

**AUSTRALIAN FORESTRY STANDARDS LIMITED**

# Business & Quality Plans

## **AFSL Standards Development Communications Management Plan**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose

This document is the Communication Management Plan for the SDO functions and responsibilities of the AFSL Secretariat and the Standards Reference Committees (SRC). The purpose of communication management is to identify planned and typical methods of exchanging information both within the projects and to stakeholders and interested parties outside of the project.

This document will be reviewed at least annually and updated as needed, as a result of continuous process improvement efforts by the project management team. Lessons learned as a result of continuing communication management efforts will be captured at the end of each project phase and used to improve the division-level standards.

### 1.2 Scope

The Communication Management Plan identifies the procedures used to manage communication for the project. The plan focuses on formal communication elements. Other communication channels exist on informal levels and enhance those discussed within this plan. This plan is not intended to limit, but to enhance communication practices. Open, ongoing communication between stakeholders is critical to the success of the project.

### 1.3 References

#### 1.3.1 Stakeholder Management Plan

For guidance on the Stakeholders communication management methodology refer to the Stakeholder Management Plan

#### 1.3.2 Business Plan

Refer to the AFSL Business & Communication 3 year Plan for all specific documentation associated with communication management.

### 1.4 Acronyms

AFSL	Australian Forestry Standard Limited
AFCS	Australian Forest Certification Scheme
ABSDO	Australian Bureau of Standards Development Organisation
NSO	National Standards Office
JAS-ANZ	Joint Accreditation System of Australia & New Zealand
SDO	Standards Development Organisation
ENGO	Environmental Non-Government Organisations
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification

Refer to AFSL Glossary for a full list of Acronyms

## 2. PARTICIPANTS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There are various staff resources and stakeholders involved in managing the AFSL SDO communications.

- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation, direction and monitoring of the plan.
- The Chief Executive Officer provides the direct support and liaison point for all activities related to communications and the relationship with the key Stakeholders.
- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for employing or/and contracting additional resources to ensure all objectives, timelines and Board directions are delivered.

### 2.1 Standards Revision Secretariat

The Standards Revision Secretariat provides all resources allocated to specific communication projects on a time and project by project basis. The Secretariat is responsible for the management of the project, its' communications, including procurement and oversight of contractors, as appropriate. The Secretariat performs the majority of the communications described in this plan.

### 2.2 Standards Revision Project Sponsor

AFSL Board of Directors

### 2.3 AFSL Communications Committee

AFSL Communications Committee consists of a nominated Board Director to Chair the committee plus at least three key stakeholders from the AFSL membership and wider industry.

The Communication Committee is comprised of the following representatives or their designees:

- Kayt Watts, CEO
- Rob Lowe, Board Director (Head of Marketing KCA)
- Rohan Dean, Industry Member (GM Marketing PaperlinX Merchating)
- Ron Green, Industry Member, (GM Sales Carton Holt Harvey)
- David Angus, Industry Member (GM Marketing Boral Timber)

### 2.4 Standards Reference Committee (SRC)

The SRC for each Standard and each Standard Revision project are the drafters of all technical content and information for the purpose of improving or revising the Standards. The SRC through the Standards Revision Secretariat and the Communication Team publish approved documentation for public distribution.

## 2.5 Stakeholders

In addition to the committee members mentioned above, a broad number of stakeholders have varying interests in the development and distribution of the communications. Stakeholders may or may not have any direct responsibility for project tasks, but their participation and support is essential to project success. Some of these stakeholders will periodically need to be kept informed of key milestones, findings and decisions that may indirectly impact their relationship to the project. Other stakeholders require very detailed and frequent communication, as their organisations or job functions may be directly affected by changes and revisions of the Standards.

### 2.5.1 Control Agencies

The AFSL Board of Directors through its Chair is responsible for approving published documents and project budgets. The Secretariat communicates with the Chair or/and the AFSL Board, as needed, to obtain required approvals. The following are the control items identified for this project.

- Total Standards Revision and Maintenance Budget approval
- Specific Projects budget approval (greater or outside plan approvals)

ABSDO as the primary agency for the review of the Australian Forestry Standards undertakes periodical audits to ensure compliancy and alignment to best practices and policies of the development and management of the Standards by the AFSL.

NSO as the national body, through its agency ABSDO, and with direct communications, has a vested interest in the activities and management of the Standards and the AFSL as a SDO.

