

Communications policy

1. Policy abstract

Accurate, consistent, well-managed and timely communications that reflect Western Power's approved position are fundamental to public accountability and protection of Western Power's corporate integrity and reputation.

1.1 Purpose

This policy sets the framework for Western Power's communications to achieve a coordinated and consistent approach to communications, and ensure that communications are made with the appropriate authority and approval.

As a large organisation undertaking a significant business enterprise, Western Power generates and holds large amounts of information. Much of this information is commercially sensitive or confidential in nature and that information needs to be dealt with and managed consistently and appropriately.

Western Power must ensure that all communications, whether with the media, customers, key stakeholders (internal/external – including the Minister for Energy), regulators or the general community reflect the position of Western Power and not personal views.

Many communications are significant, sensitive or have potential consequences that need to be properly managed from a reputational, corporate governance or legal perspective.

This policy is designed to facilitate timely, accurate and consistent communications and to reduce the risk of communications which do not meet these requirements.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- (a) all employees, officers and directors of Western Power – it also applies to contractors working within Western Power's workforce
- (b) all of Western Power's business activities and operations

This policy is supported by the following management Standards.

Title	EDM reference
Internal Communications Standard	EDM 31127235
Minister for Energy Communication Protocol	EDM 32275077
External Communications Standard	EDM 32489361
Regulator Communications Standard	EDM 34177837

1.3 Overview

This policy provides guidance on accountability and responsibilities for communications with:

- (i) Minister for Energy
- (ii) stakeholders/partners
- (iii) regulators
- (iv) community/customers/consumers
- (v) internal personnel
- (vi) media
- (vii) associations seeking sponsorship or donations from Western Power.

1.4 Principles

Western Power's communications are developed on the following principles:

- (i) One entity, one brand. Western Power is one organisation and speaks with one voice. In line with Western Power's brand strategy, communications must reflect one united team under one identity. Separate brands, including logos (for separate teams or projects), erode the sense of unity and are not appropriate.
- (ii) The Stakeholders & Communications function is accountable for all Western Power's corporate communications as outlined in this policy.
- (iii) All written and visual communications must comply with Western Power's writing and branding style guides (see the communications toolkit page on busbar).
- (iv) 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 or a Standard or framework.

2. Responsibility for particular communications

2.1 Spokespersons for Western Power

Except as otherwise set out in this policy, the Standards and framework, public comment on behalf of Western Power may only be made by the:

- (i) Board Chair and in his/her absence, the Board Deputy Chair
- (ii) Chief Executive Officer/Managing Director
- (iii) Chief Financial Officer
- (iv) General Counsel
- (v) Head of Stakeholders & Communications

2.2 Communications with Minister for Energy

The Minister for Energy, who represents the Western Australian government, is one of Western Power's most important stakeholders. A communications channel has been established and must be maintained between the Minister for Energy and each of the Board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer to facilitate the effective flow of information to the Minister for Energy.

2.3 External communications

Other important external communication channels covered in more detail in the External Communications Standard include:

- (i) Communications with stakeholders and business partners - Western Power has several stakeholders and business partners who have an interest in the general affairs of Western Power or a particular aspect of Western Power's business.
- (ii) Communications with community/customers Western Power communicates with:
 - a variety of electricity consumers ranging from private residents to large commercial businesses
 - a variety of customers ranging from individuals seeking to engage Western Power to perform minor network infrastructure works to large commercial retailers and generators seeking access to Western Power's network
 - the community generally.

- (iii) Communications with media - The strategic management of media interest in Western Power helps to promote Western Power and protect its reputation.

2.4 Internal Communications

Important internal communication channels are covered in more detail in the Internal Communications Standard. Internal communications form an essential part of a coordinated, controlled and efficient business approach.

2.5 Communications with regulators

Important communication channels with Western Power's regulators are covered in more detail in the Regulator Communications Standard. Western Power is subject to regulatory oversight by several federal and state regulatory authorities, including the Economic Regulation Authority and EnergySafety.

2.6 Community investments and partnerships

Community investment and partnerships provide opportunities to enhance and protect Western Power's corporate reputation as well as to further communicate strategic positions with customers and stakeholders. These investments and partnerships can include both financial and non-financial support.

Western Power maintains a comprehensive Standard which sets out protocols around community investments and partnerships including sponsorship and donations.

3. Compliance review

The Stakeholders & Communications function will oversee and review:

- (i) Western Power's communications practices, including the level of compliance by employees, officers and directors of Western Power
- (ii) communication practices generally within Western Power.

4. Training

Employees, officers and directors of Western Power (and contractors working within Western Power's workforce) will receive appropriate guidance and training on the relevant aspects of this policy, the Standards and framework which impact their role at Western Power.

5. Further information

If you have any questions in relation to this policy please contact either the Head of Stakeholders & Communications or the General Counsel.

6. Document content owner

Chief Financial Officer

7. Accountabilities

Executive Manager Corporate Services:

Accountable for:

- (i) implementing this Policy
- (ii) preparing, issuing and maintaining any required Standards
- (iii) ensuring that people affected by this Policy and its related Standards are aware of their responsibilities
- (iv) ongoing education (as necessary)
- (v) monitoring compliance with the requirements of the Policy and its related Standards
- (vi) ensuring that appropriate remedial actions are taken if there are compliance breaches
- (vii) 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 Standards issued under it, in Western Power's corporate policies register.

8. Policy 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.

9. Related documents

Title	DM reference
Brand Guidelines	EDM ID31976552
Internal Communications Standard	EDM ID31127235
Media Communications Standard	EDM ID23677498
Minister for Energy Communication Protocol	EDM ID32275077
Public/Customer Communications Standard	EDM ID32259311
Regulator Communications Standard	EDM ID31773941
Social Media Guidelines	EDM ID34166950
Stakeholders/Partners Communications Standard	EDM ID31127221
Western Power writing style guide	EDM ID12925948
Western Power style guide	EDM ID28766877

10. Document 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.

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Sam Barbaro
 General Counsel