

**GOV005- Communication Policy**

---

**1. POLICY CERTIFICATION**

Policy title:	<b>Communication Policy</b>
Policy number:	<b>GOV005</b>
Category:	<b>Policy</b>
Classification:	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>
Status:	<b>Approved</b>

**2. PURPOSE**

The Communication Policy has been developed to provide direction and guidance for the delivery of high quality, relevant, accessible and transparent communication to Roper Gulf Regional Council’s stakeholders, residents, Elected Members, Council Committee Members, Local Authority Members and Staff. RGRC places a high importance on maintaining open and consistent communication with residents, Elected Members, Council Committee Members, Local Authority Members and staff as well as with outside agencies. This communications policy should be read alongside and while observing RGRC’s *Computer Usage Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Media Policy and Social Media Policy*.

**3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE**

This policy applies to all internal and external communications of the Council including correspondences inward and outwards, telephone communication, email, internet, media contact including media releases, newsletters, RGRC’s website, direct discussion between employees or Elected Members with external persons; representation and speaking at official functions; and public speaking engagements.

**4. POLICY STATEMENT**

Roper Gulf Regional Council recognises that creating effective means of communication fosters trust among RGRC communities, Councillors and staff.

The Communication Policy intends to ensure that:

- Important information external to RGRC shall be promptly received, considered and communicated to the RGRC’s internal stakeholders,
- Important internal information is promptly identified, considered and communicated to the RGRC’s internal stakeholders and external stakeholders as appropriate.
- Whether through traditional communication mechanisms or online, a consistent, factual and positive image of RGRC is created.

**5. DEFINITIONS**

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Communication	Includes all written, verbal, electronic and personal interactions by all employees with any member of our community, visitors, all levels of government and other agencies.
Considered	Means thoughtful, respectful and with regard to the receiver of the information
Elected Members	Members of the RGRC Council
External Stakeholders	RGRC external stakeholders shall be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• residents of the Roper Gulf region</li> <li>• visitors to the area</li> <li>• other local governments</li> <li>• Territory, State, and Federal governments</li> <li>• regulatory authorities</li> <li>• funding authorities</li> </ul>

**GOV005- Communication Policy**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>businesses with whom RGRC deals with</li> </ul>
G&CP	Governance Corporate Planning and Compliance Business Unit
Internal Stakeholders	RGRC internal stakeholders shall be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Elected Members</li> <li>the Chief Executive Officer</li> <li>the Directors and Managers</li> <li>all other employees</li> <li>consultants and contractors acting on behalf of the RGRC</li> </ul>
RGRC	Roper Gulf Regional Council
Shall	Will
SLT	Strategic Leadership Team
Social Networking Sites	Includes Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and any other similar websites.
Timely	Means occurring within a suitable amount of time or occurring at a suitable time, particularly from the perspective of the receiver of the communication.

**6. PRINCIPLES**

**6.1. Professional Image**

RGRC places the highest of importance on its image of professionalism during its communications. RGRC’s professional image shall be upheld and maintained during all of its communications through ensuring:

- Informative outgoing correspondence in line with RGRC’s style guide is distributed in a timely manner to residents, stakeholders, and Elected Members and RGRC staff.
- Incoming correspondence is received, acknowledged and actioned in a suitable amount of time.
- RGRC’s services and programs are promoted and advocated effectively throughout community.

**6.2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The initial point of contact for all media inquiries is the Communications Coordinator, and the only authorised spokespeople for RGRC are the CEO and Mayor.

The CEO may delegate a member of RGRC staff to speak on a specific event. Directors or their nominated staff may speak on operational matters relating to their specific department with the CEO’s approval only.

Elected Members may speak on specific issues of interest to them with prior approval from the Mayor.

**6.3. External Communication**

RGRC recognises the importance of having a variety of external communication methods in order to reach the residents of the Roper Gulf Region effectively, transparently and in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of the Governance and Corporate Planning Manager, as a delegate of the CEO, to prepare and disseminate the following types of external communications while observing the *Local Government Act*:

- RGRC Strategic Plan
- RGRC Regional (Business) Plan
- RGRC Annual Report
- Media Releases
- Invitations to attend Ordinary Meetings of Council
- Formal invitations to special guests for civic events and functions

## GOV005- Communication Policy

---

- Website content
- Social media content
- Newsletter
- Meeting Agendas and Minutes

It is the responsibility of each business unit's manager to send the following types of communication to the Governance and Corporate Planning Business Unit, as CEO delegates, prior to its distribution to the community for approval, unless prior delegation from the CEO has been provided:

- Advertisements
- Newsletters
- Brochures
- Fact Sheets

All other forms of communication distributed, while not required to seek approval from Governance and Corporate Planning, shall be prepared and distributed in a manner that upholds RGRC's corporate image, and its professional, transparent and consistent communication values.

