

Western Victoria Transmission Network Project

Community Consultation Groups – Terms of Reference

PROJECT BACKGROUND

AusNet Services is delivering the Western Victorian Transmission Network Project (WVTNP). To support the development of the project AusNet Services is establishing three Community Consultation Groups (CCGs) across the project area to help facilitate stronger community interaction and connection with the project.

The proposed project is a new approximately 190km long transmission line extending from Bulgana in western Victoria to Sydenham in Melbourne's north-west.

This document outlines the Terms of Reference for the CCGs, confirming the purpose, objectives, functions, membership composition, conditions of membership and meeting procedures.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the CCGs is to enhance communication both within the community and between the community and the project. The CCGs will be forums to support the flow of information to the community about the project and encourage constructive two-way discussion and feedback between the project, local communities, stakeholders and local Councils.

The CCGs are not decision-making bodies and have no delegated authority to act on behalf of the project, nor on behalf of any individual organisation represented on the CCG.

The CCGs will be based in the east, central and west of the project area.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the CCGs are to:

- Provide a transparent, representative and accessible forum to assist with identification and discussion of issues of community interest related to the project.
- Provide a forum for information about the project to be shared with community representatives and invite feedback and suggestions on a range of project matters.
- Receive briefings on specific local issues, impacts and benefits associated with the project and provide feedback to the project team.
- Increase understanding about the project within the community, capture community feedback and suggestions and help identify and shape future community engagement opportunities.
- Provide advice on potential benefit sharing projects recommended by the community.

The CCG may also invite presentations from specific stakeholders at the Chairperson's discretion, in consultation with the group.

MEMBERSHIP

It is important that the CCG represents a broad range of backgrounds and interests in the community, such as in agriculture, environment, business, cultural heritage, community, transport and emergency services.

Membership of the CCGs will be selected to represent a diversity of community-based skills and interests, and locations across the project area.

Each CCG will be made up of a minimum of 5 and maximum of 12 members that represent the local area including, and not limited to:

- A Chairperson to oversee all three groups.
- A representative from the WVTNP.
- At least one landowner.
- At least one local business representative.
- At least one community member.
- Attendee from the relevant local government area.

Appointment

Members will be appointed through a nomination process advertised via e-update, newspaper advertising, email to community groups and by direct invitation to key stakeholders.

To view a copy of the Code of Conduct and Membership Application Form refer to Appendix 1 and 2.

Limitations of the CCG

The CCG is a consultative forum and not a decision-making forum.

Responsibilities of the Chairperson

A Chairperson will be appointed to facilitate and run the CCGs meetings.

The Chairperson is responsible for:

- Ensuring the orderly conduct of meetings.
- Ensuring fair participation in discussions by all member.
- Inviting specialists to attend meetings, when required.
- Finalising meeting agendas.
- Guiding meetings in accordance with the agenda and time available.
- Ensuring all discussion items end with a decision, action or definite outcome which is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- Chairing meetings in a manner that ensures consistency with the agreed Terms of Reference for the CCGs.
- Reviewing, approving and signing off on meeting minutes prior to distribution.
- Reviewing and evaluating the performance of the CCGs according to the agreed Terms of Reference of the CCGs, as considered relevant.
- Providing feedback to CCG members on any relevant matters that arise from a review or evaluation. Such matters will be discussed with both the project team and the CCG members and any actions agreed.
- Reviewing and endorsing any new nominations for vacant positions on the CCGs, as required.

Responsibilities of Members

Members will agree to:

- Adhere to these Terms of Reference.
- Identify, communicate, represent, and consider the broad range of needs and interests of the local community in relation to the project.
- Provide advice to the project team on how best to disseminate information using existing community networks.
- Provide feedback to the project team on a range of project specific issues presented to the CCGs.
- Communicate regularly with their local community who are not members of the CCG, to provide information on the outcomes of CCG meetings.

MEETING PROTOCOLS

Conduct

- The role of the Chairperson will be to chair the meetings and facilitate discussion and participation by all members.
- The Chairperson is the sole determinant of issues to be dealt with in accordance with the Terms of Reference. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring the proper and professional conduct of the CCG.
- Issues and ideas that arise during CCG meetings which fall outside its Terms of Reference will, where possible, be referred to the project team.
- A Code of Conduct for participation at the CCG meetings is outlined in Appendix 1 and must be signed by all members of the CCG.
- A minimum of five members must be present at each meeting to reach a quorum. There will be no proxies.
- Members will attend most meetings or send apologies in advance to the Chairperson.

Meeting frequency and duration

The CCG will meet at an agreed frequency, for approximately two hours, monthly to start with and then subject to the EES program will revert to a bimonthly or quarterly meeting.

The regular meeting time will be discussed and agreed at the first meeting. It is expected that meetings will run for approximately two hours and be held between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm weekdays (to be discussed at the first meeting).

