

## FACT SHEET

### Information on Code of Practice / Guideline on Public Consultation in Selected Places

	The United Kingdom	Canada	Western Australia <sup>1</sup>	The European Union
Name of the code/guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code of Practice on Written Consultation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Consultation Guide - Changing the Relationship between Government and Canadians</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Towards a Reinforced Culture of Consultation and Dialogue - General Principles and Minimum Standards for Consultation of Interested Parties by the Commission</li> </ul>
Issuing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cabinet Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canadian Centre for Management Development<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of the Premier and Cabinet of Western Australia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European Commission<sup>3</sup> (the Commission)</li> </ul>
Date of issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November 2000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 1997</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2002</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2002</li> </ul>
Users of the code/guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government departments and agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government departments and agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local governments, project developers, politicians, consultants, non-government organizations and interest groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committees and other institutions of the Commission.</li> </ul>
Objective of the code/guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate effective consultation by departments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To serve as a practical aid to assist government officials at the management level in considering or undertaking consultation initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be the first step in establishing best practice guidelines for government agencies undertaking consultation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage public involvement in the policy formulation process, in turn enhancing the Commission's accountability;</li> <li>To provide general principles and standards for consultation that help the Commission rationalize its consultation procedures, and to carry them out in a meaningful and systematic way;</li> <li>To build a coherent and flexible framework for consultation, which takes into account the specific requirements of all the diverse interests as well as the need to design appropriate consultation strategies for each policy proposal; and</li> <li>To promote mutual learning and exchange of good practices within the Commission.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> No information is available as to whether there are codes of practice / guidelines on public consultation for government departments in other states of Australia. However, individual departments of states and city councils also have policies and guidelines on public consultation.

<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Centre for Management Development is a government agency providing educational programmes and courses, events, strategic research and other leadership development activities for government officials at the management level in the Canadian government.

<sup>3</sup> The European Commission is a politically independent institution representing and upholding the interests of the European Union (EU). It is the driving force within the EU's institutional system. It proposes legislation, policies and programmes of action and is also responsible for implementing the decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

**Information on Code of Practice / Guideline on Public Consultation in Selected Places (cont'd)**

	<b>The United Kingdom</b>	<b>Canada</b>	<b>Western Australia</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Background of the establishment of the code/guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing government came to power in May 1997 and vowed to make the administration more open and responsive. The establishment of the code is one way of achieving this objective.</li> <li>The government is currently reviewing the code, and the consultation process will be completed by 23 November 2003.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The guide was published in response to inquiries from government officials at the management level who requested for information on developing and implementing public consultation programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In view of the government's commitment to public consultative practice, there were requests for support in relation to consultation, particularly for innovative methods and specialized approaches.</li> <li>In November 2001, the guide was first presented in the Searching our Futures: Consulting Citizens Forum organized by the government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interactions between the European institutions and the community were used to carry out through the European Parliament, advisory bodies of EU and other informal channels. However, member states of the Commission had a view that the consultation process should be more consistent.</li> <li>In the White Paper on European Governance, the Commission undertook to establish a coherent framework for the consultation of interested parties. After a series of consultation, a paper entitled "Towards a Reinforced Culture of Consultation and Dialogue - General Principles and Minimum Standards for Consultation of Interested Parties by the Commission" was published.</li> </ul>
Content of the code/guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General principles of public consultation; and</li> <li>A list of criteria for public consultation:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing sufficient time for consultation;</li> <li>Defining target groups, specifying purpose of consultation, formulating questions and preparing time schedule;</li> <li>Making consultation documents simple and concise, and allowing readers to respond, make contact or complain;</li> <li>Ensuring consultation documents available through various means;</li> <li>Providing sufficient time (at least 12 weeks) for responses;</li> <li>Analyzing responses and substantiating the final results with reasons;</li> <li>Monitoring and evaluating the consultation process; and</li> <li>Designating a consultation co-ordinator to ensure that the code is complied with.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion on the changing relationship between the Canadians and their government;</li> <li>Principles and guidelines for effective consultation;</li> <li>Evaluation process and measures of success; and</li> <li>Frameworks for consultation, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conceptual framework;</li> <li>Strategic framework;</li> <li>Planning framework; and</li> <li>Process framework.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation framework outlining the preliminary steps to be undertaken before the consultation;</li> <li>Foundations for effective consultation looking at issues relating to various forms of consultation; and</li> <li>Outcomes of the consultation examining the feedback, action on recommendations, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rationale of the consultation process;</li> <li>Measures to improve the consultation procedures;</li> <li>Results of the consultation on the framework for consultation of interested parties;</li> <li>General principles guiding effective consultation; and</li> <li>Minimum standards for consultation, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing information on the consultation process;</li> <li>Defining target groups and ensuring that relevant parties have an opportunity to express their opinions;</li> <li>Ensuring adequate publicity;</li> <li>Providing sufficient time (eight weeks) for target groups to plan and prepare written submissions;</li> <li>Acknowledging receipt of contributions; and</li> <li>Uploading results of public consultation on web sites.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

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## References

### Web sites

1. *Canadian Centre for Management Development*. (2003) [Internet] Available from: [http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/main\\_e.html](http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/main_e.html) [Accessed 6 November 2003].
2. *Citizenscape, Government of Western Australia*. (2003) [Internet] Available from: <http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.welcome> [Accessed 6 November 2003].
3. *European Commission*. (2003) [Internet] Available from: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm) [Accessed 6 November 2003].
4. *Regulatory Impact Unit of the Cabinet Office*. (2003) [Internet] Available from: <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/Consultation/introduction.htm> [Accessed 6 November 2003].

### Publications

1. Canada. Canadian Centre for Management Development. *Public Consultation Guide, Changing the Relationship between Government and Canadians*, May 1997.
2. European Union. Commission of the European Communities. *Towards a Reinforced Culture of Consultation and Dialogue - General Principles and Minimum Standards for Consultation of Interested Parties by the Commission*, 11 December 2002.
3. United Kingdom. Cabinet Office. *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, November 2000.
4. Western Australia. Department of the Premier and Cabinet. *Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide*, April 2002.

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