Name and logo of Council

**Communications and Stakeholder Engagement plan**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Event: |  |
| Prepared by: |  |
| Date prepared: |  |
| Status: | Version number/draft/final |

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*This template contains prompts and ideas from previous recoveries. Your emergency, your community and your recovery will be different, so your inputs and actions to the communications plan will be different.*

*Replace yellow highlights with relevant information or delete if not applicable.*

Moving from response to recovery can be a time when the affected community feel a sudden shift in support. They often notice a change in the number of people ‘on the ground’ and information available. This can lead to them feeling abandoned and that the people responsible (the Local Authority and CDEM) have ‘shut up shop’.

Communicating with the community and stakeholders during this time is crucial to assure them their needs remain the focus of activities, and that moving from response to recovery signals a positive step to regaining their quality of life. Communication and engagement needs to be two-way as much as possible, so people have opportunities to communicate back with you.

Background, scope and work programme

Most of the content in this section can be lifted from the Response to Recovery Transition Report or the Recovery Action Plan.

## The event

Brief description of event.

## Impacts

Impacts on the community, social, natural, built, rural and economic environments.

## Recovery arrangements

Eg recovery office structure.

## Recovery work programme

Brief description of outcomes, priorities and actions underway.

Communication and engagement goals

Goals are the communication results you want to achieve. *Include goals for internal communications, public communications, community engagement, stakeholder engagement and media.*

1. The Recovery Office has a comprehensive, clear and holistic story to tell about the recovery and its progress to strengthen confidence in the recovery effort, eg about social aspects, the economy, tourism, land use and resilience. This will enable communities, the public, media and stakeholders to have an informed understanding of the coordinated and effective progress across all levels of government.
2. Key internal and external stakeholders receive timely and pertinent information and advice about communications and engagement risks and opportunities. This will ensure advice is coordinated, gaps and overlaps are identified and dealt with, and opportunities and synergies leveraged.
3. The public and stakeholders receive clear and seamless communications about progress on all aspects of the recovery. Affected people feel well informed and listened to, and see that reasonable efforts are being made to address recovery-related issues that affect them directly.
4. Communities have opportunities to participate in the recovery and are encouraged to do so in ways that suit them.
5. Strengthen the sense of belonging and purpose for our community.

Communications and engagement risks and issues

A risk is something that hasn't happened yet but has some probability of occurring. An issue is a risk that has happened.

*See* [*www.civildefence.govt.nz*](https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/) *for a recovery risk register template. Ensure recovery risk registers include communications risks*.

| Risks and issues | Mitigation actions |
| --- | --- |
| Misconceptions about xxx, meaning xxx |  |
| Some channels unavailable, meaning xxx |  |
| Community xx difficult to reach, meaning xxx |  |
| Communications team under-resourced, meaning xxx |  |
| Change in personnel at key stakeholders, meaning xxx |  |
| Poor relationship with xx, meaning xxx |  |
| Uncoordinated visits by Ministers and officials, meaning xxx |  |
| Unaffected communities may feel forgotten |  |

Strategy

The approach you take to achieve a goal. Eg:

1. Develop, maintain and share a comprehensive, clear and consolidated story about the recovery (a people focus - why it’s needed, how it’s being done and progress).
2. Establish relationships and channels of communication with priority stakeholders to mitigate risks, leverage opportunities and share content and channels.
3. Ensure communication is clear, accurate, relevant and timely.
	* Clear – in plain English
	* Accurate – correct and current
	* Relevant – messaging targeted to current topics and issues
	* Timely – information delivered to the appropriate channels at the right time.
4. Gather, collate and support the effective flow of information between Council and the community.
5. Support the community to identify recovery outcomes.
6. Identify and use channels that work for each community and stakeholder.
7. Be proactive where possible, and agile and responsive where needed.
8. Continuous improvement – incorporate lessons, new information and changing circumstances. The plan will be dynamic.
9. Evaluate and monitor effectiveness of communications.

