

Hebden, Karen FLNR:EX

From: Nussbaum, Albert F FLNR:EX
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 8:44 AM
To: Hebden, Karen.FLNR:EX
Subject: FW: Communication guidelines during writ
Attachments: guidelines_ gov comms_ writ_2017.pdf

From: Nussbaum, Albert F FLNR:EX
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 3:06 PM
To: Loeb, Megan B FLNR:EX; Prasad, Atmo P FLNR:EX
Subject: FW: Communication guidelines during writ

Megan and Atmo

As we discussed, no communication during the writ period of nasty AACs.

Cheers Albert

From: Thomas, Vivian P GCPE:EX
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 12:04 PM
To: FLNR Executive; FLNR Regional Executive Directors; Hawkings, John FLNR:EX; FLNR Provincial Executive Directors
Cc: GCPE Communications - Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations; Dean, Sharon GCPE:EX
Subject: Communication guidelines during writ

Hi! Pls review the attached guidelines for communications during the writ period, including advertising, internet, public engagement and social media activities. The campaign period this year runs April 11 to May 10 (the day after the election, May 9, 2017). All new or updated website content must be live **before 1:30 p.m. MARCH 31, 2017, or after MAY 10, 2017.**

There should be no proactive communications during this period unless it relates to emergency situations involving public health and safety, or if they are statutory in nature. Burning bans, road closures due to emergency repairs and potential aerial spray for gypsy moth in North Saanich meet these exceptions.

In summary...

Social media:

Only BCWildfire Service (Facebook) or @BCGovFireInfo (twitter) may continue operating during this period, since they are considered critical to public safety.

Internet:

Any new pages or sites should be up by March 31, 1:30 p.m. Other than fixing errors there should be no changes to the internet during the writ period.

Media relations:

All media requests should continued to be forwarded to GCPE FLNR, which we will handle on a case by case basis. The lone exception is media requests handled by our Fire Information Officers.

Advertising:

Statutory only.

Public Engagement

While public feedback can still be accepted no new promotion or engagement can occur.

You may have situations that do not fit neatly into any of the above categories, and so they can be looked at individually. If you have any questions or concerns, pls don't hesitate to contact me or Sharon Dean (250 356-6998).

Thank you

Vivian Thomas

Communications Director

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Tel: 250 356-2475 cell: 250 213-2972

Vivian.Thomas@gov.bc.ca



Memorandum

Government Communications and
Public Engagement
Communications Support Services

GCPE Directors and Managers

Election Communications Guidelines for Government Communicators

The campaign period of an election lasts 29 days including General Voting Day. The campaign period runs from April 11, 2017 to May 10, 2017 (the day after General Voting Day May 9, 2017) (Elections BC).

Based on previous practice, and to ensure strict compliance with guidelines, all Government of B.C. advertising, communications, internet/web updates and social media and public engagements will be limited to public health and safety, responding to the public regarding services and statutory advertising as of **March 31st, 2017**. All other communications requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Advertising:

Advertising is any paid or in-kind informational activity including print, radio, TV, outdoor displays or internet. All advertising falls into two categories—"Informational" or "Statutory":

- "Informational" advertising provides information about government priorities, programs, services or policies which are *not* required by statute, regulation or policy. Out of an abundance of caution, "Informational" advertising is not permitted during the election period.
- "Statutory" advertising is required by statute, regulation or policy. "Statutory" advertising is permitted during the above period.

Distribution of advertising materials during the election period must be approved by the ministry GCPE Communications Director and Executive Director, Marketing and Communications Support Services.

Communications Materials:

Communications materials are also divided into two categories, "Informational" and "Statutory." "Informational" materials and services are any activities or products that are used to inform audiences, or raise awareness about a particular program, service, policy or issue. These may include (but are not limited to) publications, presentations, brochures, posters, videos, pins, buttons, coffee mugs, flags, signs or services, including those provided by a media relations or public relations contractor such as strategic planning, media relations, graphic design, video production, etc.

Generally, distribution of "Informational" material is not permitted during the election period.

Distribution of communications materials during the election period must be approved by the ministry GCPE Communications Director.



Memorandum

Government Communications and
Public Engagement
Communications Support Services

Internet:

New internet websites /web-pages should either go live **before 1:30 p.m., March 31, 2017** or after May 10, 2017. The only exception for website changes is for fixing spelling errors or correcting information.

Any other postings to internet websites during the election period must be approved by the ministry GCPE Communications Director.

Social Media/ Public Engagements:

If your ministry has a program area that uses social media or is conducting a public engagement, we ask that you communicate these guidelines to them and inform them that they are not allowed to publish content that may be perceived as promotion of government priorities, programs, services, policies, etc. This includes all consultation be it multi-year or ongoing.

However, public feedback can still be accepted, but no new promotion or engagement can occur. The only exception is for emergency or public health or safety purposes, which must be coordinated with the respective GCPE Communications Director and the Executive Director, Communications Support Services, with Government Communications and Public Engagement.

Please note: Websites and social media accounts considered critical to public health and safety will continue during the election period. These accounts are: Drive BC, Emergency Info BC (including PreparedBC and emergency preparation accounts) and Wildfire Info. All other accounts will be considered on a case-by-case basis via the ministry Communications Director.

FAQ's:

In the case of the Ministry of Health / Health authorities – how do these rules impact ongoing marketing efforts to create awareness about the Opioid crisis?

This is a public health emergency – and ongoing efforts to communicate a broader public health message may continue up to, and through the writ period. However, all marketing materials must be service/program focused – and in no way convey broader support of the government.

What about logo recognition with partner programs?

The BCID may be used to recognize a partnership with the Government of B.C. for programs run by third parties provided that the logo recognition is required to fulfill a contractual agreement that was in place prior to the election period. Logos affiliated with government programs may not be used. Logo recognition with the BCID is permitted where other partners/sponsors are recognized, such as signage or collateral material, however the BCID should not be included in any advertising activities.



Memorandum

Government Communications and
Public Engagement
Communications Support Services

What about international marketing? I'm scheduled to attend a trade event in Asia, can I bring my usual promotional materials? What should I avoid?

Advertising during the election period is not permitted. However, due to the timing and logistics of these events, please contact Mary Dila for review on a case by case basis.

What about news releases, Information Bulletins, photos and video?

Communications is suspended during the election period. There will be no news releases, IBs etc. Any photos or video collected cannot be distributed. The only exception is for messaging related to the health and safety of the public.

My ministry would like to have a button added to our ministry homepage, can we do that?

Unfortunately, no. Websites are "frozen" during the election period. The only exception is for spelling errors and fixing incorrect information.

A program area in my ministry would like to launch a new section on the website. It's a great project with positive benefits to the community and won't be controversial. Can we quietly launch it?

The same applies as above. Even if a project is very worthy and has good ramifications for BC, it can't be launched via a website or using communications materials, social media or advertising until after the election period.

A program area in my ministry has a social media account with a campaign for engagement that ends May 1. They've been promoting that date and the engagement quite heavily and they feel it will impact their effectiveness. Can they continue to communicate using social media?

