Government Gazette

of the State of

New South Wales

Number 163 - Other
Thursday, 24 April 2025

The New South Wales Government Gazette is the permanent public record of official NSW Government notices. It can also contain local council, non-government and other notices.

Each notice in the Government Gazette has a unique reference number that appears in parentheses at the end of each page of the notice and can be used as a reference for that notice. For example, [NSWGG-2024-10-1].

The Gazette is compiled by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office and published on the NSW Government Gazette website (www.gazette.nsw.gov.au) under the authority of the NSW Government. The website contains a permanent archive of past Gazettes.

To submit a notice for gazettal, visit the website.

NSW Admission Board First Amendment Rule 2025

under the

Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014

The Legal Profession Admission Board made the following rule under the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 on 11 February 2025.

Jerry Riznyczok

Executive Officer of the Board

Explanatory note

The object of this rule is to amend the NSW Admission Board Rules 2015 to substitute the term Presiding Member for President, update the current subjects examined by the Board, and make some other miscellaneous amendments.

1 Name of Rule

This Rule is the NSW Admission Board First Amendment Rule 2025.

2 Commencement

This Rule commences on its publication in the New South Wales Government Gazette.

3 Amendment of NSW Admission Board Rules

The NSW Admission Board Rules 2015 is amended as follows:

(1) Add the following heading to Rule 7:

"Executive Officer and deputies"

(2) In subrule 2 of Rule 7, replace "President" with "Presiding Member".

(3) Add the following heading to Rule 8:

"Duties of the Executive Officer"

(4) In Rule 8, replace the words "Public Finance and" with "Government Sector".

(5) Add the following heading to Rule 9:

"Corporate Seal"

(6) In subrule 2 of Rule 9, replace "President" with "Presiding Member".

(7) Add the following heading to Rule 53:

"Examinable subjects"

(8) In Rule 53, replace "Legal Institutions" with "Foundations of Law"

(9) In Rule 53, swap the places of "Contracts" and "Criminal Law and Procedure"

(10) In Rule 53, replace "Local Government and Planning" with "Planning & Environmental Law"

(11) In Rule 53, replace "Understanding Legal Language and Legislation" with "Advanced Statutory Interpretation"

(12) In Rule 53, add "Health Law".

(13) In subrule 1 of Rule 67, add the word "rule" before the number 66A.

(14) Add the following heading to Rule 89:

"Hearing committee"

(15) In Rule 89, replace "President" with "Presiding Member".

(16) Add the following heading to Rule 90:

"Composition of hearing committee"

(17) In Rule 90, replace "President" with "Presiding Member" wherever appearing.

(18) Add the word "(Repealed)" in bold after the notation "110-112"

(19) In subrule 1(c) of Rule 113A, replace the comma with a full stop.

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

EXEMPTION ORDER

Under the provisions of section 126 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW), an exemption is given from sections 8 and 51of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) to Lake Macquarie City Council to advertise, designate, and recruit two Natural Area Conservation Trainee positions for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons only.

This exemption will remain in force for 5 years.

Date: 17 April 2025

Katherine Nelson
A/g Manager, Governance & Advice
Delegate of the President
Anti-Discrimination NSW

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

EXEMPTION ORDER

Under the provisions of section 126 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW), an exemption is given from sections 8 and 51 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) to the **University of Wollongong** to advertise, designate and recruit positions and opportunities (including but not limited to work placements, traineeships, and apprenticeships) for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people only in pursuit of a workforce participation rate of 3%.

This exemption will remain in force for 10 years.

Date: 14 April 2025

Katherine Nelson
Manager, Governance & Advice
Delegate of the President
Anti-Discrimination NSW

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

EXEMPTION ORDER

Under the provisions of section 126 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW), an exemption is given from sections 8, 10 and 51 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) to the **Legal Aid Commission of NSW** to designate, target and recruit positions and provide targeted programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people only, in pursuit of an 11% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation rate, including to provide:

- Targeted support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in preparation for recruitment processes
- Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into senior executive roles
- Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into entry-level employment programs including graduate programs, scholarship programs, traineeships, and internships
- Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into frontline service delivery roles
- Targeted development programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including targeted talent management and mobility programs, leadership development, coaching, shadowing and sponsorship development opportunities
- Capability development, mentoring and connecting programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leaders and potential leaders.

This exemption will remain in force for 7 years.

Date: 22 April 2025

Jackie Lyne
A/ Executive Manager
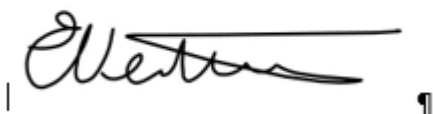**Delegate of the President**
Anti-Discrimination NSW

ORDER

GAS AND ELECTRICITY (CONSUMER SAFETY) ACT 2017

SECTION 20

I, Elizabeth Verteouris, Director Licensing and Accreditation, declare pursuant to section 20 of the *Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017* that the scheme for the approval or certification of models of declared electrical articles respectively conducted by the person specified in Schedule Two of this Order is:

    a)   for a period of five years, a recognised external approval scheme for the purposes of Part 2 of the Act; and

    b)   subject to the conditions imposed pursuant to clause 21(4) of the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018 in Schedule One.

Elizabeth Verteouris,
Director Licensing and Accreditation

SCHEDULE ONE

RECOGNISED EXTERNAL APPROVAL SCHEMES - CONDITIONS
Conditions imposed by the Minister pursuant to Section 21 (4) of the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018

<u>Interpretation and definitions</u>

These conditions are imposed by the Minister in addition to the requirements of *the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017* and the *Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018*.

