


SHARED SERVICES TEAM

Document Name: Stakeholder and Communications Strategy and Plan Guidance and Template

Usage Guidance

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CATEGORY DESCRIPTION

<p><i>1. Example material</i> –The tool has been provided by a single public or private sector organisation, or an external forum that has not been moderated by the Shared Services Team. It represents one possible approach to a given shared service activity, and can be used by Toolkit users as an example / reference aid.</p>	
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Stakeholder and Communications Strategy and Plan Guidance and Template

The purpose of this document is to help you develop and document your strategy and plan for stakeholder engagement and communications during the lifecycle of your corporate services transformation project.

Introduction

Communicating the key messages and benefits of the project in a consistent, timely and appropriate manner is fundamental to the success of the transformation.

Set out some information about the objectives of your project here.

The Need for Effective Communication

Communication will play a major role in managing a programme of work by ensuring that the changes brought about by an improved way of working with suppliers will last and that the benefits are realised. People naturally fear and resist change and uncertainty, and this often leads to staff being de-motivated.

There are typically four phases people go through when confronted with a major change - complacency, concern, paralysis and composure (set out below). The time it takes for people to reach composure will be shortened through effective 2-way communications including strong mechanisms for feedback as well as understanding and addressing questions that are raised.

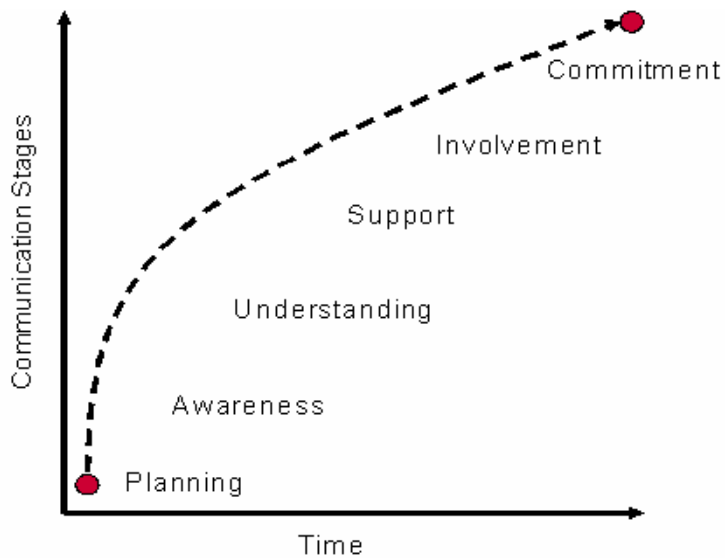
The Emotional Rollercoaster

- *Complacency* - most people are unaware of any changes or issues.
- *Concern* - people are aware of the changes, but are unsure how it will affect them.
- *Paralysis* – people are aware of the changes and apprehensive of what they may bring.
- *Composure* - people have been successfully managed through the change process and are comfortable with the changes and impact.

Stakeholders therefore need a regular, relevant flow of information and an indication of when future information will be available.

Stages of communication

The Stakeholder Management and Communication Strategy and Plan is intended to set out the communications with stakeholders through the following stages of understanding:



In practice, the stages of communication will involve the following activities:

Stage	What
Planning	Identify Stakeholders (Who) Stakeholder Interest Mapping (Why) Communications Plan (What & How) Stakeholder Map (Prioritise)
Awareness	Communication of Aims & Objectives Communication of Benefits Benefits related to individuals current roles
Understanding	Drivers for change, approach and plan going forward understood
FOR SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STAGES:	
Support	Delivery governance models and roles confirmed
Involvement	User Groups representing project steering and challenging the direction and outcomes of the transformation
Commitment	Senior stakeholders taking accountability for benefits delivery and championing progress

