

Community Engagement Standard for Flight Path and Airspace Change Proposals

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We acknowledge and embrace a culture that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and equality for all. In making this statement we acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the country on which we operate, now called Australia.

Executive Summary

About Airservices Australia

Airservices Australia is the nation's air traffic management and aviation rescue fire fighting service provider, operating at 29 of Australia's major airports and managing 11 per cent of the world's airspace, including the upper airspace for Nauru and the Solomon Islands.

We connect people with their world safely through our world-class services – linking family and friends, generating economic activity, creating jobs, and facilitating trade and tourism.

As our skies get busier and more complex, we will ensure we make aviation safer, more efficient and cleaner, while seeking to minimise the impact of aircraft operations on communities and the environment.

Airservices has a number of obligations when planning and implementing flight path and airspace changes. These are defined in legislation through the *Air Services Act 1995*, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and associated Ministerial directives.

These obligations require Airservices Australia to:

- minimise the impact of aircraft operations on communities
- undertake effective community engagement
- inform the community of the development and implementation of significant changes to air navigation.

We seek to fulfill these obligations through our Flight Path and Airspace Change Program and in particular our community engagement activity.

Community Engagement Standard

This *Community Engagement Standard* has been developed to provide a clearly defined process for engaging with the public on flight path and airspace changes of various scope, scale and complexity. It will establish a benchmark against which to measure our performance.

The Standard is part of the ongoing evolution of our flight path and airspace change community engagement practices, which commenced with the release of our [Flight Path Design Principles](#) in October 2020 and our [Community Engagement Framework](#) in August 2021. The Standard has been shaped by recent Aircraft Noise Ombudsman (ANO) findings, learnings from our engagement experience, feedback received from the communities we have engaged, and an independent review to identify best-practice standards for community engagement.

The Standard has also been informed by guidance from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), which defines through a Spectrum the various levels of engagement that might be applied, depending on the nature and scale of the decision being made, and the level of influence the community can have on this decision.

In this *Community Engagement Standard* we are proposing an approach that:

1. categorises change proposals into three levels to define the scope and scale of engagement required
2. includes 10 principles that will guide engagement activity
3. involves five steps that each flight path and/or airspace change would be taken through, to provide a consistent, repeatable, effective engagement experience
4. facilitates the iterative development of flight path and airspace changes in consultation with the community.

A key element of this Standard is to engage early with communities and stakeholders. In addition, larger change proposals will directly involve the community in the development of viable design options, which will then be shortlisted and refined into a preferred option. It aims to achieve transparent decision-making and to provide adequate time for community and stakeholder inputs to these decisions.

The Standard exemplifies our community engagement obligations to “minimise the impact of aircraft operation on communities; undertake effective community engagement; and inform the community and industry of the development and implementation of significant changes to air navigation”.

Engaging on this Standard

Airservices sought community and industry feedback on this draft Standard between February and June 2023 to ensure it best serves these key stakeholders, thereby building stronger and more trusting relationships.

Feedback on the Standard will continue to be invited as change programs are implemented, to provide the opportunity for ongoing refinement and continuous improvement.

For the purpose of the *Community Engagement Standard*, community/communities refers to populations or people who may be affected by or interested in a change.

Stakeholder/stakeholders refers to aviation industry and government bodies with an interest in the change.

Airservices places equal importance on feedback received from both communities and stakeholders.

Community Engagement Standard OVERVIEW

The Standard applies to all change proposals with the potential to affect community stakeholders

Benefits of effective community engagement delivered in line with the Standard:

Improve Decision Making | Engaging early leads to better outcomes as communities are able to provide important knowledge and insight to the proponent before any major decisions have been made.

Increase community satisfaction | A community that feels empowered by being well informed and given opportunities to contribute will be more satisfied than one with no opportunity to take part.

Greater acceptance of final outcomes | Proponents that base their final proposal in part on a robust community engagement process are more likely to gain the support from a wide array of stakeholders.

Help build community networks | Effective community engagement can help build informed and interested networks of stakeholders who can be re-engaged for different proposals.

Build Trust | A well-informed and actively engaged community is more likely to trust the process.

Community engagement activities delivered in line with the Standard should be proportionate to the impacts of the proposal, the number of alternative options and the range of stakeholders affected.

The Standard organises types of change proposals into three levels, based on their size and impact

Level 1 | New flight paths/airspace to support airport expansion

The largest, most complex changes involving a suite of new flight paths and changes airspace operation, resulting in:

- a broad range of potentially significant impacts over a wide area
- many alternative flight path design options available
- a very large and varied mix of affected stakeholders

Level 2 | New or changed flight paths in existing airspace

Large-scale flight path and/or airspace changes to introduce new features to an existing airspace system, resulting in:

- noticeable or significant impacts within specific geographical areas
- a shortlist of alternative flight path options available
- a large but distinct sub-set of affected stakeholders

Level 3 | Operational changes in existing airspace

Smaller, more specific changes to amend aspects of an existing airspace system or operational procedures, resulting in:

- a narrower set of specific impacts
- few (if any) alternative options other than no change
- a limited number of affected stakeholders in specific areas

The Standard is underpinned by 10 engagement principles that guide how the process is delivered.

Transparent

Information on the proposal and decisions should be shared openly

Meaningful

Community feedback must be considered and responded to

Scalable

The engagement approach should be proportionate to the size and impact

Outcomes-focused

Engagement should focus on supporting decision-making and enhancing the final outcomes

Options-based

Stakeholders should be presented with options where possible, highlighting key choices

Inclusive, accessible, responsive

Engagement should incorporate a broad mix of impacts and stakeholders

Balanced

Trade-offs between impacts affecting different stakeholder groups should be evaluated

Clear and concise

Engagement information should be presented in a simple format, using plain language and no jargon

Tailored

Engagement methods should be adapted to meet stakeholders' needs

Considered

Adequate time should be dedicated for the community to consider the proposal and provide feedback

Community Engagement Standard STEPS | The Standard is based on a general process for delivering engagement that can be tailored to the scale of the change

The *Community Engagement Standard* is based on a general process for delivering engagement that can be tailored to the scale of the change proposal. The general process is organised into five steps, with several consistent engagement activities to be delivered in each step.

