

Subject: Communications with External Groups
From: "Maureen E. Wylie" <Announcement@noaa.gov>
Date: Fri, 15 Apr 2005 12:13:16 -0500
To: "Maureen E. Wylie" <Announcement@noaa.gov>
Message-ID: <425FF62C.1000300@noaa.gov>
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MEMORANDUM FOR: All NOAA Employees

FROM: Maureen E. Wylie
Chief Financial Officer

SUBJECT: Communications with External Groups

Since we are exposed to a variety of information, it is important that we use sound judgment when providing information to others; especially external groups including Congressional and Appropriations Committees. The NOAA Media Policy provides a good point of reference for how to handle inquiries and will help guide you in determining what information should be provided to external groups and what should be sent to the NOAA Public, Constituent and Intergovernmental Affairs Office or Budget Office. Please be mindful that any discussions involving the FY 2007 budget should not be made with external groups until after the President announces his budget in February 2006. I encourage you to read the NOAA Media Policy and act accordingly. You may also access this policy on the NOAA Office of Public, Constituent, and Intergovernmental Affairs Web site at: <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/%7E nao/219-6.html>.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

This message was generated for the Chief Financial Officer by the NOAA Information Technology Center/Financial and Administrative Computing Division

NOAA MEDIA POLICY

Effective: 6/22/04; Issued: 6/28/04

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

.01 This Order establishes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) media policy. NOAA public affairs programs have been established throughout NOAA to conduct media and public relations activities. These activities are coordinated through the Office of Public, Constituent, and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPCIA). Well-planned media relations programs help earn public support of missions, functions, and services performed by NOAA. A principal goal of public, constituent, and intergovernmental affairs activities is to increase understanding of NOAA and its mission by increasing public exposure to, and understanding of, NOAA's programs.

SECTION 2. RESPONSIBILITIES.

.01 As NOAA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), clearance of releasable information is the ultimate responsibility of the Secretary of Commerce and his/her designated Public Affairs Director. Information on the DOC program is outlined in Department Administrative Order (DAO) 219-2, Release of News, Clearance of Publications, and Media Coverage.

.02 OPCIA is responsible for coordinating and approving media communications involving NOAA, including advisories, press releases, interviews, and other related media contacts. OPCIA's responsibilities include media communications concerning the following:

- a. announcement of the release of official NOAA data, research, positions, and statements;
- b. announcement of activities of NOAA or Department leadership which pertain to NOAA policy, science, research, missions, projects, and partnerships;
- c. announcement of the release of contracts, grants, and grants-in-aid of \$500,000 or more, or others of any

amount which may have significant public interest or other public value or significance;

d. activities that may have policy-making implications; and

e. announcing official scientific and technical papers authored or co-authored by NOAA employees that result or may result in media interest.

.03 The Director, OPCIA, may grant exceptions to the provisions of this Order as circumstances warrant.

.04 NOAA public affairs professionals are responsible for ensuring that reporters get timely and accurate answers to pertinent questions.

.05 Officials in Line and Staff Offices will ensure their organizations coordinate their activities in accordance with this Order. Media inquiries, or issues and events that may be expected to lead to media inquiries, should be referred to the Line or Staff Office's servicing Public Affairs Officer (PAO).

SECTION 3. MEDIA AND PUBLIC INTERACTIONS REQUIRING PRIOR NOTIFICATION.

.01 The following shall be referred to the servicing PAO:

a. proposed news conferences, whether for the specialized press or for the general press, radio, or television;

b. proposed contacts with major news media and radio and television stations or networks for coverage of news features involving NOAA programs or activities; and

c. official and non-official scientific and technical papers authored or co-authored by NOAA employees that may result in media interest.

.02 NOAA employees must notify the servicing PAO or OPCIA before responding to news media inquiries whenever the inquiries:

- a. are of national news interest;
- b. concern regulatory actions or issues;
- c. concern controversial issues;
- d. pertain to science or research having known or potential policy implications;
- e. involve the release of scientific or technical papers that may have policy implications or are controversial;
or
- f. involve a crisis or a potential crisis situation.

.03 Any proposed participation or inclusion in media presentations (e.g., audio or visual tapes, films, television programs, exhibits, etc.) by individuals resulting from their duties as NOAA employees must be referred by those individuals to and cleared by OPCIA beforehand.

SECTION 4. GUIDANCE ON MEDIA QUERIES.

.01 Keep OPCIA informed about media interest or potential interest in your work. The team of NOAA public affairs professionals has built very strong working relationships with many reporters. The team can assist NOAA employees in communicating aspects of their work or in responding to media calls.

.02 The following is intended to serve as general guidance for individuals who will be in contact with members of the media as a result of their work with NOAA.

- a. Discussions should focus on science and fact, not speculation.
- b. Limit discussions to matters for which you are responsible and of which you have direct knowledge.
- c. Whether in person, on camera, or over the phone, when speaking to a reporter you represent and speak for the entire agency.
- d. When speaking to reporters, you are speaking on the record. Off-the-record and background interviews

almost always result in a story.

e. You are not bound to talk with reporters. Should you have any questions, concerns, or doubts, call your servicing PAO.

f. Following an interview, call your servicing PAO to describe the interview and the expected story. Do this promptly. The situation may require the PAO to contact the reporter in order to provide additional information and context.

