



Policy Title: **MEDIA POLICY**

Policy Type: **ADMINISTRATIVE**
 (Statutory, Financial, Administrative, Human Resources)

Policy Number: **A019**

| Approved by Council | Last Review | Current Review | Next Review |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------|
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| Approved by CEO/Director: | Bernie McCarthy – CEO |  Signature. | |
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| Implementation Department | | Officer Position | |
| Corporate Services | | Human Resources Manager | |
| Revision Number: | Document Management File #. | | |
| 6.0 | 01-03-A019 | | |

1. Policy Background/Scope

This policy is to set down regulations for clearer, positive communication with the Media for the betterment of the Council and community and to provide for open, positive communication via Media with the Community and other stakeholders.

To establish protocols and consistent methods for managing communication between the Council and print and broadcast media, to ensure coordinated, accurate and reliable presentation.

The key objective of this policy is to provide Aurukun Shire Council with a positive public image in line with its corporate objectives and mission statement through presentation of media statements, media liaison, promotional literature, official speeches, interviews and other internal and external communications methodologies.

Aurukun Shire Council encourages open communication with the media, with an emphasis on promoting a positive, progressive and professional image of Council and staff.

To ensure that comment made publicly by authorised spokespersons is accurate, reliable and in the best interests of Council, there are limits on who can provide information, and the level of information those persons can provide.

2. Policy Provisions

2.1 Authorised Council representatives

For the issuing of media statements and responses to media enquiries for a comment on official opinion, the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer are Council's official spokespersons.

Generally, the Mayor/Chief Executive Officer's Executive Assistant (EA) is responsible for receiving media enquiries and referring them to ASC Media Officer copying in Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

Information of a controversial, legal or ethical nature requires the approval of the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer prior to being given to the Media.

All Council Ordinary and Special meetings are open to the media except for those matters restricted under *Section 275 of the Local Government Regulation 2012* dealing with matters such as employee issues, confidential legal advice or are commercial-in-confidence etc.

Employees, other than ASC Media Officer can contact media only with written delegation from Mayor and Chief Executive Officer.

2.2 Personal Comments

Individual Councillors are free to make personal comments to the media as private individuals but not to speak on behalf of Council, and in doing so must ensure that their comments are not perceived as representing official Council position or policy.

Council employees may communicate with the media as private individuals, with the following restrictions:

- That they do not comment on Council business or policy
- That they are not identified as Council employees

- That their comments are not perceived as representing Councils official position or policy and have not been attained by virtue of their public position.

2.3 Crisis Communication

Council recognises that ill-considered and uninformed comments can cause dire consequences and legal implications in the event of an emergency, disaster, crisis, or sensitive issue.

Accordingly, only the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer are authorised to speak to the media on these occasions except for the Local Disaster Management Group member (as delegated) in the event the emergency operation centre is raised.

2.4 Breaches

Unauthorised release of Council documents by employees or Councillors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

3. Related Documentation

Local Government Regulation 2012