

Policy Advocacy for Peak Associations

About Interact

INTERACT - Policy and Industry Solutions Pty Ltd brings together the perspectives of industry and government for effective industry representation, more informed decision-making, and better public policy.

It works with industry and government in analysing issues, scoping policy improvements, and fostering a greater understanding of the policy environment.

Service offerings

Drawing upon almost 30 years' experience, INTERACT can provide various services to local, state and national peak associations to advance their members' interests and improve their reputation with government.

Government relations strategy and approach

Effective government advocacy requires a considered and strategic approach which is underpinned by sound judgement and an understanding of the nuances of policy development and decision-making.

INTERACT can work with your organisation in reviewing your approach on government advocacy and advising on the best way to position your members' interests and advance these interests through policy mechanisms and public sector processes.

State and Federal Budgets

The annual budget process provides a tremendous opportunity for peak associations to position themselves in a positive light with key government decision-makers, improve their reputation, and advance their policy agenda. Following a Budget, an insightful analysis of the announcements and Budget documents can also provide great value to members.

INTERACT can:

- Consult with key members to identify key policy issues, and undertake an environmental scan of the political, policy and economic environment.
- Articulate key issues into a formal budget submission which identifies the importance of the industry and outline key recommendations.
- Support a political and media engagement strategy to promote the budget submission with key Ministers, Shadow Ministers and senior officials.

Elections

The period before and after elections are an important period in which policy is prioritized and developed by major political parties and incoming Governments. As such, they are an opportunity for representative groups to promote and advance their policy agenda for members.

INTERACT can:

- Work with your members to identify key policy issues.
- Develop key issues into a formal election policy statement which identifies the importance of the industry and outline key recommendations.
- Support the media release and political strategy of the election statement.

- Support and advise on introductions and engagement with incoming Ministers.

Policy discussion papers and Parliamentary Bills.

It is vital for peak representative groups to be abreast of draft policy being developed by Government agencies and proposed legislation being introduced into Parliament. INTERACT can work with members in identifying and analysing draft policy, develop submissions and engaging with Ministers and senior Government officials.

Aaron Johnstone, Founder and Director

My journey in public policy and industry advocacy spans almost 30 years. With a broad range of networks in industry and government, I have built a reputation as an effective collaborator and strategic leader.



I have a Bachelor of Arts in Government and History at the University of QLD, and an Executive Master of Public Administration at the University of Melbourne (ANZSOG).

I began my career in Canberra as a Graduate in the Australian Government in 1995, joining the public service out an eager desire to make a meaningful contribution to social and economic prosperity. Since that time, my public sector experience in Australia and the UK have included a variety of positions, such as: research and analysis for Commonwealth-State agreements on skills reforms and funding with the Australian National Training Authority

(ANTA); providing strategic political and policy advice as a Ministerial Adviser for the Hon Anna Bligh MP in her time in the Beattie State Government Cabinet; executing communication strategies for Westminster City Council in central London on transport and urban development; and managing education and training policy reform in a variety of State Government bodies in Queensland and Victoria

Between 2007 and 2023 I held leadership and advocacy roles with industry bodies in the construction materials and manufacturing sectors – including the Australian Industry Group and Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia– the peak industry body for the heavy construction materials sector.

These roles provided the opportunity to work closely with senior industry and government leaders in shaping policy and responding to key challenges. This included developing and advancing industry positions and policy, overseeing the management of member engagement activities and industry events, managing joint industry-government research projects, and undertaking industry state and national surveys.

In 2023, I established INTERACT from a passion to improve the interaction between industry and government. I believe better relations and collaboration will lead to improved public policy, more confident industry investment, and better economic and social outcomes for the broader community.

Further Information

To find out how Interact can support your organisation phone me on +61 423 481 951 or email aaron.johnstone@interactpolicy.com.