



# Media Relations Policy

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**Owner:** Integrity/High Performance

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**Version:** Final

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**Approved by:** Swimming Australia Board

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# Media Relations Policy

## IMPORTANT POINTS

- This Policy sets out guidelines for Relevant Persons regarding the effective and productive use of Media channels to promote and grow the sport of swimming.
- All Relevant Persons are responsible for promoting the profile of swimming and should interact with the Media in a way that promotes and maintains the credibility of the sport in accordance with the guidelines set out in this Policy.
- The following principle should always be considered and applied by Relevant Persons when conducting Media activities and when observing the guidelines in this Policy: *'Do not comment negatively about Swimming Australia, any Team Member(s), Swimming Australia program(s) or Associated Parties.'*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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- (a) Swimming Australia promotes positive interaction with the Media and views effective media relations as an essential component of its fan engagement, communication with the public, enhancement of its public profile as well as promoting the sport of swimming.
- (b) This Policy requires Relevant Persons to engage with the Media in a productive and positive manner that promotes Swimming Australia, the sport of swimming and the Relevant Person, and which affords respect to individuals and organisations involved in the sport.

## 2. PURPOSE

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The purpose of this Policy is to:

- (a) summarise Swimming Australia's requirements of its Relevant Persons when interacting with the Media, whether on behalf of Swimming Australia or personally;
- (b) outline guidelines for Relevant Persons regarding the effective and productive use of Media channels to promote and grow the sport of swimming; and
- (c) ensure that Relevant Persons understand Swimming Australia's approach to media relations and its expectations of Relevant Persons when interacting with the Media.

## 3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

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- (a) This Policy applies to all communications and interactions with the Media by Relevant Persons.
- (b) This Policy is to be read together with each other policy referred to in the Team Member Agreement.
- (c) This Policy forms part of the Team Member Agreement and the Swimmer Agreement. Any breach of this Policy by a Relevant Person who is a party to either or both agreements constitutes a breach of the applicable agreement.
- (d) This Policy may be updated by Swimming Australia from time to time, with the amended Policy effective on the date and time it is published.

#### 4. REPUTATION

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Media coverage can generate both positive and negative exposure for Swimming Australia and the sport of swimming. Every Relevant Person is therefore responsible for promoting the profile of swimming and should interact with the Media in a way that promotes and maintains the credibility of the sport in accordance with the guidelines set out in this Policy.

#### 5. MEDIA GUIDELINES

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Swimming Australia endorses the Media Guidelines set out in paragraphs 5(a) to 5(i) below for use by Relevant Persons when interacting with the Media. It also promotes the following principle which should be considered and applied by Relevant Persons at all times when conducting Media activities and when observing the below Media Guidelines:

***Do not comment negatively about Swimming Australia, any Team Member(s), Swimming Australia program(s) or Associated Parties.***

- (a) Relevant Persons must not disparage or criticise Team Members, their performances or the coaching of a Team.
- (b) Relevant Persons must not disclose any confidential information in relation to a Team or Team Members.
- (c) In giving any interview that includes a visual element, Relevant Persons must wear items of uniform as determined and advised by the Team Media Manager (or their authorised delegate).
- (d) It is the personal responsibility of each Team Member to attend Media conferences or interviews approved by the Team Media Manager (or their authorised delegate).
- (e) Relevant Persons are reminded of the commitment that Teams have a responsibility to share the journey and connect with those who invest in and believe in the sport when deciding whether to accept or decline to be interviewed by the Media.
- (f) Where a Relevant Person is involved in an interview or press conference it is their responsibility to read any briefing notes provided prior to the appearance to ensure information shared publicly is factually correct.
- (g) Relevant Persons should always attempt to reference and/or acknowledge the support provided by Swimming Australia or Associated Parties in interviews or press conferences where appropriate.
- (h) Relevant Persons should not speak with, write for (act as a journalist) or provide quotes to any Media representative without the written permission of the Team Media Manager (or their authorised delegate).
- (i) Relevant Persons approached directly by the Media are discouraged from engaging with the Media. Any direct Media contact made to Relevant Persons should be re-directed to the relevant contact person appointed in accordance with clause 6 below.

## 6. MEDIA MANAGEMENT

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Swimming Australia endeavours to manage and promote Media engagement in a proactive manner to further enhance the profile of the sport.