Unfortunately, no. In a case like this, we advise telling program areas to have a plan in place to let their followers know that the election period is coming up and they will be unavailable to communicate at that time. However, if they receive a direct question during that time (e.g. dollar amount, request for help/services) they are able to respond. In all other instances, they are asked to refrain from using social media to promote an idea/issue/engagement, etc.

What happens if there is an emergency or natural disaster?

The only exception for use of social media during the election period is for public health and safety. For that reason, Drive BC, Emergency Info BC (including the PreparedBC and emergency preparation accounts) and Wildfire Info will remain active. If a natural disaster or emergency situation were to occur, BCGovNews and the above mentioned social media accounts will actively respond. Other government social media accounts assist by retweeting the emergency related information only.

Senior Manager's Meeting

Richmond, British Columbia

January 17, 2017

Albert Nussbaum, Director, Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch

Notes re Provincial Election:

- Government dissolves.
- We (Public Servants) just doing caretaker position.
- We need to be neutral.
- We need to think about party platforms and how we respond.
- Be very careful with communication.



Ministry of
Forests, Lands and
Natural Resource Operations

BC Wildfire Service

Standard Operating Guideline

for Media Relations

**(in coordination with Government
Communications and Public Engagement)**

Version: 2.0

Program Area: Communications

Effective Date: April 1st, 2016

File Number: ARCS-00330-25

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1. Scope

This guideline applies to BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) information personnel responsible for responding to media queries.

2. Purpose

The objective of this guideline is to ensure media queries are responded to in a standard, efficient manner and according to government policy.

3. Definitions

BCWS – BC Wildfire Service

FIO – Fire Information Officer

GCPE – Government Communications and Public Engagement – Communications department for the Ministry.

CFIO – Chief Fire Information Officer

PWCC – Provincial Wildfire Coordination Centre

4. Guidelines

Media query received outside of core wildfire season

For media inquiries received outside of April through September (wildfire season), advise Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) of all incoming media queries by using the Media Request template (see Appendix 3) before participating in an interview.

Media query received during core wildfire season

Query received by BCWS personnel

Re-direct all media queries to provincial or regional Fire Information Officers (FIO) to coordinate. This ensures all queries are triaged and that reporters receive consistent and timely information.

- Provide FIOs with key response points, if requested
- Stand by in case you are delegated to reply to a media query

Query received by or referred to regional/provincial Fire Information Officer

FIOs are the first points of contact for local media outlets and media will generally contact FIOs before contacting other BCWS personnel.

FIOs will respond immediately if queries are about statutory, emergency or public safety issues. FIOs can provide information on fire activity, restrictions, prevention and season outlook. Refer queries outside of these topics to GCPE (see Appendix 1).

After receiving a query, log the call in a Daily Media Log (see Appendix 4) and send the log to GCPE on a daily basis.

- Prior to June 30th, use the Media Request template (Appendix 3) to inform GCPE before responding to all media queries
- After June 30th, or as calls become more frequent due to increased wildfire activity (determined in consultation with the CFIO and GCPE), distribute the fire centre's daily statistics and planned messaging to GCPE at the start of each day to eliminate the need for a Media Request template for each query
 - It is a best practice to share daily key messages (or prep period key messages) with GCPE – if a media query is not covered by daily key messages, coordinate the response with GCPE

Query received by or referred to GCPE

Some major media outlets will contact GCPE directly and/or FIOs may re-direct media queries regarding policy issues or major fires to GCPE.

GCPE is responsible for:

- Tracking all media inquiries
- Ensuring that the minister has first right of refusal on non-emergency calls
- Liaising with the minister's office on emerging issues
- Developing issues management strategies and notes
- Working on pro-active media relations (ex. news releases and events in advance of long weekends)

GCPE is the year-round, after-hours media contact.

5. Data and Records Management

Regional FIOs will maintain a Daily Media Log (Appendix 4) and distribute this log to GCPE on a daily basis (see Appendix 2 – Key GCPE Contacts and Distribution Lists).

6. References, Resources and Links

Government Communications and Public Engagement website

7. Document History

1	BCWS Media Relations Protocol – 2015 Wildfire Season	June, 2015
2	Converted to new SOG format and minor updates	March, 2016

Madeline Maley

Madeline Maley
Executive Director, BC Wildfire Service

April 1st, 2016

8. Appendices

Other Material

Appendix 1 – Division of Responsibility for Wildfire-Related Topics

Appendix 2 – Key GCPE Contacts and Distribution Lists

Forms

Appendix 3 – Media Request Template

Appendix 4 – Daily Media Log

Appendix 1: Division of Responsibility for Wildfire-Related Topics

Key messages are prepared by the PWCC for most recurring issues. Please review the relevant key messages prior to giving an interview. As the season progresses and key messages are prepared on emerging topics, FIOs may be delegated to speak about those subjects.

Left Column: Free to speak.

Right Column: Minister gets first right of refusal. Please check with GCPE and the PWCC Information section and wait for approval before conducting an interview.

