

# Our Engagement Framework



Powering a  
Bright Future



TasNetworks acknowledges the palawa (Tasmanian Aboriginal community) as the original owners and custodians of lutruwita (Tasmania). TasNetworks, acknowledges the palawa have maintained their spiritual and cultural connection to the land and water. We pay respect to Elders past and present and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

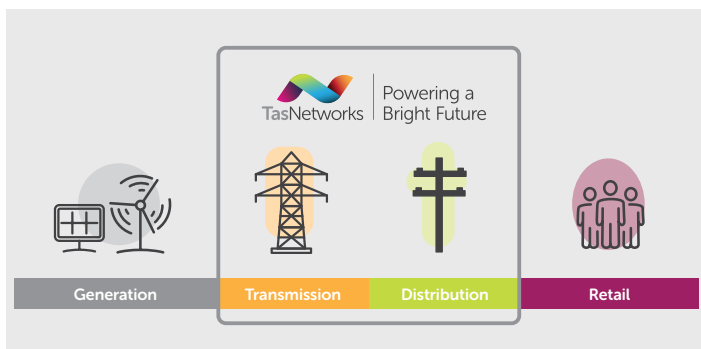


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## About us

**TasNetworks is a State-Government owned corporation responsible for planning, building, operating, and maintaining Tasmania's electricity transmission and distribution networks. We deliver safe, sustainable and reliable electricity to more than 300,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers.**



Our operations and people span the entire state of Tasmania, and our services help power the lives of our customers and communities.



# Introduction

**Our engagement framework sets the foundation for customer and stakeholder engagement at TasNetworks.**

It has been designed to support and guide anyone undertaking engagement at TasNetworks, and can be used by our customers and stakeholders to better understand our engagement approach and what to expect when engaging with us.

Its development has been informed by The Energy Charter Principles<sup>1</sup>, research into industry best-practice and the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum<sup>2</sup>.

Our engagement framework includes:

- Our vision for engagement
- A consistent process for engagement
- Clear guiding principles
- An insight into our stakeholders
- Our measures for success

Questions or comments on the framework are welcome at any time and can be directed to [engage@tasnetworks.com.au](mailto:engage@tasnetworks.com.au).



# A message from our CEO

**As the key link between electricity generators and customers, TasNetworks has an essential role to play in the lives of Tasmanians.**

Our enduring focus is to deliver safe and reliable electricity services as affordably as possible. We're also supporting Tasmania and the broader National Energy Market (NEM) in the transition to a low carbon economy.

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In a time of significant social, environmental, and technological change, the priorities and expectations of our customers and stakeholders are also shifting.

To meet these changes and challenges, and ensure we're delivering services our customers value today, and into the future, we must continue to evolve our approach to engagement.

We've taken several positive steps to improve our engagement in recent years. Through activities such as our Revenue Reset Engagement Program, we've demonstrated that better engagement leads to better decision-making, and better outcomes for our business, our customers and stakeholders.

We're proud of what we've achieved but recognise there's more we need to do to ensure customers and stakeholders have every opportunity possible to genuinely shape our decision making.

The publication of our engagement framework is a crucial milestone for TasNetworks. Not only will it help us to align our priorities with those of our customers and stakeholders, it's an important step forward in our engagement maturity journey.

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The next ten years is set to be a critical period in Tasmania's energy industry. I invite you to continue to share your experiences, needs and aspirations with us as we work towards a bright future.

**Seán Mc Goldrick**  
TasNetworks CEO



# Our vision for engagement

**We believe that better outcomes are achieved when those who are impacted are involved in the decision-making process.**

We're striving to build a culture that values and encourages engagement in every aspect of our business, which is why we're aspirational in our engagement vision, for customer and stakeholder needs to genuinely shape our decision-making.



Our vision for engagement is for 'customer and stakeholder needs to genuinely shape our decision-making.'



# Our engagement framework

**Understanding and responding to our customers and communities needs is a key focus of our corporate strategy, which sets the direction for our business through to 2030. In this time, we expect our operating environment to continue to transform rapidly, together with the needs and priorities of our customers and stakeholders.**

Our engagement framework is a critical building block to improving our understanding of our customers and communities needs. Its implementation will help us to:



## **Place our customers at the centre of our business**

We're deeply committed to embedding a customer centric culture. As a signatory to The Energy Charter, we publicly report our progress against their five principles in action. Our engagement framework is among several other initiatives we have underway to progress The Energy Charter's principles and put our customers at the centre of everything we do.



## **Make decisions based on customer and stakeholder needs**

The services we provide are essential to the way most Tasmanians live and enjoy their lives. Ensuring our customers and stakeholders have every opportunity possible to genuinely shape our decision-making is important to us, in fact, it's the core ambition of our engagement framework.

By embedding the process and principles set out in our engagement framework, we can better understand and respond to the needs of our customers and stakeholders and use these powerful insights to make more informed decisions about our plans and services.