LEVEL 1 PROPOSALS	LEVEL 2 PROPOSALS	LEVEL 3 PROPOSALS
Step 1: Engagement Planning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with stakeholders that are representative of the wider community to support understanding of affected stakeholders and local area. Publish engagement plan. Baseline awareness survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with stakeholder representatives that are representative of the wider community to support understanding of affected stakeholders and local area. Publish engagement plan Baseline awareness survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desktop analysis of affected stakeholders and local area. Publish engagement plan.
Step 2: Develop and Assess Options		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek feedback on options development methodology and assessment criteria. Engage stakeholders in the iterative development of design options. Publish preferred and shortlisted design options. 12 week engagement. Community awareness survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek feedback on options development methodology and assessment criteria. Publish preferred and shortlisted design options. 6 week engagement. Community awareness survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish options development methodology and assessment criteria. Publish proposed design. 2-4 week online information campaign (feedback may be sought if there are specific elements where this can be considered).
Step 3: Engage		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish proposed design and environmental assessment. 12 week engagement. Community awareness survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish proposed design and environmental assessment. 6 week engagement. Community awareness survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second round of engagement not generally necessary. If needed, follow approach in Step 2.
Step 4: Update and Submit		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish engagement report. Re-engagement with affected stakeholders if the final design creates new impacts that were not identified previously. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish engagement report. Re-engagement with affected stakeholders if the final design creates new impacts that were not identified previously. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish engagement report. Re-engagement with affected stakeholders if the final design creates new impacts that were not identified previously.
Step 5: Implement and Review		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform all affected stakeholders of implementation timing. Engage stakeholders in the Post Implementation Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform all affected stakeholders of implementation timing. Engage stakeholders in the Post Implementation Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform all affected stakeholders of implementation timing. Desktop Post Implementation Review.

1. Introduction

1. This document describes the Airservices Australia (Airservices) *Community Engagement Standard* (the Standard) that will be applied to all flight path and airspace change proposals with the potential to noticeably affect community stakeholders.

1.1. Purpose

2. The purpose of this document is to:
 - a) set out the overarching requirements that community engagement should meet
 - b) explain the core principles that guide how engagement activities should be delivered to meet the overarching requirements and the intended outcomes and benefits
 - c) organise the engagement steps into a general process, ensuring the approach followed is broadly consistent across all flight path or airspace proposals, while specific engagement activities remain proportionate to the size and nature of different changes
 - d) describe the criteria that should be used to track the performance of engagement activities delivered at each step of the process
 - e) summarise how existing guidance, best-practice approaches and lessons drawn from recent community engagement activities in Australia and internationally has informed the Standard [presented as an annex in a separate report].

1.2. Application of the Standard

3. The Standard will apply to all flight path and airspace change proposals delivered by Airservices with the potential to noticeably affect community stakeholders. All proposals that could result in a change to a flight path's lateral track over the ground or the vertical profile that determines the altitude of overflying aircraft will be subject to the Standard.
4. The Standard will also apply to the community engagement led by third-party airport operators and their consultants working on flight path and airspace change proposals that support Major Development Plans (MDPs) for additional runway capacity. In this context, the Standard will be incorporated into Airservices' established third-party procedures. Airport operators may also apply the Standard to community engagement conducted when changes to the schedule, hours of operation or the introduction of new carriers and aircraft types may lead to a material change in the impacts of overflight (for example, through an increase in the number of night flights).
5. Other aviation and community stakeholders that may bring forward flight path and airspace change proposals are also expected to adopt the Standard. Where the Standard is not applied by these parties, Airservices may implement actions to address the requirements of the Standard, potentially delaying implementation of the proposed change.
6. Aviation stakeholders, including air transport operators, general aviation, adjacent aerodromes and the military are also important participants in the development of flight path and airspace change proposals. Whilst the Standard focuses on community stakeholders, the principles and general process laid out in this document may be applied consistently by proponents to their engagement with aviation stakeholders.

7. The Standard does not apply to flight path and airspace changes at higher altitudes (for example movements over 20,000ft) that do not impact community stakeholders, although the principles and general process will be adopted for any necessary engagement with aviation stakeholders.
8. The Standard does not apply to temporary changes of less than 30 days duration, including operational changes to support runway maintenance activity or similar (including safety-critical works). While the full extent and scope of the Standard does not apply, it is expected that engagement would be conducted for these changes to inform communities of any noticeable temporary change. This may be through existing notification channels or broader communication as deemed appropriate to the scope and scale of the temporary change.
9. The safety of air navigation is the most important consideration when developing flight path and airspace change proposals. Community engagement on the impacts of aircraft overflight at lower altitudes is an important factor in how the proposals are developed.
10. The Standard was finalised on 12 September 2023 after national engagement and applies to all future flight path and airspace change proposals. Proposals in development at the time of publication will not be expected to apply the Standard retrospectively, however it should be considered during future stages of the proposal, where relevant.
11. The Standard will also recognise and be updated to reflect any relevant outcomes of Government's Aviation White Paper for which a Terms of Reference was released on 7 February 2023.
12. Airservices Australia, in delivering engagement according to this Standard, may do so using internal resourcing, or using specialist community engagement consultants accessed through a panel of providers.

