

Consumer Involvement --

Influencing the Safety of Products

*Presented to ICPHSO
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“Emerging Risks in the 21st Century” (quote by OECD)

Citizens as Partners...

- *“Risk decisions are not exclusively the province of scientific understanding and experts passing judgements... Introducing public participation into both risk assessment and risk decision making would make the process more democratic, improve the relevance and quality of technical analysis, and increase the legitimacy and public acceptance of the resulting decisions.”*

"Special Message to Congress on Protecting the Consumer Interest "

(President John F. Kennedy, March 1962)

- *Consumer Bill of Rights speaks to specific rights that Consumers are entitled to ...*
 - the Right to Safety,
 - the Right to be Informed,
 - the Right to Choose,
 - the Right to be Heard,
 - the Right to Education and
 - the Right to Service.

Consumer Lens



- *Consumers expect their governments to be responsive, open, transparent and accountable.*
- *They want effective mechanisms to ensure that they are appropriately informed, that their views are heard and that governments are held accountable for how public expertise and advice are used.*

Government Lens



- *While respecting statutory responsibilities, government should be open, transparent and accountable in their work, and appropriately integrate stakeholder input into their decision-making.*
- *Incorporating the views of stakeholders is a critical success factor for regulating effectively in the public interest. Engaged stakeholders have implications for governance, ethics, transparency, openness and accountability.*

Barriers to effective consumer engagement

- *Insufficient resources to support consumer participation;*
- *Significant representation imbalance on committees;*
- *Diversity of consumer groups;*
- *Empty commitment to engagement;*
- *Access to necessary information may preclude effective consumer voice.....*

Eliminating Barriers...

Government lens

- *Consult consumers early in and throughout the decision-making process to better understand their expectations, interests and concerns;*
- *Enhance consumers' ability to participate effectively through appropriate notification and resourcing;*
- *Provide timely feedback reflecting how consumer input was considered in decisions made;*

Eliminating Barriers...

Government lens

- Develop consumer involvement plans for all significant initiatives:
 - *Determine consumer involvement objectives;*
 - *Identify opportunities for collaboration;*
 - *Select appropriate methods for involvement;*
 - *Identify key consumer groups;*
 - *Communicate how input will be used;*
 - *Evaluate effectiveness of consumer involvement process*

*Guiding principles *... Government lens*

- *Equal opportunity to information access;*
- *Relevance: useful, clear and practical information that meets consumer needs;*
- *Support and Capacity: measures should be in place to ensure effective participation;*
- *Clarity: clear roles and expectations are established and understood by all;*