<u>Statutory/Emergency/Public Safety</u>	<u>Coordinate through GCPE/PWCC</u>
<p>Fire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How big is the fire? How much has it grown? • Where is it located? • How many crew members are on it? • What is the terrain? • What is the timber type? • What are the values at risk? • Is any property threatened? • What equipment/tools are being used? • What is the cause of the fire (human vs. lightning)? • Is the fire contained/out? • When did the fire start? • What's the chronology for the initial and expanded attack? • What are the operational objectives? • Can I get access to the fire? • Do you have photos/a map of the fire? • What is the fire doing now? • What do you think the fire will do next? <p>Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of fire season are we going to have? • How many fires are currently burning? • Why are there so many fires burning right now? • What is the fire danger rating in the area right now? • What level of fire activity are you anticipating for the week/weekend? 	<p>Prescribed burns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are they? • How are they conducted? • Why are they done? <p>Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have firefighting operations adapted to deal with MPB-damaged forests? <p><i>Note: FIOs can talk about how fuels (such as MPB-damaged fuels) impact a specific fire's behaviour.</i></p> <p>Climate change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What effect does climate change have on fires? • What effect do fires have on climate change? <p>Employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are you using fire crews that are not local? <p>Fuel management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is fuel management? • What's been done so far in BC? • What role does BCWS play in fuel management? • Can you tell me about Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs)? • Can you tell me about fuel management treatments? • Can you tell me about fuel management funding?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the weather impacting fire activity? How will it impact BCWS activities? • Did/will the lightning storm cause new fires? <p>Fire statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics for fires/causes/hectares burned to date? Last year? Five-year or ten-year average? <p>Prevention and FireSmart program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can I do on my property to help prevent wildfires? • What can my community do? • What do you want people to remember heading into the weekend or this week? • How can you report people who drop cigarette butts? • How much could someone be fined for dropping a cigarette butt? <p>Reporting smoke or fires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I see large amounts of smoke. What's going on? • Which phone numbers can people call to report fires? • How are fires detected? <p>Bans and restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I have a campfire/use fireworks/conduct a backyard burn? • How can people use fire safely? • When will the fire restriction be put in place/removed? • Do the current conditions mean that a fire restriction will be imposed? • Why isn't there a fire restriction in place right now? <p>Basic firefighting operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of crews are used in firefighting? How are they used? • What is the role of airtankers/bird dogs/helicopters in firefighting? • What is meant by the terms "burning off", "back burning" and "burning out"? 	<p>Air Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the Martin Mars water bomber no longer used in BC? • How is testing of the RJ85 progressing? <p>Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the firefighting budget this year? • How is that budget determined? • How much money is being spent provincially? • How much money has been spent to date? • How does this year's spending compare to previous years? <p>Forest Enhancement Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the society deliver wildfire risk reduction activities? • Where are treatments planned? <p>Out-of-province and international deployments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who pays for resource sharing? • What are the details of this exchange? • What is the history of out-of-province and international deployment agreements? • Why are we importing firefighting resources when we have local crews/people who are unemployed? <p>Resources and preparedness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What preparations are being made for the upcoming fire season? • What are the statistics for this year? • When will the new fire crews start? • When will firefighting resources be put in place? • Do we have adequate resources for the current fire season? What are our contingencies? • Are First Nations firefighting crews being used? • What can you tell me about employment equity in the BC Wildfire Service? • How much do employees get paid? <p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you comment on the current court case related to (...)?
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by the terms “patrol”, “mop-up” and “modified response”? • How are fires prioritized? • Do firefighting crews work at night? <p>Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps are being taken on this fire to ensure safety? • What actions will be taken on this fire operation if public safety is threatened? <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you tell me about this year’s new recruit boot camps? • How many people are attending the boot camps? • How many new crew members will be hired? • Why are all these BCWS people here? • Why are aircraft going back and forth? • What are the firefighter training standards for B.C.? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it mean when the <i>Wildfire Act</i> says (...)? <p>Corporate messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the mandate of the BC Wildfire Service? • What is the BCWS going to do about (...) in the long term? • How does the BCWS feel about (...)? • What is the history of the BCWS? <p>Interface fires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is an interface fire? • What are the structural loss details? • What’s happening with the evacuation? <i>Note: FIOs may talk about tactical evacuations conducted by BCWS staff. Please share messaging with GCPE.</i> <p>Accidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the details of the accident? <p>Fire response timelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did BCWS take so long to respond?
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Appendix 2: Key Government Communications and Public Engagement Contacts and Distribution Lists 2016

This list is current as of January, 2016. Contact the Provincial Fire Information Officer for up-to-date contacts and lists.

Key GCPE Contacts:

- Greig Bethel (Media Relations, GCPE FLNR): 250 356-5261; Greig.Bethel@gov.bc.ca
- Vivian Thomas (Communications Director, GCPE FLNR): 250 356-2475; Vivian.Thomas@gov.bc.ca
- Sharon Dean (Communications Manager, GCPE FLNR): 250 356-6998; Sharon.Dean@gov.bc.ca
- Thomas Winterhoff (Public Affairs Officer, GCPE FLNR): 250 356-2133; Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca
- Generic GCPE FLNR Media Requests Mailbox: FLNRO.MediaRequests@gov.bc.ca

Distribution Lists:

Media Requests:

- Greig Bethel, GCPE FLNR Media Requests, Vivian Thomas, Sharon Dean and Thomas Winterhoff
- For a contentious issue with provincial ramifications, copy in the Chief Fire Information Officer (CFIO)

Daily Media Logs:

- Greig Bethel, Sharon Dean, Vivian Thomas, GCPE FLNR Media Requests and CFIO

Information Bulletins to be distributed by GCPE:

- Thomas Winterhoff, Vivian Thomas, Sharon Dean and CFIO

Information Bulletins issued directly by fire centres (operational):

- Vivian Thomas, Sharon Dean, Thomas Winterhoff, Greig Bethel, EMBC Communications contacts, and the “FLNR BCWS Information Officer” and “GCPE FLNR Media Requests” distribution lists the GAL

Appendix 3: Media Request template

Media Request Template

Use this template when forwarding media requests to GCPE. Response points are essential unless there are pre-approved messages available on the topic.

Date/Time:

Deadline:

Media outlet:


Reporter

Contact phone number and/or email address:

Topic/Questions:

Response Points:

Appendix 4: Sample Daily Media Log



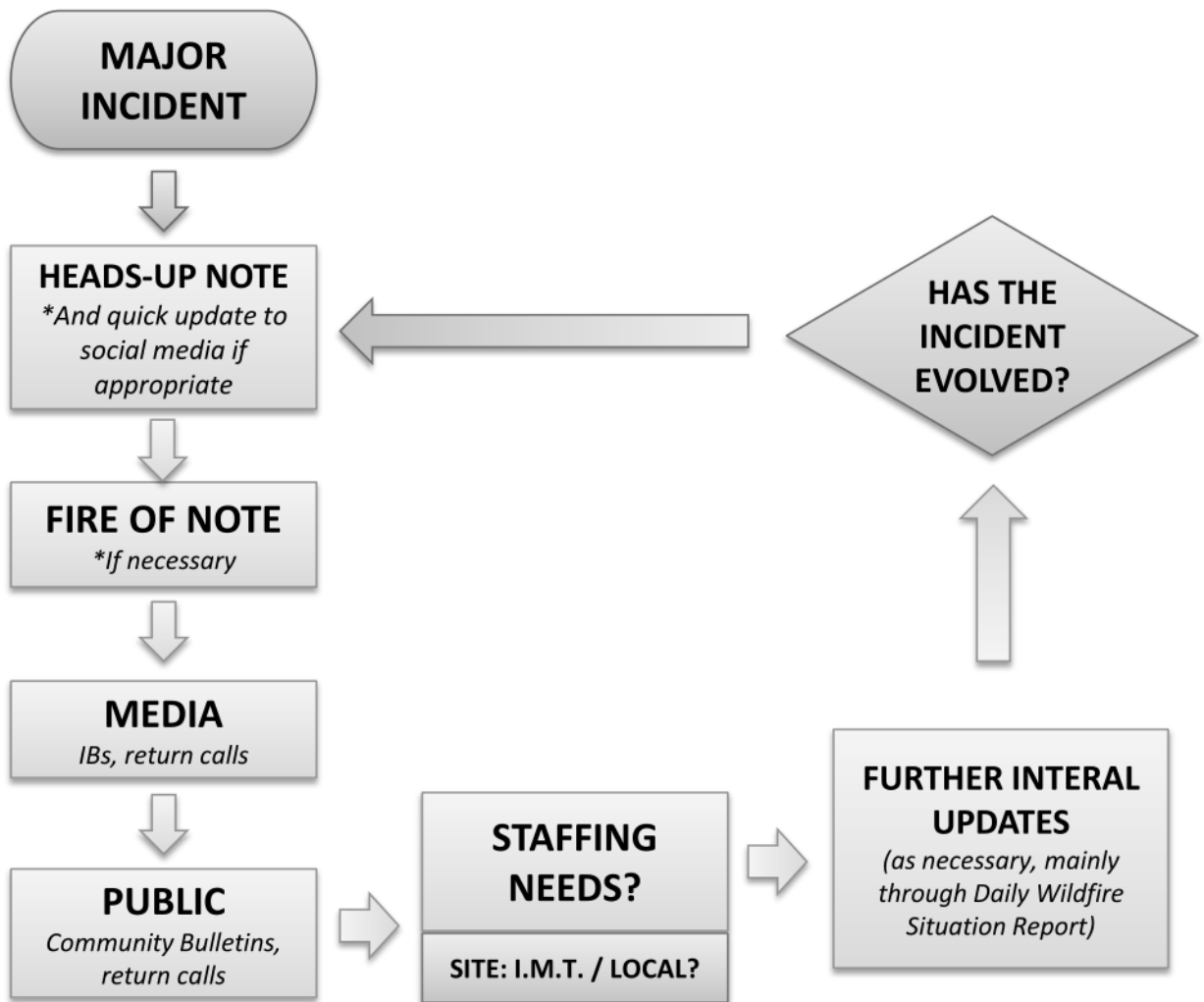
**Ministry of
Forests, Lands and
Natural Resource Operations**

