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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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FOR INFORMATION 	This paper presents an analysis of the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement activities within the REC, including proposed future initiatives. The authors request that PAB take note of the report's contents.

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to provide an operational update on the performance and effectiveness of stakeholder engagement activities under the REC. The aim is to understand how the Code Manager and RECCo are engaging with the different REC stakeholders. This paper summarises the insights from discussions with relevant Code Manager and RECCo teams.

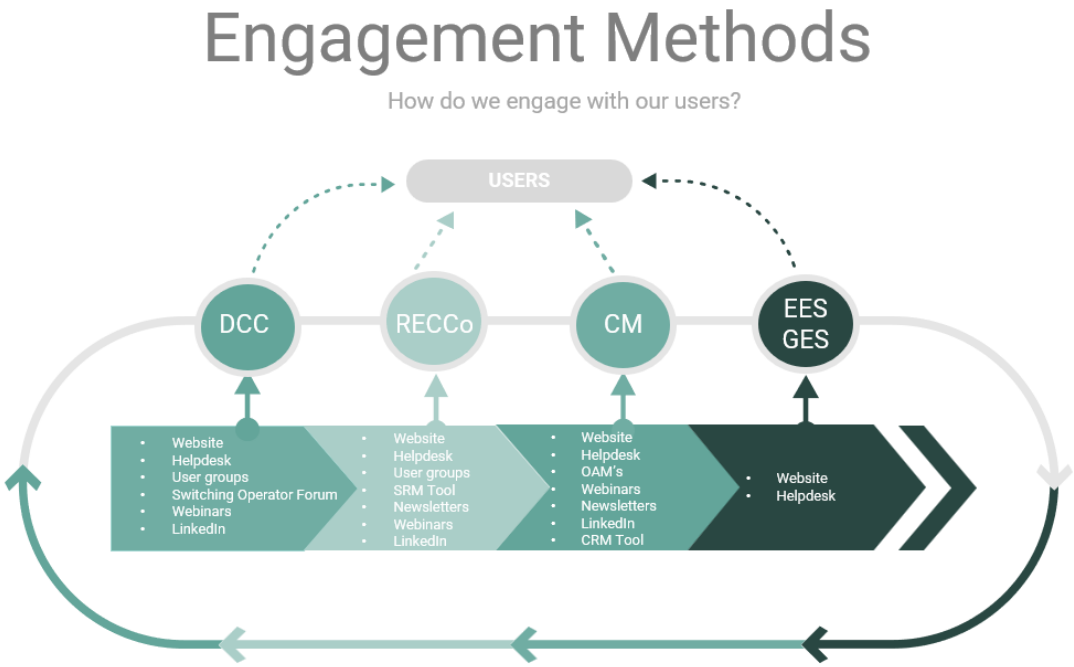
2 THE ROLE OF PAB IN STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder engagement supports many key elements of the REC, including change management, the Forward Work Plan and performance assurance. The PAB have received updates on stakeholder management in previous years, with this year's update in the form of a PAB deep dive.

3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE REC

REC Services are delivered by multiple providers to RECCo and DCC, with each of these providers needing to communicate with stakeholders. The central point of contact across these arrangements is an Operational Account Manager (OAM), who helps stakeholders navigate these arrangements.

We have set out how these various arrangements are set up in the visual below:

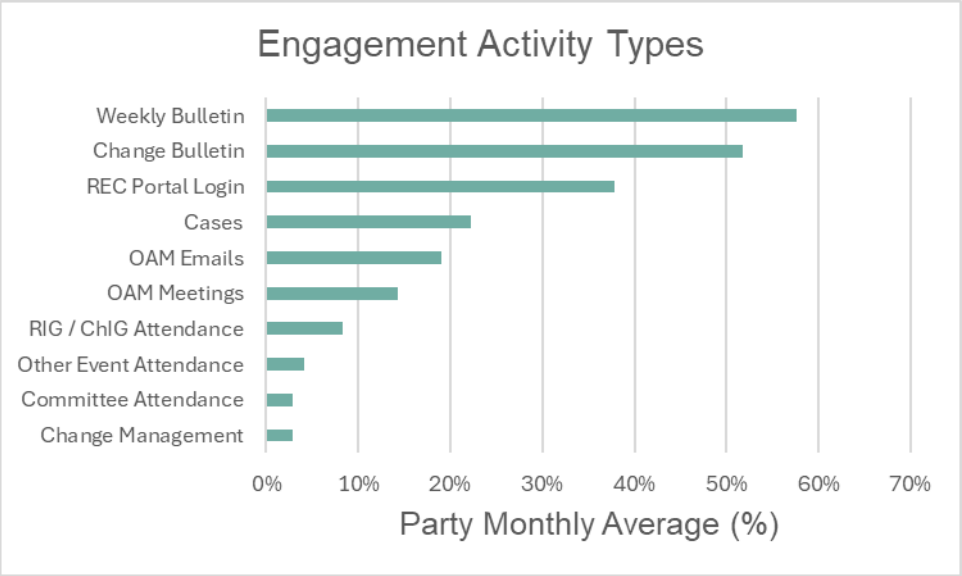


In the previous year the following activity has taken place to enhance stakeholder engagement:

