24 February 2023

Senator The Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Minister for Emergency Management
PO Box 6100 - Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: senator.watt@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator

Community and stakeholder engagement organisation IAP2 Australasia (an affiliate of International Association for Public Participation) is writing to request the opportunity to meet with your office regarding the role of community engagement professionals in disaster recovery efforts. Our organisation is interested in discussing with you how frameworks such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)'s National Action Plans will utilise community engagement in driving recovery efforts for affected regions.

As the peak body for the community and stakeholder engagement sector, IAP2 Australasia, believes that engagement, when done well, improves social, environmental and economic outcomes and increases trust in the democratic process. Our aim is to advance the community engagement profession by providing training in, and communicating the principles of, public participation and how to achieve effective community and stakeholder engagement (or public participation).

Ahead of the finalisation of NEMA's Second National Action Plan, IAP2 would like for the opportunity to discuss with your office how organisations outside of the traditional emergency management sector can contribute to the Government's engagement approach for future disaster recovery efforts. Specifically, we would like to examine with you how our industry-leading standards on community and stakeholder engagement could inform future iterations of the National Disaster Recovery Framework.

Kind regards

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About IAP2 Australasia

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is the leading public participation organisation globally which seeks to promote and improve the practice of community and stakeholder engagement.

As an international leader in public participation, IAP2 has developed tools that are widely used and acknowledged. These include:

- **IAP2 Core Values for Public Participation** - for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes.

- **IAP2 Spectrum** - which assists with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement program. The Spectrum is widely used and is quoted in most community engagement manuals.

- **Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement -** which is recognised as the international standard for public participation practice.

IAP2 Australasia has almost 13,000 members throughout Australia and New Zealand – and is committed to championing engagement that improves environmental, social and governance outcomes. Our vision is for "Authentic engagement, everyday".

Policy Position:

As the peak body for the community and stakeholder engagement sector, IAP2 Australasia believes that engagement, when done well, improves social, environmental, and economic outcomes and increases trust in the democratic process.

We advocate for all communities to be authentically engaged in decisions that affect them, in alignment with the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement.

The Evidence for Authentic Engagement

There is significant evidence to support the need for increased authentic engagement to reduce risk and speed up the delivery of projects to support Australia's economic recovery. These include:

- Community opposition has contributed to the delay, cancellation or mothballing of more than $20B of infrastructure projects in the last decade.
  Source: The Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019
- Better functioning cities and towns could deliver a $29B increase in GDP in the long term.
  Source: The Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019
- 80% of Australians indicate it is important that government considers the views of the community when planning or investing in major infrastructure.
  Source: The Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019
- 82% of businesses said "communicating and engaging with stakeholders openly was seen as the most critical factor for building trust".
  Source: Creating value and balancing stakeholder needs (KPMG and AICD survey – 2019)
- Securing a social license to operate reduces the No. 1 ranked stakeholder risk.
  Source: Top 10 Business Risks and Opportunities – 2020 (EY)