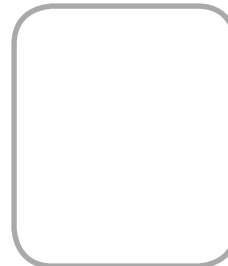
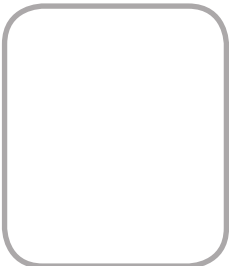
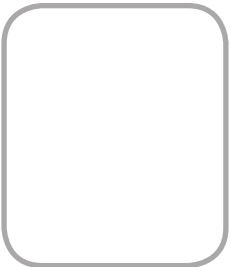
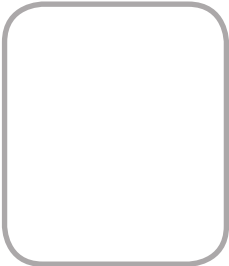


Learning Resource for BUILD AND MAINTAIN COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS



ICONS

Activities and assessments are interactive – the blank boxes can be filled in with your own information.



Activity



Assessment

This Learning Resource has been developed to support **FPI60111 Advanced Diploma of Forest Industry Sustainability**. It was based on the Unit of Competency **FPICOT5208B Build and maintain community relationships**.

The project, managed by the Institute of Foresters of Australia, has been funded by ForestWorks with support from the Australian Government Department of Industry. Intellectual property remains with the Commonwealth and is freely available for educational purposes.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2014

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the Commonwealth. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Commonwealth Copyright Administration, Attorney General's Department, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600 or posted at <http://www.ag.gov.au/cca>

June 2014

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
About yourself	5
Using website links	5
How are these materials used?	5
Self-assessment	5
What are these learning materials about	5
Employability skills	6
How the skills learned apply to your workplace	6
1. UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS	8
Learning objectives for this section	8
Building and maintaining community relationships within the forest sector	8
What is a community?	9
What is community engagement?	9
Why community engagement is important	9
Activity 1.1	11
What are the common levels of community engagement?	11
Assessment 1	12
What are the principles of community engagement?	13
Activity 1.2	13
2. IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	14
Learning objectives for this section	14
Engagement obligations and responsibilities within the forest sector	14
Activity 2.1	15
3. IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP OBJECTIVES	16
Learning objectives for this section	16
Community relationship objectives within your workplace	16
Case study example: changing objectives in a consultation process	17
Activity 3.1	17
Barriers and opportunities for engagement	18
Activity 3.2	18
4. IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS	19
Learning objectives for this section	19
Identifying stakeholders for your engagement objectives	19
Activity 4.1	21
Activity 4.2	22
Who to engage?	22
Assessment 2	24
5. ANALYSING STAKEHOLDER NEEDS, PERSPECTIVES AND CAPACITY	25
Learning objectives for this section	25
Analysing stakeholders for your engagement objectives	25
Assessment 3	26

6. COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS – BUILDING YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS	28
Learning objectives for this section	28
Your communication skills	28
Activity 6.1	29
Assessment 4	29
Activity 6.2	30
Assessment 5	30
Conflict resolution	30
Stakeholder’s engagement	31
Activity 6.3	32
7. COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS – SETTING EXPECTATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PARAMETERS	33
Learning objectives for this section	33
Expectations within community engagement	33
Activity 7.1	34
8. COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS – DESIGNING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION PROCESSES	36
Learning objectives for this section	36
Community engagement tools and techniques	36
Assessment 6	40
9. DOCUMENTATION AND FEEDBACK	42
Learning objectives for this section	42
Providing feedback on your community engagement	42
Activity 9.1	42
10. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	43
Learning objectives for this section	43
Monitoring and evaluating your community engagement	43
Assessment 7	44
Context of the engagement	45
11. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	46
Learning objectives for this section	46
Developing a community engagement strategy for your workplace	46
Summative assessment	46
SOURCES AND FURTHER READING	48
SELF ASSESSMENT	50
FEEDBACK	52
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	53

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT YOURSELF

Please fill in your details and save this PDF to your files.

Name	
Phone	
Email	

USING WEBSITE LINKS

Sometimes you may click on a web link and the site will say it is not available. Please revisit the site when you are next working on your resource materials as web sites are sometimes "off line" for maintenance reasons. If the link is "not found" then track back to the home page in the link address and try and search from there.

If you are consistently unable to access a link, please search for an alternative. If the link related to an assessment or activity include the new link in your answers. Let us know of any links that do not work by completing the feedback form at the back of the resource.

HOW ARE THESE MATERIALS USED?

This learning resource has been developed as a workbook with a strong focus on the self-directed application of knowledge. It is best used in the context of the Unit of Competency it has been written against as found on page 2. Completing this workbook and all activities and formative assessments will prepare you for your final assessment.

Where a table has been provided in activities and assessments you can use Adobe forms to make notes. Click on a cell to enter text, tab to move to the next cell. The table cells do not expand as you enter text.

When viewing the text online please turn on Bookmarks in your PDF reader so you can more easily navigate through the material.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

At the end of this document there is a self-assessment checklist of the types of skills and knowledge you would be expected to have to be deemed competent in the associated Unit of Competency. At any stage you can self-assess yourself against this list and seek more information in areas you are unsure about.

On successful completion of the final assessment as agreed with your Registered Training Organisation (RTO), you can achieve competency in the related Unit of Competency.

WHAT ARE THESE LEARNING MATERIALS ABOUT

This workbook applies to any person working in the Australian forest sector who is required to build and maintain community relationships - meaning relationships with individuals or groups of people outside or within your place of employment who have an interest in your activities. This workbook assumes limited prior skills, knowledge and experience in formal community engagement. Expected prior skills, knowledge and experience do include an ability to write basic communication products such as letters; knowledge of key stakeholders with an interest in your business or an ability to identify such knowledge as part of the course; and some experience in interacting with a range of stakeholders. You are not expected to have more formal

experience in analysing stakeholder needs and interests, in managing stakeholder expectations or building longer-term community relationships, or in integrating such engagement activities into your workplace.

The scope of the workbook includes the following activities:

- Understanding community relationships and how they affect your workplace
- Identifying and understanding community relationships important to your workplace
- Understanding and building your communication skills
- Developing a comprehensive plan for community relations applicable for your workplace.

This workbook has a strong focus on the self-directed application of knowledge and skills development in the areas of:

Effective design and implementation of community engagement through an understanding of community engagement principles, practices and the available tools and techniques relevant to the particular forest sector context (i.e. plan a community engagement strategy)

- Relevant State/Territory legislation, regulations and codes of practice with regard to public participation within the Australian forest sector
- Relevant organisational policies, procedures and protocols which guide community engagement processes in workplaces
- Conflict resolution and personal communication skills to enable more effective engagement activities
- Development of industry sector relevant community relationship building processes and practices
- Monitoring and evaluation of community relationship building activities to ensure ongoing improvement of engagement activities.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

This workbook provides an opportunity to develop and apply employability skills to your job that are learnt throughout work and life.

The statements below list the typical employability skills that would be applied in a situation related to building and maintaining community relationships within the Australian forest sector.

In completing your learning (the summative assessment), you must be able to demonstrate that you are applying the "employability skills" listed below to this competency:

- Interpersonal communication skills to a level that enables you to work effectively with communities across a diversity of contexts, including literacy, oral and conflict negotiation skills
- Technical skills relevant to the workplace in the appropriate design of community relationship activities in consideration of relevant safety and resourcing requirements
- Planning and organisational skills sufficient to adequately plan and design community engagement activities, including problem solving to overcome barriers
- Knowledge and skills to identify and accurately report problems in a timely and respectful manner
- Teamwork skills.

HOW THE SKILLS LEARNED APPLY TO YOUR WORKPLACE

This resource covers the process of building and maintaining community relationships and describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to build and maintain a diversity of community relationships relevant to your forest sector and individual workplace.

The document includes activities to:

- Understand what community engagement means for your workplace
- Understand which community relationships are important for your workplace

- Develop and implement community engagement activities relevant for your community and your workplace
- Monitor and evaluate your relationship-building activities to drive continual improvement.

The unit applies to all sectors of the Australian forest industry including forest management, wood and paper processing, timber product manufacturing, forest nurseries and associated service industries (referred to from this point as the 'forest sector').

The skills and knowledge required for competent workplace performance are to be used within the scope of the person's job and authority.

1. UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

In this section you will learn the basics on community engagement:

- What is a community?
- What is community engagement and why it is important?
- What are the different levels of engagement?
- What are the underpinning principles that guide the design and implementation of all community engagement activities?

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Have an understanding of the various terms and approaches to community and community engagement and how these can affect your process of building and maintaining community relationships
- Understand the basic principles that underpin community engagement and how these may affect engagement practices in your workplace
- Have identified the benefits and limitations of community engagement in your workplace, and critically reviewed current engagement processes being undertaken.

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE FOREST SECTOR

Forestry is an industry that attracts substantial public attention. It is therefore important that those who work in the forest sector are able to build and maintain relationships with a range of people, who often have diverse interests in what your workplace does.

The process of building and maintaining community relationships is typically called community engagement and therefore we use this term throughout this unit. Other terms that relate to the process of building and maintaining community relationships are discussed further below.

Prior to undertaking community engagement within the workplace it is important to develop an understanding of what community engagement is and why it is undertaken, what influences the effectiveness of engagement activities and how you as an individual respond to various forms of communication and conflict. This background information provides you with the appropriate knowledge and understanding to design and plan effective community engagement processes that are relevant, realistic and appropriate for your workplace context.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

The word 'community' means many things to different people. To build and maintain community relationships, you need to have a good understanding of who your 'community' is. A community simply means a group of people who have a shared interest, which may be related to a particular place (for example, residents of a local town), or to a particular activity or interest (for example, mountain biking, hunting, or being part of the same workplace). This means that most people are members of multiple types of communities at the same time ^[1].

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Multiple terms are used to refer to community engagement, many of which are used interchangeably (although sometimes they are defined to mean different things). Common terms include community engagement, public participation, public consultation, or citizen involvement; all of these terms are used to describe *a range of activities used to involve the public in decision-making* ^[2].

The building of 'relationships' is an integral part of community engagement. The building and maintaining of community relationships is crucial for the long term future of the forest industry, providing ongoing opportunities for communication that encourages mutual trust and respect.

It is important to carefully consider what you mean by the term that you choose for community engagement so you do not unduly raise participant's expectations. Differences in the meaning of community engagement terms are often based on the actual level of involvement in decision-making and the objectives of those implementing the community engagement. For example, if you label an activity 'community engagement', the individuals and groups you are involving will expect you to provide them opportunities to actively discuss the issues and inform the final decision-making. Alternatively, if you use 'public consultation' many people would understand that there is limited opportunity for discussion and that you are asking for their general feedback, but not providing them with a more direct say in decision-making. Of course, many people do not understand the differences in community engagement labels and hence clear communication of exactly how you wish to engage is essential to ensure transparency and clarity of the process itself and its outcomes. See Section 13 for more information regarding setting clear expectations of your engagement process.

It is important to recognise the two different types of community engagement prevalent within the forestry sector – *operational engagement and strategic engagement* ^[2]:

- *Operational* community engagement refers to the community relationship building activities that take place in the every-day operations of the relevant forestry sector. For those in forest management this may include talking with neighbours or local government, for those in the processing sector this may include communication with customers or regulatory authorities
- *Strategic* engagement refers to engagement activities intended to build broader company or whole-of-industry relationships. Often performed by senior management and/or industry associations, strategic engagement includes activities such as ongoing dialogue with customers, politicians or critical interest groups (e.g. environmental non-government organisations [ENGOs]).

WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Building community relationships takes considerable time and effort, so why do we do it? The reasons for undertaking community engagement vary considerably and are dependent on your organisation's:

- Operations (e.g. forest harvesting will typically require more engagement activities than a sawmill)
- Policies (e.g. prevailing corporate culture will influence an organisation's commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility principles and hence community engagement)
- Regulatory compliance (e.g. *State Codes of Forest Practices* and other relevant legislation vary considerably)

- Social context in which you operate (e.g. farming environment where land-based operations may be well accepted and understood, versus the hobby farm and urban fringes where land-based operations may be perceived more negatively).

Community engagement is an important component of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is 'the term used to describe the way that a business takes into account the financial, environmental and social impacts of decisions and actions in which it is involved. It is an increasingly important issue in business, as managers, consumers, investors and employees have begun to understand how economic growth is linked to social and environmental well-being' [3]. Considering your organisation's corporate social responsibilities requires you to consider its broader ethical, social and environmental responsibilities. Many sets of CSR principles have been suggested for businesses: all of these outline core policy and behavioural actions that are as argued to be essential for good corporate social behaviour. Most of the CSR principles used by businesses worldwide require consideration of issues such as human rights, environmental and social sustainability, community engagement, corporate integrity (see www.hydro.com/upload/Subsites/Norge/Nedlastingssenter/Om%20Hydro/SocialResponsibilityPrinciples_en.pdf for a short example of a company's CSR principles [3 pages]). Developing community relationships that ensure a broad range of interests are considered when making decisions is one of the key ways in which a business or organisations can ensure it considers and acts on these CSR principles.

Identifying the benefits and limitations of community engagement for your workplace helps you decide where to best direct your limited community engagement resources, to ensure you maximise the benefits of your activities and minimise the limitations.

The common benefits of community engagement include the building of trust and hence better ongoing relationships and communication, greater inclusion of interests and concerns which results in better quality decision-making and compliance with relevant policy and regulations.

Common limitations of community engagement include the cost involved in committing labour and time to engagement, and the cost of any changes made to operating procedures as a consequence of engagement. This must be considered against the high costs of not engaging, which can include substantial delays in operations resulting from protest or court cases, loss of market share, or other negative outcomes associated with having poor community relationships.

Explore one or more of the following web links that further outline the range of benefits and limitations associated with community engagement:

- www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/introduction/benefits.html (1 page [4])
- www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement/introduction-to-engagement/benefits-of-successful-engagement (1 page, [5])
- www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf (this is a useful document for community engagement within the forest sector, although for this exercise you only need to see pages 12-13 and 19-24, [2]).

It may be difficult to engage many people, with some people having more time than others to get involved (for example, those who are well educated and retired are often likely to participate in engagement activities, whereas others lack time or resources to do so). Other limitations include commercial pressures which limit your ability to engage in lengthy processes of community engagement, and the corporate culture of your workplace and their commitment to community engagement.



These issues are discussed in this short video (6min 29 seconds):
vimeo.com/75471929



Activity 1.1

Identify the 3 most relevant benefits and limitations of community engagement for your workplace.

Benefits of community engagement	Limitations of community engagement
e.g. Builds trust	e.g. Lack of capacity of our staff to undertake engagement activities
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON LEVELS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

As previously discussed there are many 'levels' of community engagement, usually defined based on the level of input or influence participants have on final decision-making.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) has developed a popular continuum that depicts the multiple levels of engagement (see www.iap2.org.au/documents/item/84)^[6]. As shown in Figure 1, the levels of participation range from basic *informing* activities, in which you communicate information to many people but provide them no or limited opportunities for feedback and no influence on decision-making, through to *community empowerment* which often includes only a small number of people but gives them full decision-making responsibilities.

Figure 1. Common levels of public participation (adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation ^[3])



All levels of community engagement are important and have a legitimate role depending on the objectives of the community engagement process being undertaken. You need to carefully consider which level of engagement is most appropriate for your needs and issues in different circumstances, and choose the one that best suits your engagement objectives and available resources. In any given engagement process more than one level may be used depending on the needs of different stakeholders – for example you may inform the local government of pending operations but involve or collaborate with other forestry organisations to achieve operational efficiencies.

Develop your understanding of the different types of levels of engagement by reading one or more of the following resources:

- www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf (see pages 51-55 for a more detailed description of the IAP2 spectrum, ^[2])
- www.participatorymethods.org/method/levels-participation for an alternative version of levels of engagement (1 page, ^[7])
- www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement/developing-an-engagement-plan/a-model-for-engagement (1 page, ^[5]) for a discussion on the impact of the levels of engagement and community capacity, both current capacity and the building of capacity through more engaging forms of public participation.



Assessment 1

The purpose of this assessment is to apply the theory and ideas presented in this workbook to the community relationships you expect to engage in as part of your work. As part of the assessment you need to demonstrate you understand key community issues you may have to address in your workplace, and what level of engagement is best suited to addressing them. It also provides the beginning of a community engagement plan for your workplace, which can contribute to the summative assessment at the end of this course.

Choose two engagement processes that are currently used, or you believe should be used if they are not currently, within your workplace. Determine what IAP2 level(s) of engagement best suit these engagement processes (there may be more than one level as the engagement may be undertaken in different ways to suit different engagement objectives) and why it is the most appropriate community engagement approach to use.

Identified example	Level of engagement (IAP2)	Why?
<i>e.g. Writing a letter to a neighbour of pending haulage operations</i>	<i>Informing - consulting</i>	<i>The letter provides basic information to potentially affected people and encourages feedback if there are concerns.</i>
1.		
2.		

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

The principles of community engagement are the underlying values, behaviours, and ethics that guide good engagement design and practice. Principles are not hard and fast rules or prescriptions of actions to be implemented; they are guiding statements that combine ethical considerations with good sense and good business practices^[8]. Principles of public participation ensure that a common set of values are utilised across the organisation. Understanding the principles relevant to your workplace is important for good community engagement practice.

The principles that underpin your community engagement are influenced by the context in which you are operating in – for example what are the aims and scope of your engagement activities, who is participating in your engagement and where is it being carried out?

The following resources provide a diverse range of engagement principles that contain information which may be relevant to your workplace. You may like to visit one or more of these.

- IAP2 foundations of public participation www.iap2.org.au/documents/item/83^[9] (4 pages) presents the IAP2's values and code of ethics (their principles – see page 3)
- Impact assessment principles www.iaia.org/publicdocuments/special-publications/SP4%20web.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1^[10] (3 pages) provides an overview of public participation and its objectives with well-defined principles of engagement that are applied in nature and hence applicable for the forest sector
- Sample principles www.fermilabcommunity.org/pdfs/ParticipationPrinciples.pdf^[11] (9 pages) provides a list of principles from a range of organisations, including forest industry and broader natural resources management organisations.

The *Handbook for operational community engagement within Australian plantation forest management*^[2] identifies the following principles of engagement:

- a. inclusivity
- b. transparency
- c. clear and agreed purpose and process
- d. emphasis on mutual learning and sharing of knowledge
- e. building of relationships and trust.

Pages 10-12 of the handbook provide a detailed description of these principles. See: www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf.



Activity 1.2

Write a short document (one page in length) that identifies the principles that (i) are currently applied in your workplace to engagement (whether formal or informal), and (ii) you believe should apply to your workplace's engagement activities.

2. IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

In this section the range of formal and informal community engagement obligations and their potential impact on engagement processes within the workplace is discussed.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Have an understanding of the obligations and responsibilities your organisation has regarding community engagement, including legislative, regulatory and corporate policy based obligations
- Assess examples of engagement obligations applicable to your workplace and describe how they are being implemented.

ENGAGEMENT OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE FOREST SECTOR

People working in different parts of the forest and wood products industries have a range of community engagement obligations. These include formal legislative requirements to consult (e.g. development application requirements), voluntary commitments such as company policies and forest certification, and informal commitments including norms of practice within your organisation (i.e. you may do community engagement because in your workplace it is considered the right thing to do, not because you are obliged to do it by law), or individual norms of behaviour based on your own personal morals and values.

In Australia there are hundreds of regulations governing the forest sector. Regulatory requirements for public participation that apply to your workplace may occur in international, national, state, local government or industry-based voluntary and mandatory regulatory systems. For example, state legislation may mandate that you must consult with key groups when undertaking some of your work activities. Your company may be certified by a voluntary certification scheme which specifies requirements for community consultation. Many regulations require compliance with others, for example forest certification schemes typically require compliance with all Australian regulations.

This complex array of regulations must be well understood. Clearly identifying regulatory and policy requirements for community engagement in your workplace is an essential step to designing efficient and effective community engagement processes that comply with all requirements across the regulatory system.

Legislation, regulation and policy that you may need to consider include:

- Work health and safety regulations
- Current awards and enterprise agreements
- Industrial relations
- Environmental Protection Acts
- Noise and pollution regulations
- Transport regulations
- Environmental regulations
- Industry-based Codes of Practice

- Good Neighbour Charters
- Forest Certification
- Organisational policies and procedures
- State and National Privacy Acts
- Local government planning requirements.

(This list may not include all relevant areas for your workplace but provides a guide to what regulations may apply.)

While many of these regulations are not explicitly related to community engagement they often do include public consultation requirements, and may or may not provide explicit prescriptions for consultation activities. For example, some regulations require you to provide a 60 day public consultation period during which the public can submit written responses to an activity you are proposing to undertake. In some instances community engagement obligations are the result of industry and other stakeholders collaborating to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to community engagement – Good Neighbour Charters, in which multiple members of the forest sector agree with other stakeholders on an agreed approach to community relationships are a good example. You may like to explore one or more examples of Good Neighbour Charters in the Australian forest sector can be found at:

- Tasmanian Good Neighbour Charter (6 pages) cdn.forestrytasmania.com.au/assets/0000/0552/FOT5958.pdf
- Forest Products Commission (WA) Good Neighbour Charter (4 pages) www.fpc.wa.gov.au/content_migration/assets/documents/about_us/publications/FPC-community-engagement-and-good-neighbour-charter.pdf
- Australian Bluegum Plantations Good Neighbour Charter (1 page) www.austgum.com.au/australian-plantations-woodchips/documents/Good%20Neighbour.pdf



Activity 2.1

Identify two formal, voluntary and informal public participation obligations that affect your workplace, what they require in terms of public participation, and what level of engagement this requires (use the IAP2 spectrum to identify the level of engagement, or if you wish, you can use a different model of engagement levels).

Type of community engagement obligation	Legislation, regulation, policy etc. name	Public participation requirements (list 2 main requirements where there are several)	Level of engagement (IAP2)
Formal	e.g. National Aerial spraying regulation	Notify schools of all aerial spraying within 2km radius	Informing
	1.	a.	
	2.	a. b.	
Voluntary	e.g. Forest Certification	Demonstration of proactive stakeholder engagement	Consulting
	1.	a. b.	
	2.	a. b.	
Informal	e.g. Company community engagement policy	Where relevant employees will attend community group meetings	Consulting
	1.	a. b.	
	2.	a. b.	

3. IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP OBJECTIVES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

In this section the various objectives of community engagement within the Australian forest sector are outlined, including the identification of issues that may influence engagement objectives. Barriers and opportunities to engagement are explored, highlighting the need to actively consider these barriers and objectives when designing engagement approaches.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand the range of engagement objectives across your workplace operations
- Assess example objectives to evaluate the engagement approached being used to achieve the objective and the benefits and limitations of this approach
- Understand the range of barriers and opportunities for effective engagement within your workplace.

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP OBJECTIVES WITHIN YOUR WORKPLACE

Having identified your obligations, the next step is to think more broadly about your community relationship objectives. While the regulatory obligations provide a good baseline for your engagement, your engagement objectives are likely to extend beyond mere regulatory compliance and will vary between social and environmental contexts. Community engagement objectives may include developing positive working relationships with your neighbours or customers, providing an opportunity for collaborative pest management activities with surrounding landholders and relevant interest groups, through to encouraging open dialogue with the community to ensure efficient harvest and haulage operations, to give some examples.