1.3. Drivers of flight path and airspace change

13. There are several drivers that may prompt Airservices or a third-party proponent to change the orientation of existing flight paths, introduce new flight paths or change airspace, as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Drivers for flight path and airspace change proposals

Theme	Description of the driver
Safety	Continue to enhance aviation safety performance or manage specific aviation safety risks.
Major developments	Introduce a new airspace system and suite of flight paths to support an airport Major Development Plan (MDP) for additional runway capacity.
Airspace capacity	Add capacity in the airspace system to meet the forecast growth in demand for air transport without unreasonable delays.
Aviation Sustainability	Support aviation sustainability goals by improving flight efficiency to reduce aircraft fuel burn and emissions.
Overflight impacts	Limit and where possible reduce the impacts of aircraft overflight on communities and the local environment.
Resilience	Strengthen the resilience of air traffic operations to poor weather, technical failures and unplanned events.
Compliance	Maintain compliance with evolving legal and regulatory obligations linked to the design and use of the flight paths.

1.4. Scope and scale of change proposals

14. The scale of the flight path and airspace change proposals that may be developed to address these drivers vary greatly in size and complexity. The largest and most complicated proposals are typically prompted by airport Major Development Plans (MDPs) or modernisation projects that address multiple drivers simultaneously, by overhauling an existing airspace system and introducing a new suite of flight paths. Other large proposals may focus on introducing new features to an existing airspace system, for example by re-positioning individual flight paths or adding new ones. Smaller proposals are usually required to amend specific parts of an existing airspace system to address a single driver.
15. Table 2 provides further details on the three core levels of change proposal. Where impacts are described as 'significant', as described in Section 160 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), the proposal requires referral to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment in relation to any impacts will have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

Table 2: Levels of flight path and airspace change proposal based on size and potential impacts

Level	Description	Features
Level 1	<p>The largest, most complex changes involving a suite of new flight paths or changes to multiple existing flight paths and/or airspace, resulting in the design of a new airspace system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposals to introduce a new suite of flight paths that support airport Major Development Plans for additional runway capacity modernisation projects to redesign the existing airspace system and introduce a new suite of flight paths that serve air transport at one large airport, or several adjacent airports operating in close proximity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A broad range of potentially significant* impacts distributed across large geographical areas. Many potentially viable alternative flight path design options. A very large and varied mix of potentially affected stakeholders. <p>* A significant impact refers to an impact identified through environmental assessment as triggering referral to the Commonwealth Minister for Environment in accordance with the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>.</p>

<p>Level 2</p>	<p>Large-scale flight path and/or airspace changes to introduce new features to an existing airspace system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes to the lateral orientation and vertical profiles of specific arrival and/or departure flight paths • addition of new arrival and/or departure flight paths to the existing system • changes to the configuration of flight paths to better manage the impacts of aircraft overflight, for example through the introduction of alternating respite routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticeable* or significant impacts contained within specific geographical areas. • A shortlist of potentially viable alternative flight path design options that are intended to operate within the existing airspace system. • A large but distinct sub-set of stakeholders affected. <p>* A noticeable impact refers to a change in operations that while not deemed significant through environmental assessment, could still be noticed by the community – a lateral or vertical shift in aircraft operations, or a new overnight operation at a time that currently has no operations, for example.</p>
<p>Level 3</p>	<p>Smaller, more specific changes to amend aspects of an existing airspace system or operational procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposals to replicate existing flight paths with new more precise routes designed using advanced satellite-based navigation • proposals to introduce a new Instrument Landing System that redistributes the pattern of aircraft tracks over the ground • proposals to introduce new operating procedures that may redistribute the pattern of aircraft tracks over the ground • proposals to introduce new hours of operation, carriers or new aircraft types to the existing flight paths (noting these changes would be “inform” campaigns only to ensure awareness). “Day of operations”¹ changes would not be included. • on-ground maintenance or similar works programs, extending beyond 30 days, that result in noticeable changes to regular airspace operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow set of specific impacts. • Few potentially viable alternative flight path design options apart from making no change. • A limited number of geographically confined stakeholders affected.

¹ “Day of operation” changes refer to changes made to operations on the actual day due to airport, airline or air traffic control requirements – e.g. The type of aircraft may be changed for demand or due to operational requirements.

1.5. Level of community engagement relevant to flight path and airspace changes

16. It is important for the Standard to distinguish the extent that community stakeholders are expected to be engaged in Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 proposals. As a result, the Standard is informed by guidance from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia which characterises stakeholders' involvement in a change proposal. Depending on the nature and scale of the change proposal, Airservices will inform, consult, involve and collaborate in the development of design options, as summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: IAP2 spectrum of stakeholder participation (Inform to Collaborate levels) and engagement commitments

Spectrum	Engagement objective	Proponents' commitment
Inform	To provide stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternative options and solutions.	To keep stakeholders informed.
Consult	To obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To keep stakeholders informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how inputs have influenced decisions.
Involve	To work with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To work with stakeholders to ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternative options developed and provide feedback on how inputs have influenced decisions.
Collaborate	To partner with stakeholders in the decision-making process including the development of viable alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To look to stakeholders for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

17. Stakeholders' influence on the development of the proposal and the final outcomes increases from 'inform' to 'empower':
- Proponents of smaller, more specific changes (Level 3) should aim to 'inform' community stakeholders, providing balanced and objective information about the proposals to assist them in understanding the problem and the preferred solution.
 - Proponents of larger changes (Level 2) should aim to 'consult' and where possible 'involve' community stakeholders, gathering feedback on alternative design options and highlighting how engagement inputs have influenced development of the proposals.
 - Proponents of the largest, most complex changes (Level 1), should aim to 'involve' or 'collaborate' with community stakeholders in the development and assessment of alternative options, working directly with stakeholders as part of an iterative design development process.
18. The final level on the IAP2 spectrum is "empower", which is categorised by placing "final decision making in the hands of the public". Airservices has the statutory responsibility to develop and propose flight path and airspace changes, taking into consideration multiple

relevant factors, in addition to the impact on affected communities. To place the final decision in the hands of the public, or affected communities, would contravene Airservices' legal responsibility.