"Scheme" means the Recognised External Approval Scheme declared by the Minister.

"Article" or "Electrical Article" shares the definition of "Declared Electrical Article" in Section (12) (1) of the *Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017*.

"Assessment" includes Evaluation.

Any reference to the Manager in these conditions means a reference to:
* Director, Licensing and Accreditation, Department of Customer Service; or
* Manager, Electrical & Gas Approvals, NSW Fair Trading

<u>These conditions apply to the approval of declared Articles only</u>

1 Facilities

1.1 The Scheme shall have and maintain its principal place of business suitable for the approval or certification of Electrical Articles within the countries of Australia or New Zealand.

1.2 The Scheme shall inform the Manager of changes to the location of the Scheme's principal place of business 14 business days prior to any change.

2 Personnel

2.1 All personnel conducting the assessment, review or decision making of approval or certification applications shall be direct employees of the Scheme or, in the case of contracted personnel, the Scheme shall not utilise such contracted personnel for such activities unless they have been approved and confirmed by the Manager.

2.2 The Scheme shall ensure personnel reviewing or making decisions regarding approval or certification have suitable qualifications, experience and competence.

2.3 The Scheme shall not authorise or otherwise permit other persons to assess, review, approve or certify an Article on behalf of the Scheme.

2.4   The Scheme shall inform the Manager of any changes to personnel conducting the assessment, review or decision making of approval or certification applications within 14 business days of the change.

2.5   The Scheme shall ensure that all persons who will approve or certify Electrical Articles are aware of the Scheme's approval or certification procedure and are trained in relation to the procedures.

3   JASANZ Accreditation

3.1   The Scheme shall maintain JASANZ accreditation; the Scheme shall not approve or certify (including to modify or renew) Electrical Articles unless the Scheme has the class specification for the Electrical Article within their JASANZ Scope (exclusive of any updates / versions of standards).

3.2   The Scheme shall provide the Manager with any changes within 14 business days to their JASANZ accreditation or scope, including following each JASANZ reaccreditation. This requirement does not include any change in accreditation or scope that is only related to the updating of standards, or changes that are not related to class specification(s) in the NSW Gazette.

3.3   The Scheme shall inform the Manager of any major non-conformances arising from JASANZ audits (including draft reports) within 14 business days.

4   Certificates of Currency

4.1   The Scheme shall maintain adequate insurance; Public Liability insurance (minimum $20,000,000 cover), adequate Professional Indemnity insurance and current Certificate of Currency.

4.2   The Scheme shall annually provide the Manager with current Certificate of Currency.

5   Test reports.

5.1   The Scheme shall verify that any laboratory conducting testing has current ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation from a National Laboratory Accreditation Body with a Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) with the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) or IECEE CBTL to test the product to the relevant standard.

The test reports shall show the laboratory's accreditation ID, the standards that were used to conduct the test and the test results for the Article.

Photographs in the test report must provide clear and comprehensive identification of the Article; sufficient supplementary photographs shall be requested and supplied if not suitably provided by the test reports.

5.2   The test reports shall show that the Article that was approved or certified complies with the class specification, and any other standard(s) that apply to the Article (if any). This does not preclude the use of formal declarations linking the trade name / model of the article to be approved or certified to the trade name / model of the article referenced in the report.

However, the Scheme may verify that an Electrical Article conforms with a clause of a standard by inspection (including photographs), provided that;

- The clause specifies and allows inspection to verify compliance; and
- The scheme is able to demonstrate that such verification of conformance can be reliably done without any testing or examination of a physical sample; and
- The certification file contains a justification validating the use of this provision.

5.3   CTF (Customers' Testing Facilities) Stage 3 and CTF Stage 4 are not acceptable for approvals or certificates from twelve months from the date of this notice (ref: IECEE OD-2048). This does not apply for modifications or renewals on existing models where the previous certification was based on CTF Stage 3 or CTF Stage 4.

5.4   Any additional instructions provided with the electrical article that are not related to the requirements of the class specifications should not mislead or contradict requirements of applicable safety standards.

6   Independence of Judgment and Conflict of Interest

6.1   The Scheme shall ensure that all persons authorised by it to approve or certify Electrical Articles on its behalf:

a) act independently, impartially and with integrity, and not have any conflict of interest, when approving or certifying Electrical Articles; and
b) not engage in any activity that conflicts, or may conflict, with independence of their judgement and integrity in relation to the approving or certifying of Electrical Articles.

6.2   The Scheme shall:

a) have documented procedures in place to avoid, and to manage, conflicts of interest; and
b) ensure that its personnel are aware of those procedures and are trained in relation to those procedures; and
c) keep a record of that training.

7   Approval or Certification Procedure

7.1   The Scheme shall not approve or certify an Electrical Article if it knows or suspects that by its design or construction it is unsafe to use.

7.2   The Scheme shall have in place an approval or certification procedure to ensure that an Electrical Article will not be approved or certified if:

a) the Electrical Article is unsafe to use; or
b) it does not comply with the relevant class specification; or
c) it does not comply with any other standard(s) that may apply to the Article (if any); or
d) it is noncompliant to provisions in the Act or Regulation; or
e) it is not suitable for connection to the electricity supply.

7.3 The Scheme is to ensure any approval or certification procedures are consistent with these conditions imposed by the Minister.

7.4 The Scheme shall submit any changes to the Scheme, including any amended versions of the approval or certification procedures, to the Manager within 14 business days of the change.