SECTION 5. MEDIA COVERAGE.

.01 DOC and NOAA policies are consistent with the spirit of openness in the Federal Government. Media representatives must be granted free access to open meetings of advisory committees and other meetings convened by NOAA. By definition, these include:

- a. all public meetings, workshops, symposia, conferences, seminars, and the like, which are chaired, co-chaired, hosted, or organized by authorized representatives of NOAA; and
- b. all open meetings and open portions of meetings of advisory committees for which NOAA is responsible.

.02 News media representatives attending and reporting public meetings are permitted to use tape recorders, cameras, and electronic equipment for broadcast purposes. Positioning and use of such equipment, however, should not interfere with the orderly process and conduct of such meetings. To prevent the disruption of meetings, film crews, technicians, and other assigned media representatives should discuss with OPCIA representatives the position of all equipment (lights, microphones, cameras, etc.) in advance and defer removal until the conclusion of the meeting or during an intermission period that provides sufficient time for withdrawal of equipment.

.03 A PAO attached to the Line Office or regional office sponsoring or co-sponsoring a meeting may be present, or consulted, to undertake all responsibilities of a news media nature, including but not restricted to physical arrangements herein described.

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Brian D. Gross, Deputy Director
DOC/NOAA/OAR/Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory

Location:
Forrestal Campus, Princeton University
201 Forrestal Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

Mail:
P.O. Box 308
Princeton, NJ 08542

Email: Brian.Gross@noaa.gov
Voice: 609-452-6504
Fax: 609-987-5070 Cell: 609-439-9702

Subject: Fwd: NOAA Media Policy
From: Ants Leetmaa <Ants.Lleetmaa@noaa.gov>
Date: Wed, 05 Oct 2005 08:20:38 -0400
To: Brian.Gross@noaa.gov

a reminder that public affairs needs to be kept in the loop for our
press conferences, public statements.

ants

Subject: NOAA Media Policy
From: Richard Spinrad <Richard.Spinrad@noaa.gov>
Date: Tue, 04 Oct 2005 17:44:27 -0400
To: Albritton Daniel L <Daniel.L.Albritton@noaa.gov>, BAIRD RONALD <Ronald.Baird@noaa.gov>, Brandt
Stephen B <Stephen.B.Brandt@noaa.gov>, BURGESS DIANNE <Dianne.Burgess@noaa.gov>, Hammond
Stephen <Stephen.R.Hammond@noaa.gov>, Hayes Jack <Jack.Haves@noaa.gov>, Leetmaa Ants
<Ants.Lleetmaa@noaa.gov>, Koch Kristen <Kristen.C.Koch@noaa.gov>, Brown Mark
<Mark.Brown@noaa.gov>, Blake Wade <Wade.Blake@noaa.gov>, Eppli Rene <Rene.Eppi@noaa.gov>, Uhart
Michael <Michael.Uhart@noaa.gov>, Huang Nancy <Nancy.Huang@noaa.gov>, Koblinsky Chester
<Chester.J.Koblinsky@noaa.gov>, Moore Barbara <Barbara.Moore@noaa.gov>, Goldman Jana
<Jana.Goldman@noaa.gov>, Atlas Robert <Robert.Atlas@noaa.gov>, Hicks Bruce <Bruce.Hicks@noaa.gov>,
Kimpel James <James.Kimpel@noaa.gov>, Bernard Eddie <Eddie.N.Bernard@noaa.gov>, "Jones C. Michelle"
<michelle.jones@noaa.gov>

OAR Senior Staff -

Several incidents in the last few days have served as indications that
we need to provide our folks with an important reminder regarding our
dealings with the press. Please make sure your folks have reviewed the
subject policy, found at: <http://www.xdc.noaa.gov/77Enao/219-6.html>.
It's short and it's clear. A quick review can save lots of problems
downstream.

This policy was developed in order to help earn public support of our
missions, functions and services. There are HQ resources at your
disposal. I will do all I can to make sure we get the highest degree of
visibility for our work, but I need to make sure that all of our OAR
community is aware of and adheres to this policy.

RS

Subject: Talking to the media
From: "Brian D. Gross" <Brian.Gross@noaa.gov>
Date: Wed, 05 Oct 2005 14:10:20 -0400
To: _OAR_GFDL_gov_emp@oar.gfdl.gov_emp@noaa.gov

This article may have been part of the motivation for NOAA's recent
reminder to us about media contact, which Ants discussed at today's
all-hands meeting:

http://rawstory.com/news/2005/Commerce_Department_tells_Nationa_1004.html

Note that this website is NOT apolitical, so consider yourself forewarned.

Brian

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Brian D. Gross, Deputy Director
DOC/NOAA/OAR/Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory

Location:
Forrestal Campus, Princeton University
201 Forrestal Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

Mail:
P.O. Box 308
Princeton, NJ 08542

Email: Brian.Gross@noaa.gov