Community engagement objectives will vary considerably within the workplace. The context of forest industry operations affects engagement objectives substantially. Issues that affect engagement objectives include:

- **Outcomes of previous engagement activities** – poor outcomes may result in the community not trusting the forest industry and hence more effort is required to develop and maintain effective community relationships. Objective may need to start small and build up, e.g. initial objective to develop a line of communication within the community building up to ongoing two-way dialogue.
- **The potential scale/impact of forest industry operations** – constructing a boundary fence will have different community engagement needs (the need to engage constructively with a neighbouring landowner) than the construction of a new sawmill (where you may need to develop a wide ranging, transparent consultation process enabling community input into the conditions surrounding sawmill operations).
- **The political environment** – for forest managers in a region where forestry is an acceptable land use, or wood processing is well accepted locally, the engagement objectives may be to provide a consistent message to the community regarding operations. However for the same company working in another region where forestry is a contentious land use, or a processing facility has been publicly criticised or opposed, the engagement objectives may be to develop relationships based on mutual trust and respect with the various interest groups and affected individuals.

- **Available skills and resources** – objectives need to be aligned with the skills and resources you have available. Objectives need to reflect the skills of who will be conducting the engagement (or use consultants to support the process if funds allow), the timeframe in which the process needs to be complete (remembering that engagement can take significantly more time than you think), and the budget available (while your wages may be covered, money is needed to book rooms/halls, provide refreshments, advertising, consumables, consultants, pay participants costs etc.). Grand objectives of community empowerment cannot be realised if staff managing the engagement process have insufficient training, little time and poor financial support resulting in a poorly run process that can have a negative reputational outcomes for the organisation and potentially the broader forest industry.

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE: CHANGING OBJECTIVES IN A CONSULTATION PROCESS

Community relationship objectives can change as the engagement process proceeds. An example of this is illustrated by the experience of an Australian plantation company, which a few years ago was beginning haulage operations along a road where they identified high potential for concern about the proposed transport of logs. Because of the high level of contention surrounding the forthcoming haulage operations, initial consultation was undertaken through direct face-to-face conversations. This personal approach enabled the foresters undertaking the engagement process to build trust with local residents, and to agree on principles around truck movements (for example, identifying any times when trucks would not use the road, such as periods when the road was being used by school buses). This trust also enabled them to move beyond agreeing on these operational limits to build a greater understanding of the local community’s concerns regarding forest management.

One aspect of concern they identified was the perceived mismanagement of a local historical site. The identification of this concern led to agreement in which a local interest group directly managed the site with support from the forestry company, leveraging community and company resources with the objective to enhance a site of cultural significance. Through this collaborative approach with interested community members the company was able to engender trust from the community by listening and responding to their concerns, and maintain community relationships through the collaborative management of important community cultural history.



Activity 3.1

This activity requires you to apply the theory of community engagement to your workplace, by identifying the objectives of building community relationships and demonstrating you can identify the most appropriate engagement approach to achieve these objectives.

Identify two community relationship objectives that your workplace should be trying to realise. Does your workplace use particular methods of engagement to help achieve each objective and if so, what are they? What are the potential benefits and limitations of these engagement methods for achieving the identified objective?

Community relationship objective	Engagement approach	Benefits of the approach to meet the objective	Limitations of the approach to meet the objective
1.			
2.			

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Barriers and opportunities can significantly affect your ability to build and maintain community relationships. Barriers reduce the ability to undertake engagement activities, either inhibiting the extent of the engagement (e.g. reduce the level of engagement, minimise the number of participants, shorten the time frame) or not allowing engagement to occur at all. Opportunities improve your engagement activities through encouraging more complex objectives, or providing for more participants and a diversity of interests.

As identified throughout this unit thus far there can be a number of influences that affect your engagement objectives, process and outcomes. Examples of barriers and opportunities to community engagement include^[2]:

- **Availability of resources** – do you have sufficient time, skills, money, etc.?
- **Corporate culture** – does your workplace encourage the building of community relationships or inhibit engagement opportunities?
- **Personal characteristics** – do you have the communication and negotiation skills, inclination or confidence to undertake community engagement activities?
- **Networks** – what can your networks provide to enhance your engagement activities? Using your networks you may be able to attract stakeholders that you normally wouldn't be able to work with, you may be able to share resources and implement a more comprehensive engagement process.
- **Flexibility** – the willingness/capacity to be flexible in your engagement approach may enable further engagement opportunities to arise. Through engagement activities you may develop the trust and respect needed to undertake alternative or additional relationship building activities with a group of stakeholders or around a particular issue.
- **Generate ideas** – good community engagement processes can result in the co-development of new ideas and management practices, utilising shared knowledge and experiences to develop mutually acceptable outcomes.

Explore one or both of the following resources to identify and understand the range of barriers for engagement. While these resources are not directly related to the forest industry, they represent a breadth of participatory experiences to highlight potential barriers (and associated opportunities) that you may not immediately think of in your workplace:

- www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/cald-communities/introduction/barriers.html (1 page, ^[4]) describes the barriers when working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities – while not explicitly forest sector related the barriers identified are important considerations.
- www.ruralnovascotia.ca/documents/policy/challenges%20and%20barriers.pdf (18 pages, ^[12]) While Canadian based this short report provides good detail regarding the challenges of engaging with rural communities from a range of perspectives.



Activity 3.2

Identify three barriers to community engagement and three opportunities that support and create space for community engagement within your workplace.

Barriers to community engagement	Opportunities for community engagement
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

4. IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

Understanding what a stakeholder is and how to identify them effectively is important for all engagement processes. In this section the diversity of stakeholders is discussed, including techniques for stakeholder identification and stakeholder prioritisation.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand what a stakeholder is and the potential diversity of stakeholders for your workplace operations
- Be competent in using tools to assist in the identification of stakeholders
- Identify stakeholders relevant to your workplace operations
- Be able to prioritise stakeholder and provide adequate reasoning for the priority outcomes.

IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Building and maintaining community relationships isn't simple when there are multiple, overlapping communities who may be affected by or have an interest in things related to the work you do. When a particular community, or group of people, has an interest in or may be affected by your work activities, they are called a 'stakeholder', as they have a 'stake' in your work activities^[13].

An essential step in developing relationships with stakeholders is to invest time in identifying stakeholders, and in analysing their needs and perspectives (see section 11).

Identifying stakeholders is not as simple as it may first appear. Stakeholders relevant to people working in the forest, wood and paper industries can include any of the following groups, amongst others^[2]:

- Residents living near wood and paper processing facilities, or near forests and plantations managed for wood production, who have potential to be affected by noise, traffic, odour or other effects of your business activities
- Environmental non-government organisations (ENGO) or other interest groups such as farming organisations
- Recreational users of forests, including sporting and hobby groups (e.g. mountain biking, bushwalking, hunting groups)
- Local community groups such as chambers of commerce, volunteer fire fighting groups, or community groups supported by your business.
- Members of the news media
- Forest industry groups, such as representative bodies, who may work with you to address issues of public interest
- Members of your supply chain, including suppliers, contractors and customers
- Local government, regulatory authorities, certification bodies.

Not all stakeholders will be relevant for every situation or every type of business. Some useful websites list even more ideas for stakeholders who may be relevant to people working in the forest sector. Review one or more of these to ensure you understand the variety of different groups who may be considered stakeholders:

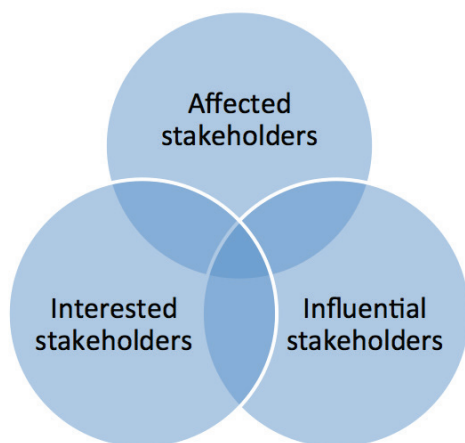
- www.prince2.com/blog/how-identify-stakeholders – this website is focused on stakeholders who may be important when managing a project (1 page)
- www.weyerhaeuser.com/Sustainability/People/StakeholderEngagement – an example of a stakeholder engagement policy from a large forestry company, including types of stakeholders they engage with (1 page)
- www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-5XKJM7 ^[14] – this resource considers stakeholders to be engaged in forest management activities, and includes useful tools for considering stakeholders including a mind-map (1 page).

Stakeholders will change over time as new issues and interests emerge. This means it is essential not only to identify stakeholders initially, but to institute a regular process of reviewing the stakeholders you are engaging with, including checking whether additional stakeholders need to be added, whether the key contacts in your stakeholder groups have changed, or whether you need to maintain relationships with existing stakeholders. You will need to decide how often you should review stakeholders based on how rapidly the issues you discuss with stakeholders are changing.

The key objectives of stakeholder identification are to (i) identify all potential stakeholders you may seek to engage, and (ii) identify which of these stakeholders you will engage with, based on clear criteria that helps you choose which stakeholders you will prioritise when building and maintaining relationships.

Doing this requires first understanding why you are seeking to build (or maintain) a relationship with stakeholders. In other words, what aspects of your business practices are you seeking to have interaction with them about and what are your engagement objectives? Answering this question is an essential first step, as it will help you identify who relevant stakeholders are – and who they are not.

Having identified your engagement objectives and what issues/activities you need to build relationships around, you then need to strategically analyse who you will engage with. Should you engage with some or all of the following types of groups?



Affected stakeholders are those groups or individuals who are directly affected by your business activities (e.g. suppliers, customers, residents living near your business operations). Interested stakeholders have a strong interest in your business activities, but are not necessarily directly affected by them (for example, interest groups who lobby in the public media, but may live some distance from where your business operates). Influential stakeholders have the power or influence to affect your business activities, such stakeholders may include politicians, financial institutions, and regulatory authorities ^[15].

Of course, all three types of stakeholder overlap – some stakeholders are affected, interested and powerful. Others, however, are not. Some are affected by your activities but may have little power or influence. Others may

have high power and influence but are not affected by your activities. There are important moral and ethical issues in decisions about which stakeholders to engage, as well as important questions of directing your limited resources to achieve best outcomes.

Read one or more of the following resources, which discuss these issues, as well as providing examples of common methods for identifying and analysing stakeholders:

- <http://www.biodiversa.org/577> (14 pages, ^[16]) provides a detailed process by which to identify stakeholders using a variety of practical methods
- www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf ^[2]- pages 59 to 66 of this resource focus on methods for identifying stakeholders
- www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_07.htm (1 page).

The following activities provide you with the skills and knowledge needed to develop and implement a full plan for stakeholder consultation. For an example of a consultation plan, including reporting of outcomes, see www.stockyardhillwindfarm.com.au/pdf/PPAR_Annexes/VOLUME_II/Annex_E-Stakeholder_Community_Consultation_Report.pdf ^[17] (69 pages).



Activity 4.1

Identify what types of stakeholders your organisation does or needs to engage with, why you need to engage with these stakeholders and what outcomes you wish to achieve through this engagement. Don't name specific stakeholder groups – instead, describe the type of characteristics they have, as you will use this to then identify all the groups who may fit this description in subsequent activities.

