



Responsible Manager	Chief Executive Officer		
Contact Officer	Policy and Communications Coordinator		
Superseded Documents			
Review	November 2016		
Associated Documents	Media Relations Procedure Media Relations Guidelines		
Version	Authorisation	Approval Date	Effective Date
1.0	USANZ Board of Directors	29 November 2014	10 June 2015

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope

Introduction

The media is a vital partner in achieving the goals of the USANZ, and 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.

This policy aims 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.

When engaging with the media, staff, Board members, members and trainee members 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 the USANZ.

Please note: The official spokesperson of the USANZ is the USANZ President.

Purpose

The USANZ and its members work with the media in order to:

- advocate for the goals of the organisation;
- promote the work of the organisation and its members;
- inform the public of the details of the organisation;
- build community knowledge about urological issues;
- build positive public opinion of members' work;

The purpose of this policy is to provide an effective and efficient framework to facilitate the timely and accurate, unbiased dissemination of information.

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



The media themselves have a vital role to play on behalf of the community in holding the USANZ 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, the USANZ 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 (if necessary using other channels of communication).

It is the responsibility of all staff, board members and contractors to ensure that effective media relations are maintained in order to achieve the aims of the USANZ.

Scope

This policy applies to all USANZ Staff, contractors, members and trainee members.

2. Definitions

Media: refers to all external news media including broadcast, electronic, social and print.

Social Media: See the USANZ Social Media Policy

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Values Statement

The USANZ operates on the values of

- **Honesty:** The USANZ will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.
- **Transparency:** The USANZ will promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, while 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 the USANZ will, as far as is possible, be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

The USANZ should 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 the USANZ should only be made by staff, Board members and members where they have:

- consulted the President, Chief Executive Officer or USANZ Media Advisor;
- the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion; and
- some experience in media relations.



Where any of these criteria do not apply, staff, contractors, Board members and USANZ members are recommended to exercise extreme caution and to seek guidance from the CEO or President of the USANZ.

When engaging with the media of behalf of the USANZ, all Staff and members must comply with the [Royal Australia College of Surgeons' Code of Conduct](#).

3.2 Advertising

USANZ members will comply with the [Royal Australia College of Surgeons' Code of Conduct](#), which provides the minimum standards applicable to surgeons regarding advertising.

According to the *Code of Conduct*, "a surgeon will

1. provide only clear, factually correct and verifiable information
2. be responsible for any advertising issued on their behalf (the subjective intention of the surgeon in advertising is irrelevant when compared to the objective content of the advertisement)."¹

3.3 Patient Privacy

USANZ members will comply with the [Royal Australia College of Surgeons' Code of Conduct](#) in relation to patient privacy, which states that "a surgeon will...actively protect the privacy of their patients within the confines of law."²

4. Legal & Policy Framework

[Royal Australian College of Surgeons \(RACS\) Code of Conduct](#)

[RACS Handling Potential Breaches Code](#)

[AHPRA Guidelines for advertising regulated health services](#)

[AHPRA Social Media Policy](#)

5. Implementation

5.1 Roles & Responsibilities

The USANZ appoints official media spokespeople to increase public awareness and understanding of USANZ and the services that our membership provides to the community.

The Policy and **Communications Coordinator** is responsible for coordinating relationships with the media.

¹ Royal Australian College of Surgeons, *Code of Conduct*, 2011,
http://www.surgeons.org/media/346446/pos_2011_02_24_code_of_conduct_2011.pdf, p. 16

² *Ibid.*, p. 6



The President of the USANZ is the *official spokesperson* for the USANZ within Australia. If the President is not available or if the topic is out of his/her area of expertise, then he or she may nominate a representative, such as the Vice-President or a SAG Leader.

The Chair of the New Zealand Section is the official spokesperson for the USANZ within New Zealand. If unavailable, then he or she may nominate a representative.

Other **staff, Board members and USANZ members** are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the USANZ Media Advisor, CEO or President before talking to the media on any issue related to the USANZ.

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the President and/or Chief Executive Officer shall determine the most appropriate person to respond.

Staff, Board members, USANZ members and third parties are encouraged to deliver public presentations that discuss the USANZ's work and its goals, provided that they make it clear where such presentations are or are not authorised by the organisation.

All **staff, Board members and USANZ members** must observe their obligations regarding patient privacy in relation to client records as per the RACS Code of Conduct.

The official **Media Advisor** engaged by the USANZ is responsible for ensuring that statements and responses reflect the values of the USANZ. The Media Advisor provides the following services to USANZ members and staff:

- executes the USANZ media strategy;
- provides strategic media advice, focusing on how media opportunities can be best managed to the specific story;
- develops the key messages of the story, in consultation with members, the President, Vice-President, CEO and SAG Leaders;
- manages chain of command approval (President or SAG Leader) for the release of information to ensure consistency is maintained;
- writes and distributes media releases on behalf of USANZ;
- sources photographs or digital images;
- identifies appropriate USANZ spokespersons;
- coordinates media interviews;
- briefs and helps prepare spokespersons for live radio/camera interviews;
- manages media enquiries from all external media outlets;
- anticipates and manages media and public responses;
- develops strategies to challenge misinformation in the community, media or social media;
- monitors news media broadcasts – print, television, radio and online;
- evaluates the strategy and capture of media results.



