



Surf Life Saving Northern Territory Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose and Scope

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan outlines how Surf Life Saving Northern Territory (SLSNT) will identify, engage, and collaborate with key stakeholders to strengthen coastal safety outcomes, volunteer participation, sustainable funding, and community trust across the Northern Territory. The plan applies across the Northern Territory recognising the NT's unique geography, climate, cultural diversity, and seasonal risk profile.

This plan supports SLSNT's strategic mission to save lives, build resilient communities, and promote safe enjoyment of the Northern Territory's coastal and aquatic environments.

Objectives

The objectives of this engagement plan are to:

- Improve water safety outcomes and reduce drowning risk
- Strengthen government, community, and Traditional Owner relationships
- Increase volunteer recruitment, retention, and sustainability
- Secure and diversify sustainable funding and partnerships
- Enhance public awareness of coastal hazards, patrol coverage, and SLSNT services
- Ensure engagement is inclusive, culturally respectful, and transparent

Stakeholder Identification and Analysis - Key Stakeholder Groups

Government and Public Sector

- Northern Territory Government (Departments of People, Sport & Culture, Tourism, Education, Police, Emergency Services)
- Local Government (City of Darwin, City of Palmerston, Litchfield Council, East Arnhem Regional Council)
- Emergency Services agencies (NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services, AMSA)

Interests: Public safety, emergency response, community wellbeing, policy outcomes

Surf Life Saving Network

- SLS clubs in the NT
- SLS Australia and state SLS entities
- Volunteers, lifeguards, officials, coaches, age managers

Interests: Capability, training, safety, sustainability, consistency

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stakeholders

- Traditional Owners and Land Councils
- Aboriginal community organisations
- Indigenous rangers and sea country groups

Interests: Cultural safety, respect for sea country, community wellbeing



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Community and General Public

- Local residents
- Recreational water users
- Schools and youth groups
- New migrants, interstate and international visitors
- Disability sector (Inclusive participation)

Interests: Safety, education, access to services

Corporate, Industry, and Commercial Partners

- Sponsors and donors
- Sporting, recreation and community organisations
- Tourism operators
- Port authority

Interests: Brand, risk reduction,

Media and Communications Channels

- Local and regional media
- Social media platforms
- Community newsletters

Interests: Timely, accurate information

Engagement Principles

SLSNT stakeholder engagement will be guided by the following principles:

- Safety-first: protecting lives is the core message
- Respect and cultural awareness
- Transparency and accountability
- Consistency and reliability
- Two-way communication
- Evidence-based decision-making

Engagement Strategies by Stakeholder Group

Government Engagement

Methods:

- Regular ministerial and departmental briefings
- Annual funding and outcomes reporting
- Joint planning for wet/dry season operations
- Participation in emergency management committees

Frequency: Quarterly formal engagement; ad hoc during incidents



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Methods:

- Branch forums and leadership meetings
- Volunteer surveys and feedback sessions
- Training days and state-level conferences
- Clear escalation and issue-resolution pathways

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement

Methods:

- Early consultation with Traditional Owners
- Partnership agreements with ranger groups
- Co-designed water safety education programs
- Use of local languages and cultural advisors

Frequency: Relationship-based and ongoing

Community and Public Engagement

Methods:

- Public education campaigns (patrolled beaches, marine hazard awareness, wet season risks)
- School-based programs and events
- Beach activation days and community patrol demonstrations
- Multilingual and visual safety messaging
- Collaborating with disability support organisations

Frequency: Seasonal, with peaks before wet season and school holidays

Corporate and Industry Partners

Methods:

- Sponsorship proposals linked to outcomes
- Workplace safety briefings
- Joint campaigns with tourism and marine operators
- Recognition programs for partners

Frequency: Biannual reviews and campaign-based

Media Engagement

Methods:

- Proactive media releases
- Designated spokespersons
- Incident-response communication protocols
- Social media education and alerts



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Frequency: As required; proactive during high-risk periods

Engagement Tools and Channels

- Face-to-face meetings and workshops
- Community expos & events
- Social media and digital platforms
- Printed and visual education materials
- Formal reports and dashboards
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

Risk Management

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Stakeholder disengagement	Clear value proposition, regular updates
Cultural misunderstanding	Cultural competency training, local advisors
Misinformation from third parties	Timely and evidence-based responses
Reputational risk during incidents	Clear critical incident communication protocol
Volunteer fatigue	Recognition, workload balance, feedback loops

Roles and Responsibilities

- Board & CEO: Strategic relationships and advocacy
- General Manager & Education & Lifesaving Manager: Government and emergency services liaison
- Community & Member Engagement Officer: Community, schools, member and Indigenous engagement
- Events & Marketing Officer: Public messaging and media liaison

Monitoring and Evaluation

Engagement effectiveness will be measured through:

- Stakeholder satisfaction surveys
- Volunteer retention and recruitment data
- Funding and partnership outcomes
- Community awareness indicators
- Incident response performance reviews

Annual review and update of this plan will be undertaken.

Review Cycle

- Formal review: Annually
- Interim updates: Following major incidents, legislative changes, or funding shifts