Type of stakeholder	Why do you need to engage?	What outcomes do you wish to achieve?
<i>Example 1: People whose daily lives may be disrupted by harvesting activity</i>	<i>To ensure the business identifies where and how potential for disruption exists, and works with these people to develop strategies to minimise disruption</i>	<i>Build and maintain positive relationships with local residents who live near harvesting operations and transport routes to mills; ensure harvesting proceeds with minimal disruption caused by local resident concerns</i>
<i>Example 2: Stakeholder whose influence will affect success of marketing our new product</i>	<i>To build support for the new product, and ensure the business understands the needs and perspectives of the stakeholders who will affect marketing success</i>	<i>Successful marketing of new product, with positive reviews and promotion of the product by key stakeholders</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Having identified the types of stakeholders you want to engage with, you can then move on to identifying the specific groups that have these characteristics. One of the common problems with stakeholder identification is that people rely on their current knowledge to identify stakeholders. Doing this can result in you only developing relationships with people you already know, instead of critically analysing whether other important groups exist that you need to develop relationships with. Using a 'stakeholder checklist' can help you get past this problem. A checklist is a list of things you will do to help you identify potential stakeholders who meet the criteria you specified in Activity 10.1. Examples of checklists can be found at the following websites:

- page 66 of www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf^[2]
- page 9 of www.csr.m.uq.edu.au/publications/developing-a-community-impacts-monitoring-and-management-strategy-a-guidance-document-for-australian-coal-mining-operations^[18]

At a minimum, methods of stakeholder identification should include actions such as consulting with other staff in your business to ask what groups they interact with; reviewing communications (for examples, websites, correspondence with your business, correspondence with your local regulatory authorities) to see who is discussing the issues about which you will be building relationships; and identifying a list of characteristics of groups who you need to consult with. For example, using Activity 10.1 Example 1 'People whose daily lives may be disrupted by harvesting activity', your checklist might look like the following:

- People who travel on roads used by logging traffic, e.g. transport companies, local residents, school buses, tourists and recreational users of the area
- People who operate businesses dependent on use of roads e.g. tourism businesses
- People who live within hearing distance of logging operations
- People who will see logging traffic even if they don't interact directly with it
- Groups and authorities with which road users may communicate if they have an interaction with a log truck while travelling (e.g. web forums, local government)

By developing this checklist, you can return to it at regular intervals to review whether any new groups need to be included in your list of stakeholders to be engaged.



Activity 4.2

Starting with the stakeholder types you listed in Activity 10.1, and using the checklists in the links above, identify all the stakeholder groups who you may want to engage with.

Stakeholder types	Stakeholder groups to engage with

WHO TO ENGAGE?

The most important part of stakeholder identification is deciding for *which* stakeholders you will build and maintain relationships. Most businesses have limited time and resources available for community engagement activities and you will likely have identified a large number of potential stakeholders in Activities 10.1 and 10.2. With which of these is it most important to engage with? With which should you invest further effort in analysing and building relationships, and which might you choose to engage with using methods that involve lower effort (such as an occasional communication letting them know to get in touch with you if they have any issues)?

Selecting which stakeholders and/or issues of concern over which to engage can often be difficult because of the complexity and interest in the forest industry. Clear prioritisation criteria that ensure compliance with regulatory obligations and company policy can help to ensure that the often limited engagement resources are focused on the main priorities and not the 'squeakiest wheel'.

To help you decide which stakeholders with which you will spend more time and resources on building relationships, including undertaking full stakeholder analysis (see next section), it is helpful to first identify criteria by which you will decide who to engage. Stakeholders can be prioritised using a number of methods:

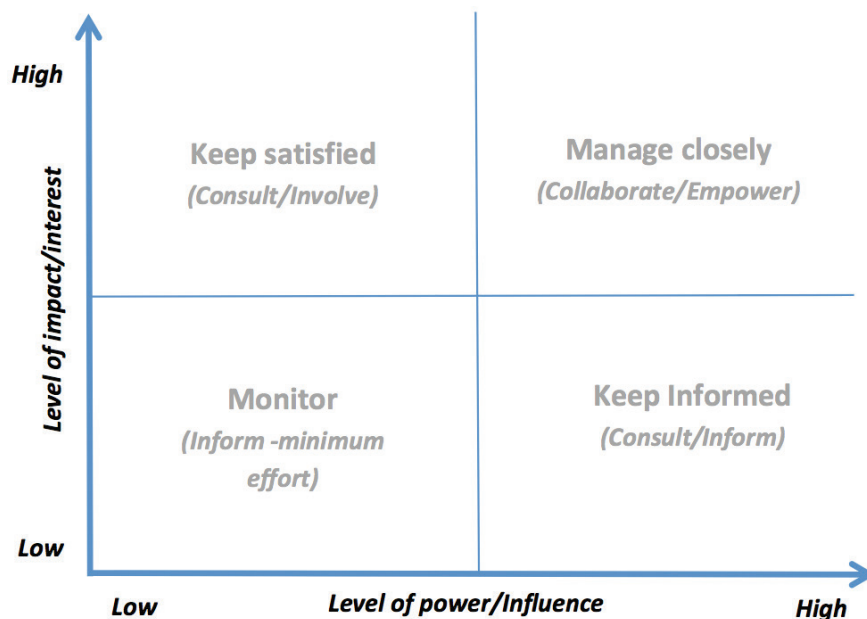
- the maturity of the issue
- the influence of stakeholders on decision-making
- the potential impact of forest industry activities on the stakeholder

The following resources provide more detail regarding how each of these methods of prioritisation work. You may use these for further reading:

- www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf (pages 67-70, ^[2])
- www.accountability.org/images/content/2/0/208.pdf (pages 40-47, ^[19])
- change.sa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Prioritising_your_stakeholders.pdf ^[20].

Classic business stakeholder theory suggests using a 'power/influence & interest' diagram (see Figure 2), in which you identify which stakeholders have low versus high power/influence, and low versus high level of interest in the issue or activity you are managing. They then argue you should invest most effort in engaging with those who have high interest *and* high levels of power or influence, as these are the stakeholders most likely to affect your activities.

Figure 2. Power and impact matrix ^[21]



However, as pointed out by Bryson in www.hhh.umn.edu/people/jmbryson/pdf/stakeholder_identification_analysis_techniques.pdf (33 pages, ^[21]), this is not always the best approach. An alternative approach is to decide to prioritise engaging with stakeholders who have the greatest potential to be affected by your activities, irrespective of whether they have high or low levels of power and influence: this approach is often considered to better meet the principles of corporate social responsibility, as it explicitly ensures you will build relationships with groups who may otherwise lack the ability to bring any issues or concerns they may have to your attention. See www.csu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/109602/EFS_Journal_vol_5_no_2_02_Kennon_et_al.pdf (9 pages, ^[22]) for examples of different approaches to this type of analysis.



Assessment 2

This assessment activity asks you to demonstrate your understanding of how to identify and analyse stakeholders, and use this knowledge to prioritise which you will focus your limited time and resources on when building community relationships.

Select the two main stakeholder groups you identified in Activity 10.2 with which you will invest most time and energy in engaging. Explain why you have chosen these as the groups you will invest most time and energy in, focusing on what criteria you used to identify them as the most important groups. This explanation demonstrates your understanding of the importance of stakeholder analysis and your ability to apply this understanding to stakeholders you are likely to interact with as part of your work role.

	Selection Criteria (may include the following, or other criteria you identify as important) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are potentially impacted by the decision (e.g. neighbours, residents on haulage route) • They are interested in the decision (e.g. environmental groups, community progress groups) • They can influence the decision (e.g. local politicians) • They have power in the decision-making process (e.g. regulators, industry representatives)
Stakeholder group selected for engagement	What selection criteria did you use and why?
<i>Example: Residents within a 1 kilometre radius of a proposed burning operation were notified of pending operation.</i>	<i>Potentially impacted by smoke in the area. By notifying them prior to the burn the residents will not be alarmed by smoke in the area and will be able to take precautionary measures regarding potential impacts of smoke (e.g. washing, water collection, driving hazard).</i>
1.	
2.	

5. ANALYSING STAKEHOLDER NEEDS, PERSPECTIVES AND CAPACITY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

Once you know who your stakeholders are it is important to understand what they might want from the engagement and how they can be involved. In this section a range of stakeholder analysis techniques are explored.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand why stakeholder analysis is an important component of good community engagement practice
- Be competent in using stakeholder analysis tools
- Analyse stakeholders relevant to your workplace operations.

ANALYSING STAKEHOLDERS FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Having identified the stakeholders you want to engage with, the next step is to analyse their needs, perspectives, capacity and constraints. Stakeholder analysis goes beyond the initial steps described in the 'stakeholder identification' section, where you considered issues such as the power and influence of stakeholders. The objective of stakeholder analysis is to give you the information you need to build effective and successful relationships with each of your identified stakeholder groups^[21, 22].

To do this, you need to know the following about each of the stakeholder groups with which you plan to build and maintain relationships:

- **What are their issues and interests?** How are they *affected by* and *interested in* your business activities? What are their objectives in engaging with you? (you have already identified your objectives in Section 10, but your stakeholders will have their own objectives which may differ from yours)
- **What is their current and historical relationship with your business?**
- **Who do they interact with?** What other stakeholders and groups do they interact with? They may influence these other groups or be influenced by them.
- **What cultural or social issues should you be aware of?** Are there specific cultural and social issues you need to consider when engaging with these stakeholders? For example, are their particular social or cultural traditions ones you need to respect when interacting? Has there been conflict within the stakeholder group you plan to engage with recently and what does this mean for your decisions about which individuals to hold discussions with in that group? If the group is facing times of stress you need to be sensitive when interacting with them (for example, farmers who have experienced an extended period of drought).

- **What capacity and constraints affect their ability to engage with you using different methods?** It is common to use methods such as email, written letters or phone calls to communicate with stakeholders – but these are not appropriate for all groups. Some groups have low literacy, or limited internet access; others may not have the confidence to communicate in writing, or may feel unable to speak about their issues in forums such as public meetings. Some may not have access to transport to attend public meetings, and prefer to engage by internet or phone. You need to understand the capacity and constraints of each of your stakeholders, as a starting point for designing ways of interacting that work for them as well as for you.

Some quick (1 page) examples of these types of analysis can be found at:

- betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/mapping_stakeholders ^[23]
- www.brainmates.com.au/brainrants/some-practical-tools-for-stakeholder-management ^[24].



Assessment 3

This activity assesses your ability to apply learnings from this workbook to analyse the stakeholder groups you are likely to build relationships with as part of your work. Identify the information you need to analyse about your two stakeholder groups from Assessment Activity 10.1. For each element identified in the table below, list the methods by which you can find out the information.

Information	How can you find out this information?
Example 1: Residents living near harvesting activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to other staff who have communicated with them in the past • Talk to local shopkeeper (or other community member with strong links and understanding of the community) to identify any social/ cultural issues to be aware of • Direct discussion with residents using appropriate methods (e.g. telephone, face-to-face)
Stakeholder Group One	
Interests and issues	
Relationship with the business	
Who do they interact with	
Cultural or social issues	
Capacity and constraints to engage	
Stakeholder Group Two	
Interests and issues	
Relationship with the business	
Who do they interact with	
Cultural or social issues	
Capacity and constraints to engage	

You need to ensure you have an appropriate system for documenting your stakeholder analysis and stakeholder interactions, enabling people who may need to interact with stakeholders to access information on historical interactions and rapidly identify key issues they need to be aware of. This is critical to ensure continuity of contact if you leave the business, or you need to transfer responsibility to liaising with particular stakeholders to other staff. It is particularly important in businesses where multiple staff may have interactions with the same stakeholder: it enables these different discussions to be recorded.

To achieve this, many businesses use stakeholder registers. You can view one or more of these below.

Examples of these can be found at:

- www.kblmining.com.au/index.php/download_file/view/422/215/ (2 pages)
- www.brighthubpm.com/project-planning/96416-stakeholder-register-example-and-template/ details what a stakeholder register is and provides templates and examples (1 page)
- Page 20 of www.csr.uq.edu.au/publications/developing-a-community-impacts-monitoring-and-management-strategy-a-guidance-document-for-australian-coal-mining-operations ^[18] provides an example stakeholder register. You may also find other sections of this report interesting regarding the measuring and monitoring of potential community impacts (25 pages).