Principles and Approach

Communication Principles

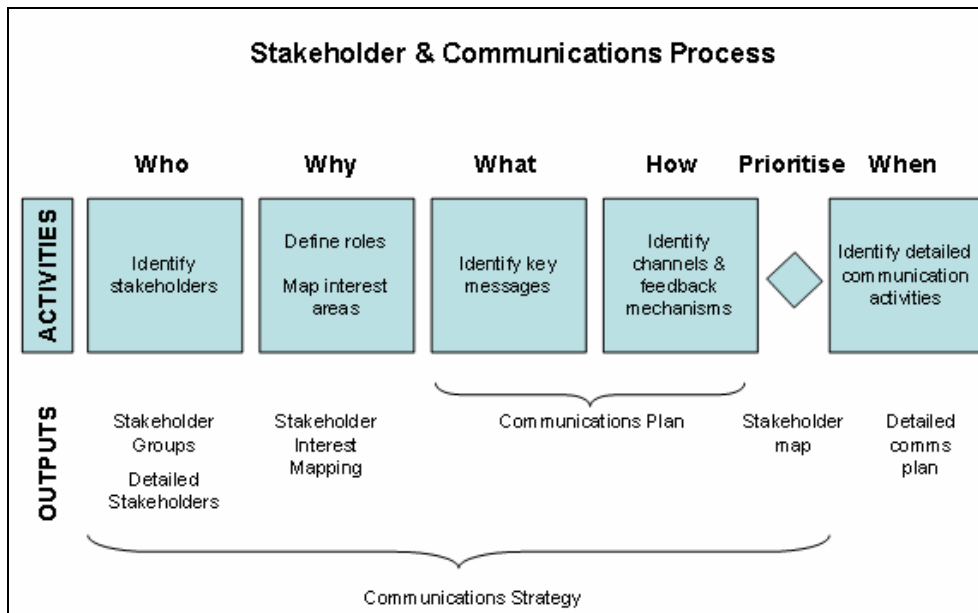
Effective communications underpins the success of all projects. The previous section provided background that describes why communication is so important throughout change programmes. Planning stages should aim to promote awareness, understanding, involvement and finally, commitment.

Clarity, simplicity, honesty and timeliness in all communications regarding transformation is key and adherence to core principles such as those below ensures messages are successfully communicated:

- all communications are transparent and open, though necessarily observing any sensitivities that arise out of a commercial or organisational change process;
- they are appropriate, timely, frequent and regular (again with the caveats noted above);
- communications are framed in straightforward “plain English” and avoid jargon, abbreviations and acronyms where possible;
- there is a consistency of message between internal and external audiences;
- there are efforts made to advise internal audiences (and those most affected by the information) first, before information is cascaded more widely to external groups, particularly through the media;
- key messages will be embedded within the programme’s audiences by the constant drip-feed of consistent messages;
- a significant level of communications is at a face-to-face level, either through existing large events or through mechanisms such as away-days;
- colleagues working directly for and on behalf of the programme are its key ambassadors and champions and represent one of its best communications vehicles;
- communication is recognised as forming part of a wider strategy about managing change and keeping people informed, involved and engaged with the work of the project.

Communications Approach

The diagram below provides a summary of the approach to developing a detailed communications plan.



This document needs to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the relevant stakeholders?
2. Why are these stakeholders interested and what level of influence do they have?
3. What information do these stakeholders need to know i.e. what are the key messages?
4. How do you communicate these key messages to stakeholders i.e. what are the best channels and feedback mechanisms for each stakeholder group?
5. How do you prioritise communications with stakeholders? i.e. how do you map your stakeholders in terms of interest and influence?
6. When do stakeholders need to be informed?

You should provide a summary of the outputs of the 'Why', 'What', 'How' & 'Prioritise' stages and provides the inputs for developing the detailed communications plan which answers the final question of 'When'?

The detailed communications plan should be a living document that explains when all internal and external communications activities will take place.

Stages of communication

Strategic (high level) communication

Strategic communication relates to the broad concept of communications, and need. This stage is designed to promote the acceptance of the project, an understanding of its need, and an awareness of what it means to the organisation. It includes key messages relating to overall business strategy, vision, goals & objectives.

The majority of communication to management and staff during the first 3 months of the project will be strategic in nature. As the project progresses, however there will be gradually less focus on strategic communications and more focus on tactical and organisational communications.

