



# THE PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT



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# The Role of the Press & Public Relations Department

## Aims of the Press & Public Relations Department

**To reduce crime and disorder and make our communities feel safer through the effective use of press and public relations techniques.**

### **Our objectives are:**

- ◆ to inspire confidence in the police;
- ◆ to provide a source of expertise and support our staff in all matters concerning press and public relations;
- ◆ to be open, accessible and accountable in providing information to the community and the media;
- ◆ to reassure the public, reduce the fear of crime and reduce crime and disorder by promoting campaigns and initiatives in line with key priorities (vehicle crime, burglaries, robberies, drugs and reassurance);
- ◆ to develop press and public relations capacity within West Midlands Police;
- ◆ to support corporacy in communications;
- ◆ to provide and develop internal and external communications products, such as News Beat, the intranet, the internet and newsletters.

**In all our activities we need to adhere to the principles of Best Value and evaluate our efforts.**

The department handles dozens of calls from the media every day and services national and regional newspapers, radio, TV and specialist publications. There are also a number of freelance journalists and agencies based in the West Midlands.

The department is staffed by experienced press officers who can offer help and advice on any media-related matter, both during office hours and on a call-out basis.

The department is split into three main sections: news desk, public relations and administration.



### **NEWS DESK**

The news desk operates between 7.00am - 7.00pm Monday to Thursday,  
7.00am - 6.00pm on Friday  
8.00am - 3.00pm on Saturdays

The news desk is fully computerised and is responsible for:

- ◆ Issuing details of crimes and incidents to the media
- ◆ Responding to general media enquiries
- ◆ Arranging witness appeals, press conferences and photocalls
- ◆ Assisting SIO's and officer's investigations by proactively engaging the media on issues ranging from anti-social behaviour to serious and organised crime
- ◆ Handling documentary requests
- ◆ Advising and supporting officers on media handling
- ◆ Dealing with the media at incidents where necessary.

Details of crimes and press statements are released via the Medialine. These are recorded information lines covering the central, western and eastern areas of the force.

When the office is closed, the Force Communications Centre handles press calls and updates the Medialine. The duty inspector can be reached on 0121 626 4040 (internal 7802 3036).

A member of staff from the Press & Public Relations Department is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can be contacted via the Force Communications Centre.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The public relations role is aimed at promoting the achievements of the force, as well as providing marketing advice.

The public relations section is responsible for:

- ◆ Writing press releases
- ◆ Organising promotional campaigns
- ◆ Preparing the Chief Constable's Annual Review
- ◆ Producing the force newspaper, News Beat
- ◆ Publishing promotional booklets and leaflets
- ◆ Maintaining the force's internet and intranet sites
- ◆ Providing promotional photographic material
- ◆ Producing offline multi media e.g. DVDs

### **ADMINISTRATION SECTION**

The administration section provides an important back-up service to the department and is also responsible for:

- ◆ Publishing a computerised daily press cuttings summary
- ◆ Recording police-related television and radio programmes

## What can the department do for you?

The Press & Public Relations Department provides a number of services. Some of those available and how they might help you are listed below.

### **ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Chief Constable's Annual Review gives details of how the force performed during the previous financial year. It also lists yearly crime and other police-related statistics. Copies of the report are available from the department and the report is also published on the internet and intranet.

### **'ANY QUESTIONS'**

The department is responsible for administering the 'Any Questions' site on the intranet, where any member of staff can submit a policy-related question which is then answered by the most appropriate individual. 'Any Questions' is aimed at giving staff with an extra channel of communication, providing accurate information and addressing misinformation.

### **CAMPAIGNS**

Contact the department for advice on how to get maximum publicity and the best ways to promote an operational success or planned activity.

### **CORPORATE IDENTITY**

The department is responsible for maintaining the force's corporate identity and has produced a manual setting out guidelines on a number of issues, from the use of the force crest to the corporate colour palette. A pdf copy of the corporate manual is available on the intranet site.

### **EXHIBITION MATERIAL**

The department has a portable display unit which can be set up within minutes. The unit, which features a number of interchangeable graphics, can be booked via the admin section.

### **INTERNET AND INTRANET**

The department is responsible for maintaining and updating the force's external internet site, which can be found at:  
**[www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk)**.