8 Approval or Certification of Electrical Articles

8.1 The Scheme shall not approve or certify an Article (including a modification to an approved Article and any renewal to that Article) unless the Scheme is satisfied the Article complies with –

a) the class specification nominated for the Article (including any modifications) to that specification by order in the Government Gazette; or
b) any model specification nominated by the Manager in writing to the Scheme (if any)

applicable at the time of approval or certification.

8.2 In the case of a modified Article, the complete Article must comply with the nominated class specification applicable at the time of approval or certification; this compliance is not limited to requirements associated with the modification.

- A modified Article is an Article that is not of the same design, materials and construction as the originally approved Article. Minor modifications as detailed by an exemption issued under the *Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2004* or *Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017* are exempt.

A Scheme may cancel the approval or certification of a model of Article without cancelling the approval or certification of other models that share the same certificate. In this case, such cancellation shall also be recorded via a modification to the certificate.

8.3 The Scheme shall not grant an approval or certificate of longer than five years.

Renewal(s) may be granted for a period up to five years. Applications for renewal must be received before the expiry date of the Approval or Certificate; an expired certificate or approval cannot be renewed – a new certificate must be issued (in this case the authorised mark should align with that of the expired certificate)

A modified approval or certificate shall not alter the date of expiry of a certificate.

The Scheme may extend an approval or certificate but only where the Manager's written authorisation has been provided. The extension period is determined by the Manager for a period not exceeding twelve months.

8.4 The Scheme may, on a certificate, include reference to a published standard edition or amendment that is not yet applicable or not yet in the gazetted class specification, only if;

   a) any certificate that include references to such future standard edition or amendment shall accurately reflect evidence of compliance as determined by the Scheme.
   b) it is not a relaxation of the currently gazetted class specification.

8.5 (Void)

8.6 The Scheme shall not rely on the approval or certificate of any other scheme or regulator in lieu of *test evidence* when issuing an approval or certificate.

   Note: Examples that usually do not require *test evidence* includes components or accessories, such as plugs and cords attached to, or contained within, the Article.

9 Approval or Certification Notices

9.1 The Scheme shall, where an approval or certification has been granted, provide the applicant, a written notice with the following particulars-

   a) the name of the certificate holder;
   b) a description of the model (including marked brand or trade name);
   c) the fact that the Scheme has approved the Article;
   d) the date of the approval;
   e) the duration or the expiry date of the approval;
   f) the authorised mark to be applied to the Article to evidence that approval;
   g) the model reference code;
   h) the declared class;
   i) the certificate number / reference number; and
   j) the fact that the Scheme is recognised by the NSW Act
   k) the specification(s) of the Article
   l) the rating / wattage of the article (if applicable)
   m) the conditions placed on the approval or certification (if any)

   Note: an example suitable to satisfy point j) could be:

   This certificate was issued by [a scheme */ ABC Pty Ltd*] recognised by [the NSW Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act */* the NSW Recognised External Approval Scheme (REAS)]

   Note: Specifications mean any of the following as appropriate; Standards, class specifications (per the NSW gazette) or model specifications (per section 8.1)

9.2 The Scheme shall, where an approval or certificate of a modified Article has been granted, provide the applicant for that approval with written notice of the approval or certification of that modified Article and of the details of the modification.

9.3   The Scheme shall, where an approval or certificate has been renewed, provide the applicant for that renewal with written notice of that renewal.

10   Certification Records

10.1   The Scheme shall maintain a computerised record of all approval or certificates (including modifications and renewals). The record shall contain-

    a) the particulars of the approvals or certificates as listed in clause 9.1 above;

    b) details of any modified, renewed, suspended or cancelled approvals or certificate; and

    c) details of any changes in the name of the approval or certificate holder, in the model reference code or in the description of an approved or certified Article.

10.2   The Scheme shall, on request, provide the Manager with any or all records, including test reports and photographs, submitted to the Scheme associated with an approval or certification granted by the Scheme. These records shall be maintained for at least 10 years from the date of expiry of the approval or certificate.

11   Approval or Certification Database

11.1   The Scheme shall provide to the Manager or NSW Fair Trading officer upon request, the computerised approval or certification records, or other records required by NSW Fair Trading.

12   Registered Mark

12.1   The authorised mark is of a standard format of ABC-XXXXXX-EA, where 'ABC-' are any 2 or 3 capital letters to identify the Scheme, 'XXXXXX' are any six numerals and '-EA' cannot be changed. See SCHEDULE TWO for authorised marks.

12.2   The Scheme shall not authorise the RCM as a substitute to the mark authorised by the Minister.

12.3   The Scheme is permitted to pre-allocate relevant authorised marks.

12.4   The Scheme shall inform the Manager and other relevant authorities as directed, within five business days, of the details where it becomes aware that an Article, marked with the Scheme's authorised mark, has been sold or is on sale without the approval or certification of the Scheme.

12.5   The Scheme may alternatively authorise the placement of the authorised mark to be made on a container, or a label affixed to a bundle, in which the articles are sold, as indicated on the relevant certificate but only where the Manager's written authorisation has been provided.

13 Cancellation and Suspended Approvals or Certificates

13.1 The Scheme may cancel or suspend an approval or certificate issued by the Scheme.

13.2 The Manager may (adopting the provisions in section 18 and section 19 of the Act) by written notice given to the Scheme, require the Scheme to:

a) suspend the model approval or certificate for a period not exceeding 90 days, or

b) cancel the model approval or certificate.

13.3 The Scheme shall advise the approval holder and other relevant authorities as directed, in a form acceptable to the manager, within five business days of a cancellation or suspension of an approval or certificate.

13.4 The Scheme shall advise the Manager and other relevant authorities as directed within one business day of the details of any cancellation or suspension of an approval or certificate.

14 Audit Assessment

14.1 The Scheme shall allow the Manager or NSW Fair Trading Officer to assess the Scheme, which may include an inspection of the premises and examination of documentation in relation to the Schemes approval or certification processes and issued approvals or certificates, at any time during business hours or by prior agreement.

15 Fees Payable

15.1 The Scheme agrees to pay the Department in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018 where appropriate.

16 Notification and Reports

16.1 The Scheme shall provide the Manager with a written report every six months for the periods beginning 1 January and 1 July within twenty eight business (28) days of the end of that period. The report shall specify for that period for all initial, renewal and modification approvals or certificates;

- the certificate type, article type, certificate number, authorised marks, certificate date and applicant
- any preallocated authorised marks that are without an associated approval

Note: It is not necessary to include test evidence or certificates in this report.

16.2 The Scheme must provide any notifications, documentation, information or reports for the Manager in writing to: energyapprovals@customerservice.nsw.gov.au

SCHEDULE TWO

Scheme	Authorised mark *
UL International New Zealand Limited (NZBN 9429033144313)	ULL-xxxxxx-EA

* 'xxxxxx' are any six numerals

Regional Communities Consultation Guide

For community engagement practitioners engaging on behalf of the NSW Government

April 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The Premier's Department acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this Guide.

Enquiries

Enquiries relating to this publication or use of material in the publication should be directed to the Premier's Department:

T 02 9228 5555

W nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/premiers-department/contact-us

Contents

1   Introduction

The Regional Communities Consultation Guide (the Guide) outlines the NSW Government's approach to consulting with regional, rural and remote communities, including Aboriginal communities, to make better decisions and improve the lives of people across NSW.

Community and stakeholder engagement is fundamental to good government. It provides the platform to develop strong, effective and sustainable policies, programs and projects that meet community needs and deliver better outcomes. It leads to inclusive planning, informed decision-making as well as greater trust and confidence in government.

However, there are challenges associated with community engagement in regional, rural and remote areas, including digital disadvantage and limited availability of well-resourced local media outlets. These are intensified by:

- sparsely populated regions

- long distances between individuals and communities

- diverse climates and communities

- cultural and linguistic barriers.

The NSW Government is committed to addressing these challenges to ensure efficient and effective consultation with communities. Meaningful and inclusive public consultation across the state builds greater trust among citizens, while also demonstrating transparency in government engagement processes and strengthening accountability.

This Guide draws upon the collective knowledge of community engagement specialists and community feedback to ensure that the NSW Government engages in consultation processes that are able to identify and understand the priorities and expectations of regional, rural and remote communities.

By developing the Guide, the NSW Government is furthering its commitment to continually increasing and improving the skills and capabilities in community engagement across the sector. This will help strengthen meaningful public participation practices in NSW and improve outcomes in all of these communities.

2   Purpose

The purpose of this Guide is to incorporate internationally recognised best practice into NSW Government consultation with regional, rural and remote communities that face unique public participation challenges. The standards set out in this Guide are intended to be applied flexibly and sensitively to meet the needs of each consultation and each community.

Compliance with the Guide is required for certain consultations (see Section 5 – Scope) by the *Regional Communities (Consultation Standards) Act 2024* (**the Act**).

This Guide:

- sets standards for NSW Government consultations in regional communities across NSW

- provides certainty to communities about what they can expect of NSW Government consultation.

Use of the Guide will lead to more locally relevant and culturally appropriate engagement when consulting with regional, rural and remote communities.

3   Vision

Community outcomes:

- There is improved engagement and stronger, respectful relationships with regional, rural and remote communities.

- People and communities can help inform and influence decisions that impact them.

- They know that their views have been listened to by the NSW Government.

Sector outcomes:

- The public sector engages effectively with communities across regional, rural and remote NSW.

- The workforce has the skills, resources and competencies to undertake effective engagement and uses community feedback to inform decision-making.

4   Definition

IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) Australasia, the peak body for the community and stakeholder engagement sector, defines engagement as:

> an intentional process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders, and communities to shape the decisions or actions of members of the community, stakeholders, or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity, or outcome.

Throughout this document, there are references to 'engagement' as 'consultation' to ensure consistency with the language used in the Act. For the purposes of this document, the term 'consultation' refers to all engagement beyond the 'inform' level on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (Appendix A: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation).

5   Scope

This Guide ensures that those who are affected by a decision are involved in the decision-making process. It ensures regional, rural and remote communities are provided with genuine opportunities to participate meaningfully in that process, despite the unique public participation challenges they face due to their location.

This Guide applies to consultations with regional communities that are:

- primarily directed to, or primarily impacts on, the health, cultural, environmental, economic, educational or other wellbeing of persons in the regional community and

- carried out by, or for:

  — the State,

  — a NSW Government agency, or

  — a statutory body representing the Crown.

(a relevant consultation)

This means that the NSW Government – including Ministers, departments, NSW Government agencies and most NSW Government entities – will be required to use this Guide for relevant consultations.

The Guide does not apply to a consultation:

- required by or under another Act to be carried out in a specified way, or

- in relation to the exercise of a function that is not subject to the direction or control of a Minister.

The Guide does not create an obligation for the NSW Government to consult on any particular matter.

The Guide applies only to relevant consultations and does not apply to other NSW Government communications or activities in the regions (for example, Ministerial visits or emergency responses).

The Guide is intended to be applied by all who lead community and stakeholder engagement processes on behalf of the NSW Government in regional, rural and remote NSW. It sets out principles, standards and a quality assurance framework.

These are intended as the minimum standards for practitioners to apply to community consultations for NSW Government projects, programs or services.

6   Principles

These principles should guide NSW Government community consultation practices in regional, rural and remote communities in NSW. They have been developed in consultation with engagement specialists and community representatives.

Principle	In practice, this looks like:
Meaningful	- Consultation activities have a clearly defined purpose and objectives that are shared with the public. - The process is focused on achieving an outcome, but not one that is pre-determined. - Participants are provided with adequate time, background information and opportunities to participate in a meaningful way. - Consultation activities and processes make it as easy as possible for community to participate and provide input. - Genuinely listening to the community as part of the consultation, ensuring a diverse range of voices are heard.
Transparent	- Promoting the opportunity to take part in the consultation across a variety of digital and non-digital communications channels, with sufficient notice (ideally 4 weeks). - Recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers. - Honesty about the level of influence the public has in the decision-making process. Explaining why some decisions can be influenced by the consultation, while others cannot. - Early and ongoing communication with stakeholders, including timely progress updates at various stages of the consultation process and project timeline. - Advising participants, where suitable, on how their consolidated feedback affected, or did not affect, the decision at the end of a consultation (ideally within 3 months).
Localised	Partnering with local community leaders (including local government/Joint Organisations and Aboriginal Land Councils) to identify relevant stakeholder groups (including hard-to-reach cohorts), as well as strategies for engaging with them.

Principle	In practice, this looks like:
	• Recognising every community is different (from large regional centres to small remote villages and discreet Aboriginal communities), understanding community characteristics and taking a place-based approach. • Tailoring the communications and community consultation approach to specific community needs in terms of timing, location, language and style. • Leveraging trusted local sources of information to raise awareness of consultation opportunities via existing networks and communications channels. • Appreciating that people's time is limited, and making consultation as easy and streamlined as possible – this may include piggybacking off existing community events/engagement activities to help reduce consultation fatigue.
Inclusive	• Consultation design that enables the full participation of all who wish to be involved. • Identifying and overcoming any barriers to participation, including, where reasonable, asking individuals or groups how they would like to participate and designing the process accordingly. • Considering local historical, social and cultural context. Seeking local advice about appropriate consultation timings, locations and culturally aware/safe engagement. • Providing the community with accurate and easy-to-understand information. Technical information is communicated for the layperson. Translations, interpreters, accessible formats and audio-visual aids are considered. • Seeking diverse opinions to build a greater understanding of the broad range of community views and values.
Flexible	• Adapting engagement plans and the timing of consultation activities to meet the needs of community members (for example, farmers during harvest season, or working parents). • Reviewing consultation at the end of each stage to identify opportunities to improve practice and increase participation. • Including mechanisms for input from individual, organisational or marginalised voices that may not have been identified in the initial stakeholder analysis/engagement activities. • Ensuring consultation is fit-for-purpose and suitably adaptable to respond to changing dynamics among stakeholder groups (for example, it may not be appropriate to consult on a non–recovery related project too soon after a natural disaster). • Building extra time and resources into the planning so consultation can be responsive to changing needs of the community (for example, Sorry Business in Aboriginal communities).

Implementation of these principles in each case must consider the purpose of the consultation and any associated issues including, but not limited to, time constraints, Cabinet or other confidentiality requirements, and other restrictions on the use of information.

7   Standards

The below standards will assist the NSW Government to develop engagement processes that are tailored to each relevant consultation and community needs. The standards should be aligned to and adapted in a manner that is suitable for the intended purpose and scope of each consultation.

Standard	Description
Purpose definition	It is important to clearly define the purpose of the consultation and explain why the planned consultation is occurring, so people understand its intent. Defining the purpose includes a statement of the specific consultation objectives and the rationale behind the consultation.
Level of participation (refer to Appendix A: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation)	Where possible, clarifying the intended level of participation at the outset of a project can help both practitioners and participants understand the opportunity for community input to influence an outcome. This will also help to determine the most appropriate consultation methods.
Stakeholder analysis	Stakeholder groups need to be identified to ensure a thorough consultation process. Practitioners need to understand the interests, values and needs of each stakeholder group. This will heavily influence the communication and consultation techniques employed for a specific project.
Accessibility and inclusivity	Accessibility ensures everyone can use and access systems, environments and information. Inclusivity focuses on creating safe spaces where everyone feels valued and respected, and can fully participate. Practitioners will need to identify and overcome potential barriers to access and inclusion for their stakeholders.
Planning and approval	A communications and engagement plan outlines the way in which the engagement practitioner intends to involve the stakeholder groups in influencing the relevant project. The plan should include the purpose definition and intended level of participation, a stakeholder list and schedule of activities.
Implementation	Community and stakeholder consultation should be implemented in accordance with the details set out in any engagement plan. The execution of the plan should ensure methods of consultation are fit-for-purpose and suitably adaptable to respond to changing dynamics among stakeholder groups.
Evaluation	Evaluation enables the practitioner to review feedback received as part of a consultation and make recommendations. Where appropriate, it may also involve undertaking a review and evaluation of the engagement plan and activities themselves, so lessons learnt can inform continuous improvement.
Closing the loop	This is an integral part of the process and refers to providing information to stakeholders about the status of the project they were consulted on, ideally within 3 months. Where appropriate, it should include how their consolidated feedback has or will influence a project outcome.

Not all standards may be appropriate for consultations that are smaller, form part of routine practice for policy or legislation development, or are addressing urgent community matters.

