

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Version 1.0	Date Approved	Effective from	Next Review March 2021
-----------------------	----------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------------

1. Scope

This policy applies to all Mt Buller Mt Stirling resort Management Board staff and Board members in their dealings with stakeholders, and any other parties who undertake activities on their behalf. It applies to engagement activities on projects, policies and decisions. This includes but is not limited to strategic planning, significant infrastructure projects, and planning for services.

2. Purpose

This policy outlines the commitment of the Victorian alpine resort sector to engaging with its stakeholders.

3. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
The Board	Approve this policy and any amendments
CEO	Oversee this policy and the development of systems and materials to support its implementation.

4. Policy

4.1 Definitions

Alpine resort sector – as a collective this includes the following five public sector entities: the Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Council (ARCC) and the four Alpine Resort Management Boards (ARMBs): Mt Hotham, Falls Creek, Southern, and Mt Buller & Mt Stirling Boards.

Stakeholder – Traditional Owner partners, individuals, communities, interest groups, businesses and organisations who are interested in or impacted by the activities of an organisation and the decisions it makes.

Traditional Owners – are people with traditional and customary rights in a particular part of the land (i.e. the ‘right people for Country’). Some Aboriginal Traditional Owner groups have also had these rights recognised by the Australian legal system under a Native Title determination (Commonwealth) or a Traditional Owner Settlement Agreement (Victoria).

Stakeholder engagement – Involves stakeholders in problem solving or decision making and uses their input to make better decisions.

Public participation – Another term for stakeholder engagement.

Levels of engagement – The [International Association of Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#) spectrum shows a range of legitimate levels of engagement. They include:

- **Inform** – To provide balanced and objective information to assist stakeholders in understanding problems, alternatives and/or solutions
- **Consult** – To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions
- **Involve** – To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure their interests are understood and considered
- **Collaborate** – To partner with stakeholders in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution
- **Empower** – To place final decision-making power in the hands of the public.

1.2 Our vision for engagement

A Victorian alpine resort sector in which stakeholders are actively and genuinely engaged in decisions that affect them, resulting in stronger and more constructive relationships, shared knowledge and better outcomes.

1.3 Guiding principles

The alpine resort sector’s approach to stakeholder engagement is guided by the principles outlined in the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office (VAGO) [Better Practice Guide](#), and by the [International Association of Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#). These principles are based on the premise that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. The level at which a stakeholder is engaged is determined by considering the impact on stakeholders or their interest in the matter, the decision to be made and the goal to be achieved.

In conducting engagement, ARMBs and the ARCC will demonstrate the values of:

- **Responsiveness** – responding to stakeholder input in a timely and constructive manner
- **Transparency and integrity** – helping stakeholders understand the scope of a decision-making process and reporting how their input influenced the decision.
- **Openness** – willing to seek the views of those affected by decisions, and open to providing them with relevant information to support this process.
- **Accountability** – having clear objectives, following through on commitments made at the outset of the engagement, and being clear about the responsibilities of stakeholders in the process.
- **Inclusiveness** – proactively seeking out those affected by the decision and providing meaningful opportunities, accessible channels and time for their involvement.
- **Awareness** – being aware of legislative responsibilities to engage.

4.4 Alpine resort management sector’s commitment to engagement

The ARMBs and ARCC will:

- Approach engagement in a planned manner and incorporate it into project planning.
- Engage with stakeholders on matters that interest or affect them, including strategic planning, significant infrastructure projects, long-term financial planning and service planning.
- Be clear about stakeholders’ level of influence on any project or decision at the outset, using the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation as a reference, and inform them how their input was used.

- Engage with stakeholders in a manner that is timely, genuine, proactive and transparent.
- Endeavour to continually improve engagement practice, acknowledging that if it falls short, ARMBs and ARCC will work with stakeholders to understand why and find solutions.

4.5 Annual review and approval

	Responsible person	Date
Prepared by	ARCC Secretariat	2 December 2019
Approved by	ARCC Chair	12 December 2019
Endorsed by	Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resort Management Board	6 March 2020
Review due date	ARCC & ARMBs	December 2021