

IAP2 Submission to Planning and Environment Amendment (Recognising Objectors Bill) Inquiry 2015

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) was founded on the belief that those who are affected by decisions have the right to be consulted. Since 2011, the IAP2 Australasian chapter has been supporting people who implement public decision making processes by offering training and resources and promoting the principles of community engagement. It is one of many chapters around the world.

We work with Local, State and Federal Government Agencies, as well as Private companies and not for profit organisations, to achieve outstanding results from good engagement processes.

We offer the following information to assist in the inquiry into the Planning and Environment Amendment (Recognising Objectors) Bill 2015 and in the implementation of any findings/ recommendations:

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

The defining elements of community engagement include:

- Purposeful
- Planned process
- Shaping of decisions and actions of communities and/or organisations
- Recognition of the interrelationship between the decisions and actions of organisations, stakeholders, communities and individuals
- Recognition of the rights and responsibilities and roles of organisations, stakeholders, communities and individuals.

At IAP2 we believe it is important that all decision making bodies involved in this process can demonstrate that the above elements are evident in their activities.

IAP2's core values, code of ethics and public participation spectrum are also foundational elements of effective public participation processes and we encourage organisations to incorporate these principles into their processes.

The IAP2 Public Participation spectrum provides a quick reference to the levels of community engagement available to adopt. It recognises that not every project will require intense collaboration and some will require more than information delivery. It is about selecting the right level based on the needs/constraints of the decision maker and the potential impacts on stakeholders.

IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

		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 seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	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 work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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IAP2's core values define the expectations and aspirations of the public participation process they include;

1. Public Participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public Participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public Participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants including decision makers.
4. Public Participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public Participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public Participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

The code of ethics is a set of principles which guide the integrity of the process. All IAP2 training practitioners must uphold these principles;

1. Purpose: We support public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders and meet the needs of the decision-making body
2. Role of Practitioner: We will enhance the public's participation in the decision making process and assist decision makers in being responsive to the public's concerns and suggestions.
3. Trust: We will undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process and among all participants
4. Defining the Public's Role: We will carefully consider and accurately portray the public's role in the decision making process.
5. Openness: We will encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public's role in the decision making process.
6. Access to the Process: We will ensure that stakeholders have fair and equal access to the public participation process and the opportunity to influence decisions.
7. Respect for Communities: We will avoid strategies that risk polarising community interest or that appear to "divide and conquer".
8. Advocacy: We will advocate for the public participation process and will not advocate for a particular interest. Party or project outcome.
9. Commitments: We will ensure that all commitments made to the public, including those by the decision maker, are made in good faith
10. Support the practice: We will mentor new practitioners in the field and educate decision makers and the public about the value and use of public participation.

We trust this information will be valuable for your inquiry.