

Community Consultative

Committee Guidelines

Frequently Asked Questions

November 2016

What are Community Consultative Committees?

- Community engagement is an integral part of the NSW planning system. For many years, Community Consultative Committees have played an important role in facilitating community engagement on State Significant projects, such as mines and wind farms.
- These committees are chaired by an independent chairperson, and provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.
- They seek to:
 - promote good working relationships and information sharing between committee members
 - allow proponents to keep the community informed about projects, seek community views on projects, and respond to matters raised by the community
 - allow community members and the local council to seek information from proponents on the development and implementation of projects, and facilitate the delivery of balanced social, environmental and economic outcomes.

Why has the Department updated the guidelines?

- The Department published guidelines for Community Consultative Committees in 2007.
- In 2015, the Department carried out a review of the effectiveness of Community Consultative Committees with the independent chairpersons of several committees.
- This review identified several measures that could make these committees work better. These included:
 - expanding the scope of the guidelines to cover all State significant projects, rather than just mining projects
 - enabling the committees to be set up earlier in the assessment process, instead of only after approval
 - strengthening the procedures for the establishment and operation of these committees, including introducing a new code of conduct for members.

How was the community consulted on the revised guidelines?

- The revised guidelines were released for consultation between February and April 2016, and attracted 106 submissions from community members, special interest groups, and government agencies.
- The Department also carried out targeted consultation with several key stakeholders, including the members of existing Community Consultative Committees and the [Resource Advisory Forum](#).

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What changes were made to the revised guidelines?

- Several changes were made to address issues raised during consultation.
- Key changes include:
 - independent chairpersons will now be appointed directly by the Department, without recommendations from the proponent
 - giving independent chairpersons an expanded role, involving them in the appointment of community members and requiring them to publish an annual report on the committee's activities on the Department's website
 - strengthening the procedures for establishing committees, and replacing committee members
 - increasing the maximum number of community members from five to seven
 - requiring the guidelines to be reviewed within five years to ensure they remain up to date.

What role will proponents have in recruiting a chair of a Community Consultative Committee?

- None. The Department is now solely responsible for the appointment of independent chairpersons for committees.
- According to the revised guidelines, the Department will recruit, appoint and review the performance of all independent chairpersons.
- The Department will establish a pool of suitable independent chairpersons for committees. A list of the members of this pool and a summary of their credentials will be published on the Department's website

How will community representatives be selected?

- Independent chairpersons will oversee the selection of the community representatives.
- Advertisements will be placed in media, seeking expressions of interest for the committee.
- Interested community representatives will apply directly to the independent chairperson.
- The independent chairperson will review all applications, and make a recommendation to the Department.
- The Department will then consider all applications and the independent chairperson's recommendation, and appoint the community members.

Who will the new guidelines apply to?

- The guidelines will apply to the establishment and operation of all new committees and also, to the extent they are relevant, to existing committees.
- The Department will be writing to the independent chairperson of all existing committees shortly, asking them to apply the new guidelines.

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- If there is any doubt about the application of the guidelines, the matter can be referred to the Department for advice.

When will they take effect?

- The guidelines will take effect immediately.
- Existing committees will be given some time to revise their operations to incorporate the new guidance.
- The guidelines are available at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/CommunityConsultativeCommittees