

# WIM150 MINERAL SANDS PROJECT STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PLAN

May 2012

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WIM150 Mineral Sands Project

Australian Zircon

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background**

The WIM150 heavy mineral sands resource was defined in the 1980s by CRA Limited (CRA) (Conzinc Riotinto of Australia). An environment effects statement (EES) was prepared at the time but not released because the CRA project did not proceed, due to technical challenges and market conditions. Australian Zircon NL (AZC) has an opportunity to develop the WIM150 Mineral Sands Project ('the project') and has engaged Coffey Environments (Coffey) to assist with the development of a stakeholder consultation plan (SCP) for the project, which is located in the Wimmera region of Western Victoria. The SCP sets the strategic framework that underpins the future communication and consultation for the project, and will be used and updated throughout the life of the project.

The SCP outlines the strategy and communication tools that AZC will use to effectively communicate information to the project's stakeholders and gather stakeholder's feedback and/or concerns with respect to the EES process and the various stages of the project.

To date, many landholder discussions and several local and government agency briefings have taken place with the project's stakeholders. These discussions have focused on investigative drilling, field surveys and consultation with potentially impacted landowners.

## **1.2 Project Description**

AZC is proposing to develop the WIM150 mineral sands deposit, located approximately 20 km southeast of Horsham and 280 km northwest of Melbourne. The project will target heavy minerals to produce a variety of products including heavy mineral concentrate, zircon, monazite, and titanium minerals. The mineral resource is currently estimated to be 727 Mt at 3.9% heavy mineral. AZC has a farm-in agreement with Austpac Resources NL (Austpac) for the project on tenement EL4521 where the project area is located.

The conceptual plan is that conventional earthmoving equipment (including excavators, bulldozers, scrapers, front-end loaders and trucks) will be used to strip topsoil, subsoil and overburden before extracting the ore. Approximately 12 Mt of ore will be extracted each year. Mining will commence in the southern section of the deposit and progress to the north of the Western Highway during the latter part of the mine life. Preliminary studies and conceptual planning indicate a mine life of more than 25 years depending upon project economics.

Key components of the project will include a mining unit plant, a wet concentrator plant (for primary processing) and a mineral separation plant. Mined ore will be transported to a mining unit plant located adjacent to the open pit where the ore will be screened and slurried. The ore slurry will then be pumped to a wet concentrator plant where it will be separated into sand, clay/silt and heavy mineral concentrate. Heavy mineral concentrate will then be transferred to a mineral separation plant for processing to final products. Final products will be transported to a port for export overseas.

## **1.3 Project Area**

The project area is located on a broad flat plain ranging in elevation from 125 to 150 m. The landscape within the project area has been largely modified due to agricultural activities and varies from flat to gently undulating. The project is located within the Wimmera River catchment.

Major watercourses of the region include the Wimmera River located to the east and north of the project area, and the Mackenzie River located to the west of the project area. Potter Creek is the only significant drainage line located within the project area. The two major surface water features of the project area are Pine Lake and Lake Taylor, which adjoin (and partly overlie) the WIM150 deposit. The lakes are connected hydraulically with the underlying Parilla Sand Aquifer. The Parilla Sand and Renmark Group are the main aquifers in the vicinity of the project area. A portion of the deposit occurs below the watertable, and consequently the project will require some dewatering to facilitate mining.

The project is located within the Wimmera Bioregion of Victoria. Although much of the project area has been cleared for agricultural purposes, scattered areas of grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) occur within the project area, mainly near the arms of Pine and Taylors Lakes. The major road within the project area is the Western Highway. The project area also contains other sealed and unsealed rural roads and/or access tracks.

