



ACT Rural Fire Service
Standard Operating Procedure 2.5
Dealing With The Media

2.5
Incident
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Purpose

It is very important that the media are provided every opportunity to report on emergency events as they happen. They are often the prime source of information to the public, providing such information as the current and projected emergency, situation, access and egress information, advice of where to seek further information etc. This SOP provides direction to RFS members about their responsibilities when dealing with the media, and advice about how they can help the media to provide comprehensive and accurate information.

Operating Procedure.

Release of information

ACT Rural Fire Service members must never publicly criticise other organisations, or Government or Service policy, or cause any discredit or embarrassment to the Government or the Service. Care must also be taken that confidential information is not shared with the media.

Interstate operations

When operating interstate, only members of the host State are permitted to make public comment, therefore all approaches by the media are to be referred back to the host State.

Media on the incident ground

There may be occasions where the media want to enter the incident ground to take photographs or film footage. They should arrange this through the ESA Media unit. The Incident Controller is responsible for all people at the incident site; this includes members of the media. All media must wear the correct and full Personal Protective Equipment before being allowed to operate under direction on the fire ground. Media personnel must also have successfully completed a Basic Wildfire Awareness course and must display an ESA identification card, which is issued to the individual member upon successful completion of the course.



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Major events

During major events or other activities that are likely to generate considerable media interest, a Media Liaison Officer will be appointed to specifically manage media activities. The Media Liaison Officer will arrange briefing times and locations for the media, and will organise the appropriate people to speak with the media. The reporting line for the Media Liaison Officer is directly to the Incident Controller.

Under no circumstances should media requests or requirements be permitted to interfere with fire ground safety or operational effectiveness.

Maintained By: Manager, Operations

Approved By: Andrew Stark

Position: Chief Officer RFS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Stark', on a light green background.

Signature:

Date: 15/02/2011

Cross Reference SOP/s:

Amendments: