Airport public engagement strategy template

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Deliverable 7.2

This model shows goals and methods of engagement at five engagement levels: Identify; Inform; Consult; Involve; Collaborate and Empower. For each method benefits and potential limitations are noted.

Individual airports should evaluate the methods described and select those that they feel would be most appropriate to their situation. It is unlikely to be necessary to use all methods. Also, this is not an exhaustive list, and if an airport has other methods that work for them then it is entirely sensible for those to be used too.

	Goal	Method	Benefits	Limitations
IDENTIFY	To ensure all public groups and individuals are involved in the engagement process	Local knowledge of the groups and individuals with an interest in or who make use of the airport. See **Note 1** for a list of examples.	• Offering all sections of the public an opportunity to become engaged with the airport reduces uncertainty and increases knowledge of the public's needs and the airport's plans	• Groups may be missed if they are not known to the airport • Identification of groups does not necessarily mean they will be willing to become engaged
INFORM	To provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist members of the public to understand the problem and identify alternatives, opportunities and solutions	**Fact sheets** Brief paper or online documents that summarise 'facts'	• Simple and efficient access to the public • Can be targeted to specific groups • Can be provided in multiple languages	• May not be accessible to people with visual impairment or low literacy levels • May be costly to provide information in multiple languages
		Information sharing For example, emails, newsletters, circulars, websites, social media	• Access to large numbers of the public • Can be targeted to specific groups	• Written material may not be accessible to people with visual impairment or low literacy levels • Online information may not be easily accessible to certain sections of the public, such as the elderly or those on low incomes

	Goal	Method	Benefits	Limitations
CONSULT	To obtain feedback from the public on analysis, alternatives and/or outcomes	**Survey** Online or paper based to gauge views, experiences and behaviours	• Straightforward • Focussed and specific • Can gauge a large number of opinions • Easily adapted	• Difficult to gather qualitative information • Answers may lack relevance • Delivery methods can affect results • Online surveys difficult to access for some sections of the public
		Opinion polls Used to determine what people think about an issue and extrapolate results to a wider group	• Quick and cheap • Provides a snapshot of opinions at a certain point in time • Straightforward and accurate	• May be too brief to allow full opinions to be given • Results may be influenced by wording of questions
		Focus groups Facilitated event allowing attendees to provide views on a range of topics of interest to the organiser	• Opportunity to interact with participants • Results may be easier to understand than complex statistics • Quicker to obtain information than individual methods	• Small sample size means group may not be fully representative • Group discussions can be difficult to control
		Workshops Facilitated event allowing attendees to address an issue in greater depth than at a focus group	• Complex issues may be discussed, competing options analysed and ideas generated • Encourages joint working • Builds ownership of results	• Availability of participants may make finding a suitable date for all difficult • Results may be skewed if certain groups are more easily able to attend
		Expert panel Used to obtain specialised input and opinion on a particular issue	• Intense focus on a specific subject • Produces in-depth analysis • Experts can often be subjective	• Process must be carefully focussed • Breadth may be limited • May be too 'exclusive'
		Public meetings Open to all interested parties rather than by specific invitation	• Opportunity for the public to ask questions and raise issues • Able to gather support for new ideas and build relationships • Communication with large groups	• Can be chaotic if not controlled by the chair • Difficult to capture questions, comments and ideas if multiple people are speaking • Some issues may not be able to be raised in an open forum
		Interviews Intensive face-to-face meetings or telephone conversations	• Excellent way to obtain qualitative information from individuals • Can produce highly accurate results • Adds a personal dimension	• Requires sensitivity • Many interviews needed to ensure accurate results • Advance preparation required

	Goal	Method	Benefits	Limitations
CONSULT contd		**Social media and Web 2.0 tools** Online facilities to allow the public to contribute their views, for example, Facebook, Twitter, microblogs	• Useful for diverse and extensive input • Offers access to views and feedback • Measurement of website visits can indicate public interest	• Some groups (e.g. elderly, those in poverty) may have limited online access • Careful design required to ensure valid data is collected • Cost to develop and maintain
INVOLVE	To work directly with individuals and/or groups of the public throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered	**Action research** A set of research methods enabling exploration of issues and testing of solutions See **Note 2** for further explanation and examples of this technique	• Provides good qualitative data • Inclusive • Flexible, allowing problem solving and solution testing during the process	• Often difficult to gather quantitative data • Answers may lack relevance • Delivery methods can affect results
		Advisory committees Made up of expert representatives to provide detailed or specific information	• Allows the input of a wide range of technical and other expertise • Enables distribution of information via the representatives to wider groups of the public	• May fail to allow in-depth opinions to be given • Results may be adversely impacted by wording of questions
		Open space technology A group process that supports positive transformation in organizations, increases productivity, inspires creative solutions, improves communication and enhances collaboration See **Note 3** for more information	• Allows development of a bottom-up agenda • Inspires ownership and action • Enables building of alliances	• Access for people with low literacy levels may be limited