Location

During Covid-19 restrictions, meetings will be held online over a networking platform such as zoom and recorded. A special or extraordinary meeting may be called by the Chairperson at their discretion. An extraordinary meeting would only be called by the Chairperson if there is an issue or event of sufficient importance.

Agenda

All meetings will follow an agenda.

The meetings will be closed and not open to the public. Agenda and minutes of each meeting will be published to the project website.

Agenda items to be considered at each CCG can be nominated by the project team and other members at the preceding meeting or through the Chairperson.

The Chairperson will finalise the agenda. The number of items to be placed on the agenda will allow for appropriate levels of discussion and be restricted to items of relevance to the project and that fall within the parameters of the CCGs' purpose.

The meeting agenda and minutes of the previous meeting will be distributed seven days prior to each meeting.

Meeting Minutes

All meetings will be minuted. Matters raised and actions agreed will be recorded in the minutes.

The minutes will be presented to the Chairperson within five business days of the meeting.

The Chairperson will seek acceptance of the minutes at the next meeting.

The minutes will then be circulated by email to CCG members and once approved, the minutes will be uploaded to the applicable websites.

Secretariat Services

The project team will undertake secretariat services for the CCGs to:

- Prepare agendas and issue notices for meetings and ensure all necessary documents for discussion or comment are attached to the agenda
- Distribute the agenda and minutes of meetings, seven days prior to the next meeting
- Take notes of proceedings for the preparation of draft minutes
- Provide draft minutes to the Chairperson for review and approval as a true and accurate record of meetings
- Ensure the CCGs agenda and minutes of meetings are uploaded to the project website if agreed.
- Ensure actions items are followed up.

APPENDIX 1

Western Victoria Transmission Network Project Community Consultation Group (CCG) Code of Conduct

As a representative of the (insert east or central or west precinct) CCG, I agree:

- To attend CCG meetings and provide apologies in advance where attendance is not possible.
- To act in an advisory capacity to the project by disseminating authorised information within the community and providing insight and advice into community perspectives on the project.
- To always seek to obtain and represent a range of views of the broader community.
- To represent the views of my organisation, interest group or community and not my individual views if at odds with my organisation or group.
- To participate in a positive way to finding solutions to issues or concerns.
- To respect the ideas and beliefs of all members and provide an atmosphere where all members feel comfortable to participate.
- To notify AusNet Services of any actual or potential conflict of interest that may arise in relation to the project during my participation in the CCG.
- To allow AusNet Services to publicly promote my participation in the CCG to facilitate and encourage community feedback.
- To not disseminate confidential information that is discussed at the CCG meetings as advised by the Chairperson.
- To refer all media enquiries about the project or the CCG immediately to AusNet Services.
- That members of the CCG are not authorised to represent the project or to provide any written or verbal comment to the media on behalf of the project; That in the event a CCG member is approached by the media, any comments made must be limited to, and clearly identified as, the member's own opinion as a private citizen, and not representative of the views of the CCG or about the project.
- That comments made by other members of the CCG, in any situation, must not be discussed with the media nor posted to social media; and
- Copies of information presented and/or discussed at CCG meetings must not be provided to the media or shared on social media.

I understand that where a member disregards the Code of Conduct, as agreed by the CCG members, the Chairperson may ask them to step down and/or their organisation may be requested to nominate a replacement.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX 2

Western Victoria Transmission Network Project
Community Consultation Group (CCG) Membership Application Form

1. PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS BELOW:

First name Last name

Contact Number

Email

Residential address

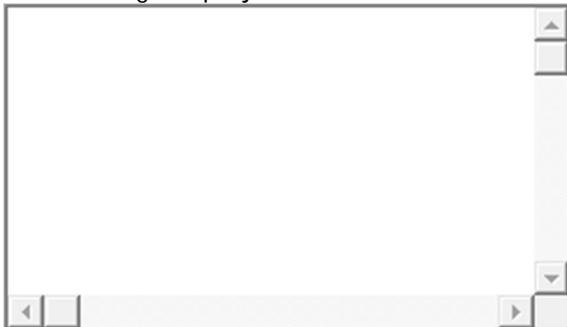
Why are you interested in becoming a member of the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project Community Consultation Group?

Please outline your connections to the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project and the surrounding local community, and particular interests you would bring to the Community Consultation Group.

Describe any past or current experience you have on committees or working groups.

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How would you gather ideas from - and disseminate project information to – the local community surrounding the project?

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Please outline any skills or expertise you have that you think will be beneficial to the Community Consultation Group.

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Please indicate how you represent the diversity of the community, as described in the Terms of Reference.

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Do you have any existing or potential conflict of interests* to declare?

*A situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a person because of the possibility of a clash between the person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest.

Yes No

If yes, please specify _____

Please nominate
two referees
for the
Chairperson to
contact

Name:	
Phone:	
Name:	
Phone:	