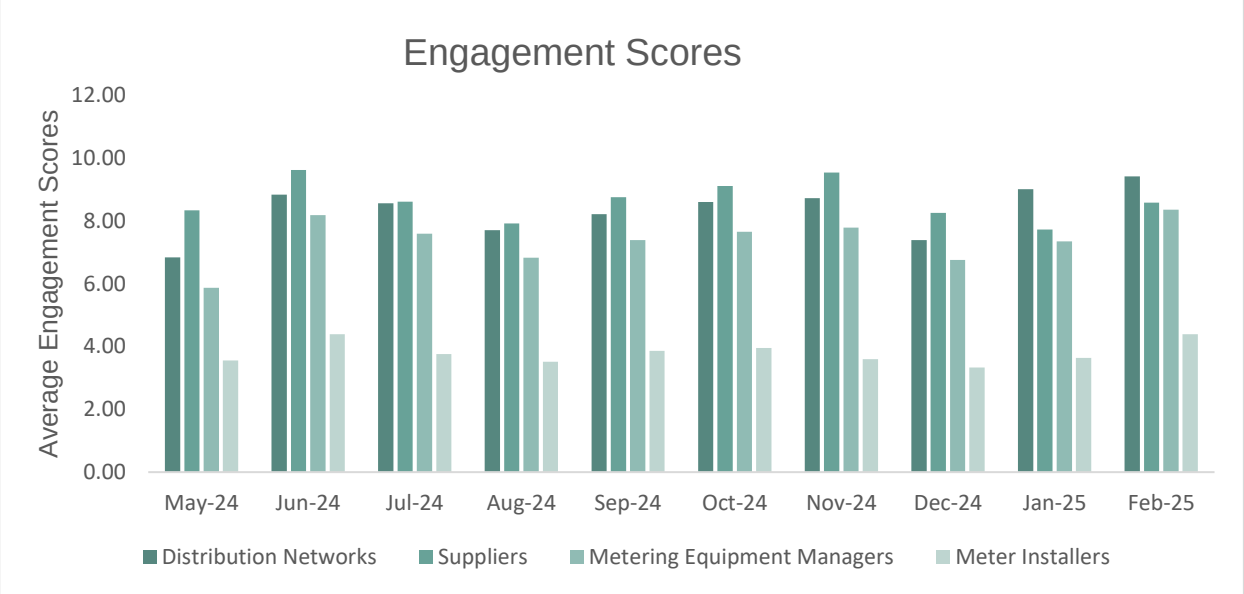
- Improvements to the usability of the REC Portal to support self-service interactions.
- Greater direct engagement with industry through the change and assurance process, with collaborative working sessions on issues (RIG), changes (CHIG), Theft (TIG) and the PA webinars.
- Trialling PA check-in meetings in Summer 2024. These were successful in providing Parties with a chance to speak directly to RPA, providing clarification around their operations and asking questions.
- Increasing the number of OAMs, to reflect the increasing breadth of REC stakeholders as REC Services evolve. This includes OAMs dedicated to non-Party Service Users and TPIs.
- RECCo implementing a SRM (Stakeholder Relationship Management system) tool, building on the CRM information available to RECCo above that is captured by the Code Manager.
- RECCo establishing Stakeholder Advisory Groups to gain insight into how to enhance its services. Stakeholder Advisory Groups have covered Enquiry Services Evolution, Code Manager Evolution and CRS Transfer, with one planned for Tariff Interoperability subject to DESNZ confirmation that RECCo is the delivery manager and Consumer Consent.
- A monthly 'key stakeholder messages' meeting, identifying the key messages across REC arrangements, so these can be prioritised across engagement channels.
- We have observed DCC working on the way it engages, with less focus on technical issues and more on the overall performance of the service and getting input from Users, although we have seen limited take up from Parties on this interaction.

We also have direct feedback to demonstrate that these improvements have had positive results. Half of respondents to the REC Party Annual Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey stated that communication has improved in the last 12 months, with OAMs and PA communication improvements particularly noted in this survey.

REC Parties are engaged with using multiple channels, with the use of these channels tracked each month. The graph below shows how much different engagement types have been engaged from May 2024 till February 2025. Note that these figures are all on a “one Party per month” basis. For example, a Party may have multiple OAM meetings in one month but would still only be scored as one against that engagement type in that month. We see that email bulletins are the most utilised channel.