IMPORTANT: Please ensure your logs are entered consistently, are free of any errors or typos, and are completed by all LQs in your Fire Centre including site-level LQs. The data captured in this log will be consolidated with and compared to other Fire Centre / PWCC media logs. Only one log per news story is needed, even if a journalist contacted you multiple times regarding the same story.

SUBMIT TO GCPE DAILY								
Date (hit "CTRL" + "2")	Media Outlet	Reporter/Anchor	Subject	Completed By	Interview Format	Live interview? <small>(hit "x" if true)</small>	Site-level interview? <small>(hit "x" if true)</small>	During standby? <small>(hit "x" if true)</small>
2016-01-18	CBC Vancouver	Nadia Jannif	s.22	Kevin Skrepnek	Email only			
2016-01-18	Vancouver Sun	Matt Robinson		Kevin Skrepnek	Email only			
2016-01-18	Global BC	Annie Wong		Kevin Skrepnek	Email only			
2016-01-18	Canadian Press	Camille Bains		Kevin Skrepnek	Email only			
2016-01-26	Radio NL Kamloops	Jim Harrison	BCWS recruiting	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone			
2016-01-28	CBC Kamloops	Shelley Joyce	BCWS recruiting	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone	x		
2016-01-28	Eagle FM Courtney	Bill Nation	BCWS recruiting	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone			
2016-02-18	News 1130	Simon Druker	Season outlook, preparation	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone			
2016-02-18	Alaska Highway News	Mike Carter	Season outlook, preparation	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone			
2016-02-23	Alaska Highway News	Mike Carter	Season outlook, preparation	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone			
2016-03-07	Vancouver Sun	Derrick Penner	2015 UAV trials	Kevin Skrepnek	Phone			

A copy of the most recent Daily Media Log template can be found in the Communications Working Group shared folder at s.17, s.22

INFORMATION PRIORITIES

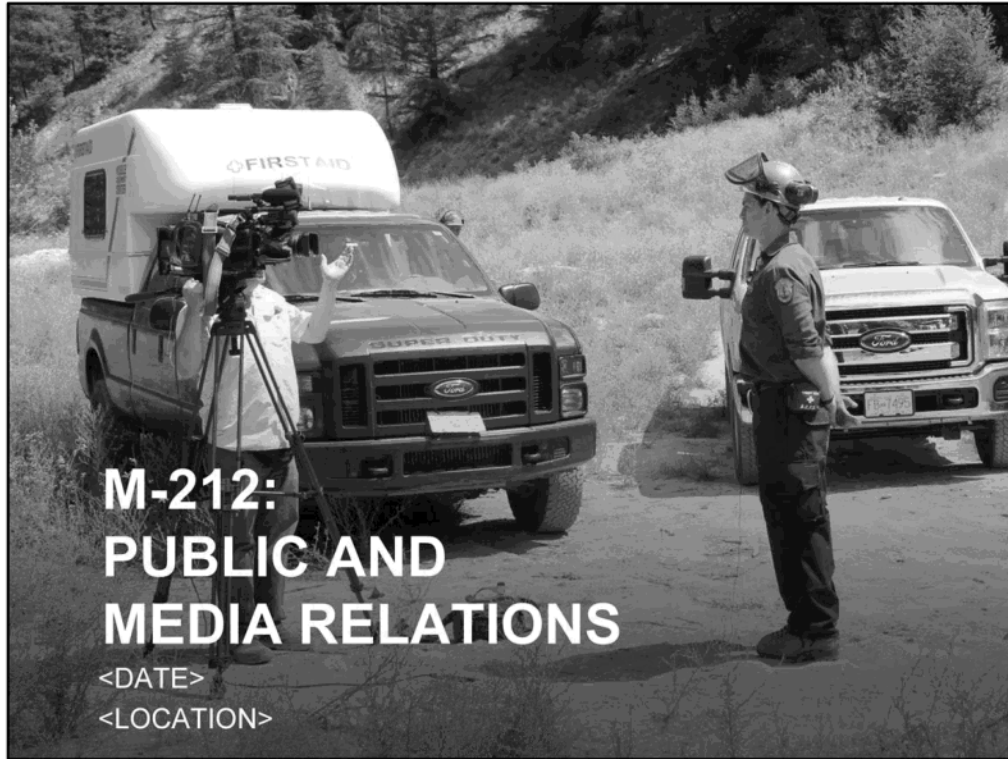


Options to reduce “one-off” media calls:

Daily media briefings at a set time

Soundcloud

Voicemail – direct callers to other sources (bcwildfire.ca, etc)



- Introduce yourself, and outline the structure of the course.
- Take care of any housekeeping, etc.
- Distribute the following handouts: **BCWS Media Cheatsheet** and **BCWS Social Media Guidelines**

By the end of this course, you will:

- 1** Understand the structure and protocols for external communications in the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS)
- 2** Practice conducting interviews with the media in fireline and non-fireline situations
- 3** Gain knowledge of the importance of social media for the BCWS and you as staff

By the end of this course, you will accomplish three things:

1. You learn the structure and protocols that BCWS personnel are expected to follow when representing the organization in a media interview.
2. You will participate in mock interview scenarios which will help prepare you for **real** media interviews, both on and off of the fireline.
3. You will learn why social media is important to the BCWS, and why your conduct on social media affects our reputation.

When would you do an interview?

- When “ambushed” by media on the fireline
- When the Information Officer :
 - Is unavailable – at the Coordination Centre or too far away to assist
 - Requires additional help during busy periods
- You’re the appropriate person to interview when:
 - You are an expert in subject area (i.e. beyond the scope of the Information Officer)
 - Remember that in ICS, as Incident Commander – you ARE the Information Officer on site

Before you begin this slide, ask if any students have completed media interviews in the past.

