



# SOCIAL LICENCE AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

AUSTRALIAN HYDROGEN COUNCIL

JULY 2021

# EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

## An expression of interest

AHC would like to express an interest to partner with the federal and jurisdictional governments to develop and manage the social licence/public communications programme for the NHS.

## Who we are

The Australian Hydrogen Council, or AHC, is the peak body for the emerging hydrogen industry. Our objective is to grow the industry to have clean hydrogen as a key part of the energy mix. We have 78 members at the moment, and our membership is spread across many sectors of the economy.



# WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

## The missing strategic piece

AHC has observed the progress to date on managing hydrogen communications and believes that there is a fundamentally important piece missing.

Government and other stakeholders have tended to focus on:

- Surveys, to understand the community perspectives on hydrogen.
- Traditional communications advisors, with a view to segmenting the community and delivering messages to respond to the survey outcomes.

These are important things to do, but they need to sit within a broader strategic framework that addresses other key considerations and risks.

Importantly, we need to acknowledge that the emerging hydrogen industry **will affect several different markets in different timeframes, from now to beyond 2050.**

There is also a huge **number of diverse stakeholders and many connections to be built.**

Communications will occur within a **politically fraught space** that is occupied **by competing interests.**

**Without very clear direction and strong support, it is likely that the complexity of this could be beyond most communications experts.**



### Some considerations for hydrogen communications

1. Readiness of different markets, e.g. the market for small FCEVs is some way off but buses could be sooner.
2. Types of consumer engagement for different markets, e.g. users of blended natural gas might use it now but are passive, compared with eventual purchasers of FCEVs, who will be active.
3. Industry and political risk of timing for each market, where communicating too soon can create unmet needs and communicating too late may create a dangerous information vacuum.
4. Optimal levels of knowledge at different points in time for different people to meet established objectives.
5. Risk of questions that can't be answered well at this stage, e.g. what will this cost me? will you need to dig up my pipes?
6. Locating hydrogen communications within a larger communications piece that will be required on net zero and (likely significant) renewable energy developments - don't want to confuse people or blindly wander into adjacent political problems.

# WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

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There needs to be national project planning to deliver a world-leading communications framework for governments and industry

The approach should **at least**:

- Transparently show deliverables and milestones
- Account for strategic context and different markets/conditions
- Engage with the research here and internationally
  - Learn from experience
  - Build connections with related industries and governments
  - But not reinvent the wheel on surveys
- Engage with all jurisdictions on:
  - Communication needs, e.g. topics and timing
  - Precedents
  - Risks
  - Terminology
- Consult early with other relevant stakeholders, and work closely with those building the hydrogen ecosystem (such as the hubs and clusters).

AHC is offering to **partner with the federal and jurisdictional governments to deliver this work.**

We can also **project manage work** in this space as a **subject matter expert**, and can do so in close collaboration with any and/or all Australian jurisdictions.

There can be **accountability and transparency** as desired by all government stakeholders.

We might need **resourcing to support this**, as appropriate to deliver outcomes, and we would agree this in partnership with governments.

# WHY THE AHC

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## AHC is in a unique situation to partner with the federal and jurisdictional governments on hydrogen social licence and public communications

**First**, we have established thinking and relationships since early last year:

- We have our working group on social licence – established March 2020 and including many government and research stakeholders as well as AHC members
- We have strong relationships with most jurisdictions
- We have industry support
- We engage with academics and researchers in the social licence space
- We have established MoUs with associations like ours in Australia and globally, and we share information
- We established, and act as the Secretariat for, the national H<sub>2</sub><2 working group on hydrogen.

**Second**, as a national body we have the requisite coverage:

- We operate across all jurisdictions
- We cover all sectors and we focus on the demand/consumer side for all hydrogen use
- By definition, our involvement demonstrates industry engagement and ownership.

**Third**, the AHC Secretariat is also well versed in energy policy, consultation, and public communications, through previous employment:

- Dr Fiona Simon, AHC's CEO would lead this work. Prior to joining AHC, Fiona spent 20 years in energy policy and regulation, specialising in consumer protections and stakeholder relations. She was regularly a lead for work on consumer information needs and communications.
- Joe Kremzer, AHC's General Manager, Policy would support the work. He has also worked for governments and the private sector in complex energy policy, including engaging with a range of stakeholders on natural gas projects, energy consumer protections, and consumer information requirements and support.