8   Quality Assurance Framework

This standard-derived self-assessment checklist has been developed to support practitioners as they develop, implement and evaluate their community engagement plans.

The specific objectives of the Quality Assurance Framework are:

- to better assure the quality of consultation in regional, rural and remote NSW
- to improve confidence and certainty in the process of community and stakeholder consultation, both for practitioners and participants

- to regulate practitioner activity by establishing a minimum standard for the process of community and stakeholder consultation.

Standard	Self-assessment checklist
Purpose definition	• Have you clearly identified the project and consultation objectives? • Have the purpose and objectives of the consultation been communicated with the public in advance of activities?
Level of participation (refer to Appendix A: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation)	• Have you explained where in the project or policy lifecycle the consultation is being undertaken (what has been done to date/will follow)? • Have you clearly defined the negotiable and non-negotiable elements of the decision making? • Where appropriate, have you explained why some decisions can be influenced by the consultation, while others cannot?
Stakeholder analysis	• Have you partnered with local community leaders (including local government/Joint Organisations and Aboriginal Land Councils) to identify relevant stakeholder groups (including hard-to-reach cohorts), as well as strategies for engaging with them? • Have you identified any existing activities or events that you may be able to leverage/incorporate your engagement activities into, to increase reach and reduce engagement fatigue? • Have you reviewed and considered existing local priorities and data collated through the development of the council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP)/Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R)? • If engaging with communities in a cross-border council area, have you considered stakeholders in the adjacent jurisdictions who may be able to assist with/contribute to the process? • Have you considered the capacity and willingness of each stakeholder group to participate (including potential barriers to participation and how to overcome them)?
Accessibility and inclusivity	• Do your communications and engagement activities enable the full participation of all who wish to be involved? • Have you considered the need for translations, interpreters, accessible formats and audio-visual aids to enable easy/accessible two-way communication? • Have you contacted the relevant Local Aboriginal Land Council/s to seek advice about appropriate consultation timings, locations and culturally aware/safe engagement? • Have you considered safety, privacy and confidentiality to encourage participation without fear of negative consequences, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues (like domestic and family violence)?
Planning and approval	• Do your chosen consultation methodologies align to the level of influence the community has in decision-making (see Appendix A: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation for more information). • Have you identified if there are opportunities to collaborate locally, by piggybacking off existing community events/engagement activities to help reduce consultation fatigue? • Have you provided the community with reasonable notice of engagement activities in their area? Where feasible, 4 weeks' notice is ideal.

Standard	Self-assessment checklist
Implementation	• Is the information you plan to present accurate and easy to understand for the layperson or the relevant stakeholder group? • Have you used a variety of digital and non-digital communications channels and networks to raise awareness of consultation opportunities, including leveraging local, trusted sources of information? • Have participants been provided adequate time, background information and opportunities to participate in a meaningful way? • Have you undertaken early, proactive and direct communication with directly impacted stakeholders?
Evaluation	• Has your evaluation identified any gaps in participation and whether key stakeholders' views have been represented? Consider information needs that are still to be addressed. • Have you determined an approach to manage out-of-scope queries or issues? Consider referral pathways. • Where appropriate, have you undertaken an evaluation of the engagement plan and activities, including possible participant feedback on the process, so lessons learnt can inform continuous improvement?
Closing the loop	• Have you provided a timeframe of when participants can expect a project update? • Have you communicated the next steps of the engagement process with participants and stakeholders? • Where appropriate, have you informed participants how community feedback was considered and to what extent it contributed to the decision-making process? • Have you provided this consolidated feedback to the community in a number of ways to ensure accessibility?

9 Examples of appropriate engagement methods

We engaged with representatives of regional, rural and remote communities across NSW to develop a list of regionally appropriate face-to-face and online engagement methodologies that support an effective and meaningful consultation process.

In general, the planning process should seek to incorporate appropriate engagement methodologies, taking into account the level of engagement that is suitable for each consultation project and each community.

The below table is adapted from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (Appendix A: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation) and IAP2 Methods Matrix. It contains some useful suggestions for practitioners depending on the level of participation required (noting 'inform' is not consultation as it does not require input from the public).

While this is not an exhaustive or definitive list of activities that must occur, it provides options to consider.

Level of participation	Example engagement methodologies
Inform – to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the	• Advertising – radio, TV, newspapers • Flyer

Level of participation	Example engagement methodologies
problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	• Letter • Newsletter • Poster • Social media • Website • SMS
Consult – to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	• Door knocking • Dotmocracy (dot voting) • Have Your Say pages/public exhibition • Public meeting • Open house (online or offline) • Vox pops • Webinars • Randomised sampling (telephone)
Involve – to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	• Action research • Community working groups • Focus groups • Online discussion forum • Polling • Surveys • Summit
Collaborate – to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	• Co-design • Community reference/advisory groups • Interviews (online and offline) • Panels (online and offline) • Summit • Workshops • Yarning circles
Empower – to place final decision-making in the hands of the public.	• Consensus conference • Citizens assembly • Citizens jury • Crowd funding • Participatory budgeting • Participatory editing • Voting

It is also important to consider the suitability of engagement methods in relation to the safety, privacy and confidentiality of participants, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues (like domestic and family violence). In these situations you should also consider whether participants have been linked with appropriate services to support their safe participation.

10 Examples of appropriate communications channels

It is important to use local, trusted sources of information in a timely manner to promote upcoming consultation opportunities, without over-relying on digital or social media channels.

We engaged with representatives of regional, rural and remote communities across NSW to develop a list of locally relevant communications channels and distribution methods. While this is not an exhaustive or definitive list of activities that must occur, it provides options to consider.

