

## LOBBY ELEMENT: MEDIA

### - ten points for lobbyists keen to generate supportive media exposure

<b>Be realistic</b>	Recognise the inherent risks and seductive opportunities involved in encouraging media interest.
<b>Write it down</b>	Unless the situation is exceptional, write down what you want to say. It can be in the form of notes to yourself for a telephone or radio interview; or a release (containing news), a statement (a response to a previous or current event), an advisory (advertising an event in which you are involved).
<b>Know yourself</b>	Keep asking yourself "What is special about the message I have to give?"
<b>Pause if possible</b>	If you get a cold-call from the media asking you to comment on something, do everything to avoid responding then and there. That is high risk territory for mistakes. Offer to call back in a few minutes, end the call, work out something and phone back. Or offer to put your thoughts in writing and E-mail or fax through.
<b>Appearance counts</b>	If writing a release, focus on key elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One side, 1 ½ space;</li><li>• Ariel lettering style;</li><li>• The first sentence summarising the whole message in 25 words or less; then</li><li>• Factual explanation of the news item and a quote, then</li><li>• Your contact details, preferably a cell-phone.</li></ul>
<b>Be alert</b>	If the media respond, get back to them fast. They work to tight deadlines. They are generally doing you more of a favour than you are doing them.
<b>Playing with fire</b>	Before saying anything which might come back to harm you but you feel you must say, establish that you have " <i>off the record</i> " status and avoid saying anything that only you could possibly have known or thought. If radio phone, make sure that you are not on a car.
<b>Know your limits</b>	Don't try and control what the journalist might produce; don't insist at approving something before it is published. If they offer that, fine.
<b>Don't despair</b>	At the bad moments, when a negative story about you first item in every news broadcast, remember that there is much truth in the assertion that "all publicity is good publicity".
<b>Your target</b>	A media release etc. which is repeated word for word, prominently, in the media which you have targeted is a bullseye hit!