19. For each level of engagement, clear communication on negotiable and non-negotiable elements should be included in engagement information to ensure the community know what they can influence and what is not able to be changed, and why.

2. Requirements of the Standard and principles of engagement

20. The Standard is required to ensure the community engagement activities conducted by proponents of flight path and airspace change proposals are credible, proportionate, comprehensive, efficient and timely. These five outcomes are used to structure the overarching requirements that community engagement conducted in line with the Standard should meet. Table 4 describes the terms of the overarching requirements.

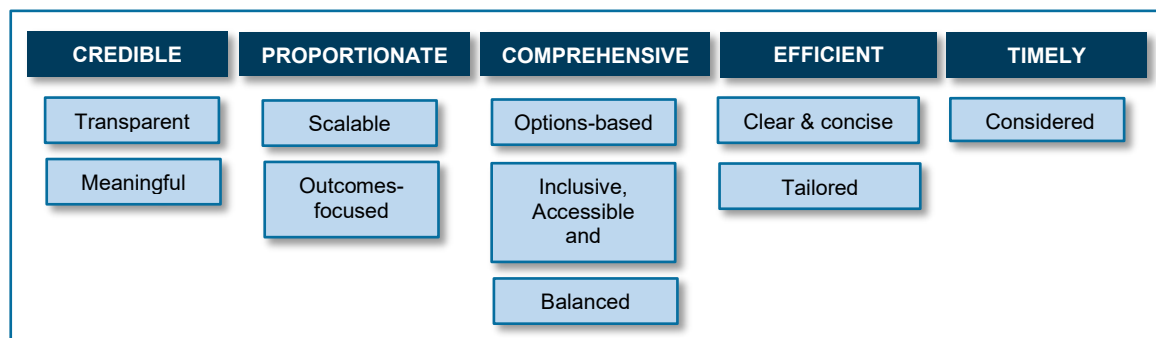
Table 4: Terms of the overarching requirements for community engagement

Overarching requirement	Terms
Engagement should be credible	<p>The outcomes of change proposals are viewed by community stakeholders as legitimate because the approach followed is viewed as credible, even by those stakeholders that may not agree with the final outcomes. The Standard requires that community engagement is delivered to the following principles:</p> <p>Transparent: information on the proposal and decision should be shared openly</p> <p>Meaningful: feedback must be considered and responded to</p>
Engagement should be proportionate	<p>The extent of the community engagement conducted to support a change proposal is proportionate to the proposed change’s potential impacts, the noticeability of these impacts, the range of options available, and the local circumstances of the stakeholders that may be affected. The Standard requires that community engagement is delivered to the following principles:</p> <p>Scalable: engagement activities should be proportionate</p> <p>Outcomes-focused: engagement should focus on supporting decision-making and enhancing the final outcome</p>
Engagement should be comprehensive	<p>The proponent should communicate the expected impacts of a proposal on community stakeholders, especially where there may be adverse effects. The engagement process should consider all viable options to limit and where possible reduce the total adverse effects of the changes. The engagement process should consider the special needs of different communities and respond to requirements as they arise. The Standard requires that community engagement is delivered to the following principles:</p> <p>Options-based: develop options and engage on the key choices</p> <p>Inclusive, Accessible and Responsive: incorporate a broad mix of stakeholders and impacts</p> <p>Balanced: consider the trade-offs between different impacts</p>

<p>4. Engagement should be efficient</p>	<p>The community engagement activities are tailored to meet the different needs of stakeholders that might be affected by a change (including those that are seldom heard or harder-to-reach). Engagement material should focus on the issues that matter most to stakeholders. The Standard requires that community engagement is delivered to the following principles:</p> <p>Clear and concise: present information in a simple format using plain language and no jargon</p> <p>Tailored: adapt engagement methods to meet stakeholders' needs</p>
<p>5. Engagement should be timely</p>	<p>Information relevant to engagement for a change proposal is accessible in a timeframe that enables community stakeholders to consider the material and formulate their feedback. The timeframes must be realistic and ensure there is reasonable time for community contributions. The Standard requires that community engagement is delivered to the following principles:</p> <p>Considered: dedicate adequate time for the community to consider the proposal and provide feedback</p>

21. The overarching requirements set out in Table 4 have been used to develop 10 core principles that guide how the community engagement activities that support flight path and airspace change proposals should be planned and delivered. The principles of engagement and their relationship to the overarching requirements is summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Summary of the principles of engagement and relationship to the overarching requirements



22. The principles are not presented in priority order. All 10 principles should be adopted and followed by the proponents when planning and delivering community engagement activities.

TEN PRINCIPLES

Transparent: information on the proposal and decisions should be shared openly.

Meaningful: engagement outputs should be considered and responded to.

Scalable: the engagement approach should be proportionate.

Outcomes-focused: engagement should focus on supporting decision-making and enhancing the final outcome.