## 1.4 Objectives

The SCP sets out a process for engaging with stakeholders, as well as identifying the process for considering community issues and concerns with regards to the project. The objectives of the SCP are to:

- Identify and prioritise project stakeholders.
- Ensure accurate project information is accessible and available to stakeholders and interested community members.
- Provide opportunities for involving and communicating with stakeholders, ensuring prior and informed consultation occurs.
- Provide a process by which project planning can take into account matters raised by stakeholders at the earliest possible stage.
- Reduce the potential for stakeholder disaffection as a result of a misunderstanding of the project and exclusion from the environmental and social assessment process.

## 1.5 Legislative Context

The Minister for Planning has determined that the project requires preparation of an environment effects statement (EES) under *Environment Effects Act 1978*. An EES is required for projects likely to have a significant impact on social, economic or environmental values. The EES provides information on the project including description of the project, assessment of relevant alternatives, description of the potential environmental impacts and discussion of management measures to mitigate these impacts.

The EES informs stakeholders about the nature of the project including assessment of the significance of potential impacts and benefits that the project may bring.

As part of the EES process, a stakeholder consultation plan (this document) must be prepared and implemented. Opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in the EES process are described in Section 5.1.

This SCP has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Environment Effects Act 1978*. Preparation of a SCP is also required under the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable*



*Development) Act 1990*, and includes the requirements set out in Schedule 13 of the Mineral Resources Development Regulations 2002.

The approach to engagement underpinning this SCP has been developed in accordance with the concepts developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). These are based on the principals of:

- Informing the community with objective information.
- Seeking community feedback.
- Consulting stakeholders.
- Involving the community.
- Collaborating with stakeholders.

## **1.6 Stakeholder Consultation Plan Inputs**

This SCP has been compiled using inputs from a project workshop held in Melbourne in August 2011. In attendance were AZC, specialist consultants (groundwater and surface water) and Coffey Environments, with the key objective of identifying project stakeholders and potential issues for the project to consider.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Identify and characterise the project's stakeholders – those people and groups who are interested in and can influence the project.
- Build the foundation for the project's stakeholder engagement strategy and establish how the project will capitalise on opportunities and strengths, and address perceived impacts and weaknesses.

Further inputs into the SCP have been derived from:

- Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders including local landholders, regulators and local agencies.
- Coffey's experience in developing and implementing stakeholder engagement strategies in the resources and energy sector, and other industry sectors.
- Ongoing discussions and progress meetings between Coffey and the AZC project team.

This SCP summarises the stakeholder environment of the project, presents a consultation plan for the environmental assessment phase and proposes methods and materials to be used for ongoing consultation. The SCP has been designed as a guidance document for AZC to use during the consultation process.

## 2. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

This section details the project stakeholders identified during the project workshop, as detailed in Section 1.6, Stakeholder Consultation Plan Inputs. The outcomes and key themes arising from the workshop have been critical inputs to the development of the SCP and the strategies for communicating with stakeholders regarding the project.

### 2.1 Stakeholder Identification

The project workshop and subsequent research and analysis identified a number of key stakeholders and interest groups who could have an influence over the project. These are outlined in Table 2.1. Stakeholder identification will continue throughout the project.

**Table 2.1 Project stakeholders**

Group	Organisation/Members
Landholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landholders identified within the project area and surrounding area (including, but not limited to, local landholders, Horsham Rural City Council, Crown land and State Rivers and Water Supply).</li> </ul>
State and Federal Politicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hon Ted Baillieu (Victorian Premier).</li> <li>• Hon Peter Ryan (Victorian Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional and Rural Development, Minister for Bushfire Response).</li> <li>• Hon Hugh Delahunty (MLA Lowan, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Veterans' Affairs).</li> <li>• Hon John Forrest (MHR Mallee).</li> <li>• Hon Peter Walsh (MLA Swan Hill, Victorian Minister for Water, Minister for Agriculture and Food Security).</li> <li>• Hon Matthew Guy (MLC Northern Metropolitan, Victorian Minister for Planning).</li> <li>• Hon Michael O'Brien (MLA Malvern, Victorian Minister for Energy and Resources, Minister for Gaming, Minister for Consumer Affairs)</li> <li>• Hon Tony Burke (Australian Government Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities).</li> <li>• Senator Bridget McKenzie (National Party Senator for Victoria).</li> <li>• Hon Dr Craig Emerson (MHR Rankin, Australian Government Minister for Trade and Competitiveness).</li> </ul>
Victorian Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Primary Industries (DPI).</li> <li>• Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE).</li> <li>• Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).</li> <li>• Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).</li> <li>• Department of Human Services (DHS).</li> <li>• VicRoads.</li> <li>• Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV).</li> <li>• Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC).</li> <li>• Department of Transport (DOT).</li> <li>• Department of Business and Innovation (DBI).</li> <li>• Heritage Victoria.</li> <li>• Parks Victoria.</li> <li>• Work Safe.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1 Project stakeholders (cont'd)**