# AHC'S CURRENT THINKING - HYDROGEN STAKEHOLDERS AND PROPOSED APPROACH

	Group 1: Users of land and natural resources	Group 2: Workforce and required holders of skills	Group 3: Active consumers	Group 4: Passive consumers	Group 5: Influencers	Group 6: Owners of outcomes
People	<p><b>1.</b> Users of land, water and air who will want to know about how the industry will affect them, e.g. communities, councils, local businesses, farmers, tourism operators, tourists.</p>	<p><b>2a.</b> Future direct and indirect employees of the industry, e.g. engineers, technicians, mechanics, gas fitters.</p> <p><b>2b.</b> People supporting social services, e.g. emergency services.</p>	<p><b>3.</b> People choosing to buy hydrogen or related products via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fuel markets</li> <li>- vehicle and equipment markets, e.g. car, bus, truck, fleet, tractor, stationary fuel cell and appliances</li> <li>- service markets, e.g. FCEV maintenance via mechanic.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4a.</b> People who don't choose to buy hydrogen but still use it, e.g. natural gas users receiving blended gas.</p> <p><b>4b.</b> People who may choose in the future (become Group 3) when the market evolves, e.g. future FCEV purchasers.</p>	<p><b>5.</b> People engaging on reputation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- observing and commenting, e.g. environmental activists, media</li> <li>- making connections, e.g. industry associations</li> <li>- advocating and sharing information, e.g. various comms people, local leaders.</li> </ul>	<p><b>6.</b> People creating the markets/seen to own the outcomes, e.g. governments, councils, regulators.</p>
Issues to cover (in addition to 'Why hydrogen?' and other basics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community safety</li> <li>• Renewables credentials</li> <li>• Land access and permit processes, and coexistence with other land uses</li> <li>• Water access, management, quality and permit processes</li> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• Project consultation and community engagement through project lifecycle</li> <li>• Broader community economic benefits/issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee safety</li> <li>• Workforce opportunities and training</li> <li>• Associated skills, contracts and services required</li> <li>• Renewables credentials</li> <li>• Emergency services requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer safety</li> <li>• Renewables credentials</li> <li>• Available models of vehicles and equipment</li> <li>• Available services</li> <li>• Available refuelling/access to hydrogen</li> <li>• How hydrogen fuel and equipment compares to alternatives on key factors, including lifecycle costs</li> <li>• Energy security/independence (local and regional/national)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer safety</li> <li>• Renewables credentials</li> <li>• Where to find information</li> <li>• What future changes to expect</li> <li>• Implications for costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where to find information</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Renewables credentials</li> <li>• What future changes to expect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broader community economic benefits/issues</li> <li>• Workforce opportunities and training</li> <li>• What needs to happen</li> <li>• Where to find information</li> </ul>
Space and time	<p>Now. Both local hubs/towns and spokes to connect hubs.</p>	<p>Now for emergency services. Longer term local hubs/towns and spokes to connect hubs, except for where covered under Group 1.</p>	<p>Now for relevant catchment applications (e.g. hubs with vehicles in Group 1) but ultimately not location-specific.</p> <p>Timing for everything else needs to be in market-specific 'Goldilocks zone'.</p>	<p>Now in areas already rolling out blending (managed by industry).</p>	<p>Start now with local leaders (connect with emergency services under Group 2) for positive influence and move outwards from there.</p> <p>Now for industry associations and respond to media.</p>	<p>Now to targeted groups, including councils, government departments and Parliamentary Friends of Hydrogen.</p>