This site contains a huge amount of information, including the Chief Constable's Annual Review, the Police Authority's Annual Report and the Policing Plan.

In addition, we have a large internal intranet site which includes details of press releases, press cuttings etc.

### **IN THE NEWS...**

For full details of what is being released to the media on crime-related issues, including appeals and details of missing people, see the internet site at [www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk).

### **LEAFLETS AND POSTERS**

The department produces a wide range of publicity leaflets and posters, some of which can be viewed on the intranet under Press and PR Department, Publicity Material, Design and Print Catalogue. This material can be ordered direct from Design and Print on 7800 2110.

### **MEDIA AWARENESS TRAINING**

A one-day media awareness course examines the role of the media and shows how officers can get the most out of their dealings with them. The course includes some practical work involving television interviews. For more details about media training contact your Employee Development Officer.

### **MESSAGE OF THE DAY**

The Press & Public Relations Department is responsible for updating 'Message of the Day' on the force intranet site. If you have something of forcewide interest which you would like to publicise, contact the department on 7800 2180.

### **NEWS BEAT**

News Beat is the in-house staff newspaper. Produced monthly, it contains general news and a variety of features. Copies of News Beat are distributed to local MPs, the media, retired officers, other police forces, etc. The paper welcomes letters, suggestions and ideas for features from readers.

### **PLASMA ADVERTS**

The internet team has produced a range of on line adverts for use on plasma screens. To view a selection of the ads, see the Press and PR intranet site.

### **PLAIN ENGLISH/PROOFREADING**

If you need help proofreading or putting a document into 'plain English' the department can help.

### **PRESS CUTTINGS**

The department uses an outside agency to supply a computerised newspaper cuttings service. If you have some information you would like to publicise, contact staff on the Public Relations Desk and ask them to prepare a press release.

### **PRESS RELEASES**

If you would like to receive copies of some of the press releases issued to the media, complete the form on the internet or intranet and they will be sent direct to your e-mail account.

### **PUBLICITY CATALOGUE**

If you are organising a campaign or need some leaflets or posters, see the Publicity Catalogue on the department's intranet site. The site also has a link to the Home Office publicity catalogue.

### **STYLE GUIDE**

We have produced a 'Style Guide' which contains some guidelines to use when writing to members of the public and other organisations. For a copy, see the Press & Public Relations intranet site.

### **VIDEO/RADIO LIBRARY**

Items from local and national television news and local radio programmes are recorded daily, along with police-related documentaries, crime appeal programmes, etc, and are stored in a library. Copies of broadcast programmes are available for viewing on request.

## Organising a campaign - how can we help?

ARE YOU A FUTURE  
STAR OF CCTV?

**If you are organising a campaign to tackle a particular problem, contact the Press and PR Department.**

We will discuss:

- ◆ The aims of the campaign
- ◆ Your target audience
- ◆ The best methods for getting your message across
- ◆ The best time for launching your campaign
- ◆ How to continue getting coverage for your campaign after the launch
- ◆ The best options for 'below the line' advertising, eg, posters, leaflets etc

As well as the issues outlined above, press and publicity officers can give you advice on:

**Internal marketing**

**Producing booklets and leaflets**

**Producing a logo**

**Using the internet** to promote your message

**Promotional techniques** such as linking up with local DIY stores to offer cut-price security items.

### **Below-the-line advertising**

As well as press releases and general marketing advice the department can assist in advertising including:

- Posters
- Bus ads
- Radio ads
- Paid for adverts in local newspaper supplements eg, 'wrap arounds'
- Internet
- Big screens at football grounds
- Mailshots
- Cinema adverts
- Ad vans
- A frame trailers
- Plasma screen ads
- Leaflets
- Banners
- Billboards
- Postcards
- Taxi ads
- Petrol station ads

## Dealing with the media - general advice

### **INTRODUCTION**

The media have a powerful influence on public opinion and their interest in the police is constant.

They can prove a useful and effective ally in gaining understanding and support. At the same time, lack of information often leads to unfounded speculation and inaccuracy.

Appeals for information about offences which are carried by newspapers, radio and TV can have the same effect as knocking on thousands – sometimes millions – of doors.

