

Operationalising the Diamond Model of social licence to operate

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Social licence to operate is a term that broadly describes social acceptance for a project, company or industry and its activities. Attempts to conceptualise levels of community acceptance led to the development of Luke's (2017)¹ Diamond Model of social licence to operate, which extends Thompson & Boutilier's (2011)² model to include levels of, and processes involved in, social licence withdrawal. While previous models conceptualise levels of acceptance principally in relation to community relationships with industry, the basic premise of the diamond model is that social licence withdrawal relates to increasing levels of acceptance, approval and psychological identification with those who are actively resisting industry activities. This presentation will describe a number of ways in which the Diamond Model has been used to illustrate data arising from social licence studies, in the context of both extractive industries and farming in New South Wales and Queensland, Australia. The model was first used in New South Wales to gauge levels of support and opposition to coal seam gas arising from an election-survey¹; it was then applied to gauge levels of support for a horticultural industry using a councillor survey. Finally, it was used to illustrate changing levels of support for the coal seam gas industry by individuals from different stakeholder groups in towns and on the land, over seven years of a boom-bust cycle in regional Queensland³. The model is thus demonstrated as useful for application in a number of contexts, for illustrating individual and community-level perceptions of social licence to operate at different points in time, and over time. Further potential applications are discussed and explored.

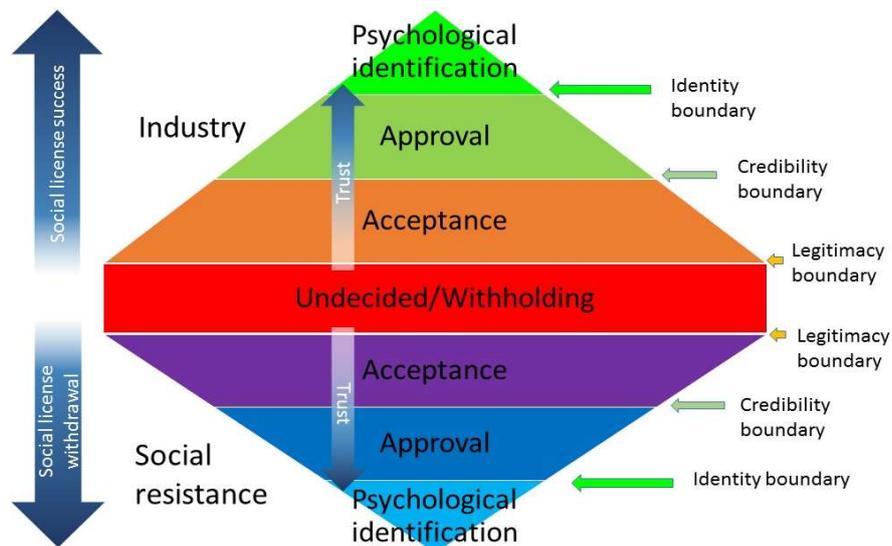


Figure 1. Luke's (2017) Diamond Model of social licence to operate

Acknowledgement

My collaborators David Lloyd, Bill Boyd, Annie O'Shannessy, Mat Alexanderson, Kristen den Exter and Nia Emmanouil

References

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