- If they have, ask what their experience was.

Use this slide to explain why BCWS personnel are sometimes required to complete media interviews.

Media process in the BCWS:

- 1** Let the fire centre or site level Information Officer know you have media on site/a media request.
- 2** Brief the Information Officer with facts or fire/event details, if requested.
- 3** Stand-by in case you are delegated to respond.
- 4** Let the Information Officer know how the interview went.

#1:

Involve the Fire Information Officer to help you out – this will allow you some time to get prepared or find the most appropriate person to respond

#2:

This will allow you to sort out the details in preparation for an interview

Also will allow you to assess if there are any difficult questions or bigger issues

#3

If the media are on site, they will want to interview someone on site. You may be the best person.

#4

The information officer needs to know the interview is complete so that they can be sure the media have what they need

Let them know if it seems they may need any further attention. Were there any points you couldn't answer...did they get the footage they needed...do they need

provincial stats that you don't have...

Remember:

When you speak for the BCWS, you are part of a team

What you say has impact for us all – positive and negative.

The sooner they get what they need, the sooner they will leave

To get you thinking about media relations, let's start by watching a short video example of a firefighter interview with a disregard for process followed by another interview of a firefighter who was designated to give an interview on short notice after following process.

After we will discuss what went well and what didn't?

SHOW: Video 1 - Bad Interview Example s.22 Discuss some of the issues.

SHOW: Video 2 - Good Interview Example s.22 Discuss what went well.

Ministry of **Forests, Lands and
Natural Resource Operations**

Never, ever:

- Say “no comment”

s.13

- Never speculate (i.e. the cause of the fire)
- Go “off the record”
- Wing it
- Speak beyond your knowledge or expertise (danger topics)
- Make promises you can’t keep

WRITE ON WHITEBOARD:

s.13

SHOW: Video 3 - Danger Topics | s.22

- What are the danger topics in this video? What should s.22 have done differently (Answer: *“I am not the best person to speak to this, but I can get you in touch with someone who is”*)?

When a standard interview becomes a crisis interview:

- Destruction of homes or property
- Stress related reactions by agency personnel or members of the public
- Equipment accident or downed aircraft
- Alcohol and drug abuse among staff
- Criminal records or violence in the workplace
- Sexual harassment and discrimination
- Staff breaking the law
- Injury or fatality

Use this slide to explain scenarios that can increase the stakes of a media interview.

Our goals in every interview

- ☒ Be understood by the audience
- ☒ Show effective visuals of crews in proper PPE
- ☒ Keep messaging consistent with FC/PWCC
- ☒ Professional representation
- ☒ Build media/public relations

Everything you do in reds and blues reflects the Ministry and we want to make sure that you feel prepared to complete an interview if designated to do so. At an incident fire, media want the best shot. They want to hike in, get footage of flames and portray the fire in the best way they can. This requires facilitation often from the information officer on site. **Always make sure the IC has approved taking media on site and messaging has been approved prior to conducting an interview.**

What are the media's goals/wants?

1. Good sound bites
2. Interesting visuals

- 1) A good sound bite (a 5-10 second burst that says it all)
 - A bite is something like: Tell me about the fire?
 - *"This fire started early this afternoon, and grew to 10 ha due to strong winds in the area. WMB is responding with 2 helicopters, 15 personnel and 3 pieces of heavy equipment. The fire is suspected to be person-caused; however, the specific cause is under investigation."*
- 2) Some interesting visuals such as flame, crews working, airtankers, helicopters, an aerial view, photos etc. **All photos taken by WMB staff that will be used for the public website, social media, or for media distribution must be approved by the IC beforehand.**

If you are asked a media question that makes you feel uncomfortable, you can divert the question by saying, *"That's an interesting question, but I'd like to tell you..."* or by saying, *"I am not the best person to speak to that, but I could get you in touch with someone that is"* (Get the media's contact information and pass it on to the FIO to follow up with the appropriate person). If the media persist in a question you don't want to answer, persist in the answer you want to give them.

- “The cause of the fire is under investigation”
- “The cause of the fire is under investigation”
- “The cause of the fire is under investigation”

Other tips to know when conducting interviews:

- Rarely will you be shot live, so you get do-overs.
- It’s all going to tape and will be edited.
- The reporter wants a good bite, even if you do it six times.
- When it comes to video, it’s fine to refer to notes or to ask if you can say your response again if you make an error.
- Always look at the reporter when speaking, not the camera.



Always make sure you have approval from the IC prior to taking media to an incident fire. The first thing you should do when media show up to a site is:

- Provide a safety briefing (this preferable should be conducted by the IC; however, if the IC is unavailable a safety briefing may also be given by an air ops branch director, an ops chief, a crew leader, a division supervisor and/or branch director).
- Inform the media where they can stand safely and outline perimeter boundaries for filming and taking photos.
- Remind them that this is your worksite and WorkSafe BC rules apply.

Other things to be mindful of when conducting interviews or tours with media:

- Don't expect them to know how to be safe
- Don't expect them to see danger
- A lens has small field so they will likely have poor situational awareness

All media must wear appropriate clothing when on site. This includes:

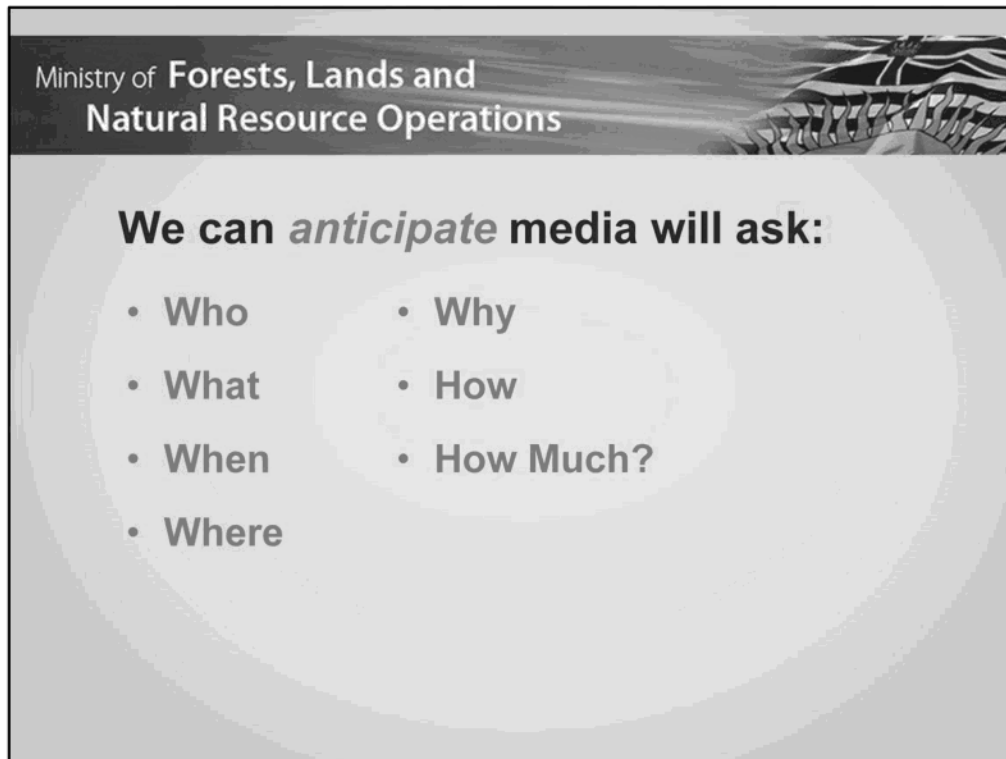
- Hard hat
- High visibility vest

- Suitable Footwear (such as hiking boots) and clothing (ie. non-synthetic clothing that covers arms and legs)
- If media are getting a heli tour, they must wear reds and blues (ask the Information Officer for this)
- Eye protection may also be required

