

HOW TO GET ON THE **SAME PAGE**

ENGAGEMENT DESIGN PRINCIPLES



Understand the community



Engage early and often



Allow sufficient time



Be flexible and tailor your approach



Agree on objectives from the outset



Acknowledge the community as equals



Engage in a two-way dialogue



Utilise skilled facilitation expertise



Utilise expert and local knowledge



Utilise and build social capital



Evaluate programs



Foster a culture of community participation



Understand the community: Know and understand the local community, their full diversity and complexity, how they connect, meet and communicate, their flood, storm and tsunami risk and their needs and priorities, vulnerabilities, strengths and resiliencies.



Engage early and often: Start now. Engage with your communities as early as possible and throughout all engagement processes. Stakeholders identified as relevant need to be represented within all aspects of the engagement process.



Allow sufficient time: Timeframes to be identified WITH the community and not dictated to them. There is no silver bullet for community engagement. Timeframes need to reflect the priorities and commitments of communities.



Be flexible and tailor your approach: Methods are tailored to the community. There is no one single approach that works all or every time. A flexible process adapts to the complexity and commitment needs of a community.



Agree on objectives from the outset: Objectives of any process involving the community are to be agreed on WITH community stakeholders at the outset.



Acknowledge the community as equals: Community members are our partners. Partnerships are equal. Involvement is recognised as an important and equal contribution or co-creation in decision making.



Engage in a two-way dialogue: Listen, ask questions and let the community inform you. Facilitate discussions and conversations. Avoid telling the community what to do. Two-way learning between participants and NSW SES builds resilient local communities and a community-centric NSW SES.



Utilise skilled facilitation expertise: Utilise external skilled facilitators perceived as impartial, open to multiple perspectives, approachable and across technical details.



Utilise expert and local knowledge: Institutional, scientific and local flood risk knowledge, including that provided by NSW SES members and local communities, is powerful.



Utilise and build social capital: Utilise local social capital including local relationships, assets, connections, networks, hubs and local capacity. Build and support the development of social capital.



Evaluate programs: A process of frequently evaluating and learning is essential to ensure the improvement of future programs. Communities should be involved in the evaluation process and evaluation design should be considered from the outset.



Foster a culture of community participation: An organisation's culture and leadership must champion and actively demonstrate the involvement of community members in decision making throughout the disaster management cycle.