



AUSTRALIAN REGISTRARS NATIONAL ELECTRONIC CONVEYANCING COUNCIL

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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Australian Registrars' National Electronic Conveyancing Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Australian Registrars' National Electronic Conveyancing Council (ARNECC) recognises that the decisions we make and the actions we take in performing our regulatory role and other activities affect a wide range of individuals, businesses and organisations. While we have engaged with the stakeholders impacted by our work, we are committed to improving the quality and quantity of our engagement.

Our vision is for our stakeholders to have the opportunity to engage with us across a range of our functions. To achieve this, we recognise that our stakeholders need to have trust that their input will be valued and, importantly, that the regulatory process can deliver outcomes that reflect stakeholders' needs and interests.

Our Stakeholder Engagement Framework works towards this vision by providing a structure that allows stakeholders' needs and interests to be consistently, transparently and meaningfully considered in our activities, including those processes through which we reach decisions.

2 ABOUT ARNECC

ARNECC was established in 2011 by a formal agreement between the State and Territory Governments to oversee the regulatory framework for National Electronic Conveyancing (NEC) across Australia. The Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) signed in 2011 broadly outlines the Council's functions. ARNECC membership comprises the Land Titles Registrars (or their nominee) from each State and Territory that has entered into the IGA.

ARNECC's core responsibility is to establish and manage the regulatory framework for the efficient implementation of the Electronic Conveyancing National Law (ECNL), including the Model Operating Requirements (MOR) and Model Participation Rules (MPR), and to maximise consistency in how it operates across different states and territories. ARNECC is also responsible for putting in place practical guidelines to support NEC take-up rates over time, and to build public confidence in the NEC system overall. Registrars regulate Electronic Lodgment Network Operators (ELNOs) to the extent they provide an Electronic Lodgment Network (ELN) to lodge electronic registry instruments, as well as use of the ELN.

ARNECC has a responsibility to engage with stakeholders which comprise persons, organisations, groups or professions involved in conveyancing transactions or potentially impacted by NEC and the ECNL. Key amongst these are ELNOs, conveyancers, lawyers and financial institutions.

The core roles and functions of ARNECC are to:

1. Provide leadership on the NEC regulatory framework and its operations.
2. Provide advice to government, industry and the community on the NEC regulatory framework and its operations.
3. Consult with and inform stakeholders about NEC and its progress.

4. Prepare and update documentation that supports the efficient and consistent implementation of NEC.
5. Ensure there is one national electronic conveyancing data standard.
6. Monitor and review ELNO and Subscriber compliance across jurisdictions and take steps to support the consistent implementation of NEC.
7. Share information and resources with ARNECC members that support their jurisdictional responsibilities consistent with the IGA

3 PURPOSE OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

This Framework provides the context in which we will plan and implement stakeholder engagement for business as usual activities as well as identified projects and decision-making processes.

It sets out the principles we will adhere to when we plan and carry out our engagement activities, so that the views and interests of our stakeholders are consistently and meaningfully considered, and that our stakeholders know this to be the case.

The Framework sets out the:

- scope of our engagement activities – who we will engage with and the kinds of issues we will engage with stakeholders on
- principles that will underpin our engagement activities
- different levels of engagement and the mechanisms we will use to engage with our stakeholders, recognising that tools and strategies must be tailored to suit the decisions, activities and processes we are seeking to engage on.

The core objectives of the Framework are to:

- promote the achievement of National Electronic Conveyancing
- increase the transparency of our regulatory activities and processes, and increase participation in them
- facilitate our ability to understand and be aware of the stakeholder environment including stakeholder concerns, needs and interests and incorporate them into our processes, activities and decision making
- improve the way we communicate and engage with our stakeholders, including enhancing the clarity, accessibility, relevance and timeliness of our communication throughout our engagement processes
- build stakeholders' trust and confidence in ARNECC and its regulatory processes, decisions and activities
- build stakeholder relationships based on mutual trust, respect and understanding

4 SCOPE OF THIS FRAMEWORK

4.1. Who are our stakeholders?

The principles and practices set out in this document are intended to cover (but are not limited to) our engagement with the following groups:

- Electronic Lodgment Network Operators (ELNO)
- Conveyancers/Settlement Agents
- Legal Practitioners
- Financial Institutions
- Advocates and representative bodies (such as Australian Institute of Conveyancers, Law Society, Australian Banking Association, Customer Owned Banking Association, Real Estate Institute)
- State Revenue Offices
- Government and other regulatory agencies – including local, state and federal government departments and jurisdictional regulators
- Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA)
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)
- Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA)
- Property Industry Professionals
- Insurance providers
- Information brokers
- Private Operator/Service Provider

4.2. What activities does this Framework cover?

This Framework covers business as usual activities as well as identified projects and decision-making processes. These can include (but are not limited to):

- Model Operating Requirements consultation
- Model Participation Rules consultation
- IGA Review outcomes and adopted recommendations
- General ARNECC activities and NEC updates
- National Consistency
- Electronic Conveyancing National Law

5 ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

ARNECC has adopted a principles-based approach to stakeholder engagement. Each principle seeks to clarify the purpose of our engagement and guide how that engagement occurs.

