

ACT Government Submission to Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure

Inquiry into School Visits by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)

Executive Summary

The *Protocols for MLA/MP/Senator and other dignitary visits to Canberra Public Schools (Attachment A)* are available on the Education Directorate's website at www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/visiting-our-schools. This version of the protocol has been available since July 2017. ACT schools are popular locations for visits by local MLAs, federal politicians and foreign delegations due to the unique geographic and political characteristics of the ACT. The ACT Education Directorate has had school visit protocols for MLAs dating back to at least 2005.

It is within the Minister's responsibility to set the protocols and standards for those visits and each Minister of Education has exercised this authority related to school visit protocols. The main Government priorities in coordinating school visits are:

- a. Effectively coordinating visits to be productive and effective learning opportunities for all involved;
- b. Ensuring the smooth operation of schools and that visits do not create undue disturbance to school routine;
- c. Ensuring appropriate media permissions are sought to safeguard students;
- d. Not placing employees in the position of breaching the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* or ACTPS Code of Conduct, inadvertently or otherwise; and
- e. Ensuring schools are not politicised or become politically affiliated.

Most jurisdictions have formal protocols for school visits, noting that the two jurisdictions most similar to the ACT in population and government, Tasmania and the Northern Territory, do not have protocols.

Of those jurisdictions with protocols require politicians visiting schools outside of the politician's electorate to seek permission from the relevant Minister's Office. All other jurisdictions have single member electorates except for Tasmania who have five member districts similar to the ACT, except of course in geographic size

It is important to note when comparing the jurisdictions, as below, that the ACT is unique in its system of government being multi-member electorates with a unicameral parliament. The Northern Territory and Queensland who also have unicameral parliaments have single member electorates and a much larger geographical spread. Tasmania also has 5 member electorates similar to the ACT but spread geographically across the State meaning members are far less likely to visit outside of their electorates.

Introduction

In February 2019 the Legislative Assembly resolved to conduct an inquiry into school visits by MLAs through the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure. The ACT Government and MLAs were invited to make submissions by the Chair of the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee is due to report to the Legislative Assembly by the last sitting day of May 2019.

The ACT is unique in its geographic position and characteristics as a city-state. It is home to Federal Parliament. It is a popular location for foreign delegations. There is a diverse range of schools in a small area, in comparison to other States and the Northern Territory.

Due to these factors ACT public schools have been, and continue to be popular locations for visits by politicians. There have been published protocols for school visits by VIPs authorised by the Minister for Education since at least 2005.

There is no whole of government specific protocol for visits to government controlled sites or events by MLAs. The Head of Service does issue guidelines under the code of conduct relating to apolitical nature of the public service and advice is issued across whole of government for interactions with non-executive members of the Legislative Assembly.

Other Directorates have internal guidelines or protocols on events, invites and site visits but the Education Directorate is the only Directorate with public protocols which aims to manage the impact on schools.

Current Protocols

The protocols are available on the Education Directorate's website at www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/visiting-our-schools. This version of the protocol has been available since July 2017. The current protocol was republished, unchanged, in February 2019 as part of the Education Directorate's website review¹. This replaced the previous protocol published in May 2016 which aligned with caretaker conventions.

The protocol directs VIPs who wish to make a request to visit a school to contact the Office of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development via the email addresses Berry@act.gov.au and EDUDLO@act.gov.au. School staff who receive requests are directed to refer the VIP to the Minister's Office. There is a Ministerial decision on the request and then notifies the Education Directorate through the Directorate Liaison Officer (DLO). The Education Directorate then organises the logistics of the event with the school and VIP.

An executive from the Executive Directorate attends all school visits to support school leaders and provide information at the system or network level for VIPs. This executive is usually a Director School Improvement of the related school network, other executives may attend if their schedules permit.

On occasions VIPs contact schools directly to organise visits and the Principal notifies the Directorate so that the VIP can be redirected to the Minister's Office. There are also occasions where school staff or Principal may invite a VIP to attend a school event and the Principal is

¹ A google search using keywords such as ACT+schools+visits+MLA+education returns the top result as the link https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/986129/Protocols-for-Visits-to-Schools-by-Dignitaries-Updated-July-2017.pdf this is the previous version (identical) of the protocols and returns an Error 404 – Page Not Found as this pdf has been replaced with the current 2019 version. The cached HTML version is still readable via Google. The web administrators are aware of this result from Google and the Directorate's website search function.

reminded by the Directorate that Ministerial permission need to be sought. In general when there is a breach of the protocol the Directorate is able to advise and redirect as necessary to the Minister's Office for Ministerial approval.

Minister Authority and Responsibility

The Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development is the position ultimately responsible for the education portfolio and operations of all ACT public schools. The Minister welcomes school visits as an appropriate part of student learning and increasing awareness of education in the ACT. The Minister is also responsible for ensuring that schools are not politicised.