Options-based: develop options and engage on the key choices

Inclusive, Accessible and Responsive: incorporate a broad mix of impacts and stakeholders

Balanced: consider the trade-offs between different impacts

Clear and Concise: present information in a simple format using plain language and no jargon

Tailored: adapt engagement methods to meet stakeholders' needs

Considered: dedicate adequate time for the community to consider the proposal and provide feedback

2.1. Benefits of applying the principles

23. The consistent application of these principles is expected to generate the following benefits:
- **Improve decision-making** – engaging communities leads to better outcomes, as communities can provide important knowledge and insight to the proponent before decisions are made. Engagement also helps the proponent to avoid unnecessary re-work, allowing for a lean and cost-effective approach.
 - **Increase community satisfaction** – communities that feel heard, engaged and part of decision-making, and who are given opportunities to contribute, will be more satisfied than a community that feels unheard, powerless through lack of information and that has been afforded no opportunity to take part.
 - **Greater acceptance of final outcomes** – trade-offs will always occur when dealing with multiple stakeholders, as a beneficial solution for one group may be detrimental to another. Proponents who base their final decision in part on a robust community engagement process are more likely to gain the support from a wide array of stakeholders, even if the final outcome may not provide a particular group with the solution that they had hoped for.
 - **Help build community networks** – effective community engagement can help build informed and interested networks of stakeholders who can be re-engaged for different proposals. Treating community engagement as a continual process, as opposed to a one-off event in response to a specific issue, will help proponents build goodwill, leading to better working relationships.
 - **Build trust** – the more well-informed a community is, the more likely they are to trust the process through which they are being engaged. A poorly informed community has no information upon which to base their trust and will view the engagement process with scepticism.

2.2. Inclusive engagement

24. Communication and engagement planning will ensure that all messaging and engagement activity is inclusive, equitable, accessible and gives consideration to diversity and linguistic requirements in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Anti-Discrimination Act (1991).
25. Consideration will be given to the unique communication requirements of the intended audience, and engagement planning will ensure that alternate methods of communication are provided for those who require adaptive messaging. This could include (but is not limited to):
- screen reader requirements across all messaging and collateral developed for those with sight impairment
 - translation services and Easy Read English documents made available for communities where English is not the main language spoken in the home
 - Auslan and captioning across visual communication materials to cater for those with hearing impairment.
26. All messaging, regardless of audience, will be delivered in an accessible format in terms of font, colour, detail and simplicity of explanation.

2.3. First Nations Engagement



First Nations Peoples must be considered in engagement planning. They are not one group but comprise hundreds of groups that have their own distinct set of languages, histories and cultural traditions. When there is a possibility that these communities may be impacted by a flight path proposal, or that the lands acknowledged as being of significance to a particular indigenous group or groups may be subject to a change, particular consideration must be made to include these groups in any relevant engagement activities.

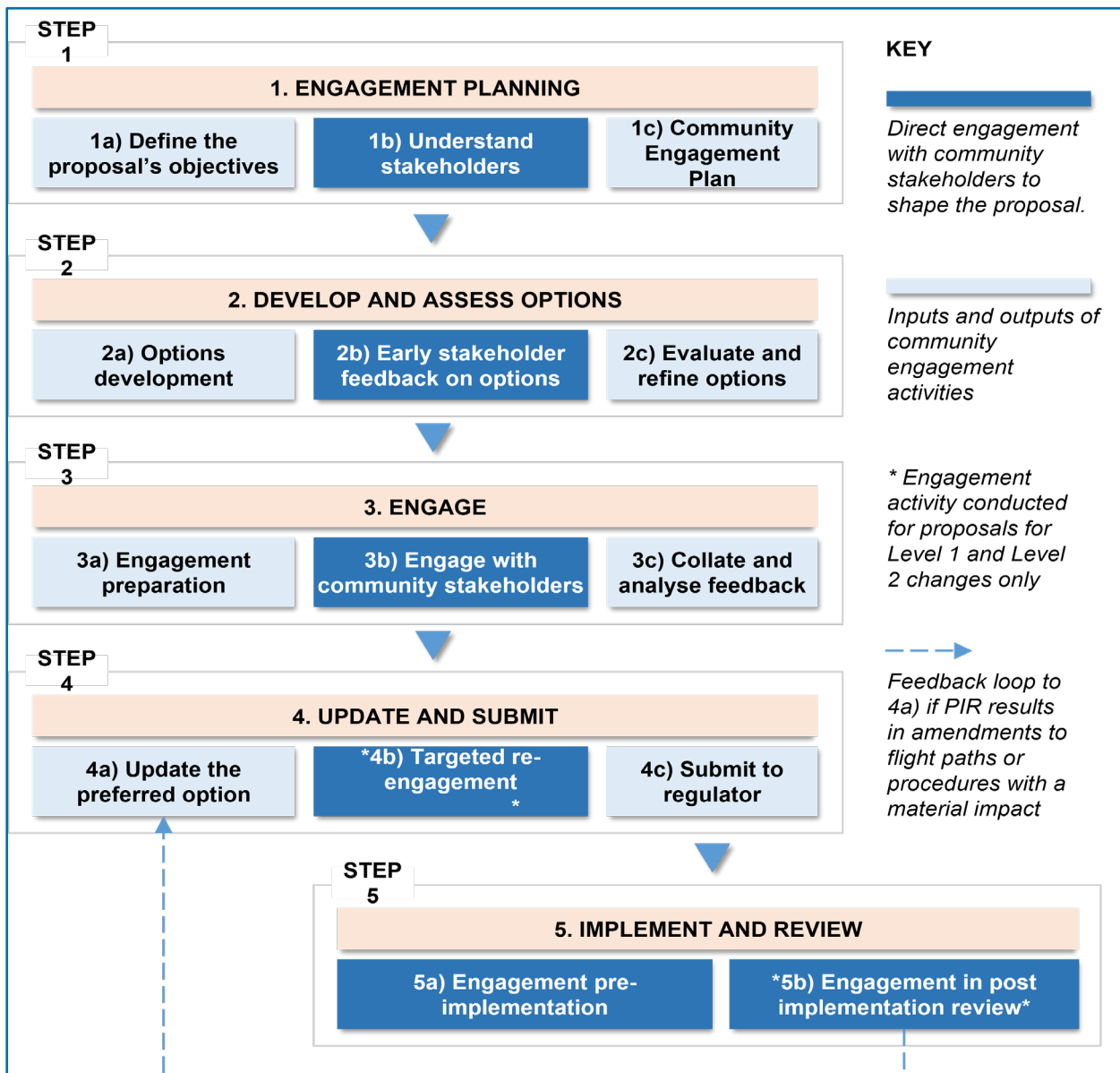
Engagement with First Nations Peoples should be discussed with Local Aboriginal Land Councils as a first step, to seek advice on the most suitable engagement approach for the local people of that area.