Communications channels	Distribution methods
Deploy a variety of communications materials/activities to ensure message penetration.	Identify community leaders and gathering points that can be used as communications distribution channels.
• Website • Social media • Email • Advertising – print and digital • Media releases • Paid advertising • Radio • Television • Newspapers • Community newsletters – print and digital • Variable Message Signs (VMS) • Posters • Flyers • Letters • Letterbox drops • Rates notices • Video messages • Foyer screens • Displays • Signage • On-hold telephone messages • Public exhibition	• Direct contact with affected individuals and individual stakeholder organisations • Community leaders, including elected representatives • Local government and Joint Organisations • Regional Leadership Executive • Local Aboriginal Land Councils • Community noticeboards • Businesses and business chambers • Banks • Supermarkets • News agencies/post offices • Vets/animal hospitals • Petrol stations • GPs/health and wellbeing groups • Schools/P&C associations/childcare centres • Hairdressers/beauticians • Real estate agents and community housing providers • Transport hubs/companies (bus, taxi, etc) • Cafes/restaurants/bars/pubs • Libraries • Swimming centres • Sporting groups • Places of worship • Festivals and fairs • Village, town and community halls • Aboriginal organisations

Communications channels	Distribution methods
Deploy a variety of communications materials/activities to ensure message penetration.	Identify community leaders and gathering points that can be used as communications distribution channels.
	• Peak body organisations, including Aboriginal alliances/assemblies • Other associations, community groups, local businesses and community service organisations

If you are engaging with communities in a cross-border council area, consider the communications channels and distribution methods that could be used in the adjacent jurisdiction.

11 Frequently-asked questions

Who does this Guide apply to?

The *Regional Communities (Consultation Standards) Act 2024* (**the Act)** requires that the Regional Communities Consultation Guide (**this Guide**) is used for consultations with regional communities that are:

- primarily directed to, or primarily impacts on, the health, cultural, environmental, economic, educational or other well-being of persons in the regional community; and

- carried out by, or for:

  — the State,

  — a NSW Government agency, or

  — a statutory body representing the Crown (see section 4(1) of the Act).

This means that the NSW Government, including Ministers, departments and NSW Government agencies, are required to use this Guide for such consultations.

This Guide takes effect from 24 April 2025.

How are 'regional communities' defined by the Act?

In the Act, 'regional community' means a community outside the Greater Sydney Region. *The Interpretation Act 1987* contains definitions and other provisions that affect the interpretation and application of this Act.

How does the Act intersect with other legislation?

The Act requires those NSW Government entities identified above to have regard to this Guide when consulting a regional community.

The Act does not apply to a consultation required by another act to be carried out in a specified way, or in relation to the exercise of a function that is not subject to the direction or control of a Minister.

Practitioners need to be aware of and comply with any legislative responsibilities and requirements relevant to their projects.

How often will this Guide be reviewed?

This Guide will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose.

When is a community engagement/consultation plan required?

Where a consultation plan should be prepared, in line with the Scope of the Guide, the content and extent of the engagement plan should be informed by the intended nature and scale of the consultation, the possible impact of the outcomes on the relevant community, the identified stakeholder group and any other policy, legal or other considerations (for example urgency or confidentiality).

How much notice do NSW departments have to give of a consultation?

Where feasible, this Guide recommends a minimum of 4 weeks' notice for significant consultation with the public. It is important people know who from the NSW Government is coming to their community, and when and why, so they can come to engagement activities feeling prepared.

If more advanced notice can be given, this can help volunteers/volunteer organisations plan and manage their budgets. Often, due to the large distances that need to be travelled to participate, personal or organisational costs (a day off work, travel, accommodation, etc) can be prohibitive.

How long should the consultation period last?

A minimum period of 4 weeks is advised, although consultation with community and stakeholders may run longer for more complex or high-impact matters.

It is also recognised that some consultations may be smaller in scope and need to be undertaken in a shorter timeframe.

It is important to consider the timing of the engagement period. Engagement that is rushed or held at inconvenient times for the community, limiting opportunities for meaningful participation, is perceived as distrustful.

For consultations with agricultural communities, the seasonal conditions (such as drought, flood or bushfire) and seasonal production cycles should be considered, with input from the relevant communities during the planning stages. Consultations should be flexible enough to be extended if such conditions change.

Where consultation must be held at an inopportune time for the community, you should consider extending the duration of the consultation period.

Do all consultation activities need to be in-person?

While there has been concern about an overreliance on digital and social media channels for community engagement, NSW Government consultation with community leaders has highlighted that they prefer there to be a mix of online and offline methodologies used to ensure equitable access for all.

When consulting on issues that have safety implications for participants (such as family and domestic violence), the choice of communications and engagement methods should minimise any potential risk to the participant and promote safe engagement.

How can I improve communication with stakeholders?

It is important to communicate clearly, avoiding jargon and acronyms. Technical information should be translated into plain English, so it is easy to understand. Literacy levels can be a barrier, making audio a useful communications tool. Translations and visual aids can also increase accessibility.

Regional, rural and remote communities have well-established networks. Communities have encouraged the NSW Government to leverage existing channels to share information and to ask community leaders how best to engage with key stakeholders, including hard-to-reach cohorts.

How should I consult with Aboriginal communities?

Because every community is different, including Aboriginal communities, it is important not to take a 'one size fits all' approach. Consultation methods must be specific to the location and tailored to the stakeholders you wish to engage with.

One of the best ways to find out what the most suitable approach might be is to partner with local community leaders who can help you identify relevant stakeholder groups and advise on the best ways to communicate and consult with them.