It is within the scope of the Minister's decision making accountability and control to decide that permissions must be sought to visit school sites as places of employment and learning. It is within the Minister's responsibility to set the protocols and standards for those visits and each Minister of Education has exercised this authority related to school visit protocols.

Government Priorities for School Visits

The main priorities in coordinating school visits are:

- f. Effectively coordinating visits to be productive and effective learning opportunities for all involved;
- g. Ensuring the smooth operation of schools and that visits do not create undue disturbance to school routine;
- h. Ensuring appropriate media permissions are sought to safeguard students;
- i. Not placing employees in the position of breaching the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* or ACTPS Code of Conduct, inadvertently or otherwise; and
- j. Ensuring schools are not politicised or become politically affiliated.

The main role for the Education Directorate, which has remained unchanged through various versions of the protocol for school visits, is to ensure the visit is well-coordinated. The Directorate works with the VIP, Minister's Office, the school and Directorate line areas to ensure the visit is effective and beneficial.

There is a significant degree of planning and logistics involved for all parties. This is most typically coordinated within the Directorate through the Minister's Office, Ministerial and Corporate Reporting (including the DLO), Media and Communications and School Operations Sections in communication with the school involved and VIP's office.

When appropriate the Directorate may recommend or offer visits to alternative schools if scheduling, school activities or other factors do not align. The Directorate may also offer alternative visits if the intent of the visit is to see or participate in a particular activity that could be better showcased at an alternative school.

To support the protocol, the directorate has a centralised approval and coordination strategy to ensure that visits do not adversely affect the operation of the school and cause undue disturbances to school routine. For example Forest Primary School, Yarralumla Primary School, Telopea Park School, Campbell High School and Red Hill Primary School receive a disproportionately large number of requests for visits from VIPs, Federal MPs and foreign delegations due to their close proximity to the parliamentary triangle, embassies and other locations of national significance. If there are a number of requests for a particular school in a

term the Directorate is able to offer alternative schools to visit in a manner that is not possible at the school level.

The other scenario where offers of alternative schools are made is when a VIP requests to visit multiple school sites. To achieve a broad cross section of education in the ACT an alternative list of schools is provided designed to showcase primary schools, high schools, colleges, K-10, preschools and schools with specific buildings, innovations or programs. An example of this practice (although not specific to visit requests) is school visits coordinated during incoming Minister or Director-General visits where a broad array of schools are recommended across the Territory. A similar approach is adopted for Shadow Minister school visit requests where an attempt is made to cover schools of all grades, types and locations across the ACT rather than a specific electorate or isolated to primary schools, for example.

Media

The protocols for school visits fall into two categories with the key difference being media presence, or lack thereof. This distinction is becoming increasingly difficult to manage as VIP's offices can easily generate their own media as opposed to relying on external media organisations to be present. The main priority for the Directorate in distinguishing between the two types of visit is sourcing media permissions from parents and safeguarding student welfare. Parents, as part of enrolment, provide their consent or non-consent to their child being included for ACT Education promotional purposes in the school environment. Typically this is publishing of photos on school or Directorate publications, social media or websites. These media permissions are known at the school level and seek to avoid publishing identifying information or locations of students who may be involved in court orders, custody matters, are children of public or high ranking officials or families who have other security or privacy concerns.

The media permissions sought as part of the school enrolment process only apply to ACT Education Directorate activities to promote ACT education. They do not cover use for political purposes or wider media publication. In the case of a school visit request with media presence for promotion of political activity, campaigning or policy announcement separate media permissions must be sought by the requesting VIP office with a clear description of the event proposal for parents to consent or non-consent to their children being involved. A Directorate media officer, when available, attends to ensure that children who should not be filmed or photographed are not.

The *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (PSM Act) and the ACTPS Code of Conduct apply to school staff as public servants. The Directorate is conscious of the fact that school staff can be placed in the position during school visits by VIPs of making statements that could be misconstrued as an official comment (PSM Act, Part 2, Section 9) particularly with media present. Having an executive and media officer available to act as advisors for staff from inappropriate questions or political statements is beneficial.

The final priority for the Minister and Directorate is to ensure that schools at an individual and systemic level do not become politicised or politically affiliated, or indeed to be perceived to be either. It is very important for the public school system to remain as apolitical as possible. ACT public schools are host to a diversity of families, who hold a range of political, religious and philosophical opinions. ACT public schools host families who come from a range of backgrounds and circumstances. ACT public schools are free and open to everyone, and therefore, their effective operation requires equity, universality, and non-discrimination.

There can be no perceived bias at the school level or the Government level and so adherence to a standard set of protocols for all school visits is a necessity of this system. The standard set of protocols is applied to all VIPs regardless of political affiliation. The reverse also applies, in that school principals cannot create a perception of political affiliation by requesting attendance of politicians without a level of scrutiny from the Minister.

