

 <b>CONSUMER PROTECTION BC</b>	<b>Media Relations Policy</b>	<b>Version: 1.0</b> <b>Modified: 14 October 2014</b> <b>Approved: 14 October 2014</b>
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## 1.0 Purpose

This document sets out the Policy and Procedures Consumer Protection BC will follow when managing and responding to media requests.

## 2.0 Definitions

“**Media requests**” can include requests for our statistical information, information about licensing, compliance or enforcement activities, information about the legislation Consumer Protection BC administers, our position on consumer issues or general requests for interviews or corporate statements.

## 3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Consumer Protection BC recognizes the support our media stakeholders may offer in sharing important marketplace information with our consumer and business stakeholders.

3.2 In dealing with media inquiries, Consumer Protection BC will:

- a) Handle all media inquiries promptly and professionally;
- b) Be as open and transparent as possible with information provided to the media;
- c) To the extent possible, ensure messages and responses are easy to understand; and
- d) Act in accordance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the Communication Protocols set out in our Administrative Agreements with government, and our Publishing Policy.

3.3 Consumer Protection BC will consider each media inquiry on a case-by-case basis. In doing so we will be guided by the following considerations:

- a) We will consider the extent to which the media request is likely to directly contribute to informing consumers and businesses of an important marketplace issue.
- b) We will consider the internal and external resources and time required to gather and interpret the required information.
- c) Priority will be given to media requests related to:
  - Industries/businesses regulated and/or licensed by Consumer Protection BC;
  - Marketplace issues that fall under legislation administered by Consumer Protection BC; and/or
  - Consumer Protection BC initiatives, investigations or statutory determinations.

## 4.0 Procedures

### 4.1 Primary Responsibilities

All media requests will be forwarded to the Marketing Communications department as soon as they are received. The Manager of Corporate Communications is responsible for determining what information Consumer Protection BC can be provided to the media on a

case-by-case basis. The decision will be based on the guidance criteria provide in the above Policy Statements.

## **4.2 Spokespeople**

The following people have been designated to speak publicly to the media on behalf of Consumer Protection BC:

- The Chair of the Board will speak on behalf of the Board of Directors on governance related issues;
- The Manager of Corporate Communications is the official spokesperson for Consumer Protection BC.
- Only employees who have been designated to speak to the media on behalf of the organization may act as back-ups or address specific topics with the media. These people may include the CEO, the Vice President of Strategic Services, the Vice President of Operations, and the Director of Motion Picture Classification.

All individuals granting media interviews must be doing so based on the guidance provided by the Manager of Corporate Communications or designate.

## **4.3 Media Call Response Time**

Responses to media calls or emails will occur preferably immediately or same day, and always within 24 hours during business hours as best practice. If extensive data is required, an additional day may be required.

## **4.4 Media Tracking**

As required by the Communication Protocols of our Administrative Agreements with government, Consumer Protection BC will track all media contacts and interviews on an ongoing basis.

## **4.5 Key Messages**

The Marketing and Communications Department will work with the subject matter experts to gather information and background material to help develop Key Messages to be used in response to media.

## **4.6 Issues that have potential for media interest**

The Marketing and Communications Department must be advised by email or phone immediately or as soon as possible within 24 hours, of any issues that could result in media interest.

## **4.7. Public Speaking Engagements**

If a staff member is giving a presentation or a speech, and if media are expected to attend, Corporate Communications should be notified in advance to help develop messaging around potential questions from media.

## 5.0 Documentation

*Administrative Agreement Communications Protocol*  
*Consumer Protection BC Publishing Policy*

## 6.0 Authority

### 6.1 Administrative Agreement with the Province

Article 8 of the Authority's Administrative Agreement with the Province states:  
The Authority's administration of the Legislation will include the following core business functions:

- (c) provision of information and assistance, including the voluntary, fair and impartial mediation of disputes, to consumers and Licensees regarding their rights and responsibilities under the Legislation;
- (d) consumer education initiatives that provide information verbally, in printed materials, via the Internet, and through the media to raise consumer awareness of consumer rights and responsibilities;
- (e) education initiatives, to ensure a fair marketplace and to inform businesses and applicants for licenses about their statutory duties and other responsibilities;

## 7.0 References

The *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* sets out the information handling requirements for any person engaged in the administration of the Act.

### 7.1 *The Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act*

The *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* (Part 12, Division 3) states:

#### **Confidentiality**

185(1) A person who is engaged in the administration of this Act or the regulations and who has custody of, access to or control over information or records under this Act must not disclose the information or records to any other person except

- (a) if disclosure is for the purposes of the administration of this Act or the regulations,
- (b) with the consent of the person to whom the information or record relates,
- (c) in court proceedings related to this Act, or other similar enactments of British Columbia, another province or Canada,
- (d) if an enactment of British Columbia, another province or Canada requires the disclosure,
- (e) to the person's counsel,
- (f) to a law enforcement agency in Canada, or
- (g) under an agreement with the government.

(2) The person referred to in subsection (1) is not, except in a proceeding under this Act, compellable to disclose or give evidence about information or records the person has custody of, access to or control over.



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Rob Gialloreto, President & CEO

October 14, 2014

Date