



CENTRAL DESERT REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMUNICATION PLAN 2019 – 2020



**CENTRAL DESERT
REGIONAL COUNCIL**
two ways :: one outcome

RELEASE NOTICE

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INTRODUCTION

Effective communication is key to managing Central Desert Regional Council's reputation and is vital to meaningful engagement with our community members and other stakeholders.

Communication is the responsibility of every member of the organisation, however, Corporate Services will plan, develop, implement and review the effectiveness of communication activity.

The Communication plan's purpose is to develop trust and understanding in Council and help our communities to have an influence on the issues that affect them.

The guiding Communication Principles used to this end are:

- We provide our communities with the opportunity to have their say
- We use the most appropriate communication channel for our message
- Our communications are clear, concise and easy to understand

The Communications Plan links to the CDRC Regional Plan through Objectives one and two of Goal 1: Advocacy. These are:

- Objective 1: Communication Plan (including stakeholder mapping and key messages) developed by 30 June 2019
- Objective 2: Full implementation of Communication Plan by 1 January 2020.

The full [CDRC Regional Plan](#) can be viewed on our website.

This document should be read in conjunction with approval and workflow processes, the Delegations Register, the Media Policy and the Code of Conduct.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Aims

The aims of the CDRC Communication Plan are to:

- Promote the range and quality of CDRC services available to our community.
- Ensure CDRC staff are aware of and contribute to service developments and planning.
- Promote key work and issues within NT & across Australia.
- Ensure funding bodies are recognised.
- Help ensure successful promotion of CDRC externally.
- Assess key reputational issues or risks
- Communicate key messages

Responding to media requests

The President and CEO are the Council's official spokesperson on all matters. The CEO may nominate other staff to act as spokesperson for particular operational aspects of the council.

The CEO is responsible for coordinating media liaison and will be delegated authority to respond to media enquiries of behalf of CDRC. No staff member, other than CEO is to handle an enquiry from the media.

The CEO will be responsible for issuing media releases about CDRC's activities, decision and plans subject to the President's approval.

Media Releases

The Governance staff will work to prepare media releases on behalf of the Council. Other staff are also encouraged to prepare their media releases but they must be forwarded to the Governance unit for review, editing and formatting to ensure that they maintain the Council's style and look as well as a consistent Council message.

All media releases must be approved by the CEO and will be posted on the Council's website.

Liaising with the Media

All media enquiries are to be dealt with promptly and should be directed to the CEO. Media organisations and their representatives will be treated equally and without bias.

Internal communications

Key aspects of the internal communications strategy include:

- Encouraging the use of clear, concise and easy to understand language throughout Council.
- Building understanding and commitment among staff and between staff and Councillors
- Celebrating successes and acknowledging achievements

Council website and social media

CDRC has a publically available website that contains information on our policies, plans, meeting agendas and minutes, services, elected members, jobs available as well as news stories of the Council. It also fulfils our obligations under the Local Government Act 2008.

Social media has a wide audience, particularly targeting the younger demographic, and is a good way to promote positive stories to the public and raise the image of the Council.

Sponsorship & events

CDRC will sponsor a number of events, based on the value gained and reputation of the event.

Reputation management

Good communication is essential to the reputation of CDRC. Council must not only perform its key responsibilities well, but also communicate this to the public effectively.

Elected Members, local authority and committee members and staff are not to use or disclose information gained in the ordinary course of business of Council, in a way that may cause significant damage or distress to a person; damage to the interests of the Council or a person; or confer an unfair commercial or financial advantage on a person or business when dealing with the media.

All aspects of communication by staff (including verbal, written or personal), involving council activities should reflect the status and objectives of the Council. Communications should be accurate and professional.

Promoting and defending the Council is a job for all staff and councillors. As advocates of Council they can be incredibly effective. As detractors, they can be equally as damaging.

Issue/crisis management

It is important to manage issues before they become crises.

If Councillors/staff are aware of an issue that has the potential to impact negatively on Council, they should notify the CEO immediately. Identifying and analysing the issue, then forming an appropriate strategy is the key to success.

Corporate Style Guide

The Council has developed a Style guide to ensure that all communications, such as emails, posters, business cards and stationary, all create a singular image to the public.

Advocacy

The Central Desert Regional Plan and Community Plans provide the identification of key issues that matter to our communities and residents. Council advocacy campaigns and actions are built from these issues and reinforced by a series of targeted activities, which provide the themes and priorities for how Council directs its resources and uses its voice on behalf of residents.