JAS-ANZ as the key body for the accreditation of Certification Bodies has an indirect interest in the activities and delivery of the Australian Forestry Standards.

PEFC as the global certification scheme that AFSL is a member of has a vested interest and requirement regarding the status of AFSL and its Standards. PEFC independent auditors conduct periodical audits on AFSL practices and alignment of the Standards against the PEFC certification guidelines.

### 2.5.2 Federal and Industry Partners

AFSL as a not-for profit public company and relies on funding contributions from key partners this has included;

- DAFF – Department of Fisheries and Forestry
- A3P – Australian Plantation and Paper Industry Council
- NAFI – National Association of Forestry Industries, and
- State and Private Forest organisations

### **2.5.3 Members**

The AFSL is a member based organisation,

The members have an interest in all activities of the AFSL, its promotion, management and deliverables.

*Refer to Membership register for a list of current subscribers.*

[www.forestrystandard.org.au/9documents.asp](http://www.forestrystandard.org.au/9documents.asp)

### **2.5.4 Industry Stakeholders**

AFSL as a not-for profit public company has a responsibility to ensure the development and management of its Standards are transparent and inclusive of all interested parties and stakeholders, this includes;

- Federal Government
- State Government
- Regional Bodies
- ENGOS
- NGO's
- Control Agencies (see item 2.4.1)

### **2.5.5 Certification Bodies**

AFSL has a responsibility to accredited certification bodies of the Australian Standard for Forestry Management (AS 4708) and Chain of Custody (AS 4707) to inform them of all changes, updates, findings and decisions that may indirectly or directly impact their business.

## **3. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

Formal internal communication is required to keep the staff, communications committee, SRCs and AFSL Directors informed of project status, work plan status, issues, and risks. Internal communication also includes communication with AFSL members as required.

## **4. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

Formal external communication is required to keep key stakeholders informed of project status, issues, and risks.

## **5. SRC AND AFSL BOARD COMMUNICATION**

It is important to identify this communication to ensure independence of process of the standards development projects.

Any communication concerning the content of a Standard between the governance structure of the organisation and the Standards Reference Committee is documented, open and available for audit.

Any communications arising from the Standard Reference Committees are a standing item on all AFSL Board agendas. The chair of each SRC provides a status report to each board meeting on progress and issues that may require a Board resolution.

The AFSL Board and/or any of its members will communicate to the SRC and/or any of its members through the SRC secretariat. All communications will be documented.

## **6. OTHER COMMUNICATION**

### **6.1 News and Print Media**

All news and print media is to go through the CEO. Staff or Directors (when speaking on behalf of the AFSL) are not allowed to communicate with the media unless prior approval or direction has been granted from the CEO. If a news or print media requests an interview or information, which may have controversial impact on the organisation or its members the CEO will seek out instruction from the AFSL Chair.

### **6.2 Public Inquiries and Public Records Requests**

Occasionally, the organisation may receive requests from the public for information (e.g., statistics, reports, program information). If the project receives any of these requests, the requestor should be directed to the CEO, who will address the request or refer the individual to the appropriate resource or source.

Physical inspection of the records shall be permitted within the AFSLs offices and under the conditions determined by the Board of Directors or its Chair. Upon either the completion of the inspection or the oral request of AFSL personnel, the person conducting the inspection shall relinquish physical possession of the records. Persons inspecting organisations records shall not destroy, mutilate, deface, alter, or remove any such records from the project. The AFSL reserves the right to have a representative present during the inspection of records in order to prevent the loss or destruction of records.

Upon any request for a copy of records, other than records the AFSL has determined to be exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act, AFSL personnel shall provide copies of the records to any person upon payment of a fee covering costs of duplication.

For more information about public records requests, refer to AFSL Public Records and Information Policy

### **6.3 Grievances and Complaints**

AFSL as a not-for profit public company has an open door policy for grievances and complaints. See policy and procedural documentation that provides the guidelines, method and process for the management of grievances and complaints.

*Refer to CM PROC-08-Complaints and Grievance \_V4.0*

[www.forestrystandard.org.au/9documents.asp](http://www.forestrystandard.org.au/9documents.asp)

All grievances and complaints will be placed in a register. The register will be managed by the Chief Executive Officer.