Jurisdictional Comparison

New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia all have public published protocols available. Queensland and South Australia have internal published protocols for schools to access via intranet. The Northern Territory and Tasmania do not have formalised published protocols and arrangements are left to individual schools and VIPs.

It is important to note when comparing the jurisdictions, as below, that the ACT is unique in its system of government being multi-member electorates with a unicameral parliament. The Northern Territory and Queensland who also have unicameral parliaments have single member electorates and a much larger geographical spread. Tasmania also has 5 member electorates similar to the ACT but spread geographically across the State meaning members are far less likely to visit outside of their electorates.

All other states have bicameral parliaments with members of the lower houses drawn from single member electorates. Upper house parliaments are a mix of state wide representation (NSW and South Australia) and multi (Victoria, Western Australia) or single (Tasmania) member electorates.

The unique mix of politicians, electorates and size of the ACT lends itself to a more centralised approach. There is more potential for visits which explains the long standing formal published protocols for the ACT and differences from other jurisdictions' protocols. Those with formal protocols, with the notable exception of Victoria, require politicians visiting outside of their electorate to seek permission from the Minister's Office or Chief Executive. Victoria instead has the Regional Director's permission sought as suitable for the size of their system given the 1,531 public schools in the state contrasted with the ACT's 88 public schools.

A summary of other jurisdictions protocols is provided below for the Committee's information.

Jurisdiction	Protocol Summary	Notes
New South Wales	Local members should be warmly welcomed at schools within their electorates. All arrangements should be made between the Principal and member's office. Other Members of Parliament (including Federal) are required to make arrangements through the Minister's Office.	Titled <i>Controversial Issues in Schools – Procedures</i> . First published June 2007, last revision December 2017.
Victoria	Schools have the discretion of hosting or inviting MPs to the school. The Principal is responsible in consultation with the school council to issue an invitation or respond to a request by an MP to visit a school.	Titled <i>Protocols for Members of Parliament Visiting Schools</i> Caretaker period included.

	Regional Director must be notified of the visit as early as possible. Schools must consider the best interests of students, including duty of care, education benefits and appropriateness of the proposed visit.	
Queensland	Elected members whether in the government or opposition, should be welcomed by schools within their electorates... Elected members are not required to make arrangements through the Office of the Minister for Education to visit schools in their electorate. However, any elected members wishing to visit schools in other electorates must seek approval from the Office of the Minister for Education. Principals should inform members of this requirement and ensure their Regional Director (RD) is notified immediately of any proposed visit, particularly if the principal has concerns in relation to the timing and/or nature of the visit.	Published on Queensland Department of Education intranet. Caretaker period included. Community use of school facilities included as relates to political parties and campaigning.
South Australia	Members of Parliament are welcome at schools and preschools within their electorate at time convenient to the site and when it will not disrupt normal activities. Timely and prior notification of any visits to department sites by Members of Parliament or candidates is to be given to the Office of the Chief Executive to allow appropriate protocols to be addressed. Site visits must not be for political or campaign purposes, including the distribution or promotion of party political or candidate specific material.	Published December 2018, not available online. Caretaker instructions not included.
Western Australia	A politician is welcome to visit a school in their electorate and does not need to seek permission from the Minister's Office.	Published May 2018. Caretaker period included.

	Minister's Office decision is required if visit is outside of the politician's electorate. Minister's Office decision is required if media invited. Minister's Office decision is required if inviting politicians from outside of the electorate. Premier and Minister must arrange visits via requests to the Ministerial Services Unit. Principals must remind politicians that they: • Cannot express political views and ideologies, either personal or those of a political party, to students, staff, and members of school community; and • Can talk generally to students and staff about their roles in the confines of student learning and curriculum.	
Northern Territory	No formal protocols	Nil
Tasmania	No formal protocols	Nil

Caretaker Conventions

There are particular issues that arise during caretaker period, both federal and territory, as ACT public schools receive an increase in requests for visits with media promotion. The ACT caretaker conventions are updated prior to election periods and the protocols for school visits subsequently updated to align with caretaker arrangements. Requests for school visits during caretaker periods is coordinated through the Ministerial and Corporate Reporting and Media and Communications sections of the Education Directorate. The updated protocols with different contact points are distributed to Principals, Directorate staff and politicians' offices.

The current protocols include the advice that is provided to VIPs during caretaker periods that they must adhere to the following:

- No announcements of media conferences are to be made/held in classrooms or with school signage in the background. Filming outside or at the school gates is preferred.
- Staff cannot be included in any visual representations or provide comment to media on any issues related to political campaigning.