### 6.4. Customer Service

RGRC shall provide a high level of customer service to all stakeholders. RGRC shall correctly and efficiently answer and respond to phone calls, letters, faxes, emails and face to face contact with stakeholders and customers to ensure a positive reputation of RGRC is generated and upheld.

### 6.5. Community Consultations

Consultation with the community is a vital and essential method of receiving the ideas and views of the Roper Gulf Region's residents. Community consultations shall occur whenever reasonable and/or possible.

It is the responsibility of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), as set out by the *RGRC Organisational Structure* to ensure that community consultation on community issues begins as early as possible to allow for community involvement and comment before decisions are made. Local Authority Meetings are an effective medium for these consultations to occur. At Local Authority Meetings, it is the responsibility of the Director to delegate the responsibility of spokesperson to an RGRC staff member in their own business unit to conduct the consultation.

### 6.6. Media Relations

RGRC shall establish and maintain a strong working relationship with the local and regional media outlets through the provision of up-to-date and interesting stories from the RGRC region. RGRC shall endeavour to respond to media inquires from on the same day as receiving them.

The official media spokespersons of RGRC are the Mayor and the CEO unless delegation has been provided by the Mayor to another Elected Member, or by the CEO to another member of staff.

### 6.7. Internal Communication and Employee Relations

In order to provide information to the community in a timely and transparent manner, RGRC will provide information to its Elected Members, Local Authority Members and Employees in a timely manner. Internal communication shall occur by, but is not limited to:

- New employee or member induction training;
- Regular business unit staff meetings;
- Regular SLT meetings;

## GOV005- Communication Policy

- Access to RGRC policies, procedures and plans;
- Notice boards;
- Newsletter
- Meeting Agendas and Minutes

### 6.8. Events and Festivals

Roper Gulf Regional Council may use community events and festivals to disseminate and distribute information regarding RGRC as an organisation, the programs and services that RGRC operate/provide and employment opportunities that may exist.

The business unit manager who is organising or intending to have RGRC information disseminated at any event, festival or public event must have the content approved by either the Manager Governance and Corporate Planning or the Communications Coordinator to ensure it meets RGRC style, copyright and intellectual property requirements, and upholds RGRC's corporate image and communications values.

### 6.9. Violations

Violations of the Communication Policy will be dealt with in accordance to the nature and severity of the specific violation. An RGRC employee or Elected Member or Local Authority Member who violates the Communications Policy will be subject to disciplinary action under Council's Code of Conduct and Member's Code of Conduct.

## 7. REFERENCES

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	Roper Gulf Regional Council Governance and Corporate Planning Business Unit.
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RGRC Style Guide</li> <li>• GOV013 Social Media Policy</li> <li>• CL001 Members Code of Conduct</li> <li>• CL002 Members Disciplinary Policy</li> <li>• HR003 Employee Discipline Policy</li> <li>• HR005 Confidentiality and Privacy Policy</li> <li>• GOV006 Computer Usage Policy</li> <li>• GOV007 Mobile Phone Policy</li> <li>• GOV010 Media Policy</li> <li>• RGRC Organisational Structure</li> </ul>
Related Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Local Government Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Information Act</i></li> <li>• <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i></li> </ul>
Relevant Forms	<i>Nil</i>

## 8. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy number	<b>GOV005</b>
Policy Owner	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>
Endorsed by	<b>SLT, Council</b>
Date approved	<b>4<sup>th</sup> November 2008</b>
Revisions	<b>March 2014, July 2017</b>
Amendments	<b>23 August 2017 FCM</b>
Next revision due	<b>June 2021</b>

**GOV005- Communication Policy**

---

**9. CONTACT PERSON**

Contact person

**Manager - Governance and Corporate  
Planning**

Contact number

**08 8972 9005**