	Goal	Method	Benefits	Limitations
COLLABORATE AND EMPOWER	To partner with individuals and groups of the public, including the development of alternatives, making decisions, and the identification of preferred solutions, if appropriate placing final decision making in the hands of the public	**Future search conference** A participatory method often used to develop a shared future vision and plan around an issue See **Note 4** for more information	• Can drive public and government action • Involves a broad range of relevant sections of the public • Develops public support and agreement	• Needs to be carefully focussed • Breadth may be limited • May be too 'exclusive'
		Participatory editing Members of the public co-write reports and endorse the final version of documents	• Builds ownership • Reflects informed views and contributes to quality of outputs	• Organisational structures of public groups and resources for groups and individuals need to be considered • May attract criticism if final result does not reflect input
		Visioning A technique that is used to support the public in developing a shared vision of the future. See **Note 5** for more information	• Large numbers of the public can be involved • Builds relationships • Utilises knowledge and experience held by members of the public • Generates forward planning	• Requires multiple facilitators • Large amount of data generated needing subsequent analysis • Careful documentation and clarity of purpose required to ensure process links to concrete outcomes
		Co-design Utilise the expertise and skills of the public to jointly create products and services	• Diverse contribution • Builds relationships • Increases commitment • Enables experimentation	• Process needs to be carefully focussed

Adapted from: State of Victoria (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) (2011). *Stakeholder Engagement Framework*. p. 14 and pp. 26-27.

Note 1: Groups for consideration as "the public"

This list should be seen as a starting point for development of a public engagement strategy, but it should be tailored to the needs of the individual airport by addition or subtraction as appropriate.

Groups for consideration as "the public"
Passengers departing on outbound flights
Passengers arriving on inbound flights
Transit passengers making a connection at the airport
Friends and relatives accompanying departing passengers
Friends and relatives meeting arriving passengers
People using airport facilities such as cafes and restaurants without going airside
People using the airport for leisure activities such as plane spotting, ornithology, etc.
People parking at the airport but not taking a flight
People visiting the airport to view a display or exhibition
People attending special events organised by the airport
People attending special events organised at the airport but not by the airport
People organising and attending meetings at the airport without flying (excluding some meetings with airport stakeholders)
People living in the vicinity of the airport affected by noise
People living in the vicinity of the airport affected by pollution
People living in the vicinity of the airport affected by traffic
People living in the vicinity of the airport affected by off airport parking
"Friends of the airport" groups

Note 2: Action Research

Action Research starts with a question and then proceeds through a 4 phase cycle.

Phase 1: PLAN. Develop a plan for the investigation of the question, consulting with the public who will be involved to explain what you intend to do and why.

Phase 2: ACT. Initiate the planned action, such as a new activity or a change to an existing one, ensuring that the involved group understand why the action is being taken. It may be necessary to check that good practice and ethical guidelines are followed.

Phase 3: OBSERVE. Make observations and recordings of the impact of the action on the group, noting any change to their behaviour, including any feedback that they wish to give.

Phase 4: REFLECT. Review the previous activities and reflect critically on the outcomes. Further questions may have been raised necessitating a repeat of the cycle.

An example of guidelines on Action Research developed by the Open University can be found at http://www.open.ac.uk/cobe/docs/AR-Guide-final.pdf

Note 3: Open Space Technology

A full description of Open Space Technology can be found on Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Space_Technology. It can be used in settings ranging from small meetings of just a few people to very large ones attended by thousands. There are five basic mechanisms involved in its application:

i.   The organizer issues an invitation to potential participants setting out the purpose of the meeting
ii. Attendees sit in a circle
iii. The group as a whole decides the agenda from "bulletin board" posts made by individual participants
iv. Many break-out spaces allow participants to learn about and contribute to different ideas and information sources
v.   There should be a rhythm between plenary and break-out sessions throughout the meeting

The meeting generally has a single facilitator, who ideally should be "fully present and totally invisible".

Note 4: Future Search conference

A full description of the Future Search conference process can be found on Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Future_Search#Future_Search_Conference. It is used for medium sized meetings of between 40 and 80 people and takes place in 4 or 5 half day sessions over 3 days. Facilitation is usually "hands-off", allowing participants to work collaboratively to arrive at their own solutions. There are four underlying principles:

i.   A cross-section of all parties with a stake in the outcome needs to be present
ii. The whole system needs to be discussed before starting to search for solutions
iii. The central aspect of the conference must be common ground between participants and a focus on the future, with problems and conflicts treated as information to enable solutions to be found rather than items to be acted upon
iv. Attendees are encouraged to be responsible for actions before, during and after the conference

Note 5: Visioning

For an example of the techniques employed in Visioning (sometimes referred to as Stakeholder Visioning) see this article that is part of the Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management Toolbox at http://www.sswm.info/content/visioning.