The effect of the media is formidable and should be used to our advantage. We cannot complain about poor coverage if we are not spreading the word about the many positive stories and achievements occurring every day in the West Midlands.

Letting the public know about crime through the media encourages awareness and reminds people of the need for crime prevention.

The force intranet site sets out the policy about talking to the media on a wide range of issues. But remember - if in doubt contact staff in the department directly for advice.

It is important to remember the need for a sensible and professional working relationship with the media. Promoting a positive image of the force is up to each and every one of us.

### **ALWAYS:**

- ◆ Ask journalists to repeat your quote and insist they quote you as you wish to be quoted.
- ◆ As far as possible, explain the reasons if information cannot be released.
- ◆ Refer questions on force policy or Police Authority matters to the Press and Public Relations Department.

### **NEVER:**

- ◆ Say "No comment".
- ◆ Give "off the record" comments unless you are completely confident in doing so.
- ◆ Be drawn into giving comment or opinion on matters outside your knowledge - stick to the FACTS.
- ◆ Give information which could compromise judicial proceedings, either in criminal or disciplinary matters.

### **REMEMBER:**

Although dealing with the media can be demanding and time-consuming, publicity can bring a swift response and considerably shorten your investigation.

### **WHAT THE MEDIA WILL WANT TO KNOW**

#### **Checklist:**

**An outline of the incident** - (excluding information which may be crucial to an investigation, eg, the exact words used.)

**Where the incident happened** – don't reveal IP's full address.

**When the incident occurred** - the time, day and date.

**Who was involved** – do not release the names of victims of crime or people involved in RTCs without their express permission.

#### **How the incident happened**

**Ages and occupations** of people charged, the area where they live, full details of the charges, whether they have been kept in custody or granted bail, what court they will be appearing at and when. (Do not release names or full addresses until after any court appearance.)

**Contact numbers** in cases of appeals for witnesses.

#### **Descriptions of offenders**

**Other information** such as vehicles used, injuries, the name of the hospital victims were taken to, etc. Remember, newspapers will usually want photographs of murder victims.

# A-Z of dealing with the media

This section should be read in conjunction with the 'Dealing with the Media' section.

## **ACCIDENTS**

### **(see also Road Traffic Collisions)**

Personal details of people injured or involved in accidents are not normally released. They can be released only with the express permission of the victim or a close relative. If a person does not want their name and address disclosed to the media this should be respected.

Do not give opinions about the cause of an accident.

In cases where there are fatalities, the permission of relatives should be sought before details are released.

## **AMOUNTS OF CASH STOLEN**

Amounts of cash stolen are not usually released where a very large amount of money is stolen. Publicising the amount might encourage similar offences or make victims vulnerable to further attacks.

## **ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS**

As a general rule do not publicise the activities of animal rights activists. Often the organisations themselves will contact the media direct and give them details. In these cases the incident should be confirmed but backed up by a request not to publicise.

If the incident involves public safety such as contamination of foods, the Press and Public Relations Department should be informed immediately.

## **ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Press and PR Department's website contains a range of information to assist officers, including a template letter to be sent to offenders warning them a leaflet is about to be distributed in their neighbourhood, a risk assessment to be completed by officers requesting publicity and a template ASBO leaflet.

## **ARSONS AND FIRES**

Full details of fires may be released. If arson is suspected this should be made clear (after taking advice from the officer in charge of the investigation) and appeals made for help. Details of anyone killed in a fire can be released once formal identification has taken place and relatives have been informed.

## **ARRESTS AND CHARGES (SUB-JUDICE)**

Under the 1981 Contempt of Court Act, a case becomes active upon an arrest or the issue of a warrant or summons. There is then a legal responsibility on journalists not to publish or broadcast details which may prejudice a jury. Therefore officers must specify whether a person has been arrested or has attended a police station voluntarily.

Once a case is active, nothing should be released which would create a substantial risk of prejudice. But do not hide behind the sub-judice rule - nothing should be released which identifies a suspect, but the main facts of the matter can be released to the media.

Once charged, the media will want to know the ages and occupations of the accused, the area where they live, full details of the charges, if they are in custody or on bail, what court they will be appearing at and the circumstances leading up to the arrest. Do not release full names or addresses until after any court appearance. A surname can be given for the guidance of the media.