If media show up in poor clothing, point it out to them. Express polite regret that they may be limited to where they can go, due to safety concerns.

Please note: If they have shown up in poor clothing, point it out to them. Express polite regret that they may be limited to where they can go, due to safety concerns. Under the *Workers Compensation Act* WMB staff is responsible for the safety of all individuals on site. A designated WMB rep must escort media at all times and point out safety hazards. If you're unsure, contact a site supervisor or information officer.

Again, what is the first thing you should do when media show up with cameras? **Tell them where they can stand safely, so they can start filming while you get things sorted out.** Let them tell you, so that you establish your willingness to cooperate. This will give you an idea of what they're looking for, so you can help them on their way.



This is what the public needs to know to understand the situation and how it relates to them – this will make WMB look good and keep the public calm. Even though you may anticipate these questions, you still have a right to know what kind of interview the media want. If the questions veer into areas you are not comfortable with during the interview, say so and regroup. For example, *“I wasn’t aware you wished to ask that question. I am not the best person to answer that. I will have the FIO follow-up with you on that”*

Give the media the FIO’s number, or get their contact information and pass it on to the FIO to follow up.

SHOW: Video 4 - Anticipating Questions^{s.22} Ask the question: What could ^{s.22} have done differently? Comment on how key messages can help you respond eloquently to tricky questions. What key messages could ^{s.22} have said?

Avoid jargon, use simple messaging

- What grade level do we speak to?
- If you can't avoid jargon, follow-up with:

“

by this I mean...

OR

“

this means that...

We speak to Grade 3 level.

Translate this:

(1/2)

- The fire is 18,000 hectares with a Type 1 IMT on site.
- 2 IA crews are setting up the SPU's and 6 unit crews working on the fire.
- 2 heavies, an intermediate and a light are bx right now.
- A dry cold front has dropped the RH and created some gusty winds this am.

Ask students to simplify the sentences on this slide to Grade 3-level language.

Translate this:

(2/2)

- Volatile fire conditions up to Rank 5/6 are expected.
- The DMC in the area is 80 and we are expecting 1x over the weekend.

Ask students to simplify the sentences on this slide to Grade 3-level language.

Body language:

- Lean slightly forward, one foot slightly further forward than the other.
- **Gestures are great!**
- No gum. No hands in pockets.
- Look at the reporter. Aim for 100% of the time.
(Real life is around 40-60% - it will feel strange)

Use this slide to demonstrate proper body language for interview situations.

Voice:

- Increase your volume.
- Be energised – pretend you are speaking to people at a dinner party and want them to focus on you for the story.
- Intonation should imply statements. Not questions.
- Connect your content with your tone and body language

Use this slide to demonstrate proper vocal technique for interview situations.

EXAMPLE: House fire interview

- What would you do differently?
- Body language?
- Jargon?
- Danger topics?
- What key messages would you use for this incident?

Show Video 5 - Bad Interview Example 2^{s.22} . Discuss what you would do differently. **Video 6 - Good Interview Example 2** (s.22) . Discuss what works for these interviews.

SCENARIO:

- You're the IC on an interface fire.
- A tractor accidentally lit up farm fields (approximately 4 ha adjacent to the highway).
- There are two IA crews on site and a unit crew is en route.
- You've called for tankers, but none have arrived yet.
- The fire is creating a lot of smoke, making it very visible and people are stopping on the side of the highway.
- At least a dozen community personnel are helping your IA crews put out the fire.
- There are homes and farms nearby, but nothing immediately threatened.
- You have a handle on the fire and the media is desperate for an interview when they show up.

Distribute a copy of the following printout to each student: **Handout – Scenario.docx**

Have someone from the class read the scenario and have the interviewee answer a few questions from “the media” (Global TV). Ask what students believe should be done first (before they begin an interview with the media)? Answer: You should get the “go-ahead” from your fire centre. **Always contact your IC or FIO to receive approval of your messaging.**

SCENARIO: Questions

- When did the fire start?
- How did the fire start?
- How big is the fire?
- Is it growing quickly?
- How many firefighters and resources are working on the fire?
- Is the fire threatening anything or anyone?
- Are there evacuations?
- What is the budget for fighting this fire?
- Is there anything else the public should know?

OPTIONAL: If you planned to record mock interviews, this is the point where you will set up for that.

Interview Questions:

- 1) When and how did the fire start? Answer: The fire started on “Saturday”. When you talk about fire cause – use either “person” or “lightning”. If you do not know, say it’s under investigation.
- 2) How big is the fire? Is it growing quickly? Answer: The fire is 15 ha. We are experiencing some wind. The fire hasn’t grown since . . .
- 3) How many firefighters, airtankers, heavy equipment and helicopters are working on the fire? Answer: We have 20 firefighters (refrain from using jargon – “unit crew”). Pretend you’re talking to your friends and family.
- 4) Is the fire threatening anything or anyone? Answer: If it’s obviously threatening something, don’t pretend it’s not. Give them the truth. You can mention there are *“houses in the area and our first priority is protecting life and property”*. **If an evacuation has been issued, redirect all evacuation questions to the Regional District.** We speak to fire activity and the Regional District speaks to Evacuation Orders and Alerts. If an Evacuation Order or

Alert hasn't already been announced, do not be the one to announce it. Wait until the Regional District releases this information.

- 5) What is the budget for fighting this fire? Answer: "I'm not the best person to answer this question, but I can find someone who could comment after this interview." **Do not answer something you don't know.**
- 6) Is there anything else the public should know? Answer: If you have the opportunity, throw in some prevention messaging. Urge the public to be responsible with fire, and report wildfires or smoke columns to *5555 on a cell or 1 800 663-5555

Now that you have seen a few examples of interviews, good/bad/ugly....I'm going give you a rundown of 4 protocol steps you should follow when dealing with the media. For more information, you can always refer to the M-212 Communications Work Plan.