Each individual Party’s engagement is tracked on a monthly basis, with each engagement type given a score (the higher the score, the higher the level of proactivity from the Party). The highest notional achievable engagement score for month (if all engagement opportunities are available) is 32, although Parties only engagement through one or a handful of preferred channels so in practice the maximum score would be in the region of 12 to 16. The monthly engagement scores are then used to demonstrate the most and least engaged Parties and Party types. It enables us to track which Code Manager activities increase engagement and the most successful engagement channels. Over the period we have observed a 12% general rise in engagement, with consistent rates of engagement by Party type, as demonstrated below:



This indicates:

1. Seasonality in engagement, highlighting the importance of key messages avoiding summer and winter holiday seasons.

2. At a Party level, organisations are more at risk of missing key messages, so that more direct attempts at engagement can be used.

3. The lower levels of engagement of Meter Installers, a less impacted cohort. This means key messages to these groups need to be directly targeted.

These metrics are based on stakeholder team interactions, but could be enhanced, for example by including performance related criteria such as whether an organisations maintain their qualification on time, or meets Data Cleanse requirements.

Action 1: Update the stakeholder scoring to include key information across RECCo and the Code Manager, such as maintenance of qualification, PA check-ins and key PATs and information from the new RECCo relationship management tool.

4 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT & PLANNING

Given the multi-organisation delivery arrangements under the REC there is a need to coordinate and prioritise the multiple teams who communicate with or seek input from stakeholders, to avoid overloading stakeholders and make sure the key messages are successfully received.

Regular meetings are held between the Code Manager's Stakeholder Engagement Team and RECCo so that engagement approaches are aligned and desired outcomes understood. RECCo and its three Code Manager Providers meet monthly to share and prioritise key stakeholder messages.

The OAMs also share stakeholder feedback and concerns across these four organisations so that action can be taken to address these when required.

DCC conducts independent stakeholder engagement, particularly the Switching Operator Forum. DCC has worked to make this more interactive, although Party take up in this space is limited.

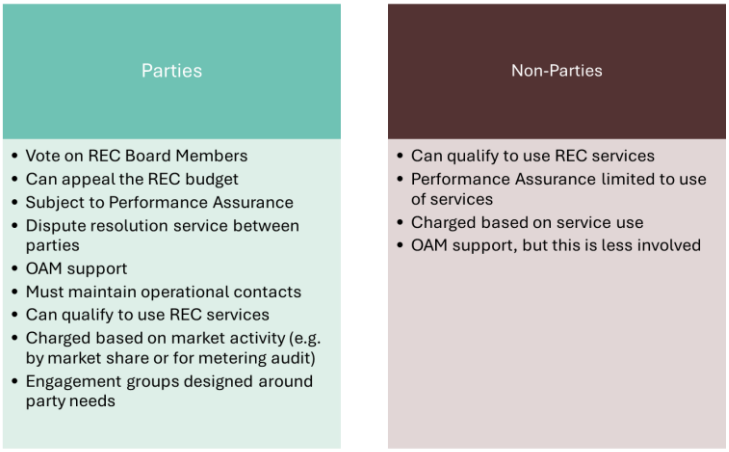
Action 2: Encourage DCC to use the existing REC Code Manager routes available to them to enhance its engagement within the REC, such as RIG and CHIG. This includes promoting key messages as appropriate.

We anticipate RECCo being licensed to provide REC Code Manager services in the coming years. This is likely to result in greater integration between RECCo and the Code Manager's stakeholder engagement activities. Whilst both teams currently plan annually, working on touch points, we envisage these two activities to become increasingly integrated, perhaps forming an integrated plan at the point of licensing.

5 FUTURE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We envisage the role of the REC will change significantly in the coming years. This will result in a larger, more diverse set of stakeholders and service providers, and therefore more challenge with integration of insight and messaging. In the recent past this has been experienced through smaller businesses utilising Enquiry Service Data and new types of metering provider, but we anticipate this could expand to include thousands of TPIs, technology companies using utilising consent services and organisations managing consumers' devices to access tariff information. Each of these groups will have different needs and be interested in a specific subset of changes.

Currently there are two categories of organisations working with the REC:



We anticipate that many new types of organisations interacting with the REC will have some of the features of each of these, and each new cohort will need detailed consideration of the stakeholder engagement support needed. This is likely to involve new engagement groups: if the Code continues to broaden its unlikely that the audiences attending CHIG or RIG will be appropriate to input into all changes.

Action 3: With the changing stakeholder landscape, identify whether there is a need for a cut-down Party role to be used for new stakeholder types, and what this would involve. For each major project determine which stakeholders will be in each category and the impacts on the overall service.

Action 4: Where additional engagement for a project is needed and a stakeholder advisory group established, the appropriate operational stakeholder model should be determined before the stakeholder advisory group is closed. This may be as simple as using pre-existing groups.