

Business Liaison Group Draft Charter

About this charter

This charter will be the framework for the operation of the Business Liaison Groups (BLGs), which have been established to enhance communication between the Grafton Bridge Project Team and business owners within the project area.

All members of the BLGs, representatives of Clarence Valley Council and the Grafton Chamber of Commerce, and any special representatives, who attend the meetings, will be expected to adhere to the charter. Members will be asked to acknowledge their understanding, and willingness to abide by, the Charter.

Role and function of the BLGs

The BLGs will be the primary communication interface between the project team and the business community. The BLGs will provide a forum for discussion on construction activities and other issues and will provide a mechanism for information exchange and comment.

The role of the BLGs is consultative and all input from the groups will be considered by the project team. The project will consider the business community's input in the context of the overall strategic objectives for the project which include:

- Supporting regional and local economic development, and providing growth and employment opportunities in the Grafton CBD and the Iolanthe Street precinct
- Enhancing road safety for road users, including pedestrians and cyclists
- Improving the level of flood immunity of the surrounding approach roads
- Increasing traffic efficiency between and within Grafton and South Grafton and the predicted growth area of Clarenza.

The BLGs are not empowered with a decision-making role and consensus or voting is not required.

The main functions of the BLGs are to:

- Meet to provide business feedback into proposed construction activities
- Consider and comment on a range of information that will be presented in relation to the proposed construction activities from a local business perspective
- Identify, communicate, represent and consider the broad range of local business needs, interests and issues as well as other stakeholders affected by the proposed construction activities
- Advise the project team on current and emerging issues relating to the project from a local business perspective
- Assist the project team to keep the local business community and key business groups informed about the project by disseminating information via existing networks.



Membership of the BLGs

Membership of the Southern BLG will include representatives from:

- Roads and Maritime Services
- The businesses impacted by upgrades to Iolanthe, Spring and Through streets and the diversion of the existing Pacific Highway
- Clarence Valley Council
- The Grafton Chamber of Commerce
- Emergency Services
- Taxi companies
- Busways.
- Fulton Hogan.

Membership of the Northern BLG will include representatives from:

- Roads and Maritime Services
- The businesses impacted by upgrades to Pound Street and the Clarence Street intersection and the consolidation of on-street parking, as well as representatives of the North Coast TAFE, which is impacted by changed access arrangements as a result of proposed intersection treatments and proposed changes to on-street parking.
- Clarence Valley Council
- The Grafton Chamber of Commerce
- Fulton Hogan
- Grafton Shoppingworld
- Emergency Services
- Busways
- Taxi companies.

It is important that the BLGs include:

- Members contactable by phone and email
- Members available to meet at night.

Roles and responsibilities of members

Roads and Maritime: will provide information and guidance on proposed construction activities, and other issues. Roads and Maritime will consider all community feedback and, where appropriate and possible, will implement requested changes.

Fulton Hogan: will provide information and guidance on constructability and timing. Fulton Hogan will consider all community feedback and, where appropriate and possible, will implement requested changes.

Business representatives: will provide feedback on proposed construction activities, and other issues, including mitigations proposed.



Clarence Valley Council: will provide information and guidance on proposed construction activities, and other issues from a local government perspective.

Grafton Chamber of Commerce: will provide information and guidance to act for the broader business community on proposed construction activities, and other issues.

Meetings and attendance of the BLGs

- Meetings will be held on a regular basis, which will be agreed to at the first meeting.
- Meetings will be as informal as possible to encourage open discussion/information exchange.
- Members should endeavour to attend and participate in all of their respective BLG meetings. If a member is not able to attend a meeting, an apology in advance should be forwarded to the Community Relations Manager, Janice Smith, on 1800 918 759 or emailed to graftonbridgecommunity@fultonhogan.com.au
- If a BLG member is not able to attend a meeting and requests a delegate attends in their place, prior notification is required.
- Urgent or specific issues (e.g. affecting an individual business only) that arise in-between BLG meetings should be raised with the Community Relations Manager via existing practices, so they may be dealt with immediately.
- The meetings will be held on consecutive week nights (Tuesdays and Wednesdays) at the project team site office at the corner of Pound and Duke streets, Grafton, from 6pm.

Notes of meetings

Notes will be made of each meeting. These will include any issues, comments and actions arising from discussions. Notes are not a verbatim record of discussion. Agreement of notes will be by consensus of meeting members with disagreements noted and recorded.

Notes will be distributed to BLG members and published on the project website within 14 days of the meeting.

BLG principles

Key operating principles for the groups are:

- The focus of each group is as outlined in the role and function of the groups. The BLGs will work within the charter and protocols as outlined
- The BLGs are designed to provide feedback on proposed construction activities and other impacts put forward for discussion. The BLGs will not be responsible for making any final decisions
- All members of the BLGs will have the opportunity to comment on proposed construction activities and other impacts put forward for discussion.
- Recognise the wide range of issues for consideration in their deliberations, and respect the views and opinions of others
- Provide timely comments and recommendations to the project team that accurately represent current business community opinion
- Notes of each meeting will be recorded and published on the website.



Media

If media comment is requested on the discussions of a BLG meeting, they should be directed to the Roads and Maritime project team via the Community Relations Manager.

This arrangement has not been designed to limit media comment or opinions on the project. It is designed to ensure that any comment from a BLG on the discussions held at a particular meeting is from a 'whole of BLG' perspective.

If members are approached individually, they will ensure that comments are attributed to themselves and not the BLG.

In relation to liaison with the media, BLG members need to:

- Respect that no member of the BLGs can speak to the media on behalf of the BLGs or on the behalf of any other member of the BLGs.
 - Undertake not to speak to the media as members of the BLGs on behalf of the group, project or other member of the groups, nor to provide materials from meetings to the media.
 - Respect every other member's right to express an opinion within the BLG meetings, and have an expectation not to have those opinions repeated out of context in the media.
- Respect the project team's need to know when the media is pursuing a story about the project, or seeking BLG member comment in relation to the project.