Crisis comm. & social media:

- If we don't speak, someone else will
- Timely information updates are key to avoiding the information vacuum and ensuring public safety
- There are no more "secrets." People listen to our scanners and Tweet what we say!

An emerging issue is anything that will impact public opinion, public safety, or be of concern to the public. It is always important to notify the IO with emerging issues. Give the IO any information you have – do not wait until you know all details. Update him or her with information as it becomes available. This will allow the IO to be proactive and crush any surfacing issues.



Unfortunately, in this day and age, we're often finding out about fires from the media/public and social media. Because of this, once the public posts the first wildfire facts, we're often coming out, in reaction to, the first information that became "public knowledge".

SCAN BC has 86,000 followers on Twitter and KamScan has 2,200 follower on Twitter.

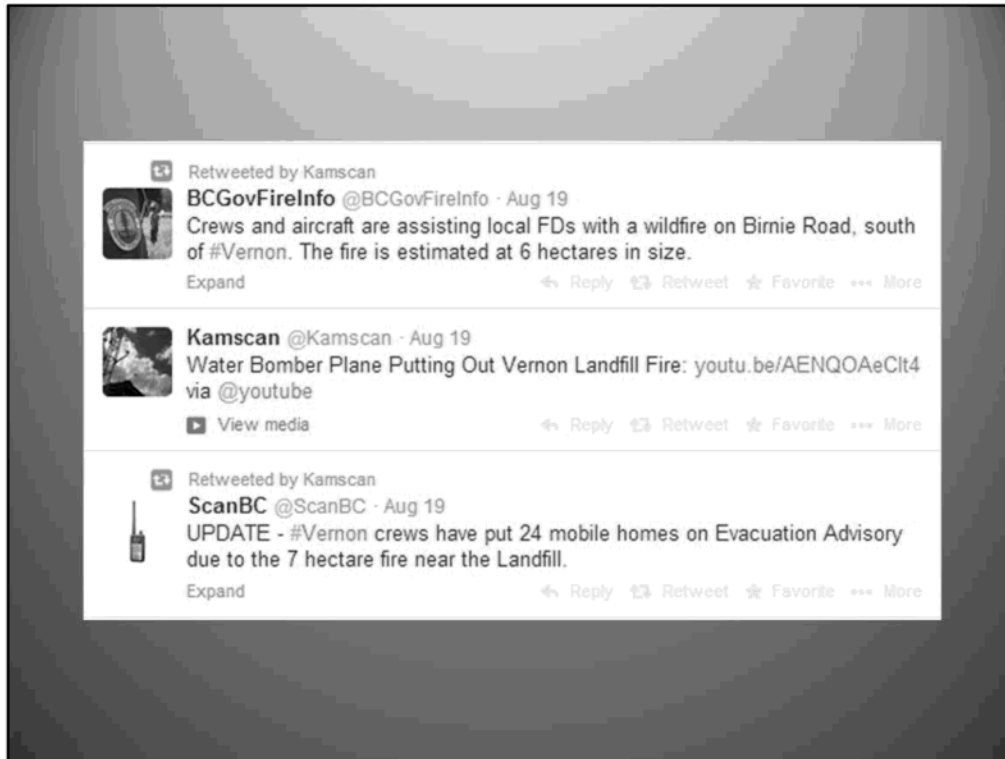
Play Scan BC's stream for Kamloops:

http://www.scanbc.com/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page

The public is also posting photos, timing airtankers drops, response times, and “meaty issues” they hear on these scanners.

Play public YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AENQOAeCl4&feature=youtu.be>. This video demonstrates how WMB is always in the public eye and how rumors can start (see comments below video).



This slide shows the interaction between agencies. Between these 3 Twitter accounts, it reaches a combined audience of 126,000+ people . . . potential for lots of rumour control!

Ministry of **Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

Social media:

- Reaches a broad audience at the same time
- Enables 2-way communications
- Creates an online “community”
- Great venue for video and photo sharing

BC Wildfire Service social media audience:

Twitter: 15,000 followers

Facebook: 82,500 likes



You're trusted with the responsibility to make important decisions both on and off the fireline, so of course we trust you to use sites like Facebook and Twitter responsibly.

Just remember:

- Keep it professional—what you do in uniform represents WMB as a whole.
Please refrain from answering public questions on the BC Forest Fire Info Facebook page
- Code of conduct still applies
- Use common sense

Copyright

How can your information officers can help you?

- Promote the hard work of your staff internally or externally (social media, newsletters etc.)
- Help you manage risk communications around emerging issues
- Support public education and outreach (Smokey!)
- Provide information about burning prohibitions
- Help you build relationships with stakeholders
- And of course, be there for media requests!

You can also direct media inquiries to the PWCC Information media line at 250-312-3051, and we can forward the media to the necessary information officer for that region.

Questions? Contact us!

More information at www.bcwildfire.ca or...



@BCGovFireInfo



/BCForestFireInfo



FireSmartCanada.ca

BCWS MEDIA RELATIONS POCKET GUIDE

Media Process at BCWS

1. When media arrive on site, tell them where they can safely stand because they may want to start filming or taking photos.
2. Contact the site IO or designate someone to complete the interview. If there is no site IO, call:

PWCC: 250 312-3051 | **KFC:** 250 554-5965 | **SEFC:** 250 608-1755 | **CoFC:** 250 951-4209
CFC: 250 392-0171 | **PGFC:** 250 961-4176 | **NWFC:** 250-877-9356

3. Inform the IO of who will be delivering the interview and what key messages will be used. **Ensure the key messages are approved and consistent!**
4. Complete the interview and notify the IO if there is any need to follow up with the journalist.

Interview Content

Only talk about your incident. Refer the media to an IO if the following topics are brought up:

s.13

You don't have to answer every question a journalist asks you. If you aren't prepared to answer a question, you can always say, "Sorry, I'm not the best person to speak to about [insert topic], I can refer you to someone who is." And then give them the IO's phone number.

Try to end your interview with a prevention message, FireSmart tip or by reciting "1-800-663-5555/*5555" or "www.bcwildfire.ca"

THE FIVE Ws: ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS FROM A REPORTER

**Defer questions in red to IO or local government*

WHO:

Number of resources, agencies involved (assisting FD?), affected population? (**local gov't speaks to evacs*)

WHEN:

Ignition? Response time? Estimated extinguish time?
s.13

WHAT:

Fire behaviour, fuel type, tactics being used (air and ground etc.), top priorities (safety, life, property)

WHY:

Fire cause – only use either "suspected human-caused and under investigation" or "lightning-caused"

WHERE:

Proximity to landmark, area restrictions, etc.