5.2 Support & Advice

For more information regarding this Policy, please contact:

Michael Nugara, CEO

Cassandra Smiles, Policy and Communications Coordinator

Edwina Gatenby, Media Advisor, Maxicom. Phone: +61 402 130 254,

email: edwina@maxicom.net.au

6. Review

This policy is due for review in November 2016

7. Acknowledgements

Institute of Company Directors Australia

Appendix A: History

Version	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Cassandra Smiles	Michael Nugara	The USANZ Board of Directors	29 November 2014	10 June 2015	



Responsible Officer		Chief Executive Officer	
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1. Introduction

This procedure document outlines the processes for communicating with members of the media on behalf of the USANZ.

2. Definitions

See Media Relations Policy

3. Procedures for media engagement

3.1 Contacting the USANZ Media Advisor

Before speaking with the media, members and staff should first consult with the USANZ Media Advisor, who will ensure that statements and responses are aligned with the USANZ's values and position. The Media Advisor's details are:

Edwina Gatenby, Maxicom
Phone: +61 402 130 254
eMail: edwina@maxicom.net.au

The USANZ Media Advisor has extensive experience and should be consulted in the development of all media or communication strategies, the level of involvement will depend on the size and sensitivity of the story. The Media Advisor is available to provide media advisory services to all members of the USANZ, including over-the-phone advice, developing media and communication strategies and managing critical issues.



3.2 Engaging directly with the media

Prior to engaging directly with the media, Members are advised to:

- Consult with the USANZ Media Advisor for guidance;
- Inform the USANZ of where and when the interview / statement will appear.

3.3 Notifying the USANZ regarding a potential news story

Members are encouraged to approach the USANZ with positive news stories or information they believe should be promoted to the public. Members should contact:

- The USANZ Media Advisor;
- The USANZ CEO; or
- The USANZ President

Examples of topics of interest include:

- A significant study that is to be published by a USANZ member;
- Information that is to be made public about the causes or prevention of cancer, and/or a new cancer treatment in your specialty or any other urological conditions;
- Community or institutional issues, including but not limited to Medicare and PBS listings;
- Upcoming community activities or policy debates that may have an impact on the membership and generate media attention.

3.4 Preparing a statement for a news story

- Members should contact the USANZ Media Advisor to ensure that the statement is aligned with the USANZ's values, mission and position and complies with relevant USANZ policies and Federal and State legislation.
- The Media Advisor will seek supporting statements from at least one additional USANZ appointed representative in order to enhance credibility, one of whom should be a Board Member or SAG Leader.
- Significant statements on behalf of the USANZ will be made as authorised by the CEO or President as detailed in the Media Relations Policy, *Section 5.1 Roles and Responsibilities*.
- Members should ensure clarity regarding whether the views put forward regarding any issue relating to USANZ are those of the organisation or of an individual.



4. Review & History

This procedure document is due for review Month 2016.

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1. Introduction

The following guidelines set out general recommendations when engaging with the media.

2. Guidelines for media engagement

- Where appropriate, consult with the USANZ Media Advisor prior to engaging with a member of the media.
- Avoid releasing information to the media that may be viewed as advertorial in nature. Sanctions are available under the RACS Code and referral of complaints regarding professional behaviour to APRHA remains an option in appropriate circumstances.
- Know what the media want, and help them to present images, ideas and information accurately and fairly. There is more credibility in positive news coverage than in paid advertising due to the implied third-party endorsement of the journalist or quoted person.
- Be prepared for media bias. Media bias is the bias or perceived bias of journalists within the media in the selection of stories that are reported and how they are covered. Practical limitations to media neutrality include the inability of journalists to report all available stories and facts, and the requirement that selected facts be linked into a coherent narrative. The most prevalent form of bias in our industry is sensationalism, bias in favour of the exceptional over the ordinary and putting a slant on a story that can do harm rather than good.
- Let opponents and critics speak for themselves. Critics need aggressive responses to generate the energy necessary to keep their ideas in the news. There is no obligation to respond to them. Letting them speak for themselves usually becomes repetitious and boring to the media and the public. And they will often show themselves up as being unworthy to be listened to.
- Doing nothing can be a powerful force. A delay in response can occur for various unintentional reasons, but can often be the best response to help diffuse the initial media and critic interest.
- Follow the USANZ in the News - media releases and press clippings. All media releases and subsequent press and radio interview clippings are distributed by the USANZ and are posted on



the Newsroom section of the USANZ website. Media releases with a broad interest are posted on eNews or tweeted through the USANZ Twitter accounts.

- At all times consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of the USANZ.

3. Review & History

These guidelines are scheduled for review in November 2016.

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