- (a) Primary Contacts
  - (i) Swimming Australia will provide a media manager to travel with all Teams to manage Media commitments around key international events where applicable (**Team Media Manager**). The Team Media Manager acts as the liaison between all Media and the Team.
  - (ii) If a Team Media Manager does not travel with a Team, the Team Director becomes the primary point of contact for all Media management.
- (b) Official Spokesperson
  - (i) The CEO (or their authorised delegate) is the official Swimming Australia spokesperson and therefore the only person permitted to speak on behalf of, or about Swimming Australia.
  - (ii) If the CEO (or their authorised delegate) is not available, or the CEO deems it necessary in their absolute discretion, the President of Swimming Australia will be deemed the official Swimming Australia spokesperson and therefore the only person permitted to speak on behalf of, or about the organisation without prior written approval of Swimming Australia.
  - (iii) The Head Coach (or their authorised delegate) is the official Team spokesperson and therefore the only person permitted to speak on behalf of, or about Teams without prior written approval of Swimming Australia.
  - (iv) Coaches should only speak about Swimmers in their own coaching group or relay squad.

## 7. MEDIA REQUEST PROCESS

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- (a) If you are contacted by the Media concerning anything involving Swimming Australia or its Associated Parties seeking comment in relation to any matter, you must apply the following approach:
  - (i) politely decline to answer any questions or to provide comment and instead contact the Head of Communications & Media at Swimming Australia; and
  - (ii) refer the Media enquiry to the Head of Communications & Media at Swimming Australia (or their authorised delegate) who will make a determination as to how to deal with or respond to the enquiry.
- (b) If a Media request is made in relation to Team Member(s) or a Team, the Head of Communications & Media (or their authorised delegate) shall refer the enquiry to the relevant Team Media Manager (or in their absence the Team Director who will, together with the Head of Communications & Media (or their authorised delegate), make a determination as to how to deal with or

respond to the enquiry and if required make the necessary arrangements in regards to the Media activation.

- (c) If paragraph (b) above applies, the Team Media Manager (or in their absence the Team Director) will give the relevant Team Member(s):
  - (i) prior notice of their Media responsibilities including date, time and location of the particular engagement; and
  - (ii) a briefing on possible questions and typical responses as necessary.

## **8. CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS**

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- (a) Prior to any comment, communication, commitment or engagement made with the Media, the following requirements must be followed:
  - (i) the Head of Communications & Media (or their delegate) must first be consulted; and
  - (ii) if the comment, communication, commitment or engagement involves a Team or Team Member:
    - (A) the Team Media Manager must then be consulted; and
    - (B) the Team Media Manager must then consult with the relevant Coach and Swimmer and obtain their approval for the relevant Media engagement as required.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, a Team Member must inform Swimming Australia prior to any opportunity where he or she will be communicating or commenting to the Media unless such comment or communication is limited to his or her performance or the performance of a competitor in the actual event the Swimmer is interviewed about in order to provide the Swimmer with the opportunity to be briefed with relevant information.
- (c) In respect of media enquiries not involving Team Member(s) directly, but rather a matter relating to Swimming Australia and its activities more generally, the Head of Communications & Media (or their delegate) should be consulted who will then direct the enquiry as appropriate.

## **9. MEDIA COMMITMENTS**

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- (a) Team Members are to participate in Media commitments as reasonably requested to do so by Swimming Australia.
- (b) Swimmers who are funded by Swimming Australia must engage in editorial media opportunities, irrespective of whether or not they are paid for the relevant opportunity.
- (c) Team Members may only decline Swimming Australia's request for a media commitment in exceptional circumstances and when it is reasonable to do so by giving Swimming Australia prior written notice.
- (d) Team Members must not enter into any agreement, arrangement or understanding that would have the effect of restricting or limiting the member's availability for media commitments.

- (e) Team Members must at all times demonstrate behaviours consistent with the Swimmer and Team Member Code of Conduct in participating in media commitments.
- (f) The Team Member participating in a media commitment must wear the items of clothing nominated by Swimming Australia for that specific commitment or from time to time. Failing which, the Swimmer must wear the team clothing which has most recently been distributed to the Swimmer and the entire team.
- (g) A Team Member shall not without approval from Swimming Australia (with such approval not to be unreasonably withheld) either participate in or make any arrangement to:
  - (i) participate in an exclusive Media interview whether or not for reward with a broadcaster that is a competitor of a Sponsor of Swimming Australia;
  - (ii) act as a journalist or in any other Media capacity; or
  - (iii) authorise any public or Media comment.
- (h) The Team Member must use his or her best endeavours to ensure his or her advisors, including but not limited to coaches, athlete managers, legal advisors, marketing or public relations advisors, and personal sponsors are made aware of and agree to comply with this Policy.