Group	Organisation/ Members
Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC).</li> <li>• The Australian Tax Office.</li> <li>• Foreign Investment Review Board.</li> <li>• Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency.</li> <li>• Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.</li> </ul>
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC).</li> <li>• Northern Grampians Shire Council.</li> <li>• Southern Grampians Shire Council.</li> <li>• Ararat Rural City Council.</li> </ul>
Indigenous groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barengi Gadjin Land Council.</li> <li>• Martang Pty Ltd.</li> </ul>
Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (GWM Water).</li> <li>• Wimmera Catchment Management Authority.</li> </ul>
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country Fire Authority (CFA).</li> <li>• Grampians Fire Brigade Group.</li> <li>• Green Lake Rural Fire Brigade.</li> <li>• State Emergency Service.</li> <li>• Victoria Police.</li> <li>• Wimmera Health Service.</li> <li>• Victorian Ambulance.</li> </ul>
Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landcare.</li> <li>• Sporting clubs.</li> <li>• Service clubs.</li> <li>• Greening Australia.</li> <li>• Trust for Nature.</li> <li>• Dock Lake Recreation Reserve.</li> <li>• Green Lake Foreshore Committee.</li> </ul>
Business Groups and Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wimmera Development Association.</li> <li>• Port of Portland.</li> <li>• Committee for Portland.</li> <li>• Wimmera Container Lines.</li> <li>• Intermodal Freight Hub.</li> <li>• V-line.</li> <li>• Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry.</li> <li>• Victorian Farmers Federation.</li> <li>• Industry Capability Network Victoria.</li> <li>• Ausnet.</li> <li>• Powercor.</li> <li>• Gasnet.</li> <li>• Telstra.</li> <li>• Fuel distributors.</li> <li>• Local contractors and transporters.</li> <li>• Local accommodation providers.</li> <li>• Wimmera Business Centre.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1 Project stakeholders (cont'd)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Organisation/ Members</b>
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Wimmera Mail Times.</li> <li>– Weekly Advertiser.</li> <li>– Weekly Times.</li> <li>– Financial Review.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Broadcast:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ABC Horsham, ACE Radio.</li> <li>– ABC TV, WIN TV, Prime TV.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Other Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minerals Council of Australia.</li> <li>• Transport businesses.</li> <li>• Investors, financiers and insurers.</li> <li>• Austpac.</li> <li>• AZC:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Shareholders.</li> <li>– Employees.</li> <li>– Contractors / sub-contractors.</li> <li>– Joint venture partners.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## **3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

This section details the consultation undertaken so far, along with the strategy underpinning the SCP.

### **3.1 Consultation To Date**

Initial project briefings have been undertaken by AZC and associates to provide information to key stakeholders, and with local landholders to gain access to land for specialist studies. The list of key local stakeholders consulted to date include:

- Horsham Rural City Council.
- Wimmera Development Authority.
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water.
- Wimmera Catchment Management Authority.
- Department of Sustainability and Environment.
- VicRoads.
- Barengi Gadjin Land Council.
- Martang Registered Aboriginal Party Pty Ltd.
- Hon Hugh Delahunty MLA.
- Country Fire Authority (CFA).
- Green Lake Rural Fire Brigade.
- Green Lake Foreshore Committee.
- D17 Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria
- Local landholders.

