

Physical Disability Australia (PDA) Social Media Policy

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Drafted By	Simon Burchill	Review Date	01/02/2020
Person Responsible	PDA Manager		

INTRODUCTION

Local, state, national and international media are vital partners in achieving the goals of Physical Disability Australia Ltd (PDA). In order to maximise the advantages of media presentation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation it is necessary to establish guidelines for how media contacts will be conducted.

It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. The organisation welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to debate issues in the public arena.

In dealing with the media, Directors, employees and volunteers should be conscious that they may be seen as representatives of the organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the long-term reputation of PDA.

PURPOSE

PDA works with the media in order to:

- Advocate for the goals of the organisation and the interests of Australians with physical disability;
- Promote the work of the organisation;
- Inform the public of the details of the organisation; and
- Assist in fundraising for the organisation.

In order to ensure that these purposes can be fulfilled, this policy regulates the choice of people entitled to speak for PDA.

The media themselves have a vital role to play on behalf of the community in holding PDA to account for its policies and actions. It is important that they have access to officers and members and to background information to assist them in this role.

To balance this, PDA must have the capacity to defend itself from any unfounded criticism, and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts.

POLICY

PDA's interaction with the media shall be consistent with the following principles:

- **Honesty:** The organisation will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.

- **Transparency:** The organisation will promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
- **Clarity:** All communications with the media will be written in plain English
- **Balance:** Information provided to the media by PDA will, as far as possible, be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

PDA will seek to establish and maintain a good and open relationship with the media. It is important that the organisation works with the media to communicate important public information messages about its work and its goals.

However, contact concerning any significant matter in the name of or on behalf of PDA should only be made by Directors, employees and volunteers where:

- They have consulted the Communications Officer nominated by the Board; and
- They have the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion.

Where any of these criteria do not apply, are to refer media inquiries to the PDA Manager, President and/or Communications Officer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board to appoint the Communications Officer of the organisation. The role of Communications Officer may be an adjunct to a Director's, employee's or volunteer's substantive position.

The Communications Officer, PDA Manager and the President are all authorised to speak on behalf of PDA.

Other Directors, employees and volunteers are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the Communications Officer, PDA Manager or President before talking to the media on any issue related to PDA.

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the Communications Officer shall determine the most appropriate person to respond.

Directors, employees, volunteers and members are encouraged to deliver public presentations that discuss PDA's work and its goals, provided that they make it clear where such presentations are or are not authorised by the organisation.

All Directors, employees and volunteers must observe PDA's Privacy Policy in relation to members' records.

PROCESS

Significant statements on behalf of PDA shall be made as authorised by the Communications Officer, PDA Manager or President as detailed above.

It should always be made absolutely clear whether the views put forward regarding any issue relating to PDA are those of the organisation or of an individual. At all times consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of PDA.

Any significant media contacts with PDA's employees, volunteers or members on any issue likely to prove contentious shall, where possible, be video-recorded.

Any video recordings on PDA's property or of the organisation's proceedings by the media is subject to prior permission of the Communications Officer, PDA Manager or President.

Every effort should be made to assist the media in their inquiries. Where media queries involve requests for information that will require substantial employee or volunteer work to produce, such work must be authorised by the PDA Manager. It will usually be necessary to provide information in addition to that which is requested in order to set the facts and figures in context.

Requests for detailed information of this nature, whether from the local or national media, should be referred to the Communications Officer.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Privacy Policy
- Social Media Policy

AUTHORISATION



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1 February 2017
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1 February 2017
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