HOW MANY / MUCH:

Hectares burned, how many dollars spent

Setting Up and Completing the Interview

It's your work site, so ensure you are available to give an effective interview. Remember: the quicker the media get their interview, the quicker they will leave. **Here's what the media are looking for and how you can easily accommodate:**

WHAT THE MEDIA WANTS:	HOW TO DELIVER:
Visuals—Reds, Blues and Orange	Escort media to a spot where they can get visuals of crews working and/or open flame. They may also want helicopter and airtanker footage, but showing our crews demonstrates that <i>aircraft don't put our fires, people do</i> . Make sure the on-site interview is approved by the IC or designate.
Make you look credible	As a FLNRO representative, you're seen in a position of authority. Therefore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Check yourself for proper PPE—button up and tuck in your shirt, roll down your sleeves ➤ No gum, chew, sunglasses, baseball hats, hands in pockets ➤ Look at the reporter, not the cameraperson ➤ Be cognizant of what's behind you ➤ Connect your content with your tone and body language
Make you sound credible	Ask the reporter ahead of time what questions you might be asked so you can prepare. If something is beyond your scope, let them know. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Be energized – pretend you are giving a presentation ➤ Intonation should imply statements, not questions. ➤ Answer questions with full sentences to ensure context and clarity ➤ It's fine to refer to notes
The "Sound Bite"	A sound bite is a 5-10 second quote that says it all—to achieve a sound bite: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Speak concisely, minimizing "ums" or "ahs" ➤ Most interviews are pre-recorded, so it's fine to ask for a do-over ➤ The reporter may rephrase the question to get the sound bite they want
Helicopter Flights	Because the fire is under a NOTAM (closed to media helicopters and drones), as part of maintaining media relations we try to set up short reccees for media. If requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Notify the IC/Ops/Air to arrange a time and meeting place ➤ If multiple media outlets are present, let them decide who will go up with a BCWS representative to get the footage ➤ Apply the same rules to media as ourselves (full PPE required)

Media Safety

- If reporters have shown up in poor clothing, point it out to them. Express polite regret that they may be limited to where they can go, due to safety concerns.
- **Media PPE Includes:** hard hat, suitable footwear, non-synthetic clothing that covers arms and legs. A high-visibility vest and eye protection may also be required.
- Under *Workers Compensation Act* BCWS staff are responsible for the safety of all individuals on site. A designated WMB rep must escort media at all times and point out safety hazards. If you're unsure, contact site supervisor or information officer.

Goals

Clear, consistent messaging | Effective visuals | Professional representation | Building media & public relations

Appendix A
SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE B.C. WILDFIRE SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Social media is an increasingly important part of our day-to-day lives. While it has empowered us all to stay connected and informed, it also poses new challenges – especially for organizations using social media to connect with the public.

Given the important mandate of the BC Wildfire Service, it's clear that the government of British Columbia puts a great deal of trust in our staff. This extends to our use of social media, both privately and professionally. We are trusted to be responsible in our use of these tools, just as we are trusted in all aspects of our work.

QUICK FACTS: BCWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- The BCWS Facebook and Twitter channels were set up during the 2009 fire season. Since then they have become an integral part of our communication with the public.
- As of March 2016, we have over 82,000 likes on Facebook and 15,000 followers on Twitter.
- Social media gives us a direct channel of communication to the public. This is invaluable when trying to get out important fire information that could affect public safety
- In a single day during the 2015 season our social media content reached over 1.1 million people
- During interface fires our social media channels are flooded with questions from the public. This allows us to get out accurate information to the people who need it, and dispel any rumours that could be circulating.
- Our social media feeds are managed by the provincial fire information team at the PWCC.
- During fire season, social media is monitored 7 days a week and sometimes up to 24 hours a day. Provincial Information Officers work with regional and site level staff to coordinate responses
- An annual social media plan is assembled to determine how our channels will be used, both for operational needs and for public outreach.
- We are one of the only organizations in the entire B.C. government allowed to directly engage with the public on social media.
- Information released to the public on our channels is treated just like information sent to the media – it requires approval from an Incident Commander or RWCO/PWCO.

DO'S AND DON'T'S

	DO	DON'T
BCWS social media accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ...follow us on Facebook and Twitter and encourage your friends and family to do the same. The larger our following, the more effective we can be at reaching the public with important fire information• ...send us content to post – photos, videos, etc. The public loves to see the work of our staff, and the media is always looking for multimedia from the fireline. You can contact the provincial info team at the address on the bottom of this page.• ...give us feedback. If you think there is something we could be doing better, or you have an idea for a social media campaign – let us know.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ...post on the BCWS Facebook page in a work capacity – that is the job of the provincial info team. Only authorized staff should be answering questions from the public or posting information about fires.• ...publically post content to BCWS social media feeds that could be seen as critical of the Branch, especially if you identify yourselves as a government employee.• ...start your own social media account around BCWS activities (ie. for your crew, section or program). Government-affiliated social media accounts require a business plan and approval through the Minister's Office.

Appendix A
SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE B.C. WILDFIRE SERVICE

	DO	DON'T
Personal social media accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...take pride in your work on social media. There is nothing wrong with posting a photo of you and your crew after a long day of hard work on the fireline, or congratulating your coworkers after coming back safe from a deployment. • ...if you identify yourself as a government employee on your social media profiles, be aware of what content you are posting and how it could be interpreted by the public. • ...be aware of the current privacy settings of your social media profiles. When social networks undergo updates, these settings can be changed without you necessarily being aware. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...post inappropriate multimedia of yourself while in uniform or working – use common sense. We are public servants and must be mindful of the taxpayer's perspective. Assume that everything you put on social media might be viewed by the public or media. • ...overuse social media while at work. Also keep in mind that you won't be compensated for the loss of personal items, like smartphones and cameras, if they're broken while at work (ie. on the fireline). • ...post anything to social media that you wouldn't feel comfortable saying in public, or to a reporter.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

As employees of the BC Public Service, we all adhere to the Standards of Conduct, which can be accessed via MyHR:
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/myhr/article.page?ContentID=45bf7662-adf9-8a5f-74f1-657fedd69edf>.

Certain sections are of particular importance in regards to use of social media. They include:

Loyalty --- Confidentiality --- Public comments --- Political activity

You can find more about these sections, and government-wide guidelines regarding social media here:
<https://www.gov.bc.ca/gov20/social-media/standards-conduct>

MORE INFORMATION

If you have any feedback regarding this document or BCWS social media activity, feel free to contact the Provincial Fire Info team at:

Twitter:	https://twitter.com/BCGovFireInfo
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo
Email:	FireInfo@gov.bc.ca
Telephone:	250-312-3051

Scenario:

You're the IC on an interface fire.

A tractor accidentally lit up farm fields (approximately 4 ha adjacent to the highway).

There are two IA crews on site and a unit crew is en route.

You've called for tankers, but none have arrived yet.

The fire is creating a lot of smoke, making it very visible and people are stopping on the side of the highway.

At least a dozen community personnel are helping your IA crews put out the fire.

There are homes and farms nearby, but nothing immediately threatened.

You have a handle on the fire and the media is desperate for an interview when they show up.

Questions:

- When did the fire start?
- How did the fire start?
- How big is the fire?
- Is it growing quickly?
- Is the fire threatening anything or anyone?
- What are you doing to fight this fire?
- Are there evacuations?
- What is the budget for fighting this fire?
- Is there anything else the public should know?