Overall the caretaker arrangements aim to reinforce the apolitical nature of the ACTPS by avoiding the use of Territory resources in a manner that advantages a particular party. In so doing, they also aim to prevent controversies about the role of the public service distracting

attention from the substantive issues in the election campaign. One of the most pertinent sections of the caretaker conventions relating to ACT public schools is 4 (i) page 11 –

“There may be occasions where agency premises can appropriately be used during the caretaker period by political parties for public events, such as media conferences, or where they are the obvious place for a function. In the case of official functions involving the use of directorate agency resources, relevant non-government spokespersons should be given the opportunity to be present.

It is not appropriate that the use of agency premises extend to such activities as engaging public servants in political dialogue, or using public servants for logistical support for political functions. Nor should the use of premises unreasonably disrupt the normal operations of the offices concerned.

ACT Government premises may be used as the backdrop for political advertising or policy material by government and non-government parties (e.g. photography or filming) provided that no official resources are utilised, and the operations of the site are not unreasonably impacted. It is important that the impartiality of ACT public servants is not compromised through their appearance in party political material of this sort. With this in mind it may be more appropriate for actors to be used in place of officials.”

Historic Protocols

In researching this submission the Government searched back through archived webpages to 2005 and located protocols for school visits by VIPs on the former www.det.act.gov.au website. To quote from the 2005 *PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL VISITS BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY*:

3. A VISIT AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE SCHOOL

- 3.1 Before an invitation is extended, the school must contact Ministerial and Communications (MAC) on 6205 9393.
- 3.2 The Minister’s permission is required prior to invitations being sent to Members of Parliaments of other jurisdictions or Members of the Legislative Assembly.
- 3.3 MAC will provide protocol advice and seek approval from the Minister’s Office for invitations to be extended.
- 3.4 MAC will notify the school when approval is received. The school should then send a formal written invitation.

4. A VISIT AT THE INITIATIVE OF A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT OR MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

- 4.1 The school should advise the Member of Parliament of another jurisdiction or Member of the Legislative Assembly that the request to visit the school should be directed to the Minister’s Office.
- 4.2 In the case of a Member of Parliament of another jurisdiction or Member of the Legislative Assembly performing a launch for an outside agency, but using the school as a venue, the school should notify MAC.
- 4.3 MAC will contact the organisation to seek further information. They will also advise the organisation that protocol requires the ACT Minister for Education and Training to be invited and to be given the opportunity to speak.

These protocols remained unchanged until 2011 when revised protocols were published with more procedural information on the forms to be completed and an update to the organisational units names and contacts. The protocols were expanded to include advice on overseas visitors. To quote from the 2011 *Attendance of Members of the Legislative Assembly, Members of Parliament and overseas VIPs at Department or school events - Guidelines for staff*:

3. Invitations to MPs or MLAs at the initiative of the Department or the school

- 3.1. The Minister's agreement is required prior to invitations being extended to MPs or other MLAs to attend events or visit schools.
- 3.2. The Minister must be invited to an event which is being attended by an MP or another MLA.
- 3.3. To seek the Minister's agreement, the Department or the school must complete the *Event/Meeting Proposal* form at Attachment A and return to the Minister's Office Manager with a copy addressed to the DLO and the Manager, Media and Communications. Contact details can be found on the *Minister - Event/Meeting Proposal for attendance* form.

4. A visit or use of an ACT public school venue initiated by a Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislative Assembly

- 4.1. MPs or MLAs wishing to visit or use a school venue e.g. for an Australian Government launch of a national education initiative, or an ACT Government launch of a children's initiative, must make their request to the Minister's office. Department or school staff approached by MPs or MLAs for use of a school venue must refer the MP or MLA to the Minister's office.

5. Schools inviting MPs or MLAs to participate in a curriculum activity involving students

- 5.1. The Minister's agreement is required (see 3.1 – 3.3) before an invitation is extended to MPs or other MLAs to participate in curriculum or extra-curricular activities involving students.

The protocols were reviewed in 2015 at the direction of the former Minister for Education Joy Burch MLA. Visits still required Ministerial approval.

In February 2016 the protocols were revised at the direction of the former Minister for Education Shane Rattenbury MLA and due to the Federal and Territory elections in 2016. The changes in 2016 removed the onus on the Minister's Office to advise of permission. Instead VIPs were requested to contact the Education Directorate's Ministerial and Commonwealth Relations unit (as known at that time) as below:

Protocols for visit

- 1. Office of the visiting VIP must first contact the Education Directorate seeking permission. Visits will be coordinated through the Ministerial and Commonwealth Relations Unit

(MCR).