## **Continuously improve our engagement culture and capability**

We're proud of the positive steps we've taken to improve our engagement in recent years. Through experience, we've learned that better engagement leads to better decision-making and better outcomes for our business, customers and stakeholders.

Continuous improvement is the defining theme in our framework and a key driver of our 'engagement capability and culture uplift program', which aims to embed engagement into the culture and core functions of our business.







## Build trusting relationships

Our business and the infrastructure we plan and build has social, environmental and economic impacts on the communities we work in. We know that engaging with our stakeholders is how we build and maintain trust in our decision making and operations. We also know that trust is hard won, and easily lost.

Getting engagement right, from the outset, and providing transparency in how feedback influences our decisions is critical to building and maintaining our social licence to operate and crucial to the planning and delivery of critical infrastructure needed for the renewable energy transition.



## Proactively meet our obligations and respond to changing needs

Our regulatory and compliance obligations have evolved to ensure energy services and future priorities reflect customer and stakeholder expectations. This engagement framework, together with guidance from the Australian Energy Regulator's Better Resets Handbook<sup>1</sup>, will enable us to meet these requirements and deliver regulatory proposals that support the long term interests of our customers and stakeholders.



## Enhance innovation and collaboration

We want to deliver innovative solutions on our network, to continue to ensure a safe, reliable and affordable energy supply. We know that meaningful engagement fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing across the industry.

By including more diverse perspectives, our engagement processes can tap into deeper insights and provide deeper understanding of the barriers, challenges and opportunities that need be addressed. More collaborative engagement processes can lead to more innovative solutions and potentially co-creation opportunities with key stakeholders, enabling us to drive change in our business, and the wider energy industry.

# Engagement principles

**Our engagement principles underpin how we design and deliver engagement. They're aligned to industry best-practice principles for genuine and meaningful engagement and were developed with input from our stakeholders.**

To deliver engagement that sees our customer and stakeholder needs genuinely shaping our decision-making, our engagement activities must be people-centred, transparent and timely. Our principle of continuous improvement recognises our commitment to enhancing our organisational capability in engagement.

<b>Transparent and timely</b> We will engage early and openly from the outset about what can be influenced.	<b>People centred</b> We will place people at the centre of our engagement design to ensure inclusive, accessible and equitable participation.	<b>Continuously improving</b> We will continuously evaluate and evolve our engagement approach in line with stakeholder expectations and best practice.
This means we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage as early as possible to ensure participants have adequate time to understand the topic and actively participate</li> <li>share background information about the topic to support meaningful participation</li> <li>clearly explain the scope of what we are engaging on</li> <li>identify the level of influence participants can have when engaging with us</li> <li>demonstrate how feedback has been considered and how it has impacted decision making.</li> </ul>	This means we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>carefully consider who may be impacted or interested in our work and actively seek their input</li> <li>hold engagement activities on days and at times and locations that are accessible and offer a mix of ways to be involved</li> <li>work with our customers and stakeholders to identify and eliminate barriers to participation</li> <li>seek diverse perspectives and adapt our approach based on participants' needs and preferences</li> <li>provide information plain and accessible language and available in a variety of formats</li> <li>provide support and resources needed to participate, based on individual needs</li> <li>recognise and respect differences in opinion and provide a safe environment for all voices to be heard.</li> </ul>	This means we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>seek feedback about the experience of engaging with us and incorporate learnings into our future engagement activities</li> <li>drive an internal culture that values engagement and actively seeks customer/ stakeholder insights to inform decision making</li> <li>strengthen engagement capability across our business</li> <li>support our stakeholders to build engagement capability</li> <li>deepen our understanding of what's important to our customers/stakeholders to help drive better outcomes</li> <li>seek feedback when evaluating our engagement activities, processes, and framework to identify what's working well and any areas for improvement.</li> </ul>



# Responsibilities

**We're working to build a culture that values and encourages engagement at every level of our business, with the understanding that everyone has a part to play.**

<b>Board of Directors</b>	Our Board is responsible for ensuring our business meets the expectations of our Shareholders and our obligations as a Network Service Provider. This includes delivering accessible, transparent and inclusive engagement.
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	Our CEO is our spokesperson and champions engagement across our organisation. Our CEO is committed to enhancing TasNetworks' engagement capability through active involvement in the Energy Charter, our sector's collective work to increase engagement with our customers, stakeholders and community.
<b>Executive Team</b>	Our Executive Team drives our organisational culture and leads by example. They play an important role in embedding engagement responsibility in the business and actively participate in engagement activities.
<b>Heads of Departments and Leaders</b>	Heads of Departments and Leaders implement quality engagement planning and ensure appropriate consideration of engagement across their business units. They support the implementation of the engagement framework within their teams and play an active role in activities aligned to their work streams.
<b>Our team members</b>	Our team members work with our Strategic Engagement Team to prepare engagement plans and activities, using templates and standard tools to deliver engagement activities and report back on outcomes. They can do this with little, some or a lot of assistance from the Engagement Team, depending on the scale and scope of the project, the engagement risks, and their skills and experience.
<b>Strategic Engagement Team</b>	Our Strategic Engagement Team provides ongoing support and advice to TasNetworks team members in designing and delivering engagement activities. They also lead engagement programs for large, complex and strategic projects. The Strategic Engagement Team has an important role in building the engagement capability of team members, coordinating engagement training and implementing our engagement framework to ensure a consistent approach.