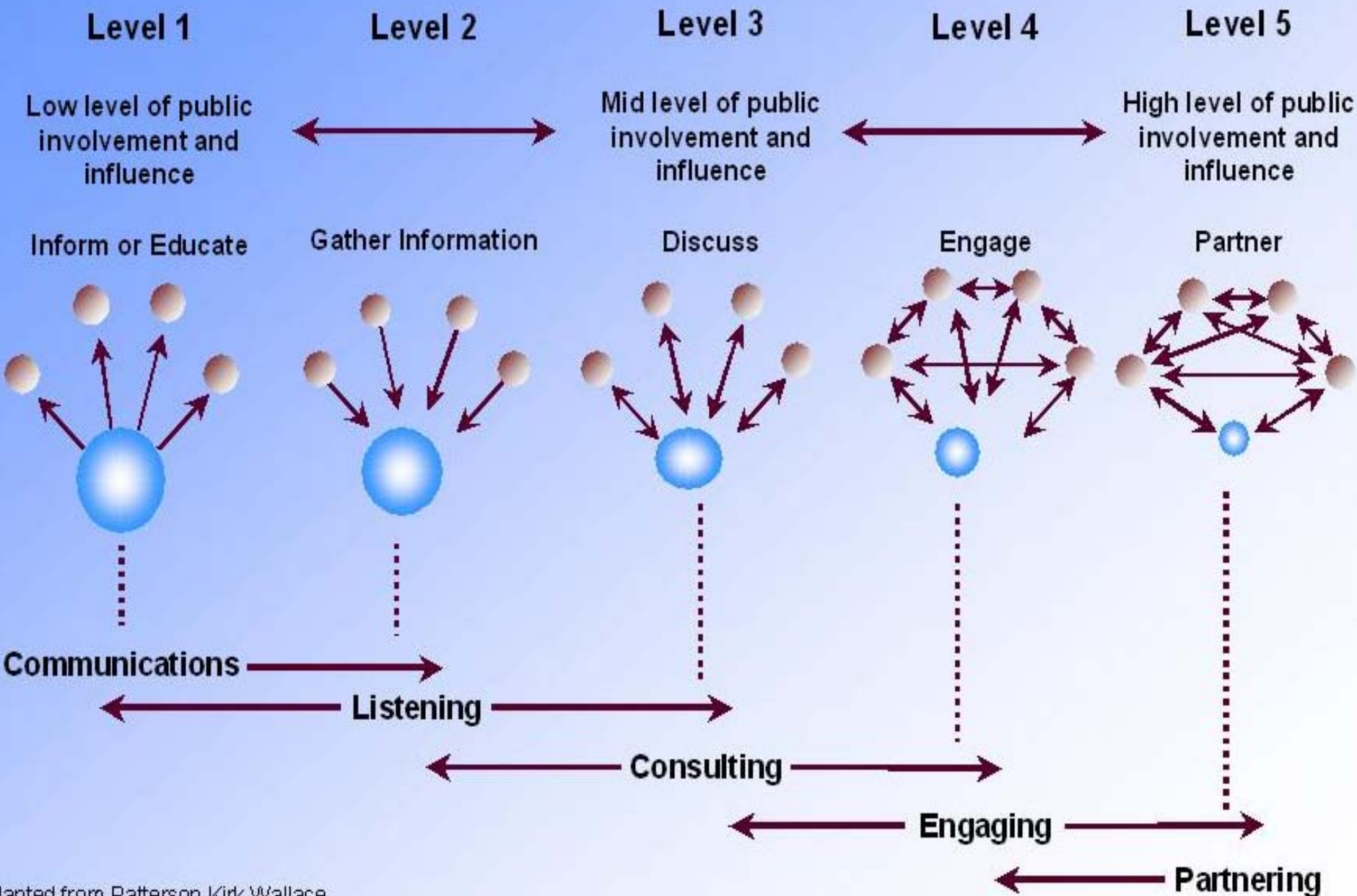
*Guiding principles *... Government lens*

- *Timeliness: information is provided early enough to ensure consumers are aware and become involved in the process;*
- *Shared responsibility for meeting engagement objectives;*
- *Accountability: commitments are met and decisions / outcomes are communicated widely and promptly*

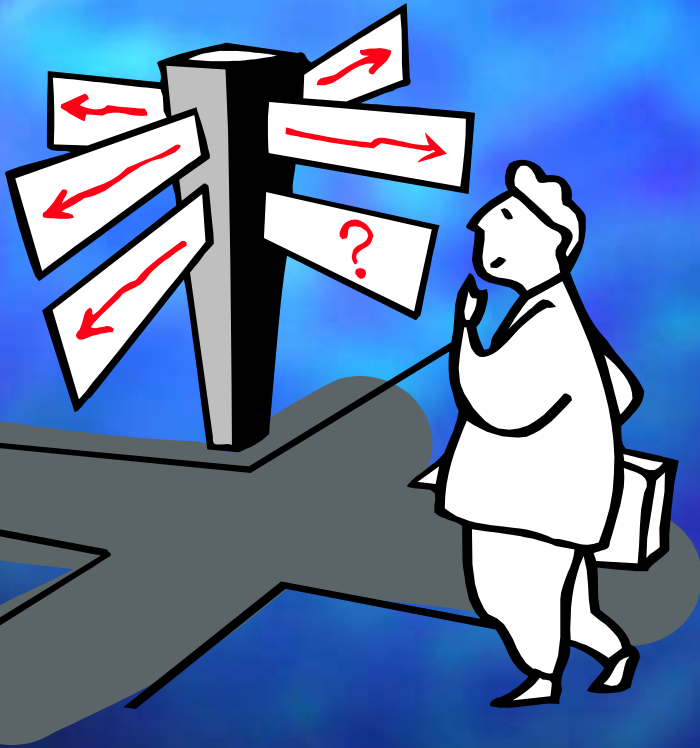
Need for innovative approaches...

- *Must recognize that government cannot regulate overall with a “one size fits all” approach to consumer engagement, but must address different needs, goals and opportunities using innovative approaches....*

Public Involvement Continuum



Thank you....



Looking for more information ?

Director

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