These registers can be simple records of interactions. However, increasingly they are used as two-way interaction tools, providing opportunities for stakeholders with an interest in your business to register with you and thus receive updates, information, and opportunities to interact with your business. Some of these also include short surveys, in which stakeholders seeking to register are asked about their views and perspectives. It is important to adhere to the relevant privacy laws when developing, maintaining and sharing any personal information stored about engagement participants.

Review the following examples of stakeholder registration forms, which encourage interested stakeholders to register their interest and through this develop a relationship with your business, and include examples from within and outside the forest industry:

- www.forestry.sa.gov.au/Contact-Us/GetConnected discusses the organisation's commitment to stakeholder engagement and provides an online stakeholder registration form
- www.lmmml.org.au/stakeholders provides rationale as to why a groups or individuals may wish to register as a stakeholder and the benefits of membership, again with an online form.

6.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS – BUILDING YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

Communication skills are essential for effective community engagement. In this section you evaluate your own communication style, particularly in difficult situations, and identify areas you can work to improve. In addition you learn the communication styles of other people and how to work with them.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand your communication skills, including a critical analysis of your communication strengths and weaknesses and how they affect your communication generally, and within conflict situations
- Understand how to analyse a situation in which there is disagreement or conflict, and consider how best to respond to this situation (you are not expected to have high level conflict resolution skills, but should be able to identify when you may need to call in a professional resolution specialist versus being able to address the situation yourself).

YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Building and maintaining relationships requires effective and appropriate communication skills. It is common for stakeholder engagement processes to require discussion about sensitive or controversial issues. A key skill in achieving success in building and maintaining relationships is by understanding and improving your own interpersonal communication skills. Other communication skills, particularly communicating using letters, the media and social media, are discussed in Section 13 of this unit.

This section helps you evaluate your own communication style, particularly in difficult situations, and identify areas you can work to improve, as well as helping you better understand the communication styles other people are using and learning how to work with them. It also helps you identify how you can better work to be a leader in interactions. It also helps you build for communicating in situations where there is disagreement or conflict. The communication styles discussed here are not unique to the forest industry – communication styles are applicable to any situation and stakeholder type, irrespective of the specific issues being discussed.

Effective communication is a critical component of building and maintaining relationship. There is no single 'correct' way to communicate, with every person having a different style of communicating. However, it is important for you to understand how the ways you prefer to interact may help or hinder you in different situations. This has two parts to it: understanding your own preferred ways of communicating; and learning to diagnose how the various stakeholders you may be interacting with prefer to communicate. This understanding can help you match your communication style to the needs and preferences of different stakeholders ^[25, 26].

First, we consider **interpersonal communication** – where you are directly speaking to others. The way you communicate with others is critical to developing community relationships, as the way you communicate will have a strong influence on how stakeholders view both you and the business or organisation you are representing. Poor communication on your part will prevent you developing successful and effective community relationships, and because of this, it is important to invest time in understanding and improving how you communicate with other

people. Improving the effectiveness of your interpersonal communications requires you to self-assess your typical style of communicating, and to understand how others communicate. There are many guides intended to help you understand your own methods of communicating, and these all provide different types of insight into communication styles and needs^[25, 26].



Activity 6.1

Complete the following three exercises, and read the information provided on what your communication style is like, and how you can communicate with different people:

- <http://communicatorsforum.com.au/communicate-with-style/> (10 minutes)
- <http://access.ewu.edu/Documents/HRRR/Sup%20Manual/CommSelfAssessment.pdf> (15 minutes)
- <http://occonline.occ.cccd.edu/online/klee/CommunicationsStyleInventory.pdf> (15 minutes)



Assessment 4

This assessment asks you to write a short essay in which you reflect on your own preferred communication style. This assessment is intended to help you build your own skills in managing how you communicate with others, by critically reflecting on the strengths and limitations of your communication style, and identifying strategies you plan to use to address any limitations and ensure they do not reduce your effectiveness in building community relationships.

Having completed the three communication self-assessment exercises, identify key elements of your preferred communication style, using any of the elements included in the three different evaluations. What sort of a communicator are you? How is this likely to help or hinder you when building relationships with stakeholders? What strategies can you use to address any communication problems that come from your communication style? Answer in a short essay, ensuring you identify key strategies for strengthening your own communication.

Second, we consider the issue of **communicating in conflict situations**. Conflict means disagreement about interests, ideas or activities, and is a common and normal part of relationships between different people and groups. In fact, disagreement can be a healthy and productive thing for your business if it is expressed and responded to appropriately^[2, 27].

Disagreement and conflict are a common part of relationships between a business or organisation and the broader community, and the forest industry is no exception. Examples of conflict and disagreements in the Australian forest industry include differing views about the use of particular forest management and harvesting practices; disputes about noise or waste discharge from processing plants; and concerns about road use by logging trucks and by transport trucks taking wood and paper products to markets, amongst others. In any of these common situations, forest industry professionals often need to address disagreement and conflict occurring between stakeholders^[2, 27]. To do this, it is important to develop skills in managing the different aspects of conflict – and doing this is not as simple as simply trying to ‘fix’ the issue that is being discussed: you also need to be aware of when and how the conflict is being driven by issues such as emotions, or problems in communication style, if you want to be able to effectively resolve many of these disagreements.

Stakeholders raising issues with you, or disagreeing with your practices, provide important information about the potential impacts of your business practices, and useful leads that can be used to improve business practices before a situation escalates to one of high levels of conflict or protest. It is important to recognise this and be proactive in identifying and responding to any conflict issue that emerges in the course of your stakeholder relationships^[2].

The way you communicate in everyday situations may be quite different to how you communicate when dealing with a ‘conflict situation’ in which there is disagreement. There is no ‘one’ appropriate conflict style. Depending

on the importance of the issue involved, and your objectives, it may be appropriate to choose to use any of a number of conflict communication styles, and you need to understand when and why different approaches may be appropriate.



Activity 6.2

Watch the following video (4 min 48 seconds) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=hv9FEuk4Mhk), which explains five different styles of responding to conflict, and when each may be appropriate and inappropriate. Then complete the associated questionnaire.



Assessment 5

This assessment requires you to apply your knowledge of conflict management to real situations you may encounter in your workplace. This assessment will be most useful to you if you use 'real world' situations from your workplace when completing it.

Identify one or more community relation situations relevant to your workplace in which it would be appropriate to use each of competing, collaborating, compromising, accommodating and avoiding conflict styles. Explain why you would choose to use these different conflict management approaches in each situation.

Conflict Style	Situation relevant to your workplace	Why this conflict management approach?
Competing		
Collaborating		
Compromising		
Accommodating		
Avoiding		

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Finally, we consider strategies for actively working to address and resolve conflict that may emerge in the course of building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders. Effectively responding to a conflict requires first analysing the things that are causing problems in the relationship, and working constructively to identify how to address the conflict, ideally achieving the outcomes desired by different stakeholders. You are not expected to become a specialist in resolving conflict. However understanding the options you have for responding in situations where you face disagreement or conflict with stakeholders can help you make good decisions, and also identify where you may need to call in the services of a professional mediator or conflict resolution specialist.

A useful introduction to conflict resolution techniques that can be applied in work-related relationships can be found here: www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_81.htm. Review this webpage, which is designed to be applied in a wide range of workplace situations, and consider whether the conflict resolution process recommended would be useful in your work situation, or whether you might need to modify it.

The Conflict Resolution Network is an Australian initiative that provides free resources and skills training for conflict resolution.

- **Trying to identify a 'win-win' solution** in which all people involved in a conflict (referred to from here as the 'conflict parties') achieved their desired outcomes. This is not always possible, and often seems impossible. However, a win-win outcome can sometimes be achieved through creative 'reframing' of the issues involved in a conflict, in which you seek to uncover alternative ways of achieving the desired outcomes of each party involved in the conflict
- **Identifying creative opportunities** from conflict. This involves creatively imagining new future opportunities – in other words, learning from the negative aspects of conflict, and applying these learnings to do things differently and avoid the same things from happening again
- **Active listening** skills, which help ensure productive communication occurs between parties
- **Assertive communication** skills
- **Co-operative power**, in which you learn skills for addressing resistance and turning the dialogue towards cooperation between people involved in conflict
- **Managing emotions** during conflict
- **Mapping the conflict** – analysing it to help you understand what is happening within it
- **Negotiation and mediation** skills.

These guides to conflict resolution tend to apply readily to situations where stakeholders are willing to talk with each other, at least to some degree. This is not always the case: in some cases, conflict involves what is commonly termed 'stakeholder outrage', a situation in which there is high outrage over a proposed activity. In some cases, that outrage may be justified by the risks posed by the proposed activity; in others, it will not be. Peter Sandman, an internationally recognised expert in managing outrage, argues that 'risk = hazard + outrage', and provides guidance on how to manage situations of low hazard and high outrage at www.psandman.com/index-OM.htm#key^[29]. This website includes links to freely downloadable shareware that are designed to help you plan how to respond to outrage situations you may be asked to respond to in your workplace. Key outrage management strategies recommended include acknowledging the best arguments of outraged stakeholders as well as your own arguments (called 'staking the middle ground'), acknowledging any prior mistakes and poor management or behaviour by your organisation as well as current problems; and giving credit to critics for changes that have been made as a result of their advocacy; as well as many of the conflict resolution approaches recommended in the other resources we have provided in this section.

STAKEHOLDER'S ENGAGEMENT

A final critical issue when dealing with conflict situations is deciding when to invest in actively engaging with stakeholders; and when to disengage. Have you ever had a situation where a stakeholder makes large and ongoing demands on your time, diverting your time and resources away from the many other stakeholders who also may need your attention? There are some situations in which choosing not to engage with stakeholders may be appropriate: this includes situations in which a stakeholder is making what both your organisation and other stakeholders believe are unreasonable or inappropriate demands, or is demanding substantial time from you that is reducing your capacity to hear the views of all stakeholders. This type of challenge is usually identified after you have engaged with the stakeholder over a period of time. It is important to develop clear criteria you will use within your organisation to decide when and how you will choose to minimise engagement with 'difficult' stakeholders. This decision should not be made lightly, and having clear criteria will help ensure you do not dismiss a stakeholder as difficult simply because they have valid views that are difficult to deal with: the criteria must clearly specify a way of evaluating whether the substance of a stakeholder's concerns are legitimate, and may for example include calling in an independent person who can make such a decision in discussion with both you and the stakeholder involved.



Activity 6.3

Identify the criteria you would use to decide when to 'disengage' – in other words, in what circumstances (if any) might it be appropriate to choose not to spend further time and effort in building relationships with a particular stakeholder? Ensure you explain your reasoning.

7.

COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS – SETTING EXPECTATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PARAMETERS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

Expectations of stakeholders can vary significantly. Likely expectations of stakeholders are discussed in this section, and you will work to identify whether your current engagement approaches effectively overcome these expectations.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand the diversity of stakeholder expectations that may influence the effectiveness of your engagement activity
- Analyse stakeholder expectations to determine whether current engagement approach is adequate.

EXPECTATIONS WITHIN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the common challenges of community engagement is that of unrealised expectations. Participants come to the engagement process with their own ideas of what will happen and how they can influence the final decision – ideas which can be substantially different from yours. Unrealised expectations can cause mistrust in you and your workplace and result in unhappy participants undertaking ongoing negative actions including media attention, promotion of consumer boycotts, market interference and other actions that discredit the organisation and impact on corporate reputation.

