

Communications policy

1. Policy statement

Accurate, consistent, transparent, well-managed and timely communications that reflect Western Power's vision, values, corporate strategy and business objectives are fundamental to promoting public accountability and protecting Western Power's integrity and corporate reputation.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to achieve a coordinated, consistent and accurate approach for communicating internally and externally and to ensure that communications are made and approved by the appropriate authority to ensure Western Power's corporate reputation is promoted and protected.

1.2 Scope

This Policy applies to all Western Power personnel.

In this Policy, personnel means:

1. every employee, officer and director of Western Power, and
2. every contractor of Western Power when performing activities on behalf of Western Power.

1.3 Outcomes

Western Power recognises that the key to building positive and lasting partnerships with the community requires effective two-way communication. Western Power will communicate openly and honestly in the interest of transparency and to maximise public knowledge of our activities. Western Power is also committed to accounting for cultural and social sensitivities in its communications and will be inclusive and respectful of all the people it engages with.

Western Power is committed to developing and implementing this Communications Policy, and associated standards that will inform the community of key decisions, services, programs and initiatives in order to deliver services in-line with community expectations, and promote accessibility by the community to Western Power information.

1.4 Principles

Western Power's communications are developed based upon the following principles:

- In all forms of communication, including verbal, printed or digital, all personnel are expected to adhere to the highest standards of ethical practice consistent with Western Power's Code of Conduct and relevant legislation.
- All communications (including verbal, printed and digital), whether with the media, key stakeholders, or the general community must reflect the position of Western Power and not personal views of personnel.

External communications

- Communications must reflect one voice – with consistent messaging style such as the use of brands and logos. All written and visual communications must comply with Western Power’s writing and branding style guides and agreed key messaging as outlined in the Message House. These are managed by the Stakeholders & Communications function.
- All communications to the Minister for Energy must be in accordance with the communications agreement between the Minister for Energy and Western Power. This is managed by the Stakeholders & Communications function.
- Personnel, other than the Board Chair, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, General Counsel, Executive Managers, the Head of Stakeholders & Communications and designated media spokespeople, are not allowed to make public comment on behalf of Western Power unless delegated by the representatives mentioned. The management of media requests, responses and releases is the responsibility of the Stakeholders & Communications function.
- Where identifiable as Western Power personnel while using social media, all personnel must ensure adherence to the Social Media Guideline. This is managed by the Stakeholders & Communications function.
- Direct communications with Western Power’s customers are managed in accordance with the Customer Service – Privacy of Customer Information Guideline.
- Engagement with Western Power’s industry regulators, unions, State agencies and other key stakeholders will be managed in accordance with the Stakeholder Engagement Standard. This is managed by the Stakeholders & Communications function. Communications (e.g. public submissions) with Western Power’s industry regulators, unions, State agencies and other key stakeholders need to be approved by the relevant Head of Function and in accordance with the principles of this Policy to ensure effective stakeholder engagement is achieved and to ensure Western Power’s reputation is protected, risks to the business assessed and long-standing relationships are achieved. The Corporate Compliance Team should be advised about Western Power’s participation in a public submission process.
- All personnel must ensure that confidentiality and privacy of information about Western Power, its customers and employees are respected and maintained, and only relevant information will be disclosed and in accordance with Western Power’s Privacy Policy.
- To maintain Western Power’s integrity and corporate reputation, Western Power recognises the importance of developing and disclosing periodic corporate reports relating to network planning and performance, general operations, and financial performance. These reports are prepared in accordance with the relevant industry standards, guidelines and regulatory requirements, approved by the accountable Executive, and are published on Western Power’s website.

Internal communications

- Internal corporate communications are managed by the Stakeholder & Communications function to ensure a shared understanding of Western Power’s strategic direction, core business objectives and business-related announcements.
- All personnel are responsible to advise of any matters which may potentially impact on Western Power’s corporate reputation to the Stakeholder & Communications function which is accountable for managing the company’s corporate reputation and corporate identity.

Political representation

- Western Power does not directly or indirectly participate or make public comments on party politics. Any public comment made by personnel in relation to a political process must be clearly at the personal capacity of the personnel as a private citizen, and taking into consideration obligations under the Social Media Guideline.

Emergency

- Communications during a declared emergency or crisis should be made in accordance with the protocols in Western Power's Crisis Management Plan. The Crisis Management Plan prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with this Policy.

2. Dictionary

Words in the first column of the following table are defined terms and have the corresponding meaning shown in the second column of the table. Defined terms appear in this document as capitalised.

Defined term	Meaning
Personnel	Has the meaning in section 1.2 of this document.
Policy	High-level, brief, straightforward, statements of principle indicating Western Power's intention and direction, to enable effective decision-making processes.
Message House	Approved messaging made available to Western Power employees via the Western Power intranet.

3. Further information

If you have any questions in relation to this Policy please contact the Head of Stakeholders & Communications.

4. Content owner

Executive Manager, Growth

5. Accountabilities

Policy content owner:

Accountable for:

- implementing this Policy
- preparing, issuing and maintaining any required Frameworks and Standards
- ensuring that people affected by this Policy and its related Frameworks and Standards are aware of their responsibilities
- ongoing education (as necessary)
- monitoring compliance with the requirements of the Policy and its related Frameworks and Standards
- ensuring that appropriate remedial actions are taken if there are compliance breaches

7. monitoring the continuing relevance of the Policy and the currency of its contents.

General Counsel: Accountable for publishing the approved version of this Policy, and any Frameworks and Standards issued under it, in Western Power’s corporate policies register.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the Board at least once in every three-year period taking into account the purpose of the policy, or earlier if circumstances require.

7. Related documents

This Policy is supported by the following documents.

Title	EDM reference
Communications agreement between Minister for Energy and Western Power	EDM 55689436
Stakeholder Engagement Standard	EDM 50681504
Customer Service – Privacy of Customer Information Guideline	EDM 47178951
Social Media Guideline	EDM 44316465
Crisis Management Plan	EDM 34031021
Code of Conduct	EDM 34010733
Western Power Privacy Policy	https://www.westernpower.com.au/privacy-policy/
Western Power Style Guide (online)	Via Brand Hub on the Grid
Western Power – Writing Style Guide 2019	EDM 33270364
Message House	Via Brand Hub on the Grid

8. Approval history

Version	Approved by	Date	Resolution no.	Notes
1.	Board	24/03/2006	BC/19/2006	
2.	Managing Director	22/02/2010	N/A	
3.	Board	03/12/2013	052/2014/BD	
4.	General Counsel	29/08/2014	004/2015/BD	Approval relates to the inclusion of the section 135(4) documents and updating DM references in the related

				documents section of the policy.
5.	General Counsel	29/08/2014	004/2015/BD	Approval of minor changes under delegated authority.
6.	General Counsel	23/01/2017	004/2015/BD	Approval of minor changes under delegated authority.
7.	Board	16/06/2022	100/2022/BD	To delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the approval of the updated Communications Policy and subject to confirming the policy addresses engagement with the Minister's office.

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Colin Becket
 Board Chair