## **ASSAULTS ON POLICE**

In the case of assaults on police the identity of the officer should only be released with his/her permission, or that of the OCU commander. In serious cases the press will usually request a photograph of the injured officer, but this will only be given with the agreement of the officer or a member of their family.

In cases of assault on members of the public, the identity of victims must not be disclosed unless they have given their permission.

## **BOGUS OFFICIALS**

Media reports about bogus officials alert members of the public to be on their guard. Where possible give details of the road where the offence took place to raise awareness in the area and appeal for witnesses. If the road name will clearly identify a vulnerable victim, use the name of the nearest main road instead. Take the opportunity wherever possible to pass on crime prevention advice to householders.

## **BOMB HOAXES**

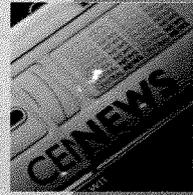
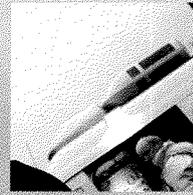
Bomb hoaxes are not passed to the media but can be confirmed if asked. Generally the media do not report details of bomb hoaxes, to avoid further nuisance calls and generating fear. In the event of someone being arrested for making hoax calls, inform the Press and Public Relations Department so a press release can be prepared.

## **BRAVERY**

Examples of bravery make good reading. If officers or members of the public have been involved in acts of heroism inform the Press and Public Relations Department as soon as possible so a press release can be prepared. Do not give names of victims in cases involving attempted suicides.

## **CAUTIONING**

Do not give the identity of anyone cautioned for an offence.



**COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE**

Queries regarding complaints against the police should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department who will liaise with the Professional Standards Department to prepare a statement.

**CONTAMINATION OF FOODS**

No details should be released until a statement has been agreed by the SIO/OIC in conjunction with the Press and Public Relations Department. Officers should only release details contained in the statement and further queries should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department.

**COUNTERFEIT MONEY**

As with other types of fraud, alerting the public via the media can help put them on their guard (advice should be sought from the Press and Public Relations Department before speaking to the media).

**CRIME**

Details of general crimes, eg, burglary, robberies, criminal damage, may be given but consider what is being achieved - are you merely contributing to the fear of crime? If a decision is made to release information, victims' personal details must only be released with their permission. The road name where the incident took place should be highlighted to alert people living nearby and appeal for witnesses. Do not go into details about the precise method of entry in cases of burglary. Serious crime attracting a lot of media attention should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department.

**DESCRIPTIONS**

Only mention someone's race if it is strictly relevant ie, descriptions. Avoid using words which may be considered offensive eg, 'half-caste' or 'coloured'. Instead use 'mixed race', 'black' or 'Asian'.

**DISORDER**

Public order incidents can be released with details of how the disorder started, how many people were involved, any damage caused and any injuries to police officers. Give brief details of people charged ie, ages, the area where they live, charges and court dates.

**ESCAPES**

Requests for information about prison escapes should be referred to the Home Office.

Information about escapes from police custody should be given on request and include details of where the escape took place, when it happened and if the escapee is considered dangerous. Do not give specific details about how the escape itself took place. The name of the escapee may be released in appropriate circumstances. For guidance contact the Press and Public Relations Department.

**EXPLOSIONS**

It is not up to the police to divulge the cause of a 'non criminal' explosion and the media should be referred to the appropriate bodies for explanations.

Explosions involving possible criminal offences should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department immediately.

**FIREARMS**

The identity of firearms officers involved in incidents should not be released. Although the type of weapon can be divulged, nothing should be released about tactics, methods of entry or specialist equipment and skills. Do not give the location of the firearms unit. Questions from the media about incidents involving firearms should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department.

**FRAUD**

As with general crime, information about fraud alerts the public and puts them on their guard. But do not divulge the exact modus operandi, which may lead to 'copycat' crimes.

**INTERVIEWS**

The Press and Public Relations Department should be contacted in cases involving force policy.

**KERB CRAWLING**

Publicity has been shown to reduce the problem of kerb crawling in blighted areas and should be seen as a positive tool when launching crackdowns. Enquiries about specific individuals arrested for kerb crawling should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department.

