

Aviation in the Spotlight: Are You Prepared?

The aviation industry is facing scrutiny and questions like never before. The crucial role that aviation plays in Australia is never far from the headlines. Aviation has faced increased turbulence in Australia as it continues to recover from the impact and effects of flight bans and the global shutdown at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The profile of industry leaders has grown through the pandemic as they advocated strongly for assistance as aviation was brought to a standstill, and now airports, airlines and their service delivery partners now face more questions from government and the community. Issues such as systemic competition, levels of customer service, and service capacity have put aviation leaders at the centre of the debate even as they work to pursue complex recovery plans and address the operational challenges they bring.

WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO NAVIGATE THIS LANDSCAPE?



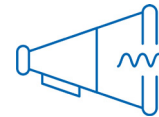
ANTICIPATE

Aviation is an issues rich industry and airlines and airports are accustomed to managing several priorities at once. The pace and challenge of recovery and the additional scrutiny and community expectation, however, have added another layer of complexity in anticipating the issues your business might face.



PREPARE

A comprehensive understanding of the issues landscape provides the foundation to prepare to address media, community and government scrutiny right through to crisis preparedness and response.



RESPOND

Having prepared the ground, you can respond with confidence, creating a willingness to be more proactive and meet issues head-on to address, reduce, and mitigate reputational risk.

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE:

In this period of heated debate, there are practical steps that senior leaders can take to take the heat out of the hot button topics.

Issues and reputation management: Ensuring that you and your team are across the important issues and their implications for your business is the critical first step.

Mapping those issues to key stakeholders and creating scenario plans to help address them – including trigger points that anticipate points at which you should respond or take proactive action – is a key step. This scenario planning will assist you to consider and address stakeholder concern and establish a robust and flexible communications strategy.

Crisis preparedness: Aviation is an operational environment and the risk of crisis remains ever-present. While a crisis can have a hugely detrimental effect on a company’s reputation, how a company reacts, responds and recovers from a crisis can often result in reputation enhancement. How well a company responds, however, comes down to how well it is prepared. Having a crisis management plan on the shelf is not enough:

- Is the crisis plan up-to-date and does it reflect the current threat landscape?
- Has it been tested and have procedures been rehearsed?
- Do crisis team members understand their responsibilities and have they drilled?
- Are senior leaders prepared to front questions from media, government and stakeholders?

Media and presentation training: Senior leaders are in a constant dialogue with stakeholders, the government and the community. The profile of senior leaders in the aviation

industry has grown significantly through the pandemic with CEOs often fronting media and, increasingly, parliamentary enquiries. These conversations are crucial to your business and the skills required to navigate a press conference or to appear before parliamentary hearing need to be developed, practiced and honed.

Ongoing government and regulatory scrutiny: The issues-rich nature of aviation means that government and regulatory scrutiny will remain after the industry has well and truly recovered from the impact and effects of the pandemic. Managing significant business issues such as landing slots, competition, customer service, and meeting sustainability and net zero goals will require a robust proactive and reactive public affairs and government relations strategy. Adopting a flexible campaign approach will allow you to respond to changes in the fast-moving issues landscape and turbulent political debate while remaining focused on long term objectives.

HOW CAN FTI CONSULTING HELP YOU?

FTI Consulting’s strategic communications segment has vast experience in the aviation sector with expertise in advising operational teams, senior leadership, and boards to manage issues and preparing for media, industry and parliamentary engagement, and proactively and effectively communicating to stakeholders.

Our Aviation segment has global reach and experience and the Australian team includes former senior leaders from London Heathrow and London Gatwick Airports who bring deep knowledge and unique understanding of key industry issues.

FTI Consulting’s aviation experts will work with you to fully meet the expectations of stakeholders, government, media and the community, from strategic advice around key issues and preparation through to pre-meeting rehearsals, media training, and crisis simulations. FTI Consulting’s team provides expertise in strategic communications, digital and social listening, and media and presentation training can ensure you and your team are equipped and ready.

Don’t hesitate to reach out to us for a discussion to ensure you’re ready to manage the increased industry attention now and to prepare for continued scrutiny in the future.



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