



information  
and privacy  
commission  
new south wales

# Media protocol

July 2014



## **Introduction**

This protocol provides clear guidelines about:

1. Responses to media requests for interviews or information
2. Approval processes for media releases, media statements, letters to the editor and speeches
3. Handling crises and emergency situations
4. Preparation, approval and booking processes for advertisements
5. General information about media services provided by the communications team of the Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC).

## **Purpose and scope**

The objectives of this media protocol are:

- To identify opportunities to promote the IPC and its activities.
- To ensure these activities are accurately and professionally portrayed in all public channels, including media releases, speeches, feature articles, advertisements, newsletters, websites and other publications.
- To maintain a consistent corporate image and a positive reputation for the commission, through a clearly understood procedure for contact with the media.
- To coordinate responses by the commission to media organisations.
- To provide a streamlined approval process for all media contact.
- To enable the office to bring to the attention of relevant parties information IPC activities that are likely to attract media interest.
- To facilitate a proactive and coordinated approach to issues and risk management.

## **1. Responses to media requests for interviews/information**

### **1.1 Contact and context**

The IPC's communications team is the primary point of contact within the office for all media enquiries directed to the IPC.

The communications team can be contacted any time on telephone 8071 7017 or 0435 961 691.

Upon receiving an inquiry from the media, the communications team will immediately inform the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner or managers as appropriate. The communications team will also notify these parties of any relevant coverage that is scheduled or likely to appear in the media.

The communications team will seek approval of any proposed responses on matters before distributing media releases, statements or letters to the editor. Comment and input will be sought from the Information Commissioner and other team managers as appropriate in a timeframe that enables the communications team to meet media deadlines.

All communications with the media must be approved by the Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner prior to distribution.

The Information Commissioner or delegate is responsible for responding to media enquiries regarding the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, compliance with the Act by government agencies, and matters relating to the IPC's reports to the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

The Privacy Commissioner or delegate is responsible for responding to media enquiries regarding the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*, compliance with this legislation by government agencies, the private sector and members of the public.

Individual government agencies are responsible for handling media enquiries regarding the publication of information held by individual agencies or relating to specific agency responsibilities for information access and protection.

The Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner and team managers as appropriate will also be consulted prior to the release of any positive media opportunities that promote the work of the office.

### **1.2 Contact with the media**

All requests received by the IPC for media interviews or information must be referred immediately to the communications team.

The communications team will consult with the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner as appropriate to determine how the enquiry will be handled.

The Information Commissioner will act as spokesperson for the IPC and right to information, or select a delegate where appropriate, to respond to the media.

The Privacy Commissioner or their delegate will act as a spokesperson for Privacy.

The communications team can be contacted anytime on telephone 8071 7017 or 0435 961 691.

## **2. Approval process for media statements and media releases**

### **2.1 Media statements and media releases**

The communications team will consult with the Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner to determine whether the response to a media enquiry will take the form of an interview or a written media statement.

Where time permits and as required by the Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner, the communications team will work with the either commissioner or their delegate before the interview to ensure they are prepared in terms of key messaging and angles likely to be pursued by the media representative.

All written media statements will be drafted in consultation with Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner and will be clearly marked DRAFT until the content has been approved.

In the case of a media opportunity or a general response to a media issue, the communications team, in conjunction with the Information Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner, may issue a media release, rather than a media statement.

All IPC media content must be approved by the Information Commissioner prior to release. All Privacy media content must be approved by the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner prior to release.

Advance notice of interviews and approved copies of media statements, media releases and letters to the editor will be provided to relevant parties for their reference prior to release.

### **2.2 Letters to the editor**

Letters to the editor may be drafted in response to issues raised or to correct misinformation. These will be drafted and approved using the same process as media statements and media releases.

## **3. Handling crises and emergency situations**

### **3.1 Communication plans**

Communication plans should be prepared for all sensitive or controversial issues. The communications team will prepare these plans as required by and in consultation with the appropriate business unit.

### **3.2 Emergency situations**

The Information Commissioner, Privacy Commissioner and all IPC managers are to be notified of any sensitive media issues or emergency situations involving the IPC.

The communications team will coordinate all media contact in consultation with the Information Commissioner, the Privacy Commissioner and team managers as appropriate.

As directed by the Information Commissioner or their delegate, the communications team will ensure relevant parties are kept informed of issues or incidents involving the IPC.

## ***4. Advertising approval process***

### **4.1 Advertising**

All advertising copy and draft advertisements (print and electronic) are approved through the same process as media releases. These advertisements may promote a variety of topics such as general awareness-raising, training workshops, public forums, enquiries processes and administrative matters such as changes to telephone numbers.

The communications team must book all advertising through the Strategic Communications and Government Advertising branch of the Department of Services, Technology and Administration, email: [advertising@services.nsw.gov.au](mailto:advertising@services.nsw.gov.au) or phone: (02) 9372 7797. The communications team can provide further advice on advertising.

## ***5. Communication services available***

### **5.1 Media monitoring**

The communications team has established a contract with Media Monitors to provide a daily media monitoring service. This is currently available to the Information Commissioner, Privacy Commissioner, team managers and other senior staff within the office.

This service monitors all press, broadcast and internet coverage relating to the IPC, right to information, Privacy and relevant legislation. Full transcripts and recordings of specific broadcast coverage may be ordered by the communications team on behalf of business units on a cost-recovery basis.

The communications team will circulate significant clips to all IPC staff, while managers and senior officers may choose to share specific coverage with their teams.