2. MCR will provide the Media and Communications Unit, the Deputy Director-General, the Office for Schools and hosting school with the initial information regarding the visit.
3. All parties must support the proposal.
4. Once the visit is supported by the Directorate, the Minister's office will be notified of the visit. The Minister's Office will be advised by MCR of any changes to the arrangements.
5. Visiting VIPs must adhere to the following:
 - no announcements or media conferences are to be made/held in classrooms or with school signage in background. Filming just outside or at the gates is preferred.
 - staff cannot be included in any visual representations or provide comment to media on any issues related to political campaigning
 - students cannot be included in any visual representations or provide comment to media on any issues related to political campaigning without express permission from parents and the school leadership – note EDU media permissions are only for the purposes of promoting the school and Canberra public schools
 - visit must not significantly disrupt the business of the school
 - VIPs are responsible for their own additional security measures and emergency procedures if required.

The former Director-General, Diane Joseph wrote on 12 February 2016 to the former Shadow Minister for Education Steve Doszpot MLA notifying him of the revised protocols and inviting him to submit a schedule of schools visits for 2016 leading up to caretaker.

In early 2017 the new Office for the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development Yvette Berry MLA reviewed the school visits protocols. The current protocols were produced and published in July 2017.

Justice and Community Safety Directorate Protocols

The *Events, Arrangements and Engagement with Non-Government MLAs* standard operating procedures (SOP) are published internally for officers of the Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACSD). It is provided for the Committee's information as [Attachment B](#).

The SOP "is designed to formalise the way in which JACS Media organises and manages events, including the arrangements briefing process. The SOP also provides advice on the appropriate actions that Members of the Legislative Assembly and/or their staff should take whenever seeking to visit JACSD premises to make political announcements or promote programs related to JACSD activities, and where the opposition or recognised parties consult with Public Servants."

Protocols for MLA/MP/Senator and other dignitary visits to Canberra Public Schools

MLAs, MPs, Senators, overseas officials and other dignitaries often request to visit public schools to participate in meetings, school activities or to hold media/promotional events. These protocols provide guidance to visiting VIPs, schools and the Directorate in managing such requests.

Please note:

- Any requests for media attendance must be agreed to by the Office of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development.
- Any Directorate or school staff approached by VIPs regarding a proposed visit must refer the VIP to the Office of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development.

Requests can be placed into two categories – meetings/visits (no media) and media/promotional events.

Arranging a school visit (meetings/visits or media/promotional events)

1. The initiator of the visit must seek written agreement from the Office of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development.
2. The request must be emailed to Berry@act.gov.au and EDUDLO@act.gov.au and include the following details:
 - school requested
 - date, time and length of visit
 - objective of visit (for example, policy announcement/media opportunity/visit only)
 - media to be invited (description: one outlet or open invite)
 - number of guests and names of VIPs
 - contact person's name and details.
3. Once a decision has been made by the Minister's Office, the Education Directorate Liaison Officer (DLO) will notify the relevant area of the Directorate. The Directorate will then organise the event's logistics with the hosting school and the office of the visiting VIP.
4. The Directorate, in consultation with the Minister's Office, reserves the right to refuse or delay a school visit (for example, in the event that the school is managing, or has just managed, a critical or severe incident).

Specific protocols for meetings/visits (no media)

A senior officer from the Education Support Office will attend all school visits/meetings to support school leaders.

Visiting VIPs must adhere to the following:

- no media is to be invited to the meeting/visit
- the visit must not significantly disrupt the business of the school
- the visit should occur between the hours of 10am and 2pm or after 3pm
- the visit should not occur in the first or last weeks of a school term
- VIPs are responsible for their own security measures and emergency procedures if required.

Specific protocols for media/promotional events

Visiting VIPs must adhere to the following:

- all media coverage, once approved by the Minister's office, is to be arranged in conjunction with the Directorate's Media and Communications Unit
- generally media/promotional events should be related to education
- if the proposed event relates to an ACT Government initiative, the visiting VIP's office should confirm with the Minister's office which VIP is most appropriate to lead/participate in the event
- no announcements or media conferences are to be made/held in classrooms or with school signage in the background. Filming outside or at the school gates is preferred.
- staff cannot be included in any visual representations or provide comment to media on any issues related to political campaigning
- students cannot be included in any visual representations or provide comment to media on any issues related to political campaigning without express permission from their parents/carers and the school leadership. This requires a separate permissions process to the standard Education Directorate media permissions process
- media permissions for participating students need to be confirmed with the school
- if the objective of the visit falls outside of the parameters set out in the permission section of the *authority to use photographs form* or on the *online enrolment form*, additional permission forms should be supplied by the visiting VIP's office
- VIPs are responsible for their own security measures and emergency procedures if required.

Authority to use photographs (including video) of children for the promotion of public education.

Dear Parents and Carers

The Education Directorate seeks to use photographic (including video) images of students to promote public education. The photographs are used for Directorate and school promotional purposes including corporate publications such as the Annual Reports. This may include illustrations for printed materials as well as the Education Directorate and school websites.

Photographs of students may also be taken by the media to illustrate a newspaper or television story about public education. The Directorate at times also provides copies of photographs of students to the media for this purpose. The media is only ever invited into a school when they have sought and gained Directorate approval.

The media includes local and national television and radio stations, newspapers, and other publications.

At times the names of children may be included in school newsletters and websites and media where it relates to an article or story that acknowledges their student work and success. Students are normally only identified by their first name except where they are named as part of a media story.

If you fill in this form, your personal information and that of your child will be collected and handled by the Directorate and/or School. This information is necessary for us when we publish photographs, video recordings and newsletter items relating to your child. This may include publishing on websites. You are not required to grant permission, this is a matter entirely at your discretion, however, by granting permission you will greatly assist us to promote the educational opportunities and the achievements of our schools and their students.

Normally we will not use or disclose this information for another purpose, without your consent, unless you would reasonably expect us to use or disclose the information for a related purpose. However, you need to be aware that images and information published on the school website can be copied and used by other web users and therefore the school has no control over its subsequent use and disclosure.

The Directorate has a privacy policy that explains how we handle personal information, including how we handle privacy complaints. The policy is available on the Directorate's website (www.education.act.gov.au) on the About Us page.

Please provide the necessary information below to advise if you do, or do not, give your permission.

Permission

Child's full name: _____ (Please print)

Name of school: _____ (Please print)

Full Name of parent or carer: _____ (Please print)

Please tick

Photographs:

☐ Yes, I agree to photographs and video recordings being taken and used by the school and Directorate.

☐ No, I do not agree.

☐ Yes, I agree to photographs and video recordings being taken and used by the media.

☐

Newsletters and websites:

☐ Yes, I agree that my child's name may be included in school newsletters and websites and media where it relates to an article or story that acknowledges their student work and success.

☐ No, I do not agree.

Date: _____ Signature _____

Office Use

Student central ID: Entered into MAZE ☐



ACT
Government

JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PROCEDURE

EVENTS, ARRANGEMENTS AND ENGAGEMENT WITH NON-GOVERNMENT MLAs

DOCUMENT ID JACS SOP 18	TITLE Events, Arrangements and Engagement with Non Government MLA's	
REVISION 4.0	PREPARED BY JACS Media	DATE PREPARED 16 February 2017
TYPE Standard Operating Procedure	APPROVED BY Director-General	DATE APPROVED 27 March 2017

REVIEW DATE

February 2019

David Pryce

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEFINITION OF TERMS	3
1.PURPOSE	4
2.SCOPE	4
3.BACKGROUND	4
4.ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
5.DETAILS OF THE PROCEDURE	5
6.CONULTATION WITH PUBLIC SERVANTS BY OPPOSITION AND RECOGNISED PARTIES WITHIN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	7
6.1 VISITS TO JACS PREMISES	8
6.2 CONSULTATION WITH PUBLIC SERVANTS	8
7.NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURE	8
8.REVIEW	9
9.ENQUIRIES	9
PROPERTIES	10

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Media Release	A written statement or announcement directed at the media.
Media Alert	Details of an event (launch, announcement, function, etc), to include brief description and event logistics.
HP Records Manager	JACS electronic data management system.
JACS Media	JACS team responsible for creating, clearing, and approving media related documents.
Business unit	Team or area of JACS.
DG	Director-General.
DDG	Deputy-Director General.
Response	All material, information, documents, or any other item provided by the Directorate in response to a media request.
Event	An organised gathering, often involving an announcement or presentation.
Arrangements brief	Document outlining detail of event.

1. PURPOSE

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is designed to formalise the way in which JACS Media organises and manages events, including the arrangements briefing process. The SOP also provides advice on the appropriate actions that Members of the Legislative Assembly and/or their staff should take whenever seeking to visit Justice and Community Safety (JACS) premises to make political announcements or promote programs related to JACS activities, and where the opposition or recognised parties consult with Public Servants.

2. SCOPE

The SOP applies to the JACS Media team and any Directorate officer who is involved with developing and organising events. It also applies to the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) media team who have reviewed their internal procedures to comply with the SOP.

The SOP applies to Statutory Office Holders (SOHO) where the SOHO has requested the assistance of the Directorate in preparing media information. It is acknowledged that in performing the statutory function of a SOHO there may be information provided to the media which is not prepared through the Directorate.