Council advocacy focuses on what needs to be done to inform, advise and influence external parties that have an authority on particular subject matters. This includes the determination of the frequency of Council's advocacy campaigns required to meet the needs and aspirations of our community.

Opportunities and Challenges for our Communications

Opportunities

- To define our key messages to ensure all staff are putting out the same message
- To increase public awareness of our messages
- To streamline communications between staff
- To raise the reputation of CDRC in the community

Challenges

- Reputational damage due to incorrect/false communications
- Local Authority meetings not going ahead

KEY MESSAGES

VISION	MISSION	OVERALL STRATEGY	VALUES	GOALS	KEY MESSAGES <i>We care about people, culture and place</i>
Central Desert people have equality of access to services and opportunities that enhance their wellbeing (4)(5)(6)	We protect and improve the wellbeing of our communities, by providing local government and other services, for people today and tomorrow (4)(5)(6)(1)	Two ways, one outcome (4)(2)(3)	Strong and good leadership (1) Teamwork (3)	Advocacy (1) (2) Customer Service (2) (3) (4)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You can have confidence in us 2. We listen to communities and help them achieve their goals. 3. We work together within our organisation, with other stakeholders and with our communities to achieve Council's goals. 4. We deliver useful, good quality services that make a difference to people's lives and have sustainable funding. 5. We help communities to be sustainable into the future and to provide ongoing services for new generations. 6. We help communities grow and develop, including improving job opportunities.
			Accountability (1) (3) (4) (5)	Liveability (2)(6)	
			Integrity (1) (2) (4) (5)	Sustainable communities (5)(6)	
			Respect (2)(3)	Economic growth (6)	

Stakeholders

- Public
- Staff
- Community Residents
- Federal and NT Government
- Other Stakeholders (covered in overall)
- Customers (contracts)
- Research bodies

Channels

- Face to Face
- Email / Letters
- Press
- LGANT
- Newsletters
- Online
- Annual Report / Regional Plan
- Meetings
- Community Visits

This list does not extensively cover internal communications. This document should be read in conjunction with approval and workflow processes and the Delegations Register.

COMMUNICATION ACTION PLAN

Public and Overall Stakeholders

VALUES	GOALS	KEY MESSAGES <i>We care about people, culture and place</i>	WHO and WHAT Who is communicating, and what	WHERE and WHEN Channel / Method & Frequency
Strong and good leadership	Advocacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You can have confidence in us 2. We listen to communities and help them achieve their goals. 	<p>President, CEO – press releases, story approval</p> <p>CEO, Directors - agreeing new services / partnering proposals</p>	<p>Main Press channels – Advocate, NT News, ABC</p> <p>Regional Plan – annual</p>
Teamwork	Customer Service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. We work together within our organisation, with other stakeholders and with our communities to achieve Council’s goals. 	<p>Communications Officer – stories (promotion)</p> <p>(Managers and Coordinators provide input as occurs)</p>	<p>Letters, Email, Phone, Meetings – ad hoc and ongoing</p> <p>Central Desert News, every 4 months</p> <p>Online stories, ongoing</p> <p>Facebook – ad hoc</p>
Accountability	Liveability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. We deliver useful, good quality services that make a difference to people’s lives 		<p>Annual Report - annually</p>
Integrity	Sustainable communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. We help communities to be viable into the future and to provide ongoing services for new generations. 	All Staff	Informal discussions
Respect	Economic growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. We help communities grow and develop, including improving job opportunities. 		

Staff

VALUES	GOALS	KEY MESSAGES <i>We care about people, culture and place</i>	WHO and WHAT Who is communicating, and what	WHERE and WHEN Channel / Method & Frequency
Strong and good leadership	Advocacy	1. You can have confidence in us 2. We listen to communities and help them achieve their goals.	CEO – values, news, achievements, cultural and behavioural expectations	All staff meeting, bi-monthly CEO Newsletter, monthly
Teamwork	Customer Service	3. We work together within our organisation, with other stakeholders and with our communities to achieve Council’s goals.	CEO, Directors – values, policies and procedures, performance expectations,	Managers Meeting, bi-monthly
Accountability	Liveability	4. We deliver useful, good quality services that make a difference to people’s lives	Managers – policies and procedures, performance, expectations, values, work safety	Team meetings, one on one discussions
Integrity	Sustainable communities	5. We help communities to be viable into the future and to provide ongoing services for new generations.		
Respect	Economic growth	6. We help communities grow and develop, including improving job opportunities.		