## **6.4 Dispute Resolution Process**

In case of a contractual disagreement with a contractor, the AFSL invokes the Dispute Resolution Process (see policy) to address the item. The Dispute Resolution Process gathers the appropriate parties to discuss and resolve the item. If the dispute cannot be settled by the specified due date, the item is escalated to the next level of management for resolution.

## **6.5 Escalation Process**

The Escalation Process is used to raise a problem, issue, action, deficiency or dispute to a higher-level of management for resolution, when a resolution cannot be reached at the operational level. Refer to Issue, grievance and complaints policy and procedure.

## **6.6 Problem/Defect Tracking Process**

Problems or errors found in delivered products are reported to the appropriate committees and managed to resolution in alignment with the Standards Continuous Improvement policy and procedure.

# **7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

## **7.1 Communication Protocol**

The scope of information shall be limited to that within the individual's domain. All communication related to organisation-wide status is directed to the CEO, unless otherwise advised. Because of the broad scope of the Communications 'on a whole' for AFSL, only those individuals involved at the standards development and management level will be able to provide a comprehensive and accurate status in reference to the SDO part of the organisation. It is therefore imperative that all other individuals limit their communications, both formal and informal, to information within their individual project domain, job functions or non-executive role.

Information that needs to be disseminated widely to Members, Stakeholders and the wider industry is disseminated through the CEO or nominated personnel. It is then expected that the CEO or nominated individual will disseminate information appropriately to other areas.

### **7.1.1 Electronic Mail**

Electronic mail (e-mail) is used as a means for informal, ad hoc communication between project team members and stakeholders. E-mail is recognised as formal correspondence, when the correspondence is an attachment on letterhead and electronically signed, it is recommended that the correspondence or documentation is also mailed when appropriate. Informal uses of e-mail include scheduling meetings, forwarding documents or other information, and general questions and answers. Incoming e-mail should not be used as official correspondence; however, if the e-mail contains pertinent or historical information, the e-mail should be given a document tracking number and archived in the project document management tool.

## **7.2 Communication Tracking and Storage**

Please refer to the Document and Records Management Plan for information about the organisations policies and procedures for communication and document naming, tracking, review, storage, retention, and change control.

Written communications received or generated by the organisation are retained and stored in the document management system, depending on the format in which they were received. All e-mail that document decisions or have pertinent value to a project are stored in the document management system and retained for historical purposes.

### **7.2.1 Communication Tools**

Communication will be through the use of e-mail, electronic document distribution, hardcopy mailed, newsletters, publishing to the AFSL website or phone.

Communication Management for the organisation and for Stakeholders is managed through project activities and MS Outlook Business Contact Management software is used for recording all activities and communications.

## **7.3 Communication Format**

Formal communication and AFSL documentation generated by the staff shall conform to the standards described in the most recent version of the AFSL Format and Style Guide. Also refer to the Document and Records Management Plan for more on the available project templates and formats.

## **7.4 Communication Effectiveness**

Periodically the Communications Committee will confirm the effectiveness of the communications with the AFSL Board, SRCs, members and stakeholders. Surveys or meetings will be conducted to ensure the communication methods present the AFSLs message clearly, timely and in a method that is easily received and understood.

## **7.5 Communication Changes**

Changes to the communication process may be proposed by any recipient or communication creator. The CEO must approve the change for it to be approved. Often a draft version will be used to generate discussion with the communication stakeholders prior to making the change official.

Changes to communication format or content are handled through the normal document change control process. Changes to content must be approved by the CEO and then are disseminated with an explanation of the change. Appropriate revision and version markings are included with the updated version.

## 8. RELATED DOCUMENTATION

- i. AFSL (2010); Australian Forestry Standard Limited Standards Development Procedure 01 SD-PROC-01-SRCRepresentation.doc
- ii. AFSL (2010), Australian Forestry Standard Limited Standards Development Procedure 02 – Standard Reference Committees – Members Code of Conduct
- iii. AFSL (2010); Australian Forestry Standard Limited Standards Development Procedure 04 – Standards Reference Committee – Procedures for the Committee Chair
- iv. AFSL (2010); Australian Forestry Standard Limited Standards Development Procedure 06 – Standards Reference Committee – Procedures for Complaints and Grievances
- v. AFSL (2010); Australian Forestry Standard Limited Standards Development Procedure 05 – Standards Reference Committee – Procedures for a Public Comment Draft