**KIDNAPPING**

In cases of abduction or kidnap where a life may be at risk, the media may be asked to impose a news blackout. This requires the endorsement of the Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constable and such incidents should be referred immediately to the Head of Crime Support, who will also liaise with the Press Office.

**MISSING PEOPLE**

Publicity often works in the case of missing people and should be uppermost in officers' minds. The need for a recent photo is crucial as a description alone is often too vague. If the case involves a juvenile, the parents or next of kin's consent should be obtained before any details are released. In exceptional cases, a senior officer can decide to release the details without a parent's or guardian's permission.

Cases involving children in care have to be endorsed by social services. The permission of a judge has to be obtained before publicising missing Wards of Court. When a publicised 'misper' returns, let the Press and Public Relations Department know as soon as possible so they can inform the media.

**MURDER**

Officers should refer to the matter as a "suspicious death" until a murder inquiry is confirmed by the senior investigating officer.

A murder inquiry may attract a large number of reporters to the scene so the Press and Public Relations Department should be contacted as early as possible to prepare a holding statement and possibly arrange for a press officer to attend.

Details of injuries and any other information should only be released at the discretion of the senior investigating officer. The victim's identity should only be released after relatives have been informed and formal identification has taken place.

**POLICY**

As a general rule, officers should confine themselves to the facts of an incident - who, what, where, when, why and how. Do not give personal opinions. Queries relating to force policy should normally be passed to a senior officer or the Press and Public Relations Department. Do not comment on Police Authority matters until after any meeting.

**PRESS CONFERENCES**

Requests to hold press conferences should be made to the head of news at Lloyd House, where there is a purpose-built press conference room. Press conferences should only be called for major incidents otherwise they risk being devalued. Always seek advice from the Press and Public Relations Department before arranging such a conference.

**PRISONERS' PHOTOGRAPHS**

Permission for the release of photographs of wanted or convicted people must be given by an officer of ACPO rank, or their designated representative, via the Press and Public Relations Department.

**PURSUIITS**

Details of police pursuits can be released to the media. Confirm a vehicle was being followed by police. Do not give specific details about how a resulting accident occurred but confirm a full investigation will be carried out. In the event of a serious accident or a death, the matter should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department.

**RAPE/SEXUAL ASSAULT**

Nothing should be released to identify a victim but some personal details such as age can be included. Details surrounding the assault can be released but do not go into degrading descriptions of the sex attack itself. Officers should refer only to 'a rape', 'an indecent assault' or a 'serious sexual assault'.

**RESCUES OR ATTEMPTED RESCUES**

Details can be released after relatives have been informed. But care should be taken in cases involving attempted suicides - use 'fell' not 'jumped' and 'taken ill' not 'suffering from a drugs overdose'.

**ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS**

The personal details of people involved in road collisions should only be released to the media if the person involved, or a relative, has given permission. Details of the incident should be given, but do not apportion blame.

Tell the Press and Public Relations Department so they can alert the local media about traffic problems. In cases of fatal road collisions, identities may only be confirmed after formal identification has taken place and all relatives informed.

**SIEGES**

The Press and Public Relations Department should be informed as soon as possible and, if appropriate, a press officer will be sent to the scene to set up a media reception point. If possible, the press officer will organise a vantage point where the media can watch from a safe distance. This discourages reporters attempting to break through police cordons and interfering with the operation.

**SUB-JUDICE (SEE ARRESTS AND CHARGES)**

**SUICIDES/SUDDEN DEATHS**

Details can be released of where and when a body was found. Avoid talking about possible injuries until after the post mortem. Release the identity only after relatives have been informed and the body has been formally identified. Do not give personal opinions as to the cause of death - that is for the coroner to decide. In suspected suicides it is safe to say "At this stage there appear to be no suspicious circumstances and we are not looking for anyone else".

### **VICTIMS (IDENTITY OF)**

In criminal cases the identity of the victim should be withheld unless they have agreed to publicity. But it is important to consider that some victims want to tell their story.

'Telling the story' may help victims get over the experience. The more publicity a story gets the more it provokes a response from members of the public and witnesses as well as offers of help.

If a victim requests anonymity, this should be respected. But full details about the incident itself should be released, including the road where it happened, to alert local residents and appeal for witnesses.