Key messages and FAQS

|  | Messages  |
| --- | --- |
| The event | Who and what was affected, what it means to people, what's being done, next steps.* Brief description of event
* Impacts on the community, social, natural, built, rural and economic environments.
 |
| Recovery outcomes and actions | * Outcomes wanted by Community
* What recovery teams are doing to help communities recover, how and by when
* Who’s paying for what
 |
| What we want people to do (general and specific) | * What help and support is available
* Where to go for help
* Available funding and to apply
* Keep an eye on Facebook for updates

-----------* Put any wet gib outside your house for collection
* Community xx should boil water for drinking
 |
| General information | * Eg road closures, parks now open
 |
| Upcoming events | * Eg Street Barbeque, Market Day, Community recovery hui
 |
| Science and technology | * Why the event happened, facts behind the emergency
* Stories about the technology supporting the recovery
 |
| Preparedness | * How we can learn and prepare better, eg Never happens, happens – [www.happens.nz](http://www.happens.nz)
 |
| Conversation | * How to contact us
* How to contribute to the recovery
* How you can help, eg volunteer opportunities
* Tell us about xxx
 |
|  |  |

RASCI

The RASCI [model](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Responsibility_assignment_matrix) is useful for clarifying communications roles and responsibilities.

| Risks | Who Title and Name  |
| --- | --- |
| Responsible for the communications plan | Recovery Communications Manager |
| Accountable – signs off | Recovery Manager |
| Support – resources to help | Recovery Communications team |
| Consult – subject matter experts | Eg Council Communications Manager |
| Inform – people who need to know about the plan | Eg CE, Mayor |

Internal communications

Approach

*How will you achieve your internal communication goals?* Eg:

* Proactive where possible
* Use existing channels
* Set up regular internal meetings to brief internal stakeholders
* Support frontline staff and find ways to engage with them to help understand what’s happening in the community
* Establish protocols and support for media interviews and public appearances.

| Audience | Objective | Channels |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Mayors, Chairs | Keep informedSupport leadership, eg media releases, public appearances, social media posts | Face-faceEmailsVia Recovery Manager |
| Councillors | Support them to be champions in the community | Councillors’ newsletter, Council meetings, memos |
| CEs | Keep informedSupport leadership, eg media releases, public appearances, social media posts | Face-face, emails, via Recovery Manager |
| Leadership team, Directors | Keep informedSubject matter experts | Face-face, emails, via Recovery Manager |
| Council staff | Keep informed | Staff newsletters, content for Managers to talk with staff, staff meetings, Intranet |
| Customer services and staff on the ground | Keep informedConversations about what is happening on the ground  | Face-face, emails, FAQs on website |
| Recovery Manager | Support leadership, eg media releases, public appearances, social media posts | Face-face, emails |
| Recovery office staff, including task leads, perhaps from other organisations | Keep informedSubject matter expertsTwo way information flow. | Face-face, staff meetings |
|  |  |  |

Community engagement

*Summarise Community engagement plan and link to it here as there will be considerable overlap and support from Communications.*

*See Issues to consider when planning and reporting template on* [www.civildefence.govt.nz](https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/) *for a list of potentially impacted communities.*

*See Appendix below for ideas for channels. Consider new channels if existing ones don’t resonate with affected communities.*

Approach

*How will you achieve your community engagement goals?* Eg:

* Engage with iwi as partners under the Treaty of Waitangi.
* Engage with any specific community segments, eg ethnic, religious.
* Identify community champions, eg Councillors, principal of local school, manager of medical centre, owner of local dairy, community members who regularly communicate with Council.
* Support community champions so they have the latest updates and key messages and can feedback information to the recovery office about what is happening in the community.
* Use channels, such as pulse surveys, to get info and opinions from the community.
* Community feedback informs actions.

| Community | Community impacts and needs | Community leaders | Purpose of engagement | Channels | Key messages |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Community x | Eg roads closed, people staying with family and friends |  | Keep informed about road closures, available support Prevent fake news and rumoursInvite to participate in solutions | Face-faceHui  | Specific key messages for community |
| Tourists |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aged in residential homes |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unaffected communities | BAU |  | Keep informed about BAU activity still operational |  |  |
| Businesses | Eg, workers can’t get to work, premises damaged |  | Keep informed, Invite to participate in solutions |  |  |
| General public, including international | General interest |  | Keep informedSolicit donations | MediaSocial media |  |

