

**4****STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS**

Stakeholder consultation is a core element in preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Queensland and Commonwealth legislation requires Proponents to consult a range of stakeholders to determine key issues and concerns, which are used to formulate Terms of Reference (ToR) against which the EIS is addressed.

Internally, QGC is guided by the BG Group Business Principles. These principles (presented in full in *Volume 1, Chapter 2*) express core values and behaviours that apply to BG Group projects globally.

The consultation process employed by QGC for this EIS has been developed to meet:

- Australian Government requirements
- Queensland Government requirements
- BG Group's Business Principles.

The consultation program was designed to inform stakeholders of potential impacts and benefits from the Project in a manner that appropriately managed the "consultation fatigue" experienced by some stakeholders in industrialised areas. Taking these aims into account, and following an analysis of existing projects, similar projects and previous public consultation programs conducted in these areas, QGC developed the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

The SEP covers all phases of the Project including planning, design, construction, operation and decommissioning. It also covers the defined Project Components: Gas Field Component, Pipeline Component, LNG Component and Shipping Operations.

Once accepted by the Queensland Government, the Draft EIS is displayed for public comment. At this stage, submissions received from stakeholders are considered in a Supplementary EIS, if required.

**4.1****APPROACH**

Consultation activities conducted in the preparation of this Draft EIS were undertaken in accordance with Queensland and Commonwealth legislation as well as community needs and stakeholder expectations for involvement in the Project.

Internally, QGC was guided by BG Group social performance standards and in particular Business Principles which outline core values and behaviours in dealing with communities:

- We work to ensure that neighbouring communities benefit from our presence on an enduring basis.

- We listen to neighbouring communities and take account of their interests.
- We support human rights within our areas of influence.

The stakeholder consultation approach adopted for this EIS was designed to inform stakeholders about the Project and foster open and transparent communication.

A range of communications materials helped disseminate Project information and encouraged participation and feedback. These included:

- regular QCLNG Project newsletters, mailed directly to registered stakeholders and displayed in community assets such as Regional Council offices and libraries
- a free-call 1800 number and dedicated email account for stakeholders to make inquiries and request one-on-one meetings with experts working on the QCLNG Project
- 10 fact sheets explaining key aspects of the QCLNG Project, prepared in response to feedback and questions from stakeholders
- public notices in local and state newspapers
- a QCLNG Project website which has received more than 8,500 hits to date
- access to the QGC offices in Gladstone, which was established on 17 March 2009 and is open to the public from 8.30 AM - 4.00 PM Monday to Friday.

Stakeholder engagement activities commenced late in 2007 including high-level discussions with representatives of key government and government-owned corporations about the Project's major infrastructure requirements.

Stakeholder consultation in relation to preparing the Draft EIS commenced in August 2008, prior to exhibition of the Project's Draft ToR. This aspect of the consultation program focused on:

- informing people about the QCLNG Project
- establishing relationships with key groups and individuals
- identifying the range of stakeholder perspectives and issues to be considered in the EIS
- finalising the preferred method for conducting ongoing consultation and engagement.

The QCLNG Project team has conducted more than 160 face-to-face meetings, phone meetings or corresponded via email with individuals and organisations. Consultation activities to date have included:

- a community survey involving 108 focus-group participants and 2,600 phone interviews

- 49 meetings with key government organisations
- six meetings with key non-government organisations
- 53 face-to-face meetings with local residents or community groups
- 42 face-to-face meetings with indigenous groups
- a project office in Gladstone offering information and displays to inform stakeholders about the Project specifically and liquefied natural gas (LNG) and coal seam gas (CSG) more generally.

## **4.2 STAKEHOLDERS**

To date, more than 300 stakeholders have been engaged and/or registered their interest in the QCLNG Project during the EIS process. The stakeholder list provided in *Volume 12* was compiled by initially reviewing interest groups active in the Project's study area and determining the interests of groups on a local, regional, state and national level.

Ongoing consultation and information sharing was conducted with a broad range of stakeholders including:

- Australian Government departments and agencies
- Queensland Government departments and agencies
- affected regional councils
- local indigenous representatives
- landowners
- residents
- non-government organisations
- the broader community.

Stakeholder identification and participation continues to evolve throughout the life of the Project as new stakeholders emerge.

### **4.2.1 Stakeholder perspectives**

There is broad support among stakeholders for a well-managed QCLNG Project. In particular, stakeholders acknowledge that the Project brings significant economic and social benefits to regional communities, Queensland and Australia.

Stakeholders appreciated QGC's approach to engagement, consisting of many low-key, one-on-one or small, group meetings with key Project personnel. Individuals were able to discuss their views and concerns at length in familiar surrounds.

Some stakeholders in the vicinity of the LNG Component of the Project expressed the view that large-scale industrial development had not been adequately coordinated within their region by local, state and commonwealth governments. Persons with a stake in the marine fisheries industries also expressed concerns regarding the impacts of dredging the harbour on fish nursery habitats and catches.

In areas impacted by the Gas Field and Pipeline Components, stakeholders are faced with increasing consultation demands from a number of proposed or developing projects. The growth in coal seam gas (CSG) exploration and Associated Water production provides new challenges for community members in understanding the industry, its benefits and impacts compared to traditional coal projects.

Concerns were expressed about the impact of CSG projects on agricultural and grazing land and the use of water in constructing and operating such projects in the interests of the region and the state.

#### **4.2.2** *Indigenous Stakeholders*

QGC has established relationships with indigenous communities and associations, and is engaged in ongoing consultation with indigenous groups. Three concurrent strands of consultation have been undertaken with indigenous groups and associations focusing on:

- cultural heritage
- native title and negotiation processes
- consultation to support indigenous communities' participation in the environmental and social impact assessment and mitigation processes.

QGC will continue to work closely with indigenous communities ensuring cultural sensitivities relating to the Project are duly considered and managed. Indigenous groups and associations involved in the EIS consultation program to date are provided in *Volume 12*.

#### **4.3** *STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS*

The Project team has liaised closely with relevant government departments and agencies to ensure that the Draft EIS, technical reports and Project design meet key agency and statutory requirements. Engagement activities have included face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations and written correspondence.

All levels of government have expressed the need to see demonstrated involvement from the community in the consultation process. Particular interest has focused on how representative the consultation process has been, community feedback received, and how community input has been considered in drafting the Draft EIS document.

Government stakeholders are also keen for involvement in the Project at various levels to ensure that all aspects are managed appropriately from an EIS regulatory assessment perspective. A list of key government agencies and contacts is provided in *Volume 12*.

**4.4****SUMMARY**

EIS consultation and engagement activities have allowed issues and concerns held by stakeholders to be identified and proactively addressed through measures that aim to minimise potential adverse impacts and maximise opportunities and benefits associated with the Project's future development.

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders will remain a core component of development activities throughout the Project's life. These activities will be developed and refined to suit the Project needs and stakeholder interests for each phase of the development and operation of the QCLNG Project.