In addition, project briefings and/or consultation have been undertaken with state and federal government agencies, including:

- Department of Primary Industries (DPI).
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE).
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).
- Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).
- Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC).
- Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV).

### **3.2 Preliminary Stakeholder Issues**

Table 3.1 lists the preliminary stakeholder issues identified to date through initial consultation with key stakeholders and via desktop research of similar mineral sands projects in Victoria.

**Table 3.1 Preliminary stakeholder issues and relevant stakeholder groups**

Stakeholder Group	Preliminary Stakeholder Issue
Landholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for provision of project information.</li> <li>• Availability of long and short-term employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Availability and affordability of housing and short-term accommodation.</li> <li>• Impacts on, or changes to, the existing environment from project activities (i.e. land disturbance, diversion or closure of roads and disruption to surface water flows).</li> <li>• Impacts on, or changes to, the existing social environment from project activities (i.e. relocation of residences and restrictions on access to recreational facilities).</li> <li>• Impacts on the amenity of housing and public infrastructure/facilities from factors such as noise, light and dust.</li> <li>• Water requirements of the project and impact on water supply for landowners.</li> </ul>
Parliamentarians (State and Federal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on local water supply.</li> <li>• Increased local employment and contracting opportunities.</li> <li>• Economic benefits to the region.</li> </ul>
Local Government and Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased local employment and contracting opportunities.</li> <li>• Economic benefits to the region.</li> <li>• Accommodation for project workforce.</li> </ul>
Local Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affect on environmental amenity due to dust, noise and visual impacts.</li> <li>• Impact on local water supply.</li> <li>• Need for provision of project information.</li> </ul>

These preliminary issues will be explored further as part of the socio-economic impact assessment and the EES, which are currently being prepared for the project. Extensive community consultation will be undertaken to assess these impacts and to explore the potential for other impacts during the preparation of the EES.

### 3.3 Engagement Strategy

The approach to engagement underpinning this SCP has been developed in accordance with the concepts developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), as detailed in Section 1.4. These principles have been used to develop three main goals of community engagement for the project:

- Communication.
- Transparent and timely information.
- Collaboration.

## **4. CONSULTATION METHODS**

This section describes the recommended methods and materials for consultation that AZC will utilise during the assessment and approvals process for the project. The SCP involves a range of methods through which identified stakeholders will be engaged.

All stakeholder communication will be kept concise, easy to understand and have clear messages. Wherever possible, stakeholder contacts will be combined (i.e. socio-economic study consultation and general stakeholder consultation) to minimise contact with stakeholders and risk of creating consultation fatigue in the community.

### **4.1 Consultation Methods and Materials**

This section details the proposed methodologies that will be used when engaging with various stakeholders, as well as useful materials that will be used in lieu of direct consultation, when stakeholders need to be informed as to project developments. These methods and materials are detailed in Table 5.1.

#### **4.1.1 Key Stakeholder Briefings**

Key stakeholders including elected local, State and Federal representatives, local and State government agencies and regulatory authorities will receive regular briefings on the project to keep them informed about progress and issues.

Stakeholder groups such as the peak industry groups (e.g. Minerals Council of Australia) and any recognised local environmental forums will be briefed at the commencement of the project. AZC will respond to requests in person or by referring the issue to its advisers and/or specialist consultants. Subsequent consultation will be required at key points of the project, for example when the results of the environmental and social impact assessments are completed. The subsequent consultation will provide an opportunity to inform stakeholders about how the project considered stakeholder views and responded to these concerns.

The stakeholder engagement strategy identifies key stakeholder groups that will be directly contacted by AZC and specifically requested to attend a project briefing. AZC will engage with State and Federal Government Ministers who will have an interest in the development.