Engagement with First Nations Peoples must be mindful of the engagement needs of these communities, which often mean that deadline driven, "review and comment" engagement approaches are not suitable.

3. General process for community engagement

27. This section describes the general process for conducting community engagement activities that should be followed by proponents of all flight path and airspace change proposals. The process is developed in line with the overarching requirements and guiding principles set out in Section 2. It provides a consistent approach that can be applied in a proportionate manner, depending on the scale of the change and the requirement to either inform, consult or involve community stakeholders.

Figure 2: Steps and activities of the general process for community engagement



28. This Standard establishes clear timeframes for engagement on changes of different scope and scale:
 - these timeframes are in some cases longer than previously applied. Implementation of engagement according to these timeframes will be completed as efficiently as possible to ensure essential changes are not subject to any unplanned delay
 - communication materials will provide an overall timeline for engagement and proposed delivery of the change to ensure this is clearly understood.
29. While a timeframe is provided for engagement activity, a firm timing for review of feedback and publishing of outcomes has not been included. This is in acknowledgement of the fact that the time required to give due consideration to feedback and to make the necessary changes to flight path and airspace designs will vary, depending on the volume and nature of feedback received. Timeframes for this review will be communicated as engagement is progressed.
30. For Level 1 and 2 changes, with multi-aviation industry involvement, other industry bodies (government, regulatory, airport and airline) will be invited to attend engagement activities to ensure all community questions can be responded to efficiently.
31. Information provided on changes will include the expected number of flights, populations overflown and forecast noise levels as a minimum.
32. Locations most affected by a proposed change will be identified during engagement planning, and engagement activities will be held as close as possible to these locations. A general principle of engagement activities being within a 10 to 15 minute drive radius of potentially impacted locations will be applied, where practicable (and subject to suitable venue availability).
33. For Level 1 and 2 changes, letterbox drops will be incorporated into engagement planning where deemed appropriate. Use of letterbox drops would include consideration of locations potentially affected and level of impact, mix of other communication tools available, local awareness of the proposed change and extend of existing community networks that can be used to generate awareness.
34. Other awareness raising tools may include newspaper advertising, Noise Complaints and Information Services (NCIS) database alerts, Engage Airservices registered user alerts, local Community Aviation Consultative Group (CACG) alerts and briefings, social media advertising, local Facebook group contact, local, state and federal elected representative correspondence, identified community/representative group correspondence, media articles and interviews, library and noticeboard information and other locally appropriate methods as available.
35. Reporting will include a summary of feedback received and our response to this, including any actions taken. This will demonstrate to submitters that their feedback has been considered and also what this has led to in terms decision-making.
36. Proponents should apply the principles set out in Section 2 to guide how the activities are delivered. The following sub-sections describe each step and the associated activities in greater detail, with guidance on the approach for Level 1, 2 and 3 changes and criteria for tracking the performance of community engagement against the Standard.

3.1. Step 1: Engagement Planning

Engagement planning overview

Define the objectives of the flight path and/or airspace change proposal, understand the community stakeholders that are potentially affected and determine the scale of the change and level of engagement that is required.

Engagement approach

- For Level 1 and 2 proposals, the proponent engages directly with individuals, groups and organisations that represent the broader community, to build an understanding of the affected stakeholders, the size and nature of the impacts and areas that may be particularly sensitive to aircraft overflight.
- For Level 3 proposals, the proponent builds an understanding of the affected stakeholders and potential impacts through desktop analysis and publishes their findings in the Community Engagement Plan or similar.
- For Level 1 and 2 proposals, a community survey is conducted at the conclusion of this step to determine a baseline level of community awareness of the change proposal, to be retested throughout the engagement program.

Performance criteria for engagement planning (Step 1)

Table 5: Performance criteria for Step 1, Engagement planning

Activity	Engagement approach		
	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
1a) Define the proposal's objectives	Publish Statement of Need a minimum of four weeks before any direct engagement begins, confirming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the scope and objectives of the change proposal • the context and drivers for the change 	The same as level 1.	No direct engagement with community stakeholders required during Step 1 for Level 3 proposals. The proponent publishes the Statement of Need online

- the desired outcome and expected impacts (positive and negative)
- the roles and responsibilities of the organisations involved.

before beginning Step 2 of the process.