Typically strategic key messages will include:

Messages relating to...	Typical Messages – [add in your projects strategic key messages here]
The business case for the project	Improved effectiveness E.g Reduction in future payments to 3 rd party suppliers
The benefits of the project	Reduction in future investment and more efficient use of existing accommodation Improved management of processes through greater visibility of timescales, costs and resources
Project goals & objectives	Consolidate existing systems Move away from tactical solutions Maximise benefit from significant investment
Links between overall business strategy	Aligned to aims and objectives
Project team organisation	Team structure Team contacts
The strategic importance of the project	How important is the project to those at the top of your organisations, i.e. how does it support the organisations strategic aims and objectives.

Messages relating to...	Typical Messages – [add in your projects strategic key messages here]
Key project steps or phases, timing, key decision points and expected overall results	Implementation timelines Deployment model
The project vision, creating in simple terms an understanding of the “end state”	Will replace legacy processes and systems with a set of unified processes supported by a single IT system
Communication events and processes	How stakeholder groups can find out a about events at their area

Tactical Messages

Tactical communication refers to the specific issues related to the process and results of each team (area) within the project e.g. project delivery updates. This communication will focus on the specific impact of changes in all areas (people, process and technology) as determined by each process team. It is likely that information relating to specific project teams will need to be communicated at different times and to different stakeholder groups depending on specific results and outcomes.

Tactical key messages will relate to the specific goals and activities of each project team or area. You should include the projects tactical messages here.

These should include:

- Project team goals and objectives
- Project team milestones, key activities and progress
- Project results, with particular emphasis on successes and specific achievements
- The impact and implication of changes on specific stakeholders resulting from project team plans and actions
- The rationale for key decisions
- The process through which stakeholders, including employees, can become involved in or provide feedback to specific project team activities
- The results and impact of feedback received from managers and staff regarding specific project initiatives

Organisational Messages

Organisational communication reflects the fact that some change management activities, particularly organisation design will directly relate to and effect individual roles and jobs. As such, this type of communication is likely to have the most impact on individuals within the organisation and is

highly sensitive. Organisational communication maintains a high priority in terms of content and timing within project communications. It can be delivered in a variety of channels, as appropriate, and generally requires the respect and confidence of all management and staff. The communication of changes to specific individuals' roles and jobs, for example, will occur through confidential one-to-one meetings with the people concerned.

Organisational messages need to describe the rationale behind any organisational change. Include your projects organisational messages here. List them here; they could include some of the following:

- Changes to structures and reporting relationships
- Desired behaviours/ cultural changes
- Changes in human resource processes such as performance management
- Changes to roles and jobs

Staff Concerns

Inevitably, there will be a range of staff concerns that should be directly addressed as part of the stakeholder and communication activities, document them here. List them here, these may include:

- *“What it means for us”* e.g. use of new systems, changes to processes, how it will change my activities, will I lose my job?
- *“What is my role description”* e.g. changes to current roles and responsibilities
- *“What happens next”* e.g. communication methods, how can we make sure relevant people stay involved
- *“When will I know”* e.g. implementation timescales, plans and milestones
- *“What support is available”* e.g. initial training, support in new technologies, contingency measures
- *“Any further questions?”* e.g. further information sources, access to frequently asked questions

The key messages to be used in response include:

- Change is coming....that will improve the way we work, self service will enable you to focus on the “added value” activities
- We recognise your concerns....
- Bear with us....this is a major programme and we must take the time necessary to get it right
- Explanation of what the service is during transition – what it is and how will it be introduced?
- We will update you with progress at the earliest opportunity - information on progress, timescales and future implementation will be made available in various formats and in a timely manner

- Feel free to approach leadership with any key concerns or suggestions

Communications Planning

Project Stakeholders

Over the life of Programme there will be many individuals and groups who have an interest in, who are involved in, or who are affected by its activities and outcomes. List your stakeholders here.

