



Monaro Farming Systems Communications & Social Issues Plan

May 2010

Developed by;

-David Mitchell (MFS Board Chairman), Oli Cay (MFS Board) and Lisa Phillips (MFS Board)

-With support from Nancy Spoljaric (MFS Project Officer)

Communications Strategic Plan

Communications

This plan recognises the need for MFS to continually revisit and assess its communication strategy to ensure it continues delivering a quality service to members.

Vision statement

“MFS will provide quality information that is timely, relevant, proven, member driven and competitive with other information providers”

Objectives: to ensure MFS is continually addressing and focussing on;

(i) *Member Services*

-driven by members / board

-driven by competition

-information needs to be timely, relevant, cost effective, accurate, proven and good quality

(ii) *Quality Information*

-information delivery needs to be relative to % of member involvement in each enterprise
ie. look at initial survey information and tailor information delivery with appropriate emphasis across wool/meat sheep/cropping etc

Conduct of the Plan:

A Communications plan is not a static document and should be reviewed bi-annually to assess progress towards the objectives, to prioritise effort, to retire issues that have been resolved or have lost their importance, and to add new issues for resolution.

Current MFS communication channels

1. emails
2. newsletters
3. media (print and radio)
4. mail outs
5. phone
6. face to face field days
7. webinars (trial period)
8. teleconferences

1. Media Strategy

ACTIVITY	ACTION
Use Keva Gocher (local ABC rural reporter) more leading up to events ie. encourage interviews with members and other relevant spokespersons at least two weeks prior to events where applicable.	Formulate a good relationship with Keva (Nancy to make personal contact) and invite to all events and encourage radio interviews leading up to events
Sell the message through Keva Gocher regarding what MFS is bringing to the region and the profile it is giving the rural community on the Monaro. Very important to advertise this and lift the profile of MFS in the region.	Formalise / document a media strategy for regional papers to raise awareness and promotion of events ie. pre and post media releases at least 2 weeks prior and following events

2. Field Days

ACTIVITY	ACTION
-focus on good quality events -continue to combine events with a good meal/refreshments to encourage constructive discussion's, reflection on what was presented and provide social outlet	More work needed on formalising a yearly program at the beginning of year but with enough built in flexibility to respond to current events and agricultural climate. This will also help in promotion of MFS to members and non-members

3. Newsletter

ACTIVITY	ACTION
Provide four (4) newsletters per year -one main article in each newsletter -greater use of links for further information -only post out hard copy on request (ie. tick a box), otherwise email only	Nancy to continue providing regular newsletters with timely information with support from the Board when needed

4. Emails

ACTIVITY	ACTION
-subject line needs to be very well defined so email can be quickly deleted if not relevant to reader -ensure email load remains reasonable and emails are concise and message is well defined	Nancy to continue filtering information that is passed on to members to protect member privacy

5. Teleconferences

ACTIVITY	ACTION
<p>Board meeting's to include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four (4) teleconferences per year (approx. every two months) • Two (2) face-to-face meeting's, one around May and the other prior to the AGM in August 	<p>Establish whether TelstraWide to continue to sponsor teleconferences (original agreement was to March 2010)</p> <p>Board member or project officer to circulate event proposals with full costing prior to board meeting to facilitate informed decision making on MFS activities</p>
<p>Information to be circulated beforehand to ensure Board meetings are focussed and efficient</p>	<p>When needed</p>
<p>Teleconferences also used for project management</p>	

6. Webinars

ACTIVITY	ACTION
<p>Interested members need to register prior to Webinar and access made available from home for all registrations</p>	<p>Formalise process for developing and coordinating webinars including technology to be used and account set up</p>
<p>Webinars give us a competitive advantage over other suppliers as we can be timely and relevant.</p>	<p>Full costings of Webinars need to be determined before they are organised to ensure they are cost efficient</p>

Social Issues Strategic Plan

Conduct of the Plan

Social Issues plan is not a static document and should be reviewed bi-annually to assess progress towards the objectives, to prioritise effort, to retire issues that have been resolved or have lost their importance, and to add new issues for resolution.

