

BCCG media and spokesperson policy

1. Background

The Body Corporate Chairs' Group was originally set up after the Unit titles Act 2010 came into force to represent body corporate chairs and provide information and guidance to enable them to govern their body corporate effectively. Its other key function was to advocate for bodies corporate as part of the unit title industry. However, as bodies corporate now tend to delegate the chairperson's function to their body corporate committee the BCCG has extended its education role to those committees and has also taken a more active role in commenting on the increasing number of issues facing apartment buildings and living as the sector continues to grow. BCCG membership currently stands at around 400.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the BCCG media and spokesperson policy is to ensure authoritative and consistent messaging and the maintenance of a professional image when the BCCG, through its spokesperson(s) provides information and commentary through traditional or social media.

3. Scope

This policy outlines for members, branches, the National Executive and its committees the protocols and procedures for the development and distribution of media statements and commentary through traditional and social media channels ("media channels").¹

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