



Effective Stakeholder Communication Strategies for Airports

A Practical Guide for Airport Professionals

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Why Communication Matters

Effective communication is more than just messaging—it's a critical function that supports an airport's safety, reputation, and operational success.

Here's why strong stakeholder communication is essential:

- Enhances operational transparency — Keeps stakeholders informed of processes, changes, and expectations - reducing confusion and surprises.
- Builds trust with community and stakeholders — Whether it's local government, airlines, or nearby residents, transparency builds credibility and positive relationships.
- Reduces miscommunication during crises: clear, pre-established channels can prevent chaos and misinformation when it matters most.
- Supports long-term airport growth and reputation — informed and engaged stakeholders are more likely to support development plans, funding initiatives, and regulatory approvals.

Key Strategies

- **Create a Living Communications Plan** — This plan should evolve as

your airport grows. Include audience-specific messaging, goals, and update cycles. Review it at least quarterly.

- **Know Your Audience** — Segment stakeholders into categories such as: Internal (staff, contractors) and External (community, airlines, regulators, media). Tailor content, tone, and channels to match each groups' needs and expectations.
- **Use the Right Tools** — Choose the right channel for your communication. Use email and newsletters for consistent updates, social media for real-time engagement, press releases for official announcements, and internal platforms to coordinate effectively with staff.
- **Partner with Experts** — Engage public relations professionals, communications consultants, or aviation communications specialists—especially during high-impact projects or crises.

- **Be Proactive, Not Reactive** - Anticipate concerns. Communicate early to set narratives and expectations rather than responding to rumors or criticism. *You control the narrative.*

Communication Toolkit

- **Create message templates for various scenarios** — Pre-written messages for common situations: delays, construction updates, noise complaints, etc.
- **Develop Target Audience Mapping** — Identify key contacts, preferred channels, and communication frequency for each stakeholder group.
- **Develop a media contact list** — Keep an up-to-date list of journalists and outlets to contact for both good news and emergency updates.
- **Implement a crisis communication checklist** — Ensure quick action during emergencies. Who approves

messaging? What channels are prioritized? How is the public notified? When is the next update?

Final Tips

- **Train your team in message discipline** — Everyone representing the airport should understand key messages, tone, and what to avoid.
- **Communicate early, often, and clearly** — Don't wait for issues to arise. Proactive communication sets the tone and reduces confusion.
- **Keep feedback loops open (via various platforms)** — Use surveys, comment boxes, meetings, and digital platforms to hear from stakeholders—and act on what you learn.
- **Measure communication effectiveness** — Track engagement metrics (email opens, social media reach, response rates) and adjust your strategy based on results.

Let's Connect!

Effective communication is at the heart of every successful airport project. If you'd like to continue the conversation or learn more about how these strategies can support your airport's goals, we'd love to connect.

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