Principle 1 – Clear, accurate and timely communication

We will provide information that is clear, accurate, relevant and timely, recognising the different communication needs and preferences of different stakeholders and that effective communication involves listening and talking.

Principle 2 – Accessible and inclusive

We will seek out stakeholders potentially affected by, or interested in, our activity, process or decision and provide them with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Principle 3 – Transparent

We will clearly identify and explain the engagement process, the role of stakeholders in the engagement process, and communicate how their input was considered and how it informed the decision or outcome.

Principle 4 – Measurable

Evaluating our engagement activities is a critical element of good engagement as it allows us to understand what is effective and improve the quality of our stakeholder engagement over time.

Principle 5 – Purposeful

Engagement activities will be purposeful and communicated clearly with stakeholders.

Principle 6 – Relevant

A range of engagement techniques can be used to ensure the approach is appropriate and relevant to ARNECC business.

6 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

We recognise that different levels of stakeholder engagement are appropriate depending on the objective, outcomes, timeframes, resources and levels of concern or interest in the project or activity.

We have adopted a Stakeholder Engagement Spectrum (see Table 1 below based on the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum) to illustrate the increasing levels of engagement we may use depending on the particular project or activity, and the different engagement methods that can accompany each level.

The spectrum provides a methodology for us to determine what level of influence stakeholders can have over an activity and therefore what level of engagement is appropriate.

At lower levels, we may determine that engagement simply means ensuring stakeholders are well informed about our processes and outcomes. At higher levels, the spectrum illustrates that for some issues we may seek more direct stakeholder input. The level of engagement we use will be determined by our role and responsibilities, the issue being considered, and what we are trying to achieve.

Given the nature of our role as regulatory decision maker, we expect the majority of our engagement activities will occur at the levels of 'Inform', 'Consult' and 'Involve'. In much of what we do, we cannot share or delegate decision making. However, we have included the higher levels of 'Collaborate' and 'Empower' in the spectrum for completeness.

A key element of the spectrum is the recognition that each level of engagement involves a promise made to our stakeholders. At all levels, the promise should be clearly defined and understood by all participants and the decision makers.

In the table following, we have also included examples of engagement tools that could be used at each level of the Engagement Spectrum. These engagement tools are not included as an exhaustive list, but as an indication of the kinds of techniques we may use, depending on the issue and our objective.

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
CHARACTERISTICS	One-way engagement.	Limited two-way engagement; we ask questions, stakeholders respond.	Two-way or multi-way engagement; learning on all sides, stakeholders and ARNECC act independently, ARNECC is decision maker.	Two-way or multi-way engagement, joint decision making and actions.	Decisions delegated to stakeholders; stakeholders play a role in governance.
STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide stakeholders with balanced and objective information to help them understand the process, problems, proposed solutions and outcomes.	To obtain stakeholder input on analysis, proposed solutions and outcomes.	To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with stakeholders in the process, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of stakeholders.
OUR PROMISE TO STAKEHOLDERS	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how stakeholder input has influenced the decision.	We will work with you so that your concerns and issues can be directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLE OF ENGAGEMENT TOOLS	Guidance Notes Email newsletters Digital communications Media releases ARNECC Website Written reports	Focus groups Surveys Stakeholder relationship management Webinars Discussion papers	Workshops Stakeholder working groups Consultative committees Stakeholder relationship management	Consensus building Participatory decision making Partnerships	Delegated decisions

Table 1: Stakeholder Engagement Spectrum (based on IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum www.iap2.org.au)

7 REVIEWING THIS FRAMEWORK

We are committed to improving the effectiveness of our engagement with stakeholders over time.

A key element of this improvement will be evaluating our performance under this Framework and, if necessary, amending and adding to this document.

Informal monitoring of the effectiveness of this framework will be ongoing. In particular, the evaluation phase at the end of each engagement process will provide opportunities for ARNECC to consider how the Framework is working in practice and suggest changes. Feedback from stakeholders gained through the project evaluation processes will inform this assessment.

8 OTHER RELEVANT ARNECC DOCUMENTS

We have published several key documents relevant to our interaction with our stakeholders.

[ARNECC Strategic Plan](#)

[ARNECC Charter](#)

[ARNECC Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure](#)