Care should be taken not to release details which might 'piece together' the victim's identity, ie, saying the attack took place "outside the victim's home in..... Road".

In the case of sudden deaths which are likely to attract media attention, relatives should be made aware that the victim's name and address may be given upon request to the media once formal identification has taken place. If there are objections officers should point out that details will be made public through an inquest.

If there is any doubt the matter should be referred to the Press and Public Relations Department.

### **YOUNG OFFENDERS**

The identity of young offenders, aged 17 and under, should not be released, nor should any information likely to lead to their identification, such as the school they attend. In cases involving Wards of Court the permission of a judge must be obtained before any information is released.

## Media training

### **ONE- DAY TV COURSE**

A one-day media awareness course is available to sergeants and inspectors, it includes advice on a range of subjects including:

- ◆ What to say when you don't have the answer
- ◆ Dealing with awkward interviewers
- ◆ How to avoid being taken out of context
- ◆ Using language to get the best message across

The course also looks at the role of the Press and PR Department and the role of communications reassurance officers.

For more details about the course, speak to your Employee Development Officer.

# Getting the most out of radio and TV interviews

The following sets out a few helpful hints about giving good radio and television interviews and lists some “dos and don’ts” to get the best out of your broadcasts.

## What do you want out of an interview?

- ◆ To get information across that will help you
- ◆ To look and sound professional and confident
- ◆ To gain the support of the listeners/viewers

## Before the interview

Before you agree to an interview, find out the following information from the Press Office or reporter:

- ◆ What areas will be covered
- ◆ Likely questions
- ◆ What angle the interviewer will take
- ◆ If the interview is live or pre-recorded
- ◆ What type of programme it is, eg, news, phone-in, chat show, etc
- ◆ How long the interview will last

## Planning the interview

For a successful interview, plan, plan, plan. How can you turn the interview to your advantage and how can you get your message across most effectively?

## What are your objectives?

- ◆ Appealing for help
- ◆ Gaining support from the public
- ◆ Promoting the force/police officers/your OCU/department
- ◆ Giving the public advice or information
- ◆ Answering criticism

Write down in less than 20 words the three most important points you want to make.

List the key facts or examples that support your main points.

Decide how you can use your facts and examples to get your points across.

## Note the questions you will probably be asked:

Who.... What.... Where....

When.... Why.... How....

Plan your replies with your objectives in mind. You may only get one opportunity to get your message across. Think of a short summary (25 words or less) which includes the points you want to raise and make sure you use it, no matter what.

## Remember

- ◆ Most radio news bulletins will only use 10 - 30 seconds
- ◆ Have incident room/helpline telephone numbers to hand
- ◆ Call back if you are asked to do a radio interview to give you time to plan
- ◆ Always assume the camera and microphone are switched on and do not say anything you would not wish broadcast
- ◆ If you forget something important, at the end of the interview ask if you can quickly record it again
- ◆ Television leaves viewers with an impression - make sure the impression you leave is professional and confident

### Handling radio chat shows and phone-ins

- ◆ Radio chat shows and phone-ins have a more informal, relaxed style - adapt your own style accordingly
- ◆ Think of someone who may be listening to the programme and talk to them as if they were sitting opposite you
- ◆ Dig out facts and figures to support your argument
- ◆ Research your subject well but if you cannot answer a question say so and give the reason why
- ◆ Decide which points you **must** get across and those which you would **like** to get across. Every time you answer a question try to use one of those on your 'hitlist'
- ◆ Give figures in non-mathematical terms, eg "one in four" rather than "25 per cent"

### Live or studio television interviews

- ◆ Arrive at the studio early - there are often delays at reception
- ◆ Ask to see the introduction and what will be said about you
- ◆ Meet the interviewer and other people involved in the interview
- ◆ If others are taking part, check the speaking order
- ◆ Ask what the first question will be

### Location interviews

- ◆ If being interviewed in your office, tidy up and remove anything inappropriate
- ◆ Put a notice on your door asking for quiet and no interruptions
- ◆ Divert your telephone
- ◆ Sit forward and look alert
- ◆ If being interviewed outside, check the background