Stakeholder engagement

*See Stakeholder engagement list, map and contacts database template on* [www.civildefence.govt.nz](https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/)*.*

*See Appendix below for ideas for channels.*

Approach

*How will you achieve your stakeholder engagement goals?* Eg:

* Identify people who may be affected by the decisions you makes or can influence the implementation of your decisions
* Map stakeholders and identify the purpose of engagement.
* Nurture existing relationships and build new relationships
* Build trust through communications and consultation
* Coordinate visits from Ministers and government officials.

| Stakeholder | Role in recovery | Opportunities | Purpose of engagement | Channels | Key messages |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| People and groups who are interested and have influence |   | Eg access to channels, venues | Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, or Empower | Best way to communicate with stakeholders | Specific key messages for stakeholders |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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Media

Approach

*How will you achieve your media goals?* Eg:

* Proactive where possible, reactive where necessary.
* Media list prepared, including national, and international if necessary.
* Social media channels ready, eg Facebook, Twitter
* Key messages ready and spokespeople trained and prepared.
* Establish processes for responding to media enquiries, including social media

Spokespeople for media interviews:

Sign off procedure: eg who will fact check, peer review, sign off. Ensure relevant internal and external stakeholders aware before it goes public.

| Planned release  | Date | Channels | Key messages |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Eg Enhanced Task Force green to start | 15 March |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
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Monitor and Evaluate

Approach

*How will you monitor the effectiveness of your communications?* How do you know channels are reaching the right people? Eg

* Establish performance targets.
* Monitor, evaluate and reflect, make changes as necessary

| Indicator  | Target | How measured  | Progress as at date | Corrective action |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Accuracy of fact reporting | 95% | Feedback after media release | 70% at 28/11 | Review fact checking procedure |
| Number of hits on website |  |  |  |  |
| Number of newsletters |  |  |  |  |
| Number of calls to call centre |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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Tactics - Action Plan

Actions based on internal communications, community and stakeholder engagement, channel and media, engagement approaches above. *Should be SMART = specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.*

| Action | How | Who | When | Status |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Internal** **communications** |  |  |  |  |
| What needs to be done | How it will be done. Include outcome, measures, audience, channels | Who will do it | By when | Underway, ongoing, complete |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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| **Community engagement** |  |  |  |  |
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| **Stakeholder engagement** |  |  |  |  |
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| **Media**  |  |  |  |  |
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Appendix – Ideas for communication and engagement channels

Approach

* Use channels that are trusted by the community and allow for two-way communication
* Create new channels if necessary (but budget for time and resource)
* Use multiple channels.

| **Channel** | **Audience** | **Content** | **Frequency** | **Comment**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Council meetings, agendas and minutes  | Local residents, businesses | Updates and Reports  | BAU |  |
| Council customer services | Local residents, businesses |  |  | Keep frontline staff updated, eg via FAQs on websiteConsider an 0800 number for the Recovery Office |
| Council website – recovery section | Local residents, businessesNational and international  | FAQs – update regularly Key messages and photosPublic education, eg preparednessLatest media releases Links to Civil Defence pagesContact details for recovery office, info about community meetings | Update regularly | Easy to keep updatedLinks from home page so easily foundOne way – limited use for conversation and feedback |
| Regular Council newsletter | All residents | As above | BAU | Not residents might be affectedInclude recovery content even if a dedicated recovery newsletterUseful when recovery exits |
| Recovery newsletter | Affected communities and businesses | As above plus:Updates, local stories and newsOpportunities for feedback, eg contact details for recovery office, community meetings | Weekly or as needed | Can be targetedResource heavyHow and how often it will be delivered? If email – need to build and maintain databasePut printed copies in libraries, dairies etc |
| Council social media, eg Facebook, Twitter | Local residents, businessesNational and international | As above plus:VideosConversationsPulse surveysQuick surveys about specific topics, eg should we choose x, y or z | Real time | Resource heavyExpectation of quick repliesAllows two way conversation |
| Face to face, eg welfare visits, community info evening, public meetings, hui-a-iwi | Communities | As aboveCommunity specific info  | As needed | Targeted and personalSee comparison of community engagement channels below |
| Local radio stations and newspapers, including community newspapers | Local residents, businesses | As above plusAdverts, eg for meetings or services | Regular slots and as needed | Leverage existing relationships and opportunitiesMonitor, provide content for, and engage with their social media |
| Visual, eg flyers, posters, on local notice boards | Local residents, businesses | Time specific infoPointers to where to go for further info | Keep fresh | In places where the community gathers, eg schools, medical centre |
| Channels belonging to communities and stakeholders, eg Facebook, newsletters, websites, Chatrooms, Neighbourly |  |  |  | Provide content for your stakeholders, eg Marae, Chamber of Commerce, radio station, schools |
| Mail outs and flyers | Targeted residents and businesses | Specific information |  |  |
| General media | National and international | Local stories of national interest |  |  |
| Ethnic media | Eg Asian, Pacific communities |  |  |  |
| Television | National | Local stories of national interest |  | Probably overkill for a local/regional recovery, although media stories likely to run nationally |
| Community events, eg street barbeques, gardening, fence building | All residents |  |  | Unaffected residents may also like to participate, benefit |