Internal Stakeholders:

Internal Stakeholder Groups

External Stakeholders

External Stakeholder Groups

Stakeholder Interest

Understanding the detailed breakdown of stakeholder's interests is the basis for planning communications with them. Analysing the interests of both internal and external stakeholder groups according to the benefits of the change programme allows us to tailor the messages we provide. The table below can be used to record the results of this analysis:

Internal Stakeholders:

Stakeholder Group	Responsibilities and Interests	Area of Interest
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External Stakeholders:

Stakeholder Group	Responsibilities and Interests	Area of Interest
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Key Messages for Stakeholders

From the outset, there are a number of key messages that need to be delivered to inform the relevant stakeholders about the plans, the progress that is being made and the ways in which it is likely to affect particular groups. These messages need to be delivered to raise awareness. Further detailed messages will need to be provided throughout the various subsequent stages of the programme. List your key messages here. These may include:

- What is Project X? – clear and concise description of the intended programme, the key deliverables and the context within the operational policing environment.
- How will it affect my role and will it make my life easier? – description of the impact on the day-to-day working activities of those that will be affected (to cover all those affected and not only to those who will directly benefit).
- What are the benefits? – high-level summary of the benefits that it aims to achieve and some details of the dependencies on which a successful delivery is reliant.
- What is the scope of the programme? – description of the programme boundaries and, if appropriate, confirmation of those things that are outside of scope.
- What are the key milestones along the road to implementation? – clear published plans that show the major phases and milestones, and against which progress may be tracked, will boost confidence and understanding of the programme (presented as a simple 'road map').
- How can I keep in touch with progress? – regularly published updates describing the status of the programme in appropriate detail for the

particular audience (ranging from detailed progress reports through to newsletter highlights).

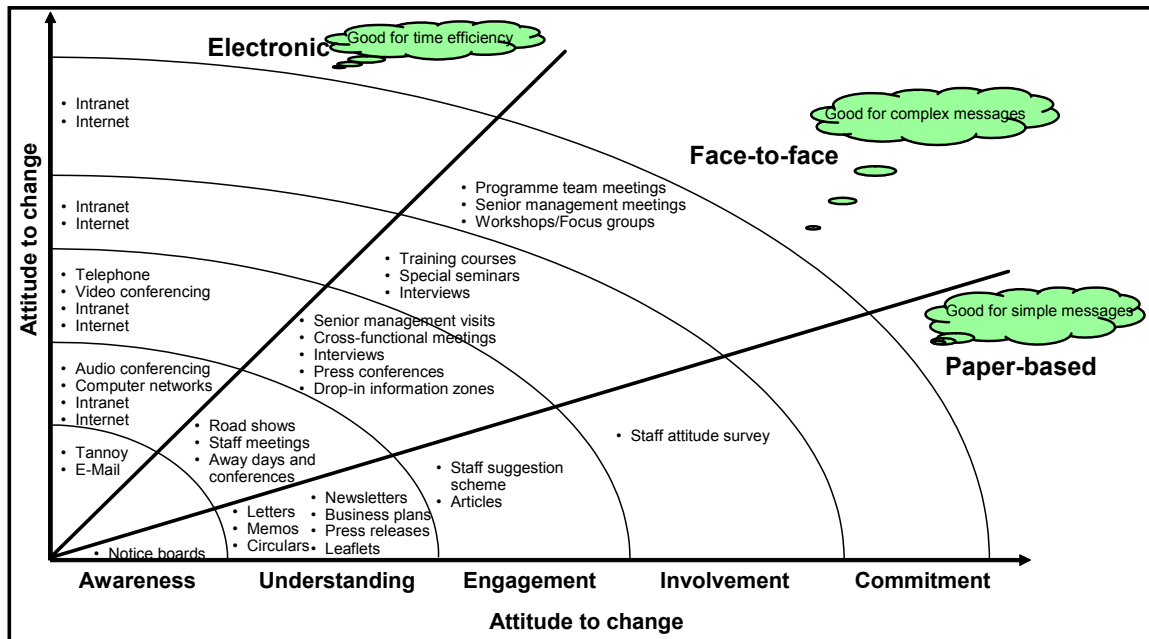
- How do I get more information? – some key contact details and sources of more detailed information that may be accessed by those with a more specific interest in the project.
- How do I provide feedback or raise issues and concerns? – provide a mechanism for the proactive collection of feedback.