Objectives;

The issue

For any farm family business to be profitable and sustainable in the long-term and to build resilience and self-reliance in the face of increasing climate challenges, economic, social and environmental aspects of farming must be balanced.

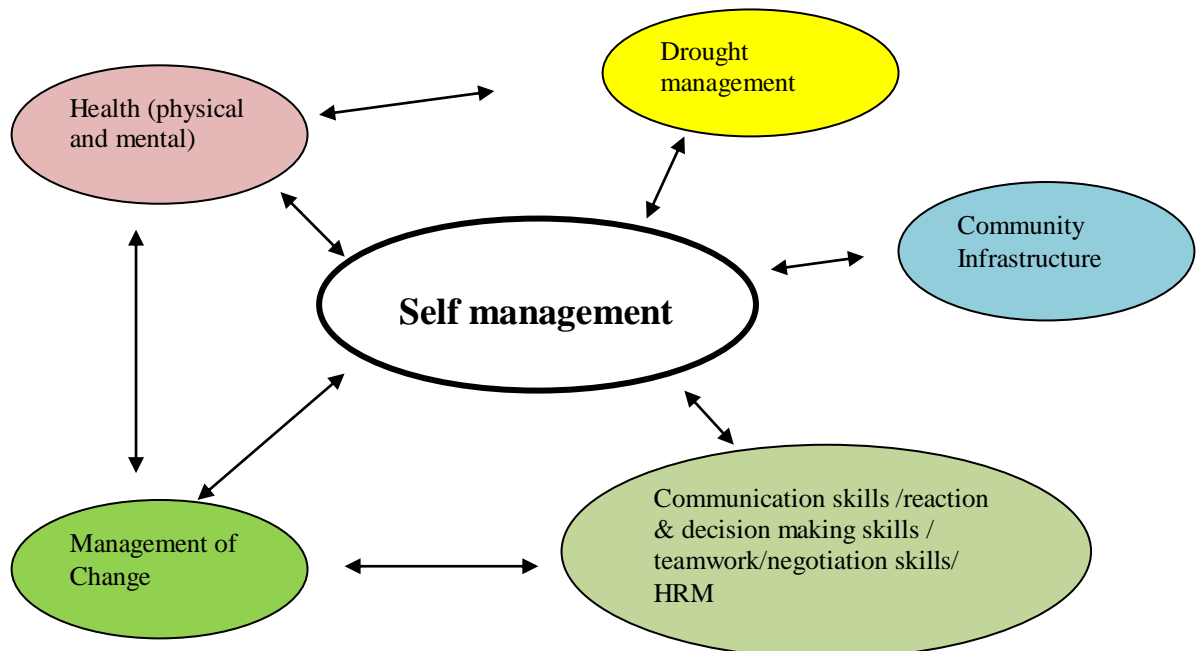
Without addressing and focussing on social aspects, the family unit breaks down and cannot deal with the complexities of change or the myriad of challenges which face the farming community.

MFS will address wider rural social issues by focusing on the individuals ability to create change through self awareness and self management

(ii) Continue to recognise the importance of nurturing and strengthening the family unit as a means to improving and ensuring economic productivity and long-term success of the farm business (maintaining the balance between family and business goals and values)

(iii) enable skills to develop key business strategies and guidelines for making decisions, resolving conflict, recognising partner & spouse contributions, improving negotiation and communication skills and managing change etc.

SOCIAL ISSUES - FLOW CHART



ACTIVITY	ACTION
Continue to try to secure funding for the communications project already written and costed (Lyn Sykes/Rob Napier) which addresses a lot of the social issues identified in this plan	-investigate possible funding channels ie Myer Foundation, Community Action Grants (open in July), -ask Pam Green and Lyn Sykes for suggestions for funding avenues
Continually look out for other funding opportunities for these social aspects	

Social Issues notes (see flow chart)

- understanding your personality type very important to understanding your management style and how you react to new innovations / technologies, decision making capabilities, learning capacity etc
- mental and physical health fairly well promoted and covered throughout regions already
- mental health is an area best left to the individual to pursue personally
- During times of Government policy development, MFS can position themselves to play a role by having the infrastructure set up for gathering information on social issues ie. what drives decision making etc

MFS Partners and Sponsors



The University of Sydney