This is an important step in the stakeholder analysis component of your engagement planning. Consider reaching out to the Premier's Department Regional Coordination team, Aboriginal Affairs NSW (which has regional offices), local council, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Registered Native Title Body Corporates and other Aboriginal community organisations to ask for advice. Your own department/agency may also have an Aboriginal engagement team that you should involve early in the planning phase.

It is also strongly advised that the staff members undertaking community consultation with Aboriginal communities have completed cultural awareness training.

The NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (NSW CAPO) has developed Community Consultation Principles to increase the quality and consistency of consultations with Aboriginal communities.

How should I consult with CALD communities?

It's important to engage in culturally responsive and linguistically accessible ways. Translations alone are insufficient to generate engagement among individuals with low levels of English language proficiency. Verbal communication is often more effective, for a variety of reasons. For example, in some refugee communities, individuals may not be literate in their mother-tongue.

Partnering with community organisations is an effective strategy for generating engagement with migrant and refugee communities. These organisations often have pre-existing trusted relationships, established methods of generating strong engagement, and resources to provide in-language support.

When engaging with migrant and refugee communities, it is important to be familiar with best practices for working with interpreters. While designed for different contexts, the following guides are useful:

- NSW Health Care Interpreter Services, *Guidelines for Working with Interpreters*: https://startts.org.au/media/Interpreter-Guidelines-Jan-11.pdf

- Sydney Health Care Interpreter Service, *How to work with interpreters*: https://slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/sydney-health-care-interpreter-services/health-care-providers/how-work-interpreters

How should I engage with cross-border communities?

There are 30 local government areas that are located close to a NSW border. Cross-border communities are home to 620,000 NSW residents and over 60,000 businesses.

If you are engaging with communities in these locations, consider stakeholders and communications channels in the neighbouring jurisdictions as this can enhance your effectiveness and provide more impactful and locally specific recommendations.

Residents and business owners in cross-border locations share close social and economic ties, and often consider themselves of 'one community'.

The Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner can provide advice on consultation in cross-border communities. At a minimum, consider community leaders, associations, community groups, local councils and agencies on both sides of the border in the area you are engaging. This can lead to richer and more impactful decision-making.

How soon after concluding our consultation should we 'close the loop'?

Communities must be advised of project updates after a consultation has taken place. If the consultation has not been finalised, the community should still be advised on next steps and updated timelines, ideally within 3 months.

Where appropriate, updates should include how the community's contribution has or will influence a project outcome. Communities become disengaged when they do not hear how their insights and feedback have contributed to the development of a policy, program or project.

While best efforts should always be made to close the loop in a timely manner, occasionally Cabinet processes or commercial negotiations may affect timing.

12 Support for practitioners

- **Aboriginal Affairs NSW:** Aboriginal Affairs NSW may be able to provide advice about how best to communicate and engage with different Aboriginal communities or connect you with appropriate local organisations to advise.

- **Multicultural NSW:** Multicultural NSW may be able to provide advice about how best to communicate and engage with different culturally and linguistically diverse communities or connect you with appropriate local organisations to advise. It also offers translation services.

- **Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner:** The office can provide advice on consultation in cross-border communities. At a minimum, consider community leaders, associations, community groups, local councils and agencies on both sides of the border in the area you are engaging.

- **Department of Customer Service:** The department's Data Analytics Centre and other insights teams can provide useful demographic information and other data that may assist with your planning. This information may help you understand the profile of the community you are consulting with and provide additional local context.

- **IAP2 training and resources:** A number of NSW Government departments and agencies have Organisational Membership with IAP2. This means team members can benefit from exclusive discounts on training, local and national events, and unrestricted access to IAP2's comprehensive library of online resources. We recommend people who are engaging with regional, remote and rural communities undergo IAP2 training.

13 Advice for the community

Community members can advocate on behalf of their community in a number of ways:

- **Join a board or committee:** Public boards and committees help guide and influence many government programs and services. They provide leadership, direction and accountability across many areas of NSW Government activity and are a vital link between community needs and government service delivery. https://boards.nsw.gov.au/why-join-a-nsw-government-board-or-committee/

- **Contact a Minister**: You can send the Premier and Ministers questions, comments, concerns or requests by completing the online contact form. www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/ministers.

- **Contact your local Member of Parliament:** This is an elected spokesperson for local interests. Find yours here: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/pages/all-members.aspx

- **Have Your Say:** Find NSW Government consultations happening in your community and share your opinions on new projects, services and government policy. www.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say

- **Connect with NSW Government online:** We're available at www.facebook.com/NSWGovernment/ and www.instagram.com/nswgov/.

If you feel this Guide has not been adhered to, you can raise your concerns with the Premier's Department via regionalguide@premiersdepartment.nsw.gov.au. Please note, as per the Act, non-adherence to this Guide will not affect the validity of a consultation, and this Guide does not override other relevant legislation requiring consultation to be carried out in a specified way.

Appendix A: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

This Guide, which sets out requirements for NSW Government consultation in regional, rural and remote communities, incorporates the work of IAP2 as international best practice on engagement. Engagement is a relevant part of any consultation process.

IAP2 developed the below Spectrum of Public Participation to show that differing levels of participation are legitimate, depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and levels of concern in the decision to be made. However, and most importantly, the Spectrum sets out the promise being made to the public at each participation level.

Aspects of the Spectrum have been incorporated into this Guide. The full Spectrum is included below for reference and is available at https://iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

iap2
international association for public participation

Premier's Department

52 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000

OFFICIAL

NSW GOVERNMENT