3. BACKGROUND

In formalising the process of organising and managing events, JACS must ensure that proper procedures are followed. This will ensure all events run smoothly, and all parties involved are given the opportunity to provide input and are appropriately involved to ensure each event is successful.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Area/Officer	Responsibilities
JACS Media Officer	• Control process from beginning to end • Ensure fluid communication between business unit and Minister's Office • Ensure the Minister's Office's needs and requirements are met within indicated timeframe • Prepare documentation appropriately, including formatting • Check spelling, grammar, format and standards • Ensure correct approval procedures are adhered to • Ensure DDG is aware of any other issues or sensitivities
ESA Emergency Media Officer	• Collate appropriate information for event • Identify any issues surrounding the event • Ensure fluid communication between the service and Minister's Office • Ensure the Minister's Office's needs and requirements are met within indicated timeframe • Prepare documentation appropriately, including formatting • Check spelling, grammar, format and standards • Ensure correct approval procedures are adhered to

Area/Officer	Responsibilities
	Ensure DDG is aware of any other issues or sensitivities
Action officer	- Collate appropriate information for event - Identify any issues surrounding the event - Provide adequate and appropriate information - Ensure draft is cleared by appropriate business unit executive - Provide draft within indicated timeframe
Business Unit Executive	- Ensure information is accurate and appropriate - Ensure any sensitivities, background or related issues are identified
Director-General	If progressed to this level, provide approval and advice on information with consideration of potential competing interests across all stakeholders
Deputy Directors-General	Provide approval and advice on information with consideration of potential competing interests across all stakeholders
Minister's Media Advisor	Indicate the Minister's requirements in the lead up to the event and on the day

5. DETAILS OF THE PROCEDURE

Potential media events are discussed and agreed to at the regular Minister's Media meetings with JACS Media or ESA Media or in some cases via email.

Officers in JACS Media and ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services work with the relevant action officer to complete the *Minister Event Proposal - Diary Request* template to provide to the Minister's Office several weeks in advance.

Once scheduled, the event will be developed and organised by the JACS Media team in consultation with the business unit through the following process.

Try to be creative when developing an event concept – consider different locations, secondary talent, photo opportunities etc.

The event should also be captured in the weekly media forecast document provided to the Minister's Office each Friday.

STEP 1 - JACS Media should organise a meeting with the business unit involved and complete the *Minister Event Proposal - Diary Request* template with as much detail as possible about the event.

Refer to any briefs which may have been provided to the Minister, past media on the event, or any potential sensitivities.

The template should also be used to clear the invitation list with Minister's Office.

ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will adopt a similar process and liaise with the relevant Chief Officers and action officer to complete the template.

ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will seek clearance from the Commissioner before forwarding the request to JACS Media via email.

STEP 2: JACS Media should ensure the document is formatted appropriately and sent to the Minister's Office, highlighting the proposed event date and time.

This document is to be approved by a DDG and directed to the Minister's media advisor.

JACS Media should also carbon copy in the action officer and appropriate executives.

JACS Media will request that the media adviser review the document and ask if they would like to proceed with either an event for the Minister or for the Directorate, or if they do not wish to proceed with an event at all.

For ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services organised events, JACS Media will identify the team member whom the media advisor should contact for further information.

STEP 3: If proceeding with an event, JACS Media will receive a diary invite from the Directorate Liaison Officer and note advice about communication required for the Minister.

This may include talking points, speech, question and answer, media alert and media release. The Directorate Liaison Officer will also set up a functions brief package in HP Records Manager.

STEP 4: JACS Media will identify roles and responsibilities for the event including:

- Who is booking the venue and organising catering and set up?
- Who is developing the guest list?
- Running order
- VIPs
- Who will be developing invitations?
- Who will be sending the invitations?
- Who will be receiving the RSVPs?
- When is the RSVP deadline?

STEP 5: JACS Media will coordinate all material and information with the business unit, delegating tasks if required – this may require a series of meetings in the lead up to the event.

JACS Media will offer to draft all communication or share this responsibility with the action officer if required.

Ensure all information and detail is complete within the arrangements brief and that all bookings are confirmed.

Make sure all decisions are communicated and confirmed with the Minister's Office.

ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will also follow this procedure for an event for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

If liaising with the Minister's Office via email, ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will carbon copy JACS Media.

STEP 6: JACS Media should then identify a deadline to which the action will have all materials and final arrangements brief delivered to the Minister's Office. Generally this is one week before the event.

JACS Media will track the progress of events organised by ESA Media when it seeks input to the weekly media forecast for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

STEP 7: JACS Media or the action officer should attach the arrangements brief, media release and any other communication requested by the Minister's Office to the HP Records container.

ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will seek assistance from the ESA Ministerial Services Unit to upload documents to HP Records Manager. This package will be cleared by a senior manager/Chief Officer and executive director/Commissioner before coming to JACS Media for review.

If changes are made to content at this stage, JACS Media will consult with the business unit and request the amended communication be approved.

STEP 8: JACS Media will ensure all documents are cleared by appropriate DDG. The DDG will decide if DG approval is needed.

