

# Communications and Media Policy

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set the principles for the Commission's communication with its stakeholders and the community, and
- outline the responsibilities of Commission employees in relation to communications and media.

## SCOPE

This policy relates to internal and external communications activities of the Commission, including through traditional media. It does not include personal or official use of social media (refer Social Media Policy).

The policy applies to all Commission employees and authorised persons, inclusive of the Chief Executive Officer (collectively, 'employees'). It does not apply to public communications authorised by the Chief Commissioner, or to the Board.

## PRINCIPLES

The Commission's workplace values underpin and guide the implementation of this policy. The Commission's core values are respect, honesty, independence, accountability, professionalism and trust.

The Commission strives to be a positive influence and an agent for change within the public sector.

## POLICY STATEMENT

We recognise that effective and appropriate communication is a key component in fulfilling our functions and the achievement of our objectives.

Our communication will build trust and improve our relationships with the public sector and the community by enhancing transparency and accountability, and managing expectations. A failure to do so can undermine our operations and reputation, and reduce public confidence in our work.

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## i) General communications

All of our communications should:

- be accurate, relevant and impartial
- be consistent with the Commission's brand, key messages and any communications plans
- meet the requirements of the Commission's Style Guide
- be in plain language and be accessible, while complying with our legislative requirements
- follow relevant approval processes, and
- adhere to record-keeping requirements.

## ii) Dealing with the media

The media plays an important role in keeping the community and the public sector informed on matters of significant public interest. It is in the interests of all for the Commission to have a positive working relationship with the media.

In addition to our general communication principles, we will manage our relationship with the media by:

- accepting the media's role to report on matters of public interest
- being strategic in our release of information, and recognising:
  - the limitations and requirements of the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*
  - the privacy of those involved in our work, particularly our investigative work
  - the public interest in our work, and
  - the potential to impact upon any operational, legal or administrative requirements, including current or pending legal proceedings
- responding to media requests in a timely manner, and
- not giving particular media outlets or journalists preferential access to information.

Media enquiries are managed by the Director, Misconduct Prevention.

## PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

We generally do not confirm or deny the existence, nor any aspect, of our investigative or operational work because:

- public confirmation may prejudice our ability to successfully conduct an investigation eg individuals may destroy evidence or be influenced by others
- a complaint may be used for political or other reasons, and we do not want to inadvertently encourage this practice
- the privacy and reputation of individuals involved in a complaint must be respected,

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and

- public confirmation in one instance may lead to inferences being drawn in other instances.

We will only comment in exceptional circumstances or when it is in the public interest to do so. This may happen if a matter is already in the public domain and the parties are identified, or if the privacy and reputations of those involved in the complaint will not be unfairly damaged.

Where relevant, public statements, including media releases, will be published on the Commission's website as soon as practicable.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Chief Executive Officer** is the spokesperson for the Commission. All public statements are to be attributed to the Chief Executive Officer, unless otherwise authorised.

The **Director, Misconduct Prevention** is specifically responsible for managing the Commission's external communication activities, and is the initial point of contact for all media enquiries.

### Employees

Adhere to this policy and ensure that their internal and external communications do not conflict with their obligations under the *State Service Act 2000* or the *Integrity Commission Act 2009*.

When in doubt, employees should seek guidance from their manager or the Chief Executive Officer on compliance with this policy.

### Directors

Ensure employees within their team are aware of and comply with this policy.

### Chief Executive Officer

Monitor compliance with this policy.

## NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

Any suspected or actual breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Commission's Workplace Conduct Policy.

## VARIATION BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Where considered appropriate to meet the specific circumstances of a matter, the Chief Executive Officer may vary any provision of this policy that is not otherwise subject to the *State Service Act 2000*, the Tasmanian State Service Award (as it stands from time to time) or other relevant legislation.

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## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Strategic Communications Plan 2018–20 (2019/000359)
  - Brand Strategy (2013/000346)
  - Style Guide (2018/001436)
  - Procedure for Tabling Reports in Parliament (2011/001490)
  - Social Media Policy (2018/000970)
  - Workplace Conduct Policy (2016/001523)
- Other:**
- [Integrity Commission Act 2009](#)
  - [State Service Act 2000](#)
  - [State Service Regulations 2011](#)

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Release Date	Reference	Reason
1.0	23/7/2018	2018/001238-1	Original release
1.1	11/9/2019	2019/001773	Combines and supersedes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communications Policy (2018/001238)</li><li>• Media Policy (2019/000038)</li><li>• Social Media Policy (2018/000970)</li></ul>
2.0	4/12/2020	2019/001773	Revised to reinstate elements of Communications Policy (2018/001238) and Media Policy (2019/000038); Social Media Policy (2018/000970) reinstated as stand-alone policy

## Document Management - Corporate Services

### APPROVED



Michael Easton

**Chief Executive Officer**

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