It is therefore important to be very clear with participants regarding the engagement process from the outset, including discussing issues such as [see 1]:

- **Objectives of the engagement process** – discuss the aims of the process to ensure that all participants understand why the engagement is occurring. If participants have other objectives there may be an opportunity to satisfy those as well if resources allow. For example a neighbour may engage your organisation over a noise complaint, but may also want to discuss and resolve issues regarding pest and weed management. This may present potential for a beneficial partnership to manage pest and weed issues. It presents an excellent opportunity for a broadening of the engagement objectives as long as sufficient skills/knowledge and resource capacity to collaborate are available.
- **Scope of the engagement process** – be clear on the boundaries of the engagement process. Is it limited to a geographical region, a type of operation, a customer specification? If participants would like to expand (or contract) the scope does this affect your objectives? Do you have the required resources to achieve the new scope effectively? For example many residents use a pending forest operation as an opportunity to discuss not only the forest operation, but also broader issues affecting them including road quality and safety, pest control measures, or broader industry community impacts. Operational issues such as roading and pest control may be easily incorporated into current engagement objectives, however industry-wide social impacts may best be left for a different process as this broadening of the scope is substantial.

- **Input in decision-making** – a common unrealised expectation is a greater role in the final decision. Be very clear from the outset as to how decisions will be made and by whom. Carefully outline how the engagement will influence the final decision and the available dispute resolution process or processes. While many community members are comfortable with an opportunity to discuss their concerns, some community members feel that they should have a say in the final decision-making, for example regarding the type of herbicide application, the timing of forest operations, or even whether a forest can be harvested at all. Honest and transparent clarity regarding their role in decision-making is imperative, this may be verbal or in the form of an email or letter where a more formal approach is required.
- **Process timeframe and budget** – the time and budget allocated to a project can significantly affect its objectives and scope for participation. Being clear about the resources available to the project helps everybody understand what is realistic and that concessions may need to be made regarding the level of engagement, scope of the projects and diversity of participants.
- **Feedback** – how will participants be given feedback on how their input was considered and used? This is discussed further in Section 15.

If time and resources allow, the co-design of an engagement process with participants is an effective way to ensure expectations are realistic and well communicated. This means you work with stakeholders to decide how you will engage and what level of engagement is most appropriate. While this collaborative process takes more time, the benefits of such a transparent approach can help to build relationships and develop trust early in the engagement process.

Explore the following resources to identify other expectations that need to be considered:

- www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cdd/grants_and_community_engagement/framework_for_community_engagement/framework/managing_expectations_and_issues (1 page)



Activity 7.1

Using your two stakeholder groups from Activity 10.3, list the community engagement expectations they are likely to have. Are these usually satisfied? If not, why not?

Likely community engagement expectations	Can these stakeholder expectations be satisfied given the engagement process in consideration? If not why not?
<p>Example: Residents on a haulage route</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected objectives of the engagement process – to have an opportunity to discuss concerns and reduce haulage impact on the residents. • Expected scope of the engagement process – to include all affected residents and influence all current and future haulage operations on this road • Expected stakeholder input in decision-making – to have a role in final decision-making through enforcement of preferred operational conditions • Expected engagement timeframe and budget – short, NOW! • Expected feedback mechanism – to be formally informed of all outcomes for legal documentation purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives – Yes this can be achieved as the purpose is to enable opportunities for dialogue and to mitigate potential haulage impacts on residents. • Scope – No, this engagement is about this current haulage operation. While learnings from this engagement will inform future operational designs the uncertainty of future technologies, market conditions, regulatory constraints, etc. do not enable us to promise that this outcome will be enforced for future operations. • stakeholder input – No, the stakeholder input will be used to inform the outcomes but final decision-making is left with the company because of accountability considerations (e.g. compliance with legal requirements, contractual obligations). • Timeframe and budget – Yes, we need trucks on the road ASAP. • Feedback – Yes, because of the contentious nature of the engagement formal notification of outcomes will be provided to ensure clarity for all parties involved.

Stakeholder Group One	
Expected objectives of the engagement process Expected scope of the engagement process Expected stakeholder input in decision-making Expected engagement timeframe and budget Expected feedback mechanism	
Stakeholder Group Two	
Expected objectives of the engagement process Expected scope of the engagement process Expected stakeholder input in decision-making Expected engagement timeframe and budget Expected feedback mechanism	

8.

COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS – DESIGNING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION PROCESSES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

This section starts to bring all of the previous sections together, using the information and knowledge you have accumulated up until this point to explore and critically review the common engagement tools and techniques.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand the range of community engagement tools and techniques and why different techniques are needed for different contexts
- Have described a range of tools and techniques, identifying their implementation characteristics including resource needs and barriers to use.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Having identified your engagement obligations, objectives, stakeholder capacities, constraints and concerns about your company's activities, and their capacities and constraints, you now have the information you need to design a strategy for engaging with different stakeholders. This involves deciding what methods you want to use to engage with stakeholders.

Before making decisions about the type of engagement methods you will use, you need to have first completed the process of:

- Identifying your engagement objectives
- Identifying the topics or issues around which you will build these relationships
- Clarifying the resources you have available to invest in community engagement
- Identifying and analysing stakeholders
- Identifying communication issues and needs.

Having done this, you are well placed to be able to identify which engagement methods will be most effective in achieving and maintaining meaningful relationships that meet your objectives and those of the people with whom you are engaging.

Many different methods can be used to engage with people and build relationships. Most guides to consultation and participation methods in the forest sector have been designed for use in forest management. However, the methods they include can often be equally applied in other parts of the forest and wood product industry supply chain. Some recommended websites and online guides which include multiple ideas for innovative approaches to engaging with stakeholders, and which have informed the materials in this section, include:

- The [Handbook for operational community engagement within Australian plantation forestry](http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf) (<http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf>, ^[2]). This handbook was designed for Australian forest managers, and many of the methods included can be applied in other work situations as well, including in operation of wood and paper processing facilities (see pages 71-108 of 142 pages)

- The Online Consultation Guide Book, www.bangthetable.com/freebies/onlineconsultationguide/ ^[30], is produced by one of the more popular online consultation websites, Bang the Table, and focuses specifically on methods for using online approaches to consultation (see pages 37-52 of 69 pages)
- Public Participation in Sustainable Forest Management, http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC/files/1237487548SR_200506beckleypub_en.pdf ^[31] provides a guide designed for use in the forest industry (see pages 27-43 of 60 pages)
- <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5xmf8l> ^[14] provides a list of toolsheets in PDF format that describes each engagement method including the level of engagement and resource requirements.

When choosing engagement methods that suit the needs of your particular situation, you need to consider the following aspects:

- **Level of participation:** Will this method enable you to have the type and level of dialogue you need? In other words, where does it fit on the 'participation continuum', and which do you need to achieve your objectives?
- **Cultural needs:** Is it culturally appropriate for both you and the people you want to engage?
- **Ability to participate:** Is everyone you want to engage with able to access/use this method (for example. If it requires an internet connection, do all your stakeholders have one)?
- **Confidence to participate:** Will everyone feel confident to use this method to communicate with each other?
- **Capacity building:** Is there a need to work with stakeholders and communities to build their capacity to engage with you using this method?
- **Resourcing needs:** Do you have the resources and skills to use this method successfully?
- **Work health and safety:** What work health and safety issues need to be considered when using this method?
- **Barriers to use:** What if any barriers exist to prevent this method working successfully, and how can you overcome them?

In this section, you are asked to consider these issues for a number of methods that can be used for community engagement. These methods were selected as they are commonly applied consultation and participation methods used in the forest and wood products industry. However, they do not represent all possible methods and have been selected to ensure development of core competencies in key engagement approaches. You should always consider whether other methods may be equally or more appropriate to use when planning how you will go about building and maintaining community relationships.

Methods are presented in order of their position on the participation continuum, from those that involve one-way communication and more passive engagement, to those that provide opportunity for greater levels of involvement, through to full partnership in decision making. None of these methods should be considered to be 'better' than others; instead, each is suitable for different situations. Your goal should be to develop your skills in evaluating when and why each approach is best to use.

Newsletters/information sheets

Newsletters, information sheets, and other written materials may be used to communicate information about how the organisation you work for operates, including their practices, activities and principles. These can be published as paper documents, or online.

Level of participation: This type of communication is one-way: it involves your organisation communicating what it does to others, with no real dialogue; the communication is not personalised to each stakeholder but is mass produced. However, you can use these types of information products to encourage stakeholders to become involved in other methods that involve greater levels of two-way dialogue or engagement, through including information on when and how they can engage in these.

Cultural needs: Newsletters and information sheets are appropriate in most situations within the Australian context.

Ability to participate: Written information is only accessible to people who (i) have adequate literacy levels to read and comprehend the material, and (ii) the means to access the written materials. Adequate literacy needs can be high, depending on how technical the communication material is: a lack of literacy in specific scientific or technical language, for example, is very common. If literacy levels are low in some or all of the stakeholders you are working with, you will need to consider using methods other than written materials to communicate. In all cases, you need to ensure that any written information uses language that is easily understandable by the intended audience.

Confidence to participate: As a passive information communication tool, there are usually few issues with confidence to participate, although in some sensitive situations there is potential for stakeholders to feel embarrassed or concerned if they are seen to be reading materials from your company, particularly if there is conflict around the topic being discussed in the written material.

Capacity building: If there are literacy issues, you may need to consider whether you need to assist in building capacity for stakeholders to understand written material. For example, if you are communicating about scientific or technical issues, you may need to consider providing opportunities for stakeholders to build their skills in understanding and interpreting this information.

Resourcing needs: Written materials usually can be designed to fit different levels of available resources. You will need to carefully budget the likely costs, which will vary depending on the printing and postage involved, and extent to which you plan to have materials professionally designed or edited.

Work health and safety: There are usually no WH&S considerations in producing this type of material.

Barriers to use: Key barriers to use are lack of literacy.

Letters and emails

Letters, emails and other forms of one-to-one written communication may be used to communicate with individual stakeholders. These differ from newsletters and information sheets in that they are not seeking to provide generalised information about your operations, but rather they are a specific method of discussing issues of relevance to the stakeholder receiving them. Letters may be used to notify stakeholders of planned operations and invite comments or discussion of any concerns; to report on how their views have been responded to; or for many other forms of communication.

Level of participation: This type of communication may be one-way or two-way, depending on whether the stakeholder is invited to respond and engage in dialogue via email/letters.

Cultural needs: Letters and emails are appropriate in most situations within the Australian context.

Ability to participate: Letters and emails are only accessible to people who (i) have adequate literacy levels to read and comprehend the material, and (ii) the means to access the written materials (in the case of emails, internet access). Adequate literacy needs can be high, depending on how technical the communication material is: a lack of literacy in specific scientific or technical language, for example, is very common. If literacy levels are low in some or all of the stakeholders you are working with, you will need to consider using methods other than written materials to communicate. In all cases, you need to ensure that any written information uses language that is easily understandable by the intended audience.

Confidence to participate: As these are passive information communication tools, there are usually few issues with confidence to participate.

Capacity building: If there are literacy issues, you may need to consider whether you need to assist in building capacity for stakeholders to understand written material. For example, if you are communicating about scientific or technical issues, you may need to consider providing opportunities for stakeholders to build their skills in understanding and interpreting this information.

Resourcing needs: Letters and emails usually require low levels of resourcing.

Work health and safety: There are usually no WH&S considerations in producing this type of material.

Barriers to use: Key barriers to use are lack of literacy.

Existing community networks (formal and informal)

Existing community networks include formal groups such as community organisations, volunteer groups, farming groups, citizen's associations, or informal social networks such as networks of family and friends within communities. These existing networks can provide good opportunities for building relationships. Sometimes you will join these networks not to promote specific issues related to your organisation, but to contribute to their objectives and activities. In other words, be a good corporate citizen. Other times, you may seek to join these networks to promote specific objectives of your organisation or to work together with others to achieve a shared objective, for example working on joint programs to manage feral animals in forest management situations.