STEP 9: JACS Media will track the package's clearance by the DDG and provide all communication to the Minister's media advisor via email. The arrangements brief and any other required materials are to be delivered to the Minister's Office **one week before event or for short notice events, 2 days before event.**

For ESA organised events, JACS Media will identify the relevant ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services contact in the email to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services' media adviser.

The Minister's media advisor should liaise directly with the ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services contact. JACS Media is only to provide further event support if requested by ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services or the ESA Commissioner.

STEP 10: JACS Media should discuss with the Minister's office their requirements on the day – are you required to attend? Do you need to be there early to set up? Do you need to develop media packs? ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will also follow this step.

STEP 11: JACS Media with assistance from the action officer will ensure all materials and event set up are complete. If JACS Media is not attending, the media officer should be available by phone in case any assistance is required. ESA Emergency Media and Broadcasting Services will also follow this procedure.

6. CONSULTATION WITH PUBLIC SERVANTS BY OPPOSITION AND RECOGNISED PARTIES WITHIN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The following protocol is being issued to protect employees and the Directorate from risks associated with:

- a visit to JACS premises by a non-government member, where visitors seek to make political announcements or promote programs related to JACS activities; and
- where the opposition or recognised parties consult with public servants.

For all requests to visit JACS facilities by Oppositions and Recognised Parties within the Legislative Assembly, the following procedures are to apply:

6.1 VISITS TO JACS PREMISES

- The business area receiving the request/contact to access a JACS site will notify the Office of the Director-General via JACSMedia@act.gov.au providing details of the visit, purpose etc.
- The Office of the Director-General will liaise with the relevant business unit and will request advice from the Ministerial Services Unit (MSU) and the relevant Minister's Office.
- The Office of the Director-General will make a decision about whether to authorise the visit and any associated conditions. If supported, the Office of the Director-General will ensure the relevant Minister's Office is kept informed about the visit.
- In addition to any conditions imposed by the Director-General, visiting VIP's must adhere to the following:
 - no announcements or media conferences are to be made/held in or on JACS facilities;
 - no JACS staff, assets, uniforms, equipment, signage or other JACS identifiers are allowed to be used in any visual representations that could be used to infer support;
 - staff must not be asked to provide comment about issues related to political campaigning; and
 - the visit must not affect the operations of the business area or in any way disrupt service delivery commitments for the community.

6.2 CONSULTATION WITH PUBLIC SERVANTS

It is accepted custom and practice that all Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Oppositions and/or their staff are to contact the appropriate Minister or Minister's office whenever seeking information on particular issues. Alternatively, a written request is made to the head of the agency concerned. Normally, an advisor from the Minister's office will attend the meeting with the public servants.

During caretaker the following additional practices apply:

- any consultation that non-Government members (being external to the ACT Government) wish to undertake with agency officials is to be initiated through the relevant Minister's office. The relevant Minister is to notify the Chief Minister of any request and whether it has been granted. Agency officials should not initiate any consultation.
- the subject matter of the discussions should generally be about machinery of government and administration. Agency officials may comment on the practicalities of implementing and administering the policies that have been proposed by the relevant member. Agency officials are not to discuss Government policies or offer opinions on matters of a party political nature.
- the detailed substance of the discussion is to be kept confidential between the agency officials and the member(s) with whom they meet. Ministers are, however, entitled to be informed that the discussions have taken place and to seek assurances that the discussions were kept within the agreed purposes.

7. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURE

JACS Media will monitor compliance with the procedure and provide feedback when necessary to action officers and business units. This may be during the process for creating an event or following an event as part of evaluation of the event's success.

8. REVIEW

The SOP is to be reviewed two years within two years of publication. If however, there are found to be errors, omissions or process changes within the review period the procedure should be immediately reviewed.

9. ENQUIRIES

Direct enquiries on this Standard Operating Procedure to:

JACS Media

jacsmedia@act.gov.au or (02) 620 77173

PROPERTIES

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Version No	Issue Date	Details	Author
1	04/10/12	Created	JACS Media
2	25/03/15	Reviewed and amended	JACS Media
3	22/09/16	Additions made to include information on visits to JACS premises.	Governance, Library, Coordination and Reporting (GLCR)
3.1	3/11/2016	Amendments	GLCR
3.2	6/12/2016	Update	JACS Media
3.3	2/2/2017	Amendments as per DDG request and final consultation.	GLCR
4.0	16/2/2017	Finalisation	GLCR

DETAILS

Document Properties	Approval Details
SOP Name:	Events, Arrangements and Engagement with Non-Government MLA's
SOP Number:	JACS SOP 18
SOP Type:	Media
Custodian:	Chief Operating Officer
SOP Advisor:	JACS Communications Manager
Branch Responsible for the SOP:	Office of the Chief Operating Officer
Stakeholders:	JACS Directorate, Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services.