AZC will also engage with Horsham Rural City Council senior executives and elected members. The preliminary discussions will seek the Council's views on the proposed methods to engage with local stakeholders and seek their endorsement for certain recommended engagement strategies such as the positioning of public notices and requests for the project representatives to brief any potential council facilitated environmental forums.

Stakeholder groups with whom AZC will make contact and issue an invitation to attend a project briefing include:

- Horsham Rural City Council councillors.
- State and Federal Ministers.
- Local environmental groups.
- Traditional owners and representatives of historical Aboriginal owners (as detailed in the native title and cultural heritage strategy).

- Local residents associations.
- Local media.

While AZC have completed a number of project briefings, as discussed in Section 3.1, AZC will maintain communication with key stakeholders and issue an open invitation for stakeholders to contact AZC for further information and to express their views on the project. AZC will nominate a person as the point of contact for the project, and stakeholder queries, at least initially, will be directed through that person.

It will be necessary to maintain communication with these stakeholder groups and to convene additional meetings throughout the course of the project approval process as key milestones are reached.

#### **4.1.2 Personal Meetings**

Following initial advice about the project, personal one-on-one meetings with stakeholders will be conducted as necessary to provide opportunities to further explain the project and the assessment process and for stakeholders to express their views.

This communication method has been used in liaising with directly impacted landholders regarding land access for specialist studies (see Section 3.1), and is likely to be necessary, particularly in regard to elected councillors, traditional owners and some community representative associations to ascertain community values and perceived potential impacts associated with the project. These meetings will be conducted either in person, or via telephone conversation as appropriate.

#### **4.1.3 Community Information and Feedback Sessions**

Community information and feedback sessions (CIFS) are an effective consultation method that will be held to provide project information to a large number of stakeholders in an efficient manner. AZC may hold one or more CIFSs during the preparation of the EES. The nature of the sessions will be relatively informal, whereby stakeholders will be invited to drop in to the sessions to learn more about the progress of the project, as well as have the opportunity to ask questions of AZC personnel and technical consultants. The CIFSs will be held in a community hall or other convenient public venue and will include a series of visual information boards/posters about the project.

The purpose of the sessions will be to:

- Provide clear information about the project background and its key elements to the public.
- Allow stakeholders to discuss the project in more detail with the project team.
- Allow community members to have their questions answered in an informal atmosphere.
- Allow for community to provide feedback on the project.
- Conduct informal surveys with attendees regarding potential project impacts.

#### **4.1.4 Site Tours**

Site tours for key stakeholders provide a valuable insight into the area proposed for the development and will be organised at appropriate times throughout the project. After the commencement of the project, tours of the site may be held for reference groups, referral agencies and emergency service providers.



Off-site tours for interested groups that are not key stakeholders may also be held. These would involve a drive around the outside of the project area, with a commentary for groups, usually in buses and would only be conducted when time and personnel are available.

#### **4.1.5 Fact Sheets**

A series of fact sheets will introduce AZC and the project and will be prepared for use during consultation, in particular the community information and feedback sessions. They will rely on the use of photos and diagrams to represent the project components visually. Additional fact sheets, or newsletters, will be prepared throughout the development of the project, to provide specific information on particular aspects or developments. These fact sheets will be distributed at briefings, information sessions and other relevant events as well as being available on the AZC web site. As the name suggests, they are to be factual statements about AZC and the project, which can be used by government agencies, the media and other organisations.

AZC will investigate the cultural backgrounds of social groups potentially affected by the project and, if necessary, will provide access to information in relevant languages other than English.

With the support of the local councils, project fact sheets will be displayed by way of public notices at selected locations. The public notices could provide initial awareness of the project, and direct people to the project website. Public notices could be displayed at:

- Community centres.
- Libraries.
- Council Chambers.

#### **4.1.6 Media**

The project will establish a specific media strategy in the initial phase of the project to align with the media strategy of the Victorian Government, given the central role the Government is playing as consent authority.