# Understanding our stakeholders

**Our stakeholders are wide-ranging, with diverse needs, priorities and motivations for engaging with us. We're committed to working together with our stakeholders and building on our knowledge and understanding of their interests, to deliver services our customers value, now and into the future.**

Some of our key stakeholder segments are illustrated below.



This image will be updated as we continue to build our knowledge and understanding of our stakeholders' preferences and needs – from how they want to hear from us, to the key issues that are of interest to and impact on them.



# Listening to our stakeholders

**We know that better customer outcomes are achieved when the people and communities impacted by the outcome are part of the decision-making process.**

Our engagement groups are our primary forum for ongoing and meaningful engagement with our customers and stakeholders. By establishing and operating these groups, we aim to ensure that our stakeholders are represented, involved, and engaged in our decision-making processes.



Group	Areas of interest
Customer Advisory Group (CAG)	Planning and delivery of energy services, tariffs, regulatory proposals, customer experience issues, processes, and policies.
Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)	Corporate strategy, regulatory proposals, policies, services and service delivery plans, network and asset investments, tariffs and pricing.
Technical Working Group	Customer, business and industry topics primarily associated with the distribution network such as connections, assets and associated processes.
Local Government Working Group	Issues affecting councils, such as street lighting, vegetation management, and subdivisions.

# Our engagement process

**We know that it's not just what we do, but why and how we do it that matters. Our engagement process illustrates our approach for planning, designing, delivering, and measuring engagement.**

It starts with a strategic understanding of WHO we are engaging with, WHY and HOW their feedback will be used. This is at the centre of our principles for accessible transparent and inclusive engagement.

Our process starts with the end in mind: we consider evaluation from the outset, by setting clear objectives that can be used to measure effectiveness during the engagement stage and at completion.





# Designing engagement

**We know through experience that well-designed engagement is fundamentally important in creating positive customer outcomes.**

We use the IAP2 Spectrum and framework to:

- help guide the design of our programs and activities
- ensure we're developing best-practice engagement and adhering to our engagement principles
- deepen understanding of our stakeholders so we develop outcomes in their best interests.

One of the first steps is determining what level of influence our stakeholders have for a given topic or challenge, so that we can clearly set expectations and our promise to stakeholders upfront.

Below are multiple examples of when we might use the IAP2 framework across our business, from informing stakeholders about straightforward changes, right through to collaborating on complex major infrastructure.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Our promise to our customers and stakeholders	We will keep you informed about work, policy and projects that impact you.	We will ask you what you think, and take this into consideration.	We will work with you to understand your concerns and aspirations, and reflect these in our decisions or options developed.	We will look to your for advice and input to create solutions, together.	We will implement what you decide.
What might this look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletters, websites and display boards</li> <li>• Information sessions, drop-in sessions or pop-ups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys and feedback forms</li> <li>• Workshops, focus groups or forums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops, focus groups or forums</li> <li>• Advisory groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-design or participant-led workshops</li> <li>• Participatory budgeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participatory governance</li> <li>• Capacity building and leadership programs</li> <li>• Deliberative panels</li> </ul>

*International Association of Public Participation*

# How we know we're engaging well

**We're committed to improving how we engage, by increasing our organisational capability and supporting our team members to design and deliver quality and consistent engagement.**

Evaluating the effectiveness of our engagement activities is key to knowing if we're delivering engagement in line with our principles and ultimately contributing to our vision. It's also a core theme of our framework, with continuous improvement a core principle.

We believe that improvement comes through regular feedback loops, iterative and systematic evaluation and courageously sharing what is working and what we can do better.

**We measure engagement success against our principles, articulated here as outcomes, for individual engagement activities, and across our organisation's engagement performance, annually.**

Desired outcome	Example measures of success
<b>Our customer and community needs genuinely influence our business decision-making.</b>	Proportion of customers and communities that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• trust TasNetworks is putting customers at the centre of their business</li> <li>• trust TasNetworks to engage with customers and community on projects and decisions that impact them.</li> </ul>
<b>Our engagement design ensures inclusive, accessible and equitable participation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation rates across diverse demographics</li> <li>• Compliance with accessibility standards, such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for digital content</li> <li>• All stakeholders have opportunity to participate equally</li> <li>• Proportion of positive feedback about ease of access to venue and timing of activities.</li> </ul>
<b>We are clear about what can and cannot be influenced, from the outset.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of participants who report understanding the scope of engagement</li> <li>• Proportion of participants who report that the level of influence was made clear</li> <li>• Proportion of engagement projects that included a report-back mechanism to inform participants about project outcomes and how their feedback was used.</li> </ul>