## **10. BROADCAST PARTNERS**

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- (a) Swimming Australia may sell exclusive television, online and radio broadcast rights for key domestic and international events from time to time.
- (b) All Relevant Persons are encouraged to work with Swimming Australia and their broadcast partners (from time to time) to promote Swimming Australia and the sport of swimming.
- (c) All Relevant Persons are encouraged to mention or reference Swimming Australia broadcast partners where appropriate in all Media engagements.
- (d) Relevant Persons should therefore cooperate with all reasonable requests from Swimming Australia's broadcast partners, including for the avoidance of doubt its existing television broadcast partner, for interviews, access to training and access for promotional opportunities to further promote Swimming Australia and the sport.
- (e) Where Swimmers, Coaches or other Members may have an exclusive Media deal with a rival broadcast partner, that arrangement needs to be approved in writing by the CEO (or their authorised delegate) and will not be approved if it impinges on Swimming Australia's ability to fulfil existing or future broadcast partnerships.

## **11. EDUCATION**

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- (a) Swimming Australia makes a commitment to actively educate Relevant Persons on best practice in terms of interacting with the Media.
- (b) Team Members must undertake Media training when requested to do so by Swimming Australia.

## 12. RESPONSIBILITY

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- (a) All Relevant Persons have a responsibility to ensure that their actions in all Media relations comply with this Policy.
- (b) In particular, Relevant Persons are required to:
  - (i) comply with this Policy; and
  - (ii) report any perceived incidence of non-compliance with this Policy to Swimming Australia, and to maintain confidentiality while the incident is being resolved.
- (c) If a Relevant Person becomes aware of any breach of this Policy, they should report the circumstances to the Contact Person by email at [Kate.Hutchison@swimming.org.au](mailto:Kate.Hutchison@swimming.org.au) or by phone on (03) 9910 0700.

## 13. MAJOR EVENTS/OTHER TEAMS

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- (a) Relevant Persons are advised that their participation on other teams and at other major events such as the Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games may involve an adherence to additional guidelines, by laws and contractual obligations, in relation to Media.
- (b) Where team agreements are in place for such teams and events, such guidelines, by laws and contractual obligations need to be followed in conjunction with this Policy to the greatest extent possible.

## 14. CONSEQUENCES

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- (a) If directed by Swimming Australia, the responsible Relevant Person will issue a public correction statement about any comment or communication made to the Media that, in the view of Swimming Australia, may breach this Policy.
- (b) A Relevant Person who breaches this Policy may be responsible for any loss suffered by Swimming Australia or its Associated Parties.
- (c) If a breach of this Policy is substantiated, disciplinary action may result.
- (d) Breaches of this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary provisions under Swimming Australia's Swimmer and Team Member Code of Conduct.

## 15. DEFINITIONS

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For the purpose of this Policy, the below definitions apply. Capitalised terms not defined in this Policy have the same meaning as that given to them in the Team Member Agreement.

**Associated Parties** means Swimming Australia Members, Sponsors, stakeholders and other parties associated with Swimming Australia.

**Board** means the directors of Swimming Australia as defined in Swimming Australia's Constitution.

**CEO** means the chief executive officer of Swimming Australia.

**Coach** means any coach accredited with Swimming Australia.

**Contact Person** means the Head of Communications & Media, Swimming Australia.

**Media** means traditional media including print, radio and television and includes a journalist, editor or anyone representing the media.

**Policy** means this Media Relations Policy as amended from time to time.

**Relevant Persons** mean:

- (i) Team Members;
- (ii) Swimmers;
- (iii) Technical Officials; and
- (iv) Coaches.

**Sponsor** means a sponsor of Swimming Australia, whether the sponsorship is cash or contra or a combination of both.

**Swimmer** means an individual who has signed, or is required to sign, a Swimmer Agreement.

**Team** means any team of Swimmers and support staff, including but not limited to coaches and Swimming Australia employees, selected or appointed and otherwise designated by Swimming Australia as the "Australian Swim Team" or the "Australian Swim Squad" or any other applicable team or squad selected by Swimming Australia which is representing Swimming Australia at any team activity including training sessions, camps, competitions, functions and any event determined by Swimming Australia to be a team activity from time to time.

**Team Member** means an individual who has signed, or is required to sign, a 'Team Member Agreement' with Swimming Australia including but not limited to the team manager, team doctors, physiotherapists, sports scientists and dietitians.

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**Technical Official** means an official registered with Swimming Australia.