Comparison of community engagement channels

| Channel | Benefits | Risks |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Community meeting / presentation*Most useful when the information to be delivered is not contentious or emotive.* | * Deliver information to all in a large audience simultaneously.
* Everyone gets the same information and messages.
* Community can ask questions.
* Broad and common issues can be clarified on the spot.
 | * Possible ‘media spectacle’ and promotion of other agendas.
* Possible confrontation between speakers ‘panel’ and audience.
* Limits the number and type of questions that can be answered.
* Audience may not be comfortable asking questions.
 |
| Community walk-in session(central and local government representatives at subject-specific tables that people can approach for one-to-one discussion)*Good for technical information or when questions and concerns from the community are best addressed in detail, and in a personalised context.* | * Targeted, personalised communication with community members.
* Direct contact the community and helps to build relationships that help future engagement.
* People can ask personalised questions in a non-confrontational environment.
* Controls the situation effectively.
* One-on-one attention from experts.
 | * Can be resource intensive.
* Not all community members will engage.
* Ongoing legacy issues can fuel negative community sentiment.
 |
| Community representative group meeting*Most useful as a forum for discussion and feedback between government and local communities.* | * Ongoing engagement with community and interest group representatives.
* The small group format allows concerns to be addressed and misinformation corrected.
* Allows for in-depth explanations and open dialogue.
* Helps build trust.
* Can test messages, information materials and engagement styles.
 | * Selection of appropriate community representatives can be difficult and create additional concerns, particularly if the wider community do not feel their views are represented well by those who put themselves forward for these roles.
* Success relies on a chairperson or facilitator and representatives’ commitment to work together collegially.
 |
| Influencer briefing*Should be done first, so influencers are ready to respond when other engagement occurs.* | * Inform, educate, provide the facts, and answer questions directly with the aim of influencing commentary and community sentiment.
* Helps influencers become ‘credible, trusted’ communication conduits to the broader community.
 | * Can be resource intensive.
* Influencers could use briefings as an opportunity to promote other agendas (however, they can do this without a briefing **–** this way they are informed).
 |
| Targeted stakeholder meeting*Should be part of any engagement approach.* | * Can inform, educate, provide the facts specific to their issues and concerns, and answer questions.
* Allows for in-depth explanations.
* A targeted approach helps build positive relationships.
 | * Can be resource intensive.
* Stakeholders could use briefings as an opportunity to promote other agendas (however, they are likely to do this with or without a briefing **–** this way they are informed).
 |
| Newsletters*Effective way of keeping everyone informed, even those unable or unwilling to attend meetings.* | * People receive factual, consistent messages.
* Helps build trust that stakeholders being kept in the loop.
* Links to research, reports etc.
* Contact details.
* Links for feedback and questions.
 | * One way communication.
* Needs to happen regularly, can appear not much is happening.
 |