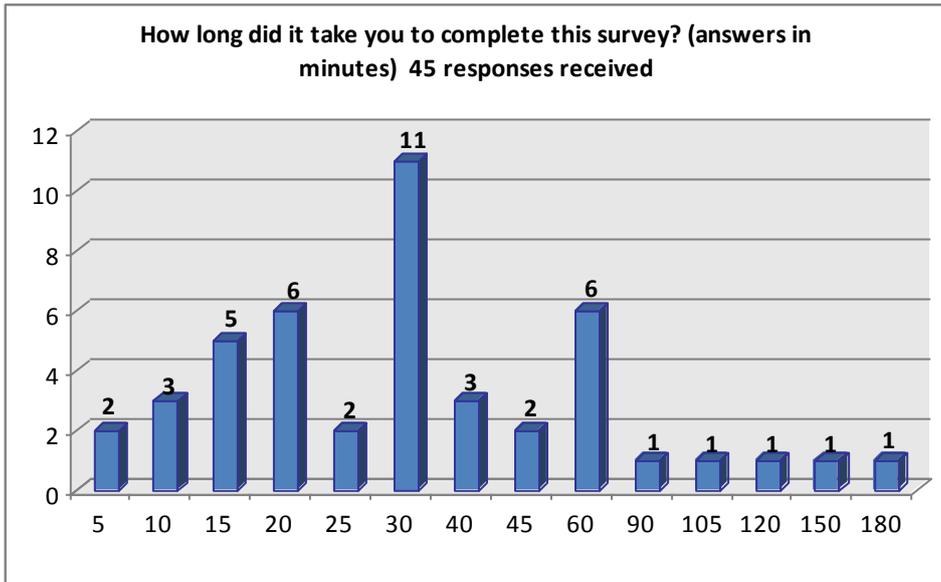
- how well they felt the public consultation process was being conducted, including how they were notified about the process,
- how long it took them to complete the form,
- whether they previously participated in consultation related to animal welfare,
- the relative ease of using the website, and
- their preferences for future consultation.

A majority of respondents (55%, 25) reported that they heard about the public consultation process through organisations they belonged to. Only a few people (11%, 5) had heard about the public consultation through the media.

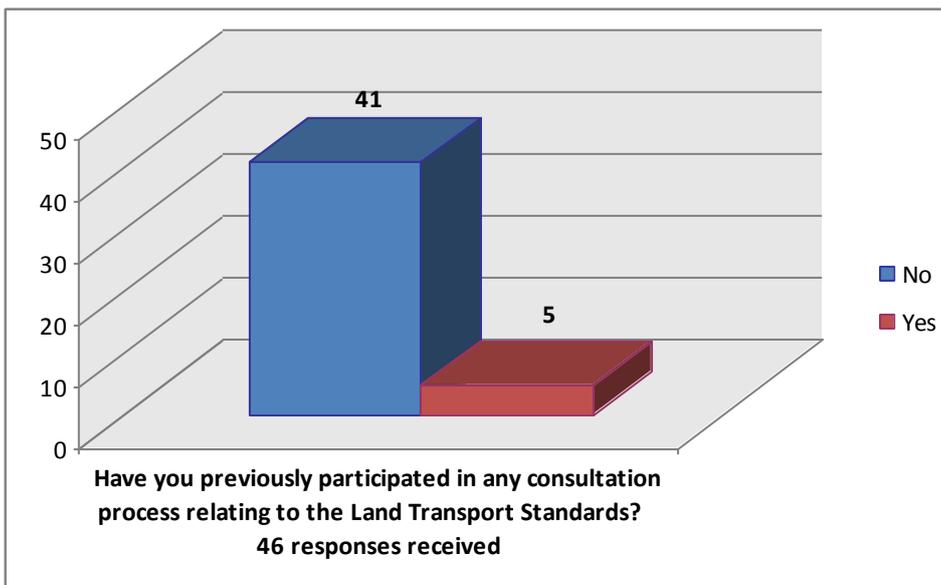


Eight people provided additional comments about the public consultation process. They believed that greater effort was needed to notify the public and stakeholders about the Draft Land Transport Standards consultation process. They had not seen any media relating to the public consultation, had heard about it by chance, and/or were notified by an organization they belonged to. It was also suggested that greater, regular outreach on animal welfare be conducted with livestock producers using events like agricultural field days, stock agents, and other key mechanisms.

A majority of respondents were able to complete their submissions in a half an hour or less. Five people took more than one hour to finish their submissions.



Virtually all of the people using the structured submission form (89%) had never participated in a public consultation process relating to animal welfare.

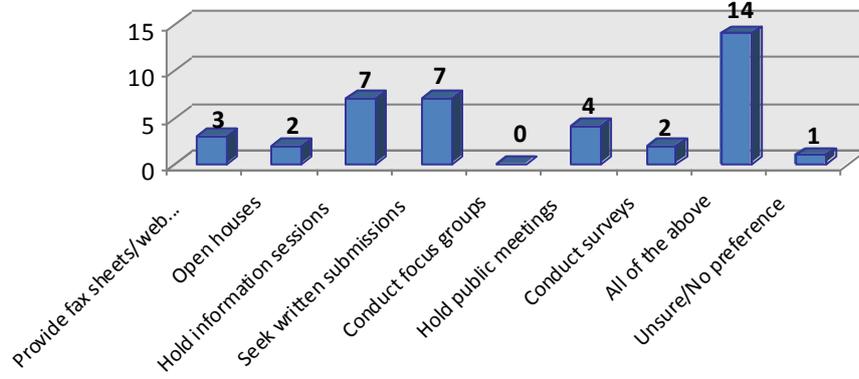


The majority of people using the structured submission form agreed that it was easy to use (74%, 30) and that the additional information provided helped them complete their submissions (69%, 28).

Thirty-two people registered their preferences for future consultation approaches for the development of animal welfare regulations. Forty-four percent wanted to see a suite of methods used to consult with the public in the future, 22% wanted to see information sessions about Standards, and another 22% were satisfied with the request for submissions.

How would you recommend we consult with the general public for future Australian Animal Welfare Standards and RIS?

32 responses received



Appendix 5. IAP2 spectrum of participation

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Objectives				
To provide participants with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with participants throughout the process to ensure that their issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with participants in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions.	To place final decision-making in the hands of participants.
Promise to participants (stakeholders, communities, 'the' public)				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example tools				
Fact sheets, web sites, displays.	Public comment, focus groups, surveys, public meetings, open houses.	Workshops, deliberative polling.	Citizen advisory committees, consensus building.	Citizen juries, ballots, delegated decisions.

Source: International Association for Public Participation 2000

References

Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2004. Principles and guidelines for National Standard Setting and Regulatory Action by Ministerial Councils and Standard-Setting Bodies. Commonwealth of Australia.

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Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) 2006. Best Practice Regulation Handbook. Commonwealth of Australia.