Level of participation: Using existing community networks can provide a means of effectively interacting with multiple stakeholders in two-way dialogue. However, care is needed in identifying who you will be reaching – some networks are highly exclusive, and if you choose to use existing networks to engage with local communities, you need to identify whether there are any members of these communities who are excluded from the networks you plan to engage with.

Cultural needs: It is not always appropriate to attempt to use existing community networks to engage in dialogue about your organisation's activities. These networks provide a range of important benefits to their members: if your participation in the network has potential to disrupt any of these benefits, you should consider alternative means of engaging with stakeholders. Access to networks will typically be decided by the stakeholders involved, and their views should be respected on whether you should attempt to become a part of the network.

Ability to participate: The key barrier is whether you will be able to participate successfully in the network.

Confidence to participate: This is usually not an issue when connecting to community networks, as the people involved in them are already participating with each other.

Capacity building: As above.

Resourcing needs: Resourcing needs for this type of engagement typically involve staff time. You need to ensure staff members have adequate time to engage in the social network's activities appropriately to enable a meaningful relationship to be developed. For example, if joining a local bushfire volunteer brigade, staff members need to have the ability to attend all relevant volunteer activities.

Work health and safety: Depending on the type of network involved, there may be WH&S issue to consider when encouraging staff of your organisation to take part in the network. These need to be assessed on a case by case basis.

Barriers to use: The cultural constraints mentioned above, and requirement for investment of staff time, can act as barriers.



Assessment 6

This assessment requires you to do your own research using the resources we have provided you, to develop an understanding of a broader range of community engagement techniques you can apply as part of building and maintaining community relationships. Each of the methods you research is a separate assessment activity. You need to generate a similar description to that provided for the methods described in the pages preceding this assessment.

Using the weblinks provided previously and other information you can find, complete at least 3 descriptions for the following community engagement methods:

Method	Description
Face to face	Face to face methods involve directly talking with stakeholders.
Level of participation:	Varies depending on whether you enable two-way communication, and the extent to which the discussion enables all people to have input into decision making.
Cultural needs:	
Ability to participate:	
Confidence to participate:	
Capacity building:	
Resourcing needs:	
Work health and safety:	
Barriers to use:	
Public meetings	Public meetings are meetings called to discuss a specific issue, which are open to any member of a particular community, group, or in many cases any interested stakeholder. They are often used to communicate information about a planned activity or development
Level of participation:	
Cultural needs:	
Ability to participate:	
Confidence to participate:	
Capacity building:	
Resourcing needs:	
Work health and safety:	
Barriers to use:	

Social media (pick a process relevant to your workplace, e.g. blogs, Facebook, Twitter, webpages)	
Level of participation:	
Cultural needs:	
Ability to participate:	
Confidence to participate:	
Capacity building:	
Resourcing needs:	
Work health and safety:	
Barriers to use:	
Field visits	
Level of participation:	
Cultural needs:	
Ability to participate:	
Confidence to participate:	
Capacity building:	
Resourcing needs:	
Work health and safety:	
Barriers to use:	
Committees, advisory groups	
Level of participation:	
Cultural needs:	
Ability to participate:	
Confidence to participate:	
Capacity building:	
Resourcing needs:	
Work health and safety:	
Barriers to use:	

9.

DOCUMENTATION AND FEEDBACK

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

In this section the need for effective feedback to engagement participants, and techniques for such feedback is discussed.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand the need for feedback and the different ways in which feedback can be provided.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON YOUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the biggest challenges to building community relationships is 'consultation fatigue'. People who are regularly asked to take part in community engagement processes can become overburdened, disillusioned, and drop out – creating a real challenge to building and maintaining relationships.

While you cannot address some of the causes of consultation fatigue, one area that can reduce potential for it is ensuring you provide regularly and timely feedback on how your organisation has heard and acted on the discussions you have had with different stakeholders. A common cause of disillusionment is stakeholders feeling they have contributed substantial time and energy, but that their input has not been heard or responded to.

Your community engagement plan should include a plan for providing feedback, and make this a requirement that is expected as part of any engagement process. Feedback may be in the form of a phone call, a conversation regarding the outcomes next time you meet, or a more formal written notification that can be archived as a record of actions taken as a result of community input. For example, following significant community interest and concern regarding the protection and management of koalas during forest operations in Victoria, Australian Bluegum Plantations (ABP) have provided feedback to both the broader community and process participants by making the new Koala Protection and Management Plan available on their website (www.austgum.com.au/australian-plantations-woodchips/koala-program.html)

In addition some regulatory processes require you to maintain documentation regarding engagement activities and outcomes (e.g. forest certification). It is important that such documentation is collected, shared and maintain in due consideration of the prevailing privacy laws. This may require adhering to stakeholder requests regarding anonymity and ensuring access to stored information upon request.



Activity 9.1

Develop a brief plan (1-2 pages) identifying how you can provide feedback to the stakeholders with whom you engage. In this plan, identify principles for (i) when you need to provide feedback, and (ii) what you believe are the most appropriate methods for providing feedback, and why.

10. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

In this section the need for effective monitoring and evaluation of engagement processes, and techniques for such evaluation is discussed, including the provision of feedback of evaluation results.

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Understand the need for monitoring and evaluation to ensure ongoing improvement to engagement practices
- Be able to design an evaluation process for engagement processes undertaken within your workplace
- Understand that like engagement, evaluation is context specific and hence measures, evaluation approaches and feedback mechanisms will vary depending on the engagement objectives and the target audiences.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING YOUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

It is important to learn from your engagement experience to improve the design and implementation of future community relationship building exercises. To do this, you need to monitor and evaluate what has worked well, and what hasn't worked so well, in your relationships with different stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation is best done as a formal process, which is included in your work planning: this ensures you put aside appropriate time to enable you to fully learn from past experience and continuously improve your expertise. While learning from experience is important, a more systematic and deliberate monitoring and evaluation process will help to capture a range of community engagement outcomes and enhance your capacity to improve engagement practices.

Evaluation of community engagement has three purposes^[4]: i) to monitor performance against the initial engagement objectives; ii) to consider what aspects of the engagement process could have been done better; and iii) to collate what learnings from the engagement process can be used to improve future engagement practice^[2].

Evaluation of engagement has the following potential benefits which may or may not be relevant for your workplace:

- improved community engagement practice and capacity
- better understood barriers and opportunities to community engagement
- development of stronger community relationships through transparency in processes
- provision of a focus for future engagement through a better understanding of community relationships and community insights
- improved workplace strategic goals and policies and procedures through better understanding of engagement processes and outcomes.

While evaluation of engagement processes can be undertaken at any stage during the process, it is most effective when incorporated throughout the engagement process, enabling ongoing feedback and opportunity for changes in engagement practices where required.

Designing an evaluation process is much like designing an engagement process, there are four core questions to be considered [2].

1. What is the purpose of the evaluation (desired outcomes)?
2. Who wants to know what (evaluation audience)?
3. What evidence will need to be collected and how (data needs)?
4. What resources are required and when (resource needs)?

The design of engagement evaluation needs to suit the original community engagement objectives, the significance of the forest industry activity (e.g. engagement associated with building a boundary fence will require very little evaluation compared to the engagement associated with the placement of a new engineered wood product mill), and the anticipated evaluation audience (e.g. internal informal audience, regulatory authorities, or a publicly available document).

Explore some of the following resources to learn more about evaluation of community engagement for your workplace:

- http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/105824/Book_2_-_The_Engagement_Planning_Workbook.pdf (from page 37-45 of 168 pages.) [5]
- <http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/documents/engaging-queenslanders-evaluating.pdf> [32] (52 pages)
- <http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf> [2] (see pages 109-122).



Assessment 7

In this assessment you are asked to formally plan the evaluation of the two engagement processes you previously identified in Activity 7.2. This assessment requires you to demonstrate ability to consider and plan how you will evaluate whether you have been successful in building or maintaining community relationships. Plan the engagement evaluation using the systematic process outlined from page 37 in the DSE handbook http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/105824/Book_2_-_The_Engagement_Planning_Workbook.pdf and from page 112 of <http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf>

Outline the purpose of the evaluation	Identify the likely audience of the evaluation and their requirements	What data do you need to collect?	What resources do you need to undertake this evaluation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine whether neighbours are being informed in an effective and timely manner, and whether such a process suits the neighbours needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest managers (information on how to improve) • Local government (evidence that neighbours are informed) • Interested neighbours (understanding on how their concerns have been considered) • Forest certification auditors (systematic analysis and evidence of continual improvement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of neighbours informed • Common response from neighbours • Neighbour preferences and needs for information delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to collect the data • Skills in qualitative interviewing and/or skills in survey design, distribution and analysis

1.			
2.			

CONTEXT OF THE ENGAGEMENT

The context of the engagement being undertaken is an important consideration for evaluation. Understanding the community context can help to recognise influencing external factors (e.g. other political activities, weather, prevailing terms of trade, demographics), interpret results, and identify the risks and benefits associated with different forms of data collation.

Determining the effectiveness of an engagement process can be difficult because of the often subjective and intangible nature of engagement outcomes (e.g. improved relationships) and the long-term focus of many engagement benefits. Data collection tools used relevant to the forest industry include:

- Interviews
- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Expert review
- Secondary data analysis (e.g. project records, media).

These tools have been selected based on the common approaches for building and maintaining community relationships in the forest industry, and the perceived capacity of forest industry workers to conduct evaluation in terms of both resources and aptitude.

Each tool used to collect data for evaluation comes with a range of strengths and weaknesses which can be managed through the careful selection of appropriate design and implementation of data collection (e.g. selection of collection method(s), careful question design, adequate training of evaluation team). See <http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf>^[2] pages 118-120 for more information on these tools.

Evaluation does not have to be formalised and may simply require the completion of a quick checklist to determine what is happening/has happened. Templates that can be completed by you as the person undertaking the engagement process, or by participants are provided on pages 116 and 121 of <http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf>^[2].

Once you have completed the evaluation you need to effectively share the results in consideration of the evaluation's purpose, audience and their needs, and any regulatory obligations (e.g. regulatory compliance, internal company policies, and forest certification requirements).

Evaluation results can be shared using a variety of techniques, including face-to-face at workplace meetings or with stakeholders, on websites, in reports, professional publications, field days, workshops etc. When sharing results it is important to:

- Ensure results are reported in an unbiased and transparent manner
- Make results easy for people to read and understand by using plain English with little jargon
- Provide information in a timely manner so as it can be used in decision-making where relevant
- Ensure reports provide clear guidance on the reliability and applicability (scope) of results and how they should be interpreted.

11. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SECTION

Upon completion of this section you should:

- Bring all of the unit learnings together to develop a comprehensive community engagement strategy relevant to your workplace.

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR YOUR WORKPLACE



Summative assessment

This assessment requires you to bring together the learning from this workbook and demonstrate you have the skills and knowledge to analyse and plan how you will build and maintain community relationships relevant to your workplace. You need to demonstrate knowledge of appropriate levels and methods of engagement (will you consult or co-manage? Use letters or face to face meetings?); an ability to identify and analyse stakeholders; and an ability to analyse the issues at hand and barriers and opportunities you need to consider when building relationships. You must also demonstrate an ability to bring this knowledge together to develop a strategy for community engagement within your workplace.