Community Residents

VALUES	GOALS	KEY MESSAGES <i>We care about people, culture and place</i>	WHO and WHAT Who is communicating, and what	WHERE and WHEN Channel / Method & Frequency
Strong and good leadership	Advocacy	1. You can have confidence in us 2. We listen to communities and help them achieve their goals.	CEO, Regional Service Managers, CSM/Cs – service and financial results, issue management, LA projects, community engagement	Local Authority Meetings – five per nine communities per year
Teamwork	Customer Service	3. We work together within our organisation, with other stakeholders and with our communities to achieve Council’s goals.	CEO, Governance Manager, Directors – seeking input, consultation	Community meetings – bi-annually
Accountability	Liveability	4. We deliver useful, good quality services that make a difference to people’s lives	CEO, Directors, Managers – asking about service performance, promoting Council	Community visits - informal and ongoing
Integrity	Sustainable communities	5. We help communities to be viable into the future and to provide ongoing services for new generations.	Community based Staff – representing Council, demonstrating values, delivering services	On community - ongoing
Respect	Economic growth	6. We help communities grow and develop, including improving job opportunities.		

Federal and NT Government

VALUES	GOALS	KEY MESSAGES <i>We care about people, culture and place</i>	WHO and WHAT Who is communicating, and what	WHERE and WHEN Channel / Method & Frequency
Strong and good leadership	Advocacy	1. You can have confidence in us	Council, CEO: With: Ministers, CEOs, Senior Officials re	Letters, Contracts, Grants requiring common seal, Email, Face to Face - ongoing
Teamwork	Customer Service	2. We listen to communities and help them achieve their goals.	– all Ministerial communications, submissions, Council position statements, major issues, advocacy	LGANT CEO Forum, Mayors and Presidents Meetings – bi-annually
Accountability	Liveability	3. We work together within our organisation, with other stakeholders and with our communities to achieve Council’s goals.	Directors To: Program Directors / Regional Managers re operational issues and resolution, managing program compliance	Email, Discussions (phone and face to face) - ongoing
Integrity	Sustainable communities	4. We deliver useful, good quality services that make a difference to people’s lives		
		5. We help communities to be viable into the future and to provide ongoing services for new generations.		
Respect	Economic growth	6. We help communities grow and develop, including improving job opportunities.	Managers – Program Managers, Grants Officers re operational issues and resolution, managing program compliance, reporting	Email, Reports, Discussions (phone and face to face) - ongoing

Communication Plan Schedule

What	Target	Frequency	Dates (if applicable)
Annual Report	Public and Overall Stakeholders	Annually	November
Year Planner	Public and Overall Stakeholders	Annually	November
Central Desert News	Public and Overall Stakeholders	Every four months	April, August, December
Press Releases	Public and Overall Stakeholders	Ongoing, minimum of 12 per year	As they arise
Website stories	Public and Overall Stakeholders	Ongoing	As they arise
Social Media	Public and Overall Stakeholders	Ongoing	As they arise
All Staff meetings	Staff	Every two months	Feb, April, June, August, Oct, Dec
CEO STAIRS Newsletter	Staff	Monthly	
Manager's forum	Staff	Every two months	Feb, April, June, August, Oct, Dec
One on one discussions	Staff	Ongoing	A minimum of quarterly
HR Roadshow	Staff	Three times a year	Feb/March, Jul/Aug and Oct/Nov
CEO, Directors and Managers Community visits	Community Residents	Ongoing	In line with Local Authority meetings, as per Year Planner
CDRC Ordinary Council Meeting (OCM) Community Barbecues	Community Residents and staff	Twice a year at communities that host an OCM	In line with OCMs that are held in community as per Year Planner
Community Planning Meetings	Community Residents and Local Authority members	Every four years, reviewed annually, per community	In line with Local Authority meetings as per Year Planner
Elections and By-Elections	Community Residents	General Elections every four years and by-elections as they arise	As per Electoral Commission
Local Authority identified community events X 9	Community Residents	One per year per community	As identified by the Local Authority in each community
Advocacy	Federal and NT Government	Ongoing	



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