

Report 00.876

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Report to the Policy and Finance Committee
From Mike Bodnar, Section Leader, Communications

Communications Strategy

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of progress to date in the research stage of the WRC's communications strategy and outline the remaining process of the strategy's development.

2. Introduction

At the Policy and Finance Sub-committee meeting of 26 October 2000, a three-stage process was outlined for the development of a new communications strategy and a purpose statement for the strategy was agreed to.

The first stage involved testing the regional community's depth of awareness and knowledge of the WRC via a region-wide survey conducted by the National Research Bureau (NRB).

The survey work has now been completed (although full results are not expected before mid-December). As well, internal survey work has been completed, and analysis of that data is underway.

3. Strategy Development to Date

To date, the following work has been done:

1. 25 September (week commencing): NRB conducted six focus groups (one per constituency) and subsequently developed phone and face-to-face questionnaires

2. 11 October: Councillors' workshop held.
3. Mid-October to end: survey questionnaires developed and trialled.
4. 2 November: NRB began telephone interviewing of 600 regional residents.
5. 11 November: NRB began face-to-face interviewing of 400 regional residents.
6. 13 November: NRB conducted Focus Group with EMT.
7. 20 November (w/c) Communications conducted three internal focus groups (RCC, Upper Hutt and Wairarapa).

4. Next Steps

The remaining strategy development process is as follows:

2000 December	<p>Communications Section continues work on the development of the strategy framework.</p> <p>National Research Bureau continues to collate and analyse survey data. Delivery of final report expected mid-December.</p> <p>Branding-marketing-design company appointed to assist with tactical aspects of strategy development.</p>
2001 January	<p>Strategy development continues in association with branding-marketing-design company.</p>
February	<p>Report back to first P&F meeting with progress on new communications strategy report (including results of NRB's surveys).</p>
End March	<p>Communications strategy completed.</p>

5. Recommendation

That the report be received and the contents noted.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission:

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