

Panel discussion: Delivering on client Expectations

Panel Members:

Courtney Armstrong *Auckland Council,*
Rachel Rait *Department of Conservation,*
Tess Brothersen *Stantec &*
Chris Hillman *Tonkin + Taylor*

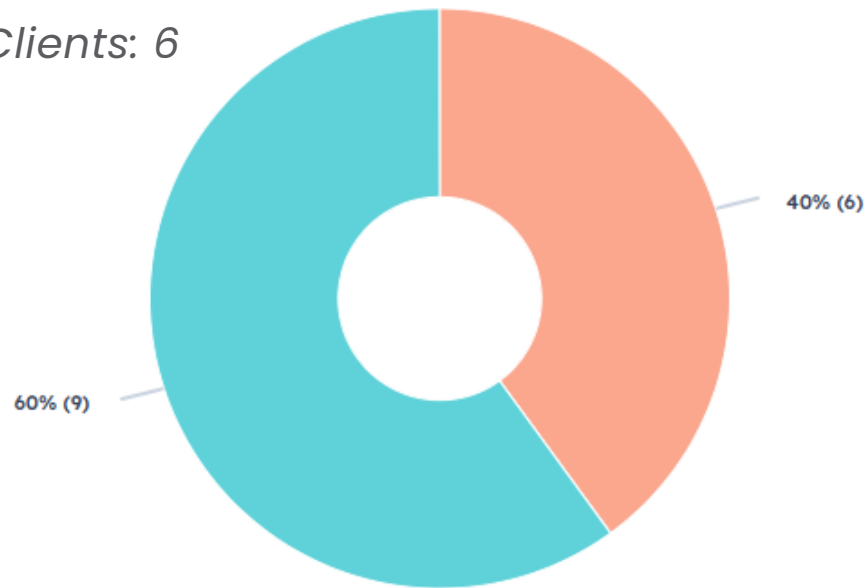
Facilitator

James Corbett *Auckland Council*

Survey – Summary & Insights

Key Metrics:

- Total Respondents: 15
- Consultants: 9
- Clients: 6



Overall Communication Quality:

- 80% rated communication as Good or Excellent

Preferred Methods:

- Email: 7
- Verbal: 6
- Mixed/Other: 2

Survey – Summary & Insights

Common Issues Clients

- *Reports lack clarity / lengthy*
- *Key objectives not clearly addressed*
- *Vague or missing recommendations*
- *Excessive technical detail*
- *Poor verbal comms*

Common Issues Consultants

- *Clients don't clarify use in decision-making*
- *Scope lacks clear project drivers*
- *Too many emails / insufficient discussion*
- *High expectations with limited understanding of consultant risk.*

What both expect in reports

- *Executive Summary*
- *Key assumptions, objectives, and outcomes*
- *Graphs / tables integrated*
- *Clear, separate Conclusions and Recommendations.*
- *A section explaining what the findings mean for the client.*
- *Technical details in appendices*

Survey – Summary & Insights



What does effective communication look like?



“AN ENGAGED
PARTNERSHIP WORKING
TOWARD THE SAME GOAL”



“CLEAR, CONCISE AND
REGULAR UPDATES”



“PROACTIVE ISSUE
FLAGGING AND MUTUAL
RESPECT”



“NO NEED TO CHASE – JUST
OPEN, TIMELY
COMMUNICATION”

Panel Questions

Clients

- Do you communicate your risk appetite, and if so, how?
- How can we effectively build strong partnerships between clients and consultants, while ensuring that the interests of both parties are covered?
- Do you as a client, build in sufficient time, cost and mechanisms to develop a good working relationship?
- The majority of respondents indicated that verbal discussion was their preferred means of communicating. What are some of the barriers that you've encountered to having those conversations with clients/consultants?

Consultants

- How do you balance the need to show your thinking in a report vs providing a clear conclusion in plain English? And how can reports be made useful for the client and other key stakeholders?
- In what ways can consultants help clients refine project scopes or address missing contextual information that may impact project outcomes? What scope challenges are there?
- What issues do you see if a client requires a standardised report structure and deliverables?
- Have the reporting frameworks in CLMG No. 1 improved or hindered report quality, and why?



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Food for thought!

What can WasteMINZ/the industry do to grow practitioners' competency, both technically and in science/risk communication?