### Dos and don'ts for a successful interview

- DO** put some 'life' into your voice; vary your tone and pace
- DO** control your mannerisms and try not to fidget
- DO** check your appearance and the interview background
- DO** avoid alcohol
- DO** try to look relaxed and sound interested
- DON'T** use jargon
- DON'T** argue with the interviewer, but correct any inaccuracies which arise
- DON'T** look directly at the camera, look at the interviewer
- DON'T** try to put on a different accent; be natural
- DON'T** make off-the-cuff comments - you should have planned what you want to say beforehand

### Looking and sounding professional

- ◆ Be 'alive', alert and assertive - not aggressive
- ◆ Target your replies as if speaking to an intelligent 16 year old
- ◆ Don't try to read from a script or notes
- ◆ Personalise interviews. If appropriate, talk about "I", "you" and "my"
- ◆ Be sincere and truthful
- ◆ Ignore distractions

### If you want further help or advice

Contact the Press & Public Relations Department who can brief you on the likely questions you will face and give you advice on your response.



# Corporate identity guidelines

## Why do we need a corporate identity?

Our staff, our buildings, our vehicles and our stationery are, in effect, our 'shop window' and therefore say a great deal about the type of organisation we are. These areas also influence how we are viewed by members of the public and a strong, professional identity helps develop positive attitudes about our organisation.

Developing a corporate identity means adopting a standard, consistent approach in respect of how we present ourselves in everything we do. For example, what state are our vehicles in? Are our uniforms smart? How tidy are our buildings? How do we present ourselves when writing to the public?

It is difficult to maintain a consistent corporate image in any large organisation - that is why each and every one of us has an important role to play. If we are to present ourselves as a competent, professional organisation, we need to comply with the standards laid down.

The Corporate Identity Manual sets out some important rules which, if followed, will help establish a clear identity across the whole force area. In turn, this should help us achieve a distinctive, recognised corporate identity which people can relate to and, at the same time, associate with a professional, efficient, police service.

## THE FORCE CREST

Every time we use the force crest we are making a statement about our organisation - therefore it is vital it is used correctly.

The crest is a distinctive, identifying symbol which should be included in as many internal publications as possible and EVERY external publication.

Under no circumstances should the Police Authority Coat of Arms be used unless directly relating to the Police Authority and with their permission.

The force crest should never be modified in its shape, style, proportion or layout. (Jpgs of the crest or computer images can be obtained from the Design and Print Department).

## CORPORATE COLOURS

### Force crest

Where applicable, the force crest should be produced using full four-colour process to the exact specifications as shown in the Corporate Identity Manual. To ensure correct reproduction it should only be published using professional printing methods. Where full-colour process is not being used, the crest should be reproduced in black and white.

**The corporate colours of the organisation are: Reflex blue and PMS109 yellow.**

### Font type and size

The font used in written correspondence to the public should be Arial 11 or 12 point.

## STATIONERY

Stationery is often the first introduction the public have to West Midlands Police. It acts as a formal link and plays a vital role in projecting our identity so it should be clear, concise and consistently laid out.

General stationery must be the same design and layout for all operational command units and departments. Pre-printed stationery should be ordered from the Design and Print Department at Lloyd House. Letterheads are also available on the Standard Forms intranet site. Computer-generated stationery should not be ALTERED OR AMENDED IN ANY WAY, unless with the permission of the Press & PR Department or the Design and Print Department.

## Endorsements

The only additional elements allowed on letterheads are:

- ◆ Campaign endorsements
- ◆ Professional marks eg, IIP award

A maximum of three symbols can be displayed.

## PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Promotional material or material intended for external use should be produced in conjunction with the Press & Public Relations Department.

Copies of all external publicity must be passed to the department prior to printing to ensure it complies with the corporate identity and are proofread.

## CORPORATE POWERPOINT

A copy of the corporate Powerpoint is available on the on line version of the Corporate Identity Manual. This template will be updated regularly and should be used in all force presentations.

## CORPORATE IDENTITY MANUAL

A copy of the Corporate Identity Manual is available on the Press & Public Relations Department's intranet site.

## For more information...

If you have any queries about any aspect of corporate identity or would like more details about the corporate standards in respect of buildings, vehicles or uniforms, please contact the Press & Public Relations Department on extension 2567 or the Design and Print Department on ext 2110.