# AHC'S CURRENT THINKING - HYDROGEN STAKEHOLDERS AND PROPOSED APPROACH

	Group 1: Users of land and natural resources	Group 2: Workforce and required holders of skills	Group 3: Active consumers	Group 4: Passive consumers	Group 5: Influencers	Group 6: Owners of outcomes
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take AHC undertaking to <b>councils</b>:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify which projects with project managers, state govts and cluster managers</li> <li>Complete draft undertaking</li> <li>Complete basic information to support and supplement                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fact sheets</li> <li>FAQs</li> </ul> </li> <li>Use the opportunity to ask what they need from us.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Engage with <b>project managers</b> on current issues and comms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with <b>SA Govt</b> and <b>DISER</b> on emergency services discussions.</li> <li>Engage with <b>CHS</b> on safety forum.</li> <li>Continue to work with <b>SA Govt</b> on broader skills and workforce issues and <b>QLD Govt</b> on Ministerial Energy Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop view of 'Goldilocks zone' per key market to use for comms planning:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map likely market availability and relative lifecycle cost for key vehicles and equipment</li> <li>Overlay analysis of likely triggers for consumer uptake and time to consider</li> <li>Overlay risk assessment for:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>market not having developed in time for consumer willingness to buy (comms too soon scenario)</li> <li>alternative voices/products filling the space (comms too late scenario).</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with <b>gas networks</b> and <b>associations</b> to build library of past and planned community engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage <b>industry associations</b> here and overseas on experiences to date and use this in conjunction with other steps to build a clearer picture of needs.</li> <li>Continue to respond to requests from <b>media</b> and various stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up <b>AHC Parliamentary Friends of Hydrogen</b></li> <li><b>Council</b> outreach once have outcomes from Group 1 steps and clarity on Groups 3 and 4.</li> <li>Usual engagement with <b>governments</b>.</li> <li>Overlap with WG8 for <b>regulators</b>.</li> </ul>
Timing	<p>Over July-September 2021 discuss with ideally four councils from four different states.</p> <p>Draft and complete fact sheets and FAQs update by end August 2021.</p>	<p>July 2021 - ongoing</p>	<p>Preliminary discussions and analysis: July-August 2021.</p> <p>Decision on whether to go into more depth by end August 2021.</p>	<p>From August 2021 speak with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AGIG</li> <li>Jemena</li> <li>ATCO</li> <li>APA</li> <li>ENA</li> <li>APGA</li> </ul> <p>Have full complement and initial assessment by end August 2021.</p>	<p>From August 2021 for industry associations, and start with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEC</li> <li>ENA</li> <li>APGA</li> <li>Bioenergy Australia</li> <li>State government connections</li> </ul>	<p>Establish Parliamentary Friends of Hydrogen by end August 2021.</p>



# KEY PERSONNEL

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**Fiona Simon**  
CEO at Australian Hydrogen Council

Dr Fiona Simon, AHC's CEO has led the social licence work for the AHC and personally developed much of the material to date.

Prior to starting with the AHC in June 2019, Fiona spent 20 years in energy policy and regulation, working for governments and the private sector. She specialised in consumer protections and stakeholder relations, regularly leading work to unpack complex policy matters and develop responsible and meaningful public communications for a range of audiences. She wrote her PhD based on her early career managing stakeholders, policy and communications for the Victorian essential services regulator when the state opened the retail energy market.

In 2017 she published a well-received academic book about the communicative and risk perceptions of key stakeholder groups on complex policy matters. She has also worked for consulting firms and has regularly projected managed projects to delivery.



Don't be put off by the title – you don't need to be a sociologist to enjoy Fiona Simon's highly engaging, insightful and perceptive account of retail energy regulation in Australia. *Meta-Regulation in Practice* explores alternative views of what regulation should achieve, and shows how policy evolved in response to the various different pressures. It calls out for an equally stimulating and informed account of UK and other experience, and for the (re)opening of diplomatic relationships between economic and sociological concepts of regulation. This is a superb book and a welcome addition to the literature.

**Stephen Littlechild, Emeritus Professor, University of Birmingham, and Fellow, Judge Business School, University of Cambridge UK; former UK electricity regulator (1989-98)**

[T]his is a sparkling book with brilliant case study material. It should enliven debate about what has perhaps become a slightly tired orthodoxy about regulatory policy and may well be destined to become a classic.

**Christopher Hood, *Australian Journal of Public Administration***



**Joe Kremzer** · 1st  
GM Policy at Australian Hydrogen Council

Mr Joe Kremzer, AHC's General Manager, Policy would support the partnership. He has also worked for governments and the private sector in complex energy policy, including engaging with a range of stakeholders on natural gas projects, energy consumer protections, and consumer information requirements and support.



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 **AHC contact**

Fiona Simon, CEO

e [fsimon@H2council.com.au](mailto:fsimon@H2council.com.au)

m 0474 028 740

w [H2council.com.au](http://H2council.com.au)