The media strategy will in effect have three aspects described below.

##### **Proactive Media Engagement**

The project will adopt a proactive strategy of engaging with journalists. The identification of stakeholders through the project workshop recognised the Wimmera Mail Times, the Weekly Times and local radio as key media stakeholders.

The project will actively engage with journalists from these media outlets to initially inform them of the project, and to maintain a dialogue and connection throughout the project. Project information will be provided to these outlets, announcing the project and associated approvals process, to ensure key messages are proactively circulated to the public.

##### **Reactive Media Management**

As the project progresses through the assessment process, it is likely that media interest will be generated. AZC will establish an agreed approach and process to respond to media enquiries.

##### **Advertising**

AZC may purchase advertising space in local media to inform the community of the proposed development. The options for advertising in local media include:

- Advertising space/public notices in the local Wimmera Mail Times and Weekly Advertiser at the time the project is publicly announced and at various milestones in the assessment process and project lifecycle.

- Inserts in the local Wimmera Mail Times and Weekly Advertiser – this would allow an announcement flyer, project factsheet or project newsletters to be inserted as stand-alone sheet in the local paper.
- Quarterly advertorials in both local papers.

#### **4.1.7 Webpage**

A dedicated page on the AZC website will be established for the project. The webpage will be maintained beyond the completion of the approval process and into the construction phase of the project, should all project approvals be obtained. The webpage will provide a project overview, answers to frequently asked questions, project updates, contact details and advice on opportunities for stakeholders to become involved in the project. The webpage content will be reviewed and revised regularly to include current information, including upcoming consultation events and the outcomes of consultation.

The AZC website will have a feedback form/email inquiry service so that people can raise concerns and provide comment on aspects of the project. AZC will ensure the feedback mechanism is routinely monitored to ensure public queries and/or concerns are addressed in a consistent and timely manner.

#### **4.1.8 Email and Postal Addresses**

A project email address and postal address will be set up to encourage questions or feedback on the project or consultation activities. The email and postal address will be included on all communication materials provided at information sessions. The email address will also be available from the dedicated project webpage.

#### **4.1.9 Freecall Telephone Number**

A freecall 1800 telephone number will be established for the EES component of the project to encourage questions or feedback on the project or consultation activities. This number will be directed to the Project Officer (WIM150), AZC's local representative in Horsham, who will respond to questions on the project or pass on to the relevant project staff, when necessary. The freecall number will also be available from the AZC website.

#### **4.1.10 Frequently Asked Questions**

A 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs) sheet will be prepared for the project addressing anticipated questions from stakeholders. The FAQ will be informed by preliminary stakeholder issues and commonly asked questions that have arisen in similar projects and during initial consultations undertaken by AZC and associates.

The FAQ will be written in simple, understandable language and will avoid technical terms. The FAQ will be posted on the project webpage and will be used during consultation meetings with stakeholders. The FAQ sheet will be reviewed regularly to ensure its currency and accuracy, and to update the content as the project develops.

#### **4.1.11 Community Attitude Survey**

In order to ensure that community engagement is effective, a community attitude survey will be conducted every two years. This survey will use various techniques such as written surveys and focus groups to gain an understanding of the community's perception of the project. It will also assist in providing feedback on areas in which AZC is performing well, and those areas that could improve.

#### **4.1.12 Annual Reports**

If all approvals for the project are obtained and development of the project commences, AZC will provide project updates in their Annual Reports to provide information on AZC as a company, progress of the mine and environmental and social performance. These will be available from AZC's website and will be distributed to selected stakeholders.

## **4.2 Grievance Mechanism and Complaints Register**

A grievance mechanism is a locally based, formalised way to accept, assess and resolve community complaints concerning the performance or behaviour of a company, its contractors, or employees. The establishment of an effective grievance mechanism is an important component of a holistic stakeholder consultation plan. Such procedures allow project proponents to reduce social risks, avoid organisational costs that may arise from managing disputes, and demonstrate sound policy commitments.