# Internal & external communications checklist

**Is your message reaching the right target audience?  
Do all your staff know what is happening on the OCU/department?  
Are local opinion formers updated with news about what's happening in your area?**

The following checklist may be useful when considering internal or external communications. It is aimed at being a simple 'aide memoire' to encourage you to think about your target audience. Who needs to know about your message? Often, many people get left out of the communications chain simply because we forget to include them.

This checklist is aimed at making sure you communicate your message to the necessary people/organisations, using the most appropriate and effective methods available.

Please bear in mind the list is by no means exhaustive and is only aimed at being a general guide. Many of the audiences may not be appropriate in particular cases.

## INTERNAL AUDIENCE

- All staff (including police officers, police staff, specials and PCSOs)
- Command team
- OCU commanders
- Advisory groups
- Heads of department
- OCU/departmental management team
- All OCU/departmental staff
- Business managers
- Crime managers
- Operations managers
- Personnel managers
- Sector inspectors
- Neighbourhood officers
- Front office staff
- Police officers
- Support staff
- Specials
- Police community support officers
- Police Federation
- Staff associations
- BAPA
- Rainbow
- DCCU
- BAWP
- Other.....

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS METHODS

- E-mail
- Intranet
- News Beat
- Force Orders
- Message of the Day
- Newsletter
- Poster
- Personal letter
- Salary slips
- Plasma
- Other.....

## EXTERNAL AUDIENCE

- Members of the public (general)
- KIN members
- Specific groups eg, children, teenagers, parents, businesses
- Strategic partners
- Media
- Police Authority members
- Local authority members
- Local opinion formers (eg councillors, MPs)
- Consultative Committees
- Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators
- Pressure groups/local interest groups
- Other.....

## EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION METHODS

- Internet
- Press release
- Specialist publications eg, Police Review, Crime Prevention Information Digest
- Personal letter
- Voicebank (for details of incidents via Press Office)
- E-mail to specific groups
- Poster
- Newsletter
- Press conference (via Press Office)
- Advice line
- Advertising, eg, radio, buses, plasma screens
- VC Relay - KIN
- Emergency text messages (Media)
- Leaflets
- A frame trailers

## ACPO briefing notes

The following ACPO/Media Advisory Group briefing notes are available from the Press & Public Relations Department on ext 2582 or via the ACPO internet website at: [www.acpo.police.uk](http://www.acpo.police.uk)  
(Media Advisory Group Guidelines)

- ◆ Individuals under investigation
- ◆ Pre-verdict media briefings in criminal cases
- ◆ Releasing details of 'old' cases
- ◆ Information about sex offenders
- ◆ Deaths in police care or custody
- ◆ The naming of victims or witnesses of crime, road collisions and other incidents
- ◆ Photographs of named people
- ◆ Police-held video footage
- ◆ Agreements with programme-makers and taking the media on police operations
- ◆ General guidance notes
- ◆ Racist incidents and racially motivated or aggravated offences

## Contacting us

### If you want to contact us...

The headquarters Press & Public Relations Department is based at Lloyd House.

<b>Post</b>	<b>External No.</b>	<b>Internal No.</b>
Head of Press & Public Relations	0121 626 5198	2568
Head of Public Relations	0121 626 5197	2567
Head of News	0121 626 5411	2191
News Desk	0121 626 5858	2500
Public Relations Desk	0121 626 5496	2561
	0121 626 5029	2668
	0121 626 5497	2562
	0121 626 5499	2565
	0121 626 5141	2281
Publications Support Officer	0121 626 5378	2260
Internet Support	0121 626 5456	2564
Intranet Support	0121 626 5180	2180
Photographer	0121 626 5495	2947
Admin Desk	0121 626 5565	2566/2463
Fax	0121 626 5190 or 0121 626 5111	2560 2191
Email: <a href="mailto:press_office@west-midlands.police.uk">press_office@west-midlands.police.uk</a>		



THE PRESS & PUBLIC  
RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

Lloyd House  
Colmore Circus Queensway  
Birmingham

[www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk)

**Our Vision:**

To reduce crime and disorder and  
make our communities feel safer