<p>1b) Understand stakeholders</p>	<p>Establish a focused group of stakeholder representatives that are broadly characteristic of the local community.</p> <p>Record the diversity of stakeholder participation by type and geographical area to test the inclusiveness of engagement activities</p> <p>Conduct a series of engagement meetings (face-to-face or online) to gather initial information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the range of potential impacts associated with the changes included in the scope of the proposal • any areas, buildings, or sites that are particularly sensitive to the impacts of overflights • the engagement needs of community stakeholders and most effective channels • vulnerable and seldom-heard stakeholders that should be accommodated in the Community Engagement Plan. <p>Track changes over time in the range of stakeholders engaged in the proposal as it develops.</p>	<p>The same as Level 1, although the size of the focus group and the number of engagement meetings is expected to be smaller because potential impacts are contained within a more specific geographical area.</p>	<p>The proponent conducts a desktop exercise to identify the limited number of stakeholders that may be affected by the proposal.</p>
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1c)	Publish Community Engagement Plan	<p>Publish the initial Community Engagement Plan or similar, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the engagement approaches that will be used • details of planned engagement activities at each step of the process • timelines for stakeholder participation. <p>Seek feedback over a minimum four-week period from stakeholder representatives (1b) on potential gaps or improvements to the Initial Community Engagement Plan.</p> <p>Update the initial Community Engagement Plan in response to stakeholder feedback.</p> <p>Provide a summary of how the stakeholders' inputs have influenced the plan.</p> <p>Publish the final Plan online.</p> <p>Conduct a general community survey to gauge the percentage of the local population with awareness of the proposal and track changes over time as engagement activities are delivered.</p> <p>The proponent should record the volume of stakeholder participation in each step of the engagement process from this point onwards and track changes over time.</p>	The same as level 1.	<p>Develop an initial Community Engagement Plan using information from the desktop analysis in 1b.</p> <p>Publish the initial Community Engagement Plan or similar on the same online platform as the Statement of Need in 1a.</p>
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3.2. Step 2: Develop and assess options

Develop and assess options overview

Develop and assess the viable alternative flight path and/or airspace design options for the change, gather early feedback from stakeholders and use the information to refine the preferred option(s).

Engagement approach

- For Level 1 and 2 proposals, the proponent seeks feedback on the Options Development Methodology and Assessment Criteria from the focus group of stakeholder representatives established in Step 1, to test that they are comprehensive and inclusive. Level 3 proposals do not require direct stakeholder engagement on the methodology or criteria.
- For Level 1 proposals, proponents should engage community stakeholders in the development of options that can be refined to a shortlist of comparatively higher performing design options and a preferred option through iterative rounds of engagement and assessment.
- For Level 2 and 3 proposals that include fewer alternative options, early engagement should start with the shortlist of options and a preferred Preliminary Design.
- All levels of proposal should include a comparison of the shortlisted and preferred option(s) with existing flight-path operations.
- For Level 1 and 2 proposals, notification of upcoming engagement should be provided four weeks ahead of planned activity. Details of dates and locations of engagement sessions should be provided two weeks ahead of hosting and information on the proposal released one week ahead of engagement sessions.
- For Level 1 proposals, proponents should publish the shortlist and preferred option online, before conducting a 12 week early engagement activity, using a range of online and offline engagement methods, and including advance notification of engagement per above.
- For Level 2 proposals, similar engagement activity should be conducted for six weeks.
- For Level 3 proposals, similar engagement activity should be conducted for two to four weeks.
- A community survey is conducted at the conclusion of this step for Level 1 and 2 proposals to compare to the baseline level of community awareness of the change proposal from the previous step.

Performance criteria for develop and assess options (Step 2)

Table 6: Performance criteria for Step 2, Develop and assess options

#	Activity	Engagement approach		
		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
2a)	Options development	<p>Engagement with stakeholder representatives through a combination of meetings, participatory sessions, consultative workshops, smaller groups and/or online surveys to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> test that the Options Development Methodology and Assessment Criteria are comprehensive and inclusive support a deliberative approach to develop a list of viable options assess the options and then refine towards a shortlist of higher performing designs identify a preferred preliminary design. <p>Publish the Options Development Methodology and Assessment Criteria.</p>	<p>Engagement with stakeholder representatives through an appropriate combination of meetings, participatory sessions, consultative workshops, smaller groups and online surveys to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> test that the Options Development Methodology and Assessment Criteria are comprehensive and inclusive. <p>Publish the Options Development Methodology and Assessment Criteria.</p>	<p>The proponent publishes the Options Development Methodology and Assessment Criteria before beginning to create designs.</p>
2b)	Early stakeholder feedback on options	<p>Publish concept design and high-level impact assessment information about the shortlist, the preferred option, the existing operations baseline and the design work conducted to create them.</p>	<p>Publish concept design and high-level impact assessment information about the preferred option and a summary comparison with the shortlisted options and the existing operations baseline, including the</p>	<p>Publish detailed design and impact assessment information about the preferred option, a general overview of the alternative options considered</p>

	<p>Conduct a 12-week engagement activity that includes multiple complementary online and offline methods to gather early feedback.</p>	<p>design work conducted to create them.</p> <p>Conduct a six-week engagement activity that includes the targeted use of online and offline methods to gather feedback.</p>	<p>(if any), and a comparison with the existing operations baseline.</p> <p>Conduct a four-week online engagement activity to gather feedback.</p>
<p>2c) Evaluate and refine options</p>	<p>Record all early stakeholder feedback provided.</p> <p>Categorise the feedback and analyse the implications on the shortlist of options and preferred preliminary design.</p> <p>Publish an Early Engagement Report setting out how community and industry feedback has influenced the design.</p> <p>Conduct a general community survey to gauge the percentage of the local population with awareness of the proposal and who engaged in the process.</p>	<p>Same as Level 1, although the volume and diversity of early feedback is likely to be smaller.</p>	<p>Same as Levels 1 and 2, although the volume and diversity of early feedback is likely to be even smaller.</p> <p>Community survey not required but may be completed if deemed necessary.</p>

3.3. Step 3: Engage

Engage overview

Develop the approach to engaging publicly with all affected stakeholders on the updated version of the preferred option that incorporates early feedback gathered during Step 2, deliver the engagement, analyse the feedback and respond accordingly.

Engagement approach

- For Level 1 and 2 proposals, notification of upcoming engagement should be provided four weeks ahead of engagement commencing. Details of dates and locations of engagement sessions should be provided two weeks ahead of hosting and information on the proposal released one week ahead of engagement sessions.
- For Level 1 proposals, proponents should publish the Proposed Design and full Environmental Impact Assessment, before conducting a 12-week engagement activity, using a range of online and offline engagement methods, and including advance notification of engagement per above.
- For Level 2 proposals, a similar engagement activity should be conducted for six weeks.
- If a second round of engagement is required for a Level 3 proposal it should follow a similar four-week online only format.
- A community survey is conducted at the conclusion of this step for Level 1 and 2 proposals to compare to the baseline level of community awareness of the change proposal from the previous step.