### **4.2.1 Rationale**

Establishing sound stakeholder consultation strategies from the early stages of a project assists in the building of an open and trustworthy relationship between the local communities, other stakeholders and the proponent.

A well-functioning grievance mechanism can be characterised by the following:

- Provides a predictable, transparent and credible process to all parties, resulting in outcomes that are fair, effective, and lasting.
- Builds trust as an integral component of broader community relations activities.
- Enables more systematic identification of emerging issues and trends, facilitating corrective action and pre-emptive consultation.

For impacted communities, the absence of an effective mechanism to address their legitimate concerns may have a serious impact on their ability to feel like an active participant in the development of their local community and associated infrastructure. It may also hinder their ability to benefit from the personal and economic development opportunities that arise from the project. A grievance mechanism can provide an alternative channel through which stakeholders can gain recognition for legitimate concerns, engage in a process to secure acceptable solutions and share in the ownership of that process.

### **4.2.2 Benefits of a Grievance Mechanism**

An effective grievance mechanism will provide a structured process for hearing and addressing community concerns, in a participatory manner. A grievance mechanism can assist in managing:

- Social risks.
- Organisational costs.
- Policy commitments.

### **4.2.3 Recommendations for Structure and Implementation**

The mechanism for stakeholders to lodge grievances will be well publicised and all impacted stakeholders will be made aware of its existence. Grievances or complaints from project stakeholders can be made to AZC in the form of telephone, email, letters or in person. The project fact sheets distributed to stakeholders in the project area, and other project stakeholders, will contain the contact details of relevant AZC staff.

Complaint forms will be made available to local stakeholders upon request, or downloaded from the AZC website.

If a stakeholder complaint is received by AZC via telephone, email, letter or in person, a complaint form will be completed by the responsible AZC officer who initially takes the complaint, and will be documented in the complaint register.

All parties involved in the complaint will be contacted and consulted within one week. If the complaint is assessed as urgent it will be addressed within 24 hours. All complaints should be closed out within one month from the initial date of contact/consultation with the person/s raising the complaint.

## **5. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PLAN AND SCHEDULE**

The SCP schedule (Table 5.1) has been designed to ensure the appropriate dissemination of information about the project during the assessment process and to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to communicate concerns about the project during and after this time.

### **5.1 Schedule**

Once dates are confirmed, the information within Table 5.1 will be transferred into an actual schedule of activities, to establish meeting schedules and accountabilities.

**Table 5.1 AZC community engagement activity schedule**

<b>Engagement Activity</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Stakeholder groups to be engaged</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b><i>Phase 0: Project Establishment</i></b>				
Webpage	Q1 2012	• All stakeholders.	• To provide access to project related materials for interested stakeholders.	• AZC
Freecall telephone number	Q3 2012	• Directly affected stakeholders.	• To provide stakeholders with an opportunity to contact AZC to access information.	• AZC
Project email and postal address	Q1 to Q2 2012	• All stakeholders.	• To provide stakeholders with an opportunity to contact AZC to access information.	• AZC
Grievance mechanism	Q3 2012	• Directly affected stakeholders.	• To provide advice on the process for recording a concern or complaint and how to submit the complaint form to AZC to record and action.	• AZC • Coffey Environments
<b><i>Phase 1: Project Introduction</i></b>				
Key stakeholder briefings	Q3 2011 to Q1 2012	• Local government. • Local authorities and groups. • State government. • Federal government.	• To keep decision makers informed. • To provide an update on project information and key milestones. • To understand potential issues, impacts and opportunities relating to the project.	• AZC • Coffey
Personal meetings	Q4 2011 to Q1 2012	• Directly affected landholders.	• To gain land access for surveys. • To provide an introduction to the project. • To understand potential issues, impacts and opportunities relating to the project.	• AZC • Coffey Environments
Site Tour	Q1 2012	• State government regulators.	• To introduce state government regulators to the project area. • To provide an update on project information and key milestones.	• AZC • Coffey Environments
Fact Sheet #1	Q2 2012	• All stakeholders.	• To provide an overview of the project and the environmental approvals process. • To provide a source of information for stakeholders to access easily from the AZC webpage.	• AZC

