

MEDIA RELATIONS PROCEDURE – (ES-C-001)

EXECUTIVE SERVICES - COMMUNICATIONS

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1. PURPOSE

To maintain a consistent system for media relations.

2. SCOPE

All Council staff, Councillors, all media outlets.

3. REFERENCES

Policy – Media Relations.

4. DEFINITIONS

EGN – Early General News. The term used to refer to the general news section of a newspaper.

Press Release – A statement prepared and distributed to the press. The aim of a press release is to receive editorial coverage (ie. A story in EGN, or within a radio/TV news bulletin).

Advertising – is often confused with a press release within this Council. Advertising is a paid announcement or statement, placed either within EGN or in the Classifieds/Public Notices section of a newspaper, or a paid advertisement on radio/TV.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

Councillors

Chief Executive Officer

Directors

Program Managers

Communications Officer

All Council Staff

Issue Date (No.)	April 2010	Originator:	Communications Officer		
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6. PROCEDURE

Issuing a Press Release

1. On occasions, staff may wish to or need to issue a press release on a certain issue.
2. Contact the Communications Officer and outline the information relating to the issue. Further information may be required for drafting the Press Release – the Communications Officer will advise you.
3. The Communications Officer will draft a Press Release. In the first instance, quotes within the press release should be attributed to the Mayor - the Communications Officer will contact the Mayor to determine if he wishes to be quoted or another relevant Councillor. If not, the Chief Executive Officer, relevant Director or relevant Program Manager may be quoted.
4. The draft will be returned to you for feedback/approval.
5. Where a photo is requested by the media or a photo is to be attached to a Press Release, approval is to be sought from the Mayor if he wishes to be included in the photo or another Councillor. If not, the CEO/Director/Communications Officer will authorise the subject/employee to be included in the photo.
6. Once a final version is agreed upon (and approved by your Director or Program Manager), the Communications Officer will distribute the Press Release to required media outlets, relevant staff and Councillors, and place on the Council's website.
7. Press releases are to be registered in dataworks.
8. The Communications Officer will monitor media response and coverage of the Press Release, and remain in contact with you if any further action needs to be taken.

Media Request – Council Staff/Management

1. All local media should be familiar with Council's Media Relations Policy and Procedure.
2. Media outlets who would like information or comment from Whitsunday Regional Council management or staff are to contact the Communications Officer on ☎ 07 4945 0204 or email info@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au, (or to the direct email of the Communications Officer, which is currently lisa.reynolds@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au).
3. The Communications Officer is to supply as much information as possible. If further information, comment or clarification is needed, the Communications Officer is to obtain this information, and supply it to the media. Information is generally supplied in a press release format however interviews can be arranged if necessary.
4. If the issue is of wider community or media interest, a press release is to be drawn up to distribute the information or comment to all media outlets.
5. All press releases are also to be distributed to relevant Council staff and Councillors. They are also to be placed on Council's website.
6. Any other requests for quotes, photo opportunities or general media queries are to be handled by the Communications Officer.
7. Media are not to contact Council staff direct (other than the CEO and/or Directors), as staff are not authorised to make comment on Council matters to media.
8. If a media outlet receives a press release from Whitsunday Regional Council, and has a further query, that query should be directed to the Communications Officer.

Media Request – Councillors

1. All local media should be familiar with Council's Media Relations Policy and Procedure.
2. Media outlets who would like information or comment from Councillors may:
 - a) Contact the Communications Officer on ☎ 07 4945 0204 or email info@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au (or to the direct email of the Communications Officer, which is currently lisa.reynolds@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au);
 - b) Contact the relevant Councillor directly;
 - c) Contact the relevant Councillor via the Executive Assistant on ☎ 07 4761 3624 (Bowen) or ☎ 07 4945 0602 (Proserpine) or email info@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au
3. Councillors are to specify if they are making the comment based on their own opinion of the issue, or based on the agreed resolution of the Council.
4. If the Councillor judges the issue to be of a controversial nature or of wider community interest, out of courtesy the Councillor should inform the Communications Officer or Chief Executive Officer of the issue, and the comments that he/she has made on the issue.
5. The Mayor is the only Councillor authorised to make official comment in relation to Council's operations unless the Mayor gives approval to another Councillor.

Receiving a press release from Whitsunday Regional Council

All questions regarding press releases issued by Whitsunday Regional Council should be directed to the Communications Officer on ☎ 07 4945 0204 or email info@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au

Other Information

There is a press release template available through Microsoft Word, and all press releases must stay in this format.

7. DOCUMENTS

N/A