



POLICY SUBMISSIONS FRAMEWORK

This framework sets out how we influence government decision-making by making submissions on policy.

OBJECTIVE

Engineering New Zealand shapes the agenda of government and industry from an engineering perspective. We are visible, bold and strong – and have the most influential, trusted and respected non-governmental voice on engineering issues in New Zealand.

STRATEGY

To achieve these outcomes, we need a clear and brave approach to policy advice:

- We proactively advocate on behalf of our members on engineering-related issues.
- Our policy advice positions us as a credible voice that offers engineering-based insight and solutions in New Zealand's best interests. It's consistent and based on a clear set of principles.

PRINCIPLES

- Offer the same advice regardless of who is in power or authority.
- Develop evidence-based, solutions-focused policy advice underpinned by the weight of science and/or expert consensus.
- Reflect the views of the majority of members but accept that being bold means a minority may be critical and challenge us.
- Write submissions that are engaging, in plain English and accessible to diverse audiences.
- Elevate others' understanding of engineering and engineering issues.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Our policy outputs provide a unique engineering perspective, are consistent with our purposes, and respond to issues of importance to our members and New Zealand.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

For any relevant public consultation, we consider the most appropriate way to seek member feedback.

Our engagement processes will be affected by the nature of the issue, any previous policy position on the issue, the timeframe for providing submissions, our available resource and our priorities. It may involve: a general and open call to members for feedback on a proposal; a targeted consultation; or seeking member feedback on a draft response.

When determining the appropriate process, factors we consider include:

- whether we already have a known policy position on the matter – if we do, it may not be necessary to seek further member (or Board) input;
- whether the issue is a narrow technical issue best considered through direct and focused engagement with the relevant technical group or through a specially formulated working group; and
- whether the issue is new, innovative or relevant to a wide range of members. This means engaging with the full membership through Discover and other communication channels, and may also involve setting up a specialised working group.

All feedback is directed to the policy team, who collate the responses.

We also encourage our members, branches and groups to generate their own submissions.

WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Proactively building relationships with the Government and other decision-makers

Policy change depends upon building and maintaining strong and mutually respectful relationships. Real influence often occurs behind the scenes and may not be visible. For this reason, we have regular conversations with the current Government (both Ministers and their officials) to build our relationships and ensure that we understand proposals – and that they in turn understand our perspective and goals. This helps us build influence in the policy development space, rather than just responding to proposals that have been formed by others.

Harnessing the strength of our industry partners

Our policy influence can be dissipated by competing voices and contradictory positions between different industry players. To mitigate this and enhance our policy influence, we build strong relationships with our key stakeholders and collaborate with them on core issues. This means identifying commonality in our principle drivers and goals, understanding and clearly articulating where our views are aligned (and if not, why), and mediating between stakeholders to provide a way forward for government and industry.

Industry partners will differ depending on the particular issues but include ACENZ, the Engineering Leadership Forum, relevant technical groups, and other industry bodies.

PULLING TOGETHER THE SUBMISSION

Not all feedback on a policy proposal will be consistent. Members will have different views. Our role as a membership body is to respond with the weight of member voices. This means not all members will support every submission that we make.

The written submission needs to follow our principles.

A submission is a means of establishing a dialogue. Written submissions can be supported by a verbal submission and supplementary information.

Quality assurance

All draft submissions are subject to a quality-assurance process, which includes at least one of the following steps:

- Member feedback;
- Review by a senior engineer, where possible nominated by a relevant technical group.

All submissions will be edited by staff before being submitted, to ensure they are consistent with our principles.

Sign off

The Chief Executive signs off submissions where:

- we already have a current policy position on that issue and we are not proposing to say anything that departs from that previously stated view; and
- they are operational in nature, such as providing information about our organisation and current activities and programmes.

Where a submission relates to a new or innovative issue on which we don't have a policy position, or it concerns a matter of significant importance to the membership (for example, occupational regulation), the Chief Executive will agree with the President the best way forward. This may include review and approval by a sub-committee of the Board or by the President only.