**Table 5.1 AZC community engagement activity schedule (cont'd)**

<b>Engagement Activity</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Stakeholder groups to be engaged</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b><i>Phase 1: Project Introduction (cont'd)</i></b>				
Advertising	Q2 to Q3 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform stakeholders of upcoming information session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AZC</li> </ul>
Community Information and Feedback Session #1	Q2 to Q3 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholders in the study area.</li> <li>Local and state government and regulatory authorities.</li> <li>Local businesses.</li> <li>Community groups.</li> <li>Environmental groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide project information to a broader range of stakeholders.</li> <li>To understand potential issues, impacts and opportunities relating to the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AZC</li> <li>Coffey Environments</li> </ul>
<b><i>Phase 2: EES Specialist Studies</i></b>				
Fact Sheet #2 and Frequently Asked Questions sheet	Q3 to Q4 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide project information to a broader range of stakeholders regarding the outcomes of key specialist studies.</li> <li>To provide a source of information for stakeholders to access easily from the AZC webpage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffey Environments</li> <li>AZC</li> </ul>
<b><i>Phase 3: EES Exhibition</i></b>				
Advertising/media release	Q4 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform stakeholders of public exhibition of EES report.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AZC</li> </ul>
Community Information and Feedback Session #2	Q4 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholders in the study area.</li> <li>Local and state government and regulatory authorities.</li> <li>Local businesses.</li> <li>Community groups.</li> <li>Environmental groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To present the findings of the EES.</li> <li>To provide stakeholders with an opportunity to ask questions regarding the EES document, public exhibition process and panel review process, and discuss opportunities relating to the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AZC</li> <li>Coffey Environments</li> </ul>
Fact Sheet #3 and Frequently Asked Questions sheet	Q4 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide information regarding the outcomes of the EES process and opportunities for stakeholders to comment on the EES report.</li> <li>To provide a source of information for stakeholders to access easily from the AZC webpage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffey Environments</li> <li>AZC</li> </ul>



**Table 5.1 AZC community engagement activity schedule (cont'd)**

<b><i>Ongoing Throughout Project Approvals Process</i></b>				
Key stakeholder briefings	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local government.</li> <li>• Local authorities and groups.</li> <li>• State government.</li> <li>• Federal government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep decision makers informed.</li> <li>• To provide an update on project information and key milestones.</li> <li>• To understand potential issues, impacts and opportunities relating to the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AZC</li> <li>• Coffey Environments</li> </ul>
Personal meetings	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly affected landholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide an update on project information and key milestones.</li> <li>• To understand potential issues, impacts and opportunities relating to the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AZC</li> <li>• Coffey Environments</li> </ul>

## **6. DOCUMENTATION**

### **6.1 Documenting Consultation Outcomes**

The information obtained from all forms of ongoing consultation will be documented, and incorporated into the EES and socio-economic report, to provide detail regarding:

- Locations, dates and lists of participants at workshops and meetings.
- Summaries of issues raised.
- Project responses to issues raised and how these were communicated back to the stakeholders.

Through the implementation of this SCP, AZC will demonstrate that the consultation process for the EES process has been thorough and that the critical project stakeholders have had an opportunity to express their views and for those views to be considered by the project.

### **6.2 Updating the Consultation Plan**

The SCP is considered a live document that will change and be updated as the consultation process and project progress. This will ensure the stakeholder identification process is ongoing, and will allow all stakeholders sufficient time and various means to be involved in the consultation process.

The range of engagement activities that will be implemented through this consultation plan, in order to engage with the maximum number of stakeholders as possible, is outlined in Table 5.1.