Regardless of the adopted communication mechanisms and the target audience, there are a number of guidelines that should be followed when producing material for communication. These include:

- Messages should be clear, concise and delivered in a timely manner
- Messages should be positive and have a 'good news' slant but should not seek to hide any 'bad news' when this occurs
- Don't make promises that may not be achievable
- Be direct in addressing people's concerns or challenges (e.g. job security)
- Provide assurance that the project team is working to support those involved and to make their life easier
- Use plain English and minimise jargon
- Review and verify the accuracy of all messages before issuing the material
- Make sure that each message has something substantive to say about the programme or the progress that has been made (i.e. ensure the message is informative)
- Where appropriate, diagrams and other graphical representations increase the effectiveness of communications (e.g. in illustrating progress against a timeline)
- Ensure the message is targeted at a particular audience (this may be internal or external – and the language used is likely to vary accordingly)
- It will also be important to consider the concerns that particular stakeholder groups may have and to illustrate that we understand the risks and issues around the implementation Some of the issues that may be present include:
 - How will the system be accepted as 'fit for purpose'?
 - How will we ensure that those in the field have the necessary confidence in the system to make its usage effective?
 - Will the new system be sufficiently stable to support the process effectively, eg pay people accurately and on time?

Communicating Key Messages

Different communication channels are appropriate for different stakeholder groups. The diagram below provides an overview of which types of channels can be used to communicate with different audiences at different stages of a Project's life cycle:



Levels of Involvement

This table below shows the four levels of involvement of stakeholders throughout a project. These should be applied in the communications plans that follow.

Levels of Involvement Required

- A Regular active involvement required
- C Periodic consultation required
- I Stakeholders need to be informed but not consulted
- M Information to these stakeholders needs to be carefully managed

External Stakeholder High Level Communications Plan

Document what key messages **external** stakeholders need to know and what channels are best for communicating with each stakeholder group:

Stakeholder Group	Required Level of Involvement	Key Messages	Channels
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Internal Stakeholder Communications High Level Plan

Document what key messages **internal** stakeholders need to know and what channels are best for communicating with each stakeholder group:

Stakeholder Group	Required Level of Involvement	Key Messages	Channels
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Stakeholder Management

Prioritising Stakeholders

Projects need to have appropriate levels of support inside and outside of the business, especially from certain key stakeholders. Mapping out the level of interest against the level of influence of each stakeholder group is a useful tool for prioritising and targeting our stakeholder management efforts (see below which can be used to identify your stakeholder's interest and influence.).

For example, if very influential and important stakeholders are deemed to have a low level of support, it might mean that you need to engage with these stakeholders more effectively. Stakeholder mapping documents should be seen as living documents that reflect a snapshot of current stakeholder's support at any given time.

Stakeholder Analysis Matrix

Influence	<p>high</p> <p>Consult</p> <p>Put enough work in with these people to keep them satisfied, but not so much that they become bored with your message. With high influence, they can affect the project outcomes, but their interests are not the target of the project. This conclusion implies that these stakeholders may be a source of significant risk, and they will need careful monitoring and management.</p>	<p>Engage</p> <p>These are the people you must fully engage and make the greatest efforts to satisfy. This implies that you will need to construct good working relationships with these stakeholders, to ensure an effective coalition of support for the project.</p>	
	<p>low</p> <p>Monitor</p> <p>Monitor these people, but do not bore them with excessive communication. They are unlikely to be the subject of project activities or management.</p>	<p>Inform</p> <p>Keep these people adequately informed, and talk to them to ensure that no major issues are arising. These people can often be very helpful with the detail of your project. They will require special initiatives if their interests are to be protected.</p>	
	low	Interest	high

Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

In order to construct a more detailed Communication Plan that is effective in its objectives, you need to consider the different stakeholder groups that have already been identified, assess the level of influence and support that they may have and then consider the key messages that may be targeted to each individual group.

Use the table below to document the analysis on internal and external stakeholders:

Stakeholder Group	Key Individuals	Commitment to Change	Impact of Change on Stakeholder (H/M/L)	Description of Impact on Stakeholder	Influence of Stakeholder	Key Message
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Next steps

Based on this analysis complete a **Detailed Communications Plan** for the life cycle of the transformation. This will show a detailed phase by phase breakdown of the communication tasks and **when** they will be undertaken. It should identify the owner of each task and include roles and responsibilities for the key individuals who are responsible for ensuring communication is adequate, appropriate and timely.