Develop a strategy for community engagement. This should be in the form of a document in which you identify (i) your engagement obligations, (ii) your engagement objectives, (iii) the issues involved, (iv) the stakeholders involved. Ensure you prioritise the issues and stakeholders (using the work you have done in previous parts of this course). The document should be formatted to ensure it can act as a guide to workplace practice for you and others in your workplace: depending on the guidelines within your workplace, this may require you to format the document according to a standard template for internal workplace policies, and you should explain this formatting as part of the assessment. As an absolute minimum, the document must contain the information listed in the table below. Based on this information, identify what level of engagement should be implemented and when (remembering this may vary among stakeholders), and which engagement methods will be used and why. Ensure you identify any barriers or limitations to the methods you plan to use, and how you will overcome them. Include a plan for the evaluation of the engagement process. For an example of a community engagement strategy that has been developed and used to guide day to day community engagement practice, see the following example from Australian Bluegum Plantations:

- <http://www.austgum.com.au/australian-plantations-woodchips/documents/Stakeholder%20Communication%20and%20Consultation%20Policy.pdf>

Community engagement plan

Engagement objective(s)	Engagement obligations (regulatory, policy etc)	Stakeholders to be involved and why (e.g. neighbours (impacted))	Level of engagement and why	Engagement methods to be used and why (e.g. face-to-face discussions (overcome tension and develop relationships))	Barriers and limitations and how you would overcome them (e.g. ongoing history of conflict so an independent facilitator will be contracted)	Evaluation approach (e.g. online survey of participants)

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

- [1] KU Work Group for Community Health and Development. (2014). Chapter 3, Section 32: Understanding and describing the community. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas. Retrieved May 12, 2014, from the Community Tool Box: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/describe-the-community/main>
- [2] Dare, M., Schirmer, J., and Vanclay, F., 2011, Handbook for Operational Community Engagement within Australian Plantation Forest Management. Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry, Hobart, Tasmania. (<http://www.crcforestry.com.au/publications/downloads/CRCForestry-CE-FINAL.pdf>)
- [3] NSW Government. 2014. Small business toolkit. URL: <http://toolkit.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au/part/17/84/362>
- [4] Queensland Government. 2011. Community engagement guides and factsheets. URL: <http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/>
- [5] Department of Sustainability and Environment. 2005. Effective Engagement: building relationships with community and other stakeholders. Victorian government, Melbourne. URL: <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement>
- [6] International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Continuum of public participation. Available from www.iap2.org.au/documents/item/84
- [7] Institute of Development Studies. No date. Participatory methods. <http://www.participatorymethods.org/#top>
- [8] Ministerial Council on Mineral and Petroleum Resources (MCMPR) 2005. Principles for engagement with communities and stakeholders, Ministerial Council on Mineral and Petroleum Resources. Available from http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0020/41735/mcmpr_principles_nov05.pdf
- [9] IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation). No date. Foundations of public participation. URL: www.iap2.org.au/documents/item/83
- [10] André, P., B. Enserink, D. Connor and P. Croal 2006 Public Participation International Best Practice Principles. Special Publication Series No. 4. Fargo, USA: International Association for Impact Assessment. URL: www.iaia.org/publicdocuments/special-publications/SP4%20web.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1
- [11] Fermilab Community Task Force on Public Participation. 2004. Sample Public Participation Principles From other Organizations. URL: www.fermilabcommunity.org/pdfs/ParticipationPrinciples.pdf
- [12] Dukeshire, S. and Thurlow, J. 2002. Challenges and barriers to community participation in policy development. Rural Communities Impacting Policy Project. URL: www.ruralnovascotia.ca/documents/policy/challenges%20and%20barriers.pdf
- [13] Clifton, D., & Amran, A. (2011). The stakeholder approach: A sustainability perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 98(1), 121-136.
- [14] Forestry Commission. (2011). Public engagement in forestry: a toolbox for public engagement in forest and woodland planning. Forestry Commission, Edinburgh. URL: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5xmf8l>
- [15] Dare, M. L., Vanclay, F., & Schirmer, J. (2012). Public participation in commercial environments: critical reflections on community engagement methods used in the Australian plantation forestry industry. *Australian Forestry*, 75(3), 180-191.
- [16] BiodivERsA (2013) The BiodivERsA Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit. Consultation Draft December 2013. BiodivERsA, Paris. <http://www.biodiversa.org/577>
- [17] Richard, R. 2009. Stockyard Hill Wind Farm Pty Ltd Stakeholder and Community Consultation Report. Stockyard Hill Wind Farm, Hawthorn Victoria.

- URL: www.stockyardhillwindfarm.com.au/pdf/PPAR_Annexes/VOLUME_II/Annex_E-Stakeholder_Community_Consultation_Report.pdf
- [18] Brereton, D. 2005. Developing a Community Impacts Monitoring and Management Strategy: A Guidance Document for Australian Coal Mining Operations. CSRM. URL: www.csrn.uq.edu.au/publications/developing-a-community-impacts-monitoring-and-management-strategy-a-guidance-document-for-australian-coal-mining-operations
- [19] AccountAbility. 2005. The stakeholder engagement manual Volume 2: The practitioner's handbook on stakeholder engagement. URL: www.accountability.org/images/content/2/0/208.pdf
- [20] ChangeSA. No date. Prioritising your stakeholders. Government of South Australia, Adelaide. URL : change.sa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Prioritising_your_stakeholders.pdf
- [21] Bryson, J. M. (2004). What to do when stakeholders matter: stakeholder identification and analysis techniques. Public management review, 6(1), 21-53. URL: http://www.hhh.umh.edu/people/jmbryson/pdf/stakeholder_identification_analysis_techniques.pdf
- [22] Kennon, N., Howden, P. and Hartley, M. 2010. Who really matters ? A stakeholder analysis tool. Extension Farming Systems Journal volume 5 number 2. URL: www.csu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/109602/EFS_Journal_vol_5_no_2_02_Kennon_et_al.pdf
- [23] Better Evaluation. No date. Stakeholder mapping and analysis. URL: http://betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/mapping_stakeholders
- [24] Ham, E. 2011. Some practical tools for stakeholder management. URL: www.brainmates.com.au/brainrants/some-practical-tools-for-stakeholder-management
- [25] Hargie, O. (Ed.). (1997). The handbook of communication skills. Psychology Press.
- [26] Beebe, S. A., Beebe, S. J., Redmond, M. V., & Beebe, S. J. (2011). Interpersonal communication: Relating to others. Allyn & Bacon.
- [27] Schirmer, J. (2007). Plantations and social conflict: exploring the differences between small-scale and large-scale plantation forestry. Small-scale forestry, 6(1), 19-33.
- [28] Conflict Resolution Network. No date. CR Toolkit. URL: http://www.crnhq.org/pages.php?pid=12#skill_2
- [29] Sandman, P. 2014. Outrage management. URL: <http://www.psandman.com/index-OM.htm#key>
- [30] Bang the Table. No date. Online consultation guidebook. URL: www.bangthetable.com/freebies/onlineconsultationguide/
- [31] Beckley, T., Parkins, J., and Sheppard, S. 2005. Public Participation in Sustainable Forest Management: A Reference Guide. Sustainable Forest Management Network, Edmonton, Alberta. URL http://www.northeasternforests.org/FRPC/files/1237487548SR_200506beckleypub_en.pdf
- [32] Johnson, A. 2004. Engaging Queenslanders: evaluating community engagement, Queensland Government

SELF ASSESSMENT

Before commencing on your summative assessment take a few minutes to review this workbook and ensure you feel that you are confident about your skill levels related to this topic.

Use the table below to help you check your skills which have been taken from the Required knowledge and Skills section of the relevant Unit of Competency. Before commencing your final assessments it is important to review any sections in which you feel unsure. Please always ask your assessor/lecturer questions about areas you are unsure about.

In the table below, read the list of skills and knowledge you should have after completing this workbook.

1. Put a tick in the "confident" column if you can do this now and a brief comment re why you believe you have this skill.
2. Put a tick in the next column if you feel you need more practice and must review the work before completing final assessments also a brief comment as to why.
3. If you require further training, complete the third column listing what training is needed. Show this list to your supervisor or assessor and ask for more time or training before completing the summative assessments.

Skills/knowledge you should have	Confident	Need Practice	What additional training do I need?
REQUIRED SKILLS			
Technical skills sufficient to apply workplace safety procedures to building and maintaining community relationships			
Communication skills and interpersonal techniques sufficient to interact appropriately with a variety of community partners to explain complex and formal policies; establish and foster transparent, trusting relationships or partnerships with individuals and communities; work with diverse communities using a range of communication styles to suit different audiences and purposes			
Literacy skills sufficient to detail requirements; write recommendations and prepare community engagement reports requiring complex language structures and precision of expression; prepare community engagement information requiring the presentation of complex information, using simple language structures and precision of expression			
Numeracy skills sufficient to estimate, measure and calculate time required to complete a task			
Problem solving skills sufficient to mediate, negotiate and attempt to obtain consensus between parties; apply lateral thinking to provide solutions and overcome barriers to community engagement			
Planning and organising skills sufficient to facilitate community engagement, including relationship building, networking, negotiation, conflict management and risk management; maintain multiple and potentially conflicting relationships or partnerships			

Skills/knowledge you should have	Confident	Need Practice	What additional training do I need?
REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE			
Applicable commonwealth, state or territory legislation, regulations, standards, codes of practice and established safe practices relevant to the full range of processes for building and maintaining community relationships			
Organisational requirements, policies and procedures for building and maintaining community relationships			
Community engagement theory, principles, practices and techniques			
Community development principles and practices			
Leadership principles and the management of expectations in the context of community engagement			
Local factors affecting community development and consultation processes			
Strategies for community consultation			
Processes of individual advocacy and group advocacy			
Cultural awareness			
Characteristics contributing to community diversity			
Organisational policies related to communication and the media			
Workplace safety procedures relating to community engagement activities			
Established communication channels and protocols			
Problem identification and resolution strategies			
Procedures for recording and reporting workplace information			


FEEDBACK

This learning resource has been developed to guide you through available topical information and to set activities for you to do that help you gain knowledge and skills appropriate to your work place or situation. Your competency will be assessed through your successful completion of the activities to a satisfactory standard and submitting these for review. Please complete the following table to notify us of an errors and suggested improvements.

Resource title	<i>Build and Maintain Community Relationships</i>
-----------------------	--

Page	Description of error	Suggested improvement
	web site link doesn't work	update link
	reference obsolete or unavailable	provide currently relevant or accessible reference, such as ...
	The activity is unrealistic and unhelpful	change it to ...

Additional comments

 [Click here to email your feedback form to ForestWorks](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Preparation of this training resource has been a collaborative effort between ForestWorks and the Institute of Foresters of Australia. It is one of a set of seven as follows:

1. Manage sustainability in the workplace (assessment framework only)
2. Implement sustainable forestry practice
3. Manage tree harvesting to minimise environmental impact
4. Undertake carbon stock sampling of forests and plantations
5. Manage sustainable tree inventory
6. Promote plantations as a sustainable form of landuse
7. Build and maintain community relationships.

Project team

The project drew on the depth and breadth of technical knowledge and subject matter expertise of IFA staff, members and other experts.

Technical review

Thank you to the technical reviewers. People from the following organisations provide critical feedback on one or more of the above-mentioned resources: Forecast Climate Management Services, Treepoint, University of Canberra, Lynea Advisory, Moore Global, Private Forests Tasmania, Forest Products Commission (WA), Timber Communities Australia, HQP, South East Fibre Exports, Timberlink, Carbon Training International, Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW – Tumut, Department of Environment, Fares Rural, University of Melbourne, Agrisilva Industries, GCS, FAO, VicForests, HVP, Australian National University, Natural Resources South East SA, AFPA.

Steering committee

Thank you to the steering committee for project oversight to ensure the resources met the needs of possible end user groups including enterprises, RTOs, and Higher Education. The committee was made up of representatives from TAFE NSW, Macquarie Agriculture, Killin Management, Green Triangle Forest Products, Forestry Tasmania, Southern Cross University, Timber Training Creswick, HVP, McLeod Industry Training and Forestworks ISC.

ForestWorks ISC

Freecall 1800 177 001

Forestworks@forestworks.com.au

@ForestWorks

www.forestworks.com.au

ABN: 39 946 785 543



Australian Government
Department of Industry

ForestWorks ISC activities are assisted by funding provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Industry.