Performance criteria for engage (Step 3)

Table 7: Performance criteria for Step 3, Engage

#	Activity	Engagement approach		
		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
3a)	Engagement preparation	Update the Community Engagement Plan to ensure the stakeholders, engagement methods, materials and timeframes are up to date, that findings from the Environmental	Same as Level 1	Same as Level 1, if the proponent considers that a second round of formal engagement is necessary.

Impact Assessment are considered in engagement planning, and that lessons learned from the first round of engagement are incorporated.

<p>3b) Engage with community stakeholders</p>	<p>Publish the Proposed Design and Environmental Impact Assessment, including a comparison with the existing operations baseline and a detailed description of the design work and previous engagement outputs from Steps 1 and 2 that have shaped to the proposal.</p> <p>Conduct a 12-week engagement activity that includes multiple complementary online and offline methods to gather early feedback.</p>	<p>Same as Level 1</p> <p>Conduct a six-week engagement activity that includes the targeted use of online and offline methods to gather feedback.</p>	<p>If the proponent considers that a second round of formal engagement is necessary, conduct a four-week online engagement activity to gather feedback.</p>
<p>3c) Collate and analyse Feedback</p>	<p>Record all stakeholder feedback provided.</p> <p>Categorise the feedback and analyse the implications on the Proposed Design.</p> <p>Conduct a general community survey to gauge the percentage of the local population with awareness of the proposal and who engaged in the process.</p> <p>Consider further engagement if low level of awareness is identified.</p>	<p>Same as Level 1, although the volume and diversity of feedback is likely to be smaller.</p>	<p>Same as Levels 1 and 2 if the proponent considers that a second round of formal engagement is necessary.</p> <p>Community survey not required but may be completed if deemed necessary.</p>

3.4. Step 4: Update and submit

Update and submit overview

Update the proposal and respond to stakeholders explaining the changes to the Proposed Design linked to feedback from the second round of formal engagement in Step 3. Conduct targeted re-engagement, if required, on any new impacts or substantial changes from Step 3. Finalise the proposal and submit to the regulator for approval, where required.

Engagement approach

- For all levels of proposal, targeted re-engagement is conducted on a case-by-case basis depending on the size and nature of the identified new impacts and the circumstances of the affected community stakeholders.

Performance criteria for update and submit (Step 4)

Table 8: Performance criteria for Step 4, Update and submit

#	Activity	Engagement approach		
		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
4a)	Update the preferred option	<p>Publish the Final Design and updated Environmental Impact Assessment if required.</p> <p>Publish the Community Engagement Report confirming how the final design has been influenced by feedback received during the second round of engagement.</p>	Same as Level 1.	Same as Level 1, if the proponent considered that a second round of formal engagement was necessary.
4b)	Targeted re-engagement	If the creation of the Final Design and updated Environmental Impact Assessment identifies any substantive changes from the information provided during Step 3, the proponent must re-engage with affected stakeholders.	Same as Level 1.	Same as Level 1, if the proponent considered that a second round of formal engagement was necessary.

Any re-engagement responses are considered and the proponent amends both the Community Engagement Report and the Final Design accordingly and republishes.

<p>4c) Submit to the regulator</p>	<p>The proponent submits an Airspace Change Proposal to the regulator for approval.</p>	<p>Same as Level 1.</p>	<p>Airspace Change Proposal not generally required.</p>
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3.5. Step 5: Implement and review

Implement and review overview

Inform stakeholders of the final decision, communicate implementation plans and conduct a Post Implementation Review

Engagement approach

- The proponent should inform community stakeholders of the Implementation Plan and ongoing mechanisms for feedback and sourcing of information.
- For Level 1 proposals, a program of ongoing community and updates should be planned to keep the change proposal visible to the community over the pre-implementation period. This should also occur for Level 2 proposals where a period of time will elapse between proposal engagement and implementation.
- Community and industry stakeholders should be engaged during the Post Implementation Review (Level 1 and 2 proposals only), in accordance with the size of the change and extent of actual impact being experienced.
- If updates to the design are required either pre-implementation or as a result of the Post Implementation Review, the proponent should undertake engagement as per the earlier steps.

Performance criteria for implement and review (Step 5)

Table 9: Performance criteria for Step 5, Implement and review

Activity	Engagement approach		
	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
5a) Engagement pre-implementation	Implementation plan published. Pre-implementation communication and update program developed and implemented.	Same as Level 1.	Same as Level 1 – may be done as part of Step 3 if further engagement was not deemed necessary.

If updates to the design are required pre-implementation, the proponent must re-visit the earlier steps to engage with community stakeholders as appropriate.

<p>5b) Engagement in the post implementation review</p>	<p>Monitor the implemented change, including ongoing review of community and industry feedback (generally via the Noise Complaints and Information Service).</p> <p>Post Implementation Review conducted 12 months after implementation of the change to assess if the anticipated impacts and benefits of the original proposal are as expected.</p> <p>Engage community and industry in the Post Implementation review including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Review considerations • Draft report <p>Draft Post Implementation Review Report published for a four-week comment period.</p> <p>Final Post Implementation Review Report published.</p> <p>Recommendations of the Post Implementation Review implemented in accordance with this Standard.</p>	<p>Same as Level 1, though review complexity and extent of community and industry engagement will vary depending on the change.</p>	<p>Post Implementation Review conducted via desktop analysis.</p> <p>If community and/or industry feedback identifies the need, a process similar to Level 2 may be applied.</p>
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