Implement the strategies described in this document and the subsequent communication plans. This will be an ongoing process that requires continued management and monitoring effort to ensure the effectiveness of the relevant actions.

Annex A

1.1 Draft Communications Action Plan (CAP)

CAP Name:		CAP Owners:	Target Date:	
Communication Subject:	CAP Reference:	Audiences: •		
Background:				
Desired communication outcomes: ▪				
Messengers: As appropriate to Audience •				
Approach:				
Key messages: •				
Communication events:				
Date	Target Audience	Communication Action/Deliverable	Channel	Owner

Annex B Stakeholder Interview Template

The following template should be used when interviewing stakeholders about the information they would like to receive. This process will help refine the placement of particular stakeholder groups within the influence and support matrix shown in the Stakeholder Map. Use this template as prompt and/or to keep a record during the interview. The interviewee should not know their commitment to the initiative is being assessed. Tailor the questions so that they are relevant for the stakeholder group.

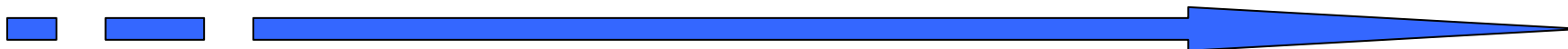
Section 1 : Stakeholder information

Name of stakeholder:	Date of contact:
Job Title:	Name of Interviewer:
Business group/function:	Approximate Number in group:
Specific points to raise:	

Section 2 : Stakeholder Commitment

How enthusiastic and committed is this stakeholder to the change

Commitment Continuum



Level of knowledge/ commitment	None	Some initial contact	Aware	Understand	Positive perception	Adopting programme	Institutionalised programme	Internalised programme
Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*0 = None – the stakeholder has no knowledge of the initiative

1 = Some initial contact made

2 = Awareness – the stakeholder has a working knowledge of the initiative

3 = Understanding – the stakeholder demonstrates comprehension of the nature and intent of the change (that is, what will be expected of them)

4 = Positive perception – the stakeholder has a positive view and disposition towards the change; they have decided to support the changes and actively work with the new systems, processes and working procedures.

5 = Adopting programme – the stakeholder has already been actively embracing the initiative e.g. resources (time, money, people) are made available, visible display of drive to meet set goals.

6 = Institutionalised programme – The initiative has been formally incorporated into the routine operating procedures of the stakeholder.

7 = Internalised programme – The stakeholder is highly committed to the change because it fits with their personal behaviour, actions, goals and values.

Interviewer comments regarding stakeholder commitment

Stakeholder 1. preferred method of communication & 2. frequency & 3. key messages that would like to be told about

Section 3 – Impact on Stakeholder

How will the initiative affect the stakeholder, in terms of changes to their working practices and behaviour

	What potential benefits do you see for your working practices (and behaviours) that will result from the initiative?	What potential downsides do you see for your working practices (and behaviours) as a result of the initiative?
For the stakeholder's area (define 'area' here)		
For stakeholder personally		

Impact Summary

Anticipated impact of stakeholder on the initiative:

High / Medium / Low	Interviewer Comments

Section 4 – Influence of Stakeholder

What is the group's ability to block or delay the delivery of the change?

	Current behaviour	Future behaviour (what we can expect)
The stakeholder's area (define 'area' here)	<p>Do you feel your area has the chance to input into what's happening with the initiative?</p> <p>How do you make your area views known?</p> <p>Do you feel your area has a leadership role to play in the initiative?</p> <p>How are you working towards that?</p> <p>How important is the initiative versus your delivery programme?</p>	<p>How would you like your area to play a role in the initiative e.g. a leadership role?</p>

The stakeholder personally	Do you feel the leadership team works effectively for you currently? (ref org chart)	How should it work? How actively would you like to get involved in the change?
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Influence Summary

Anticipated level of influence of stakeholder

High / Medium / Low	Interviewer Comments

Section 5 – Any Other Comments

Stakeholder comments	Interviewer comments
Other key contacts? Regular staff forums e.g. for info cascade?	

Section 6 – Action Plan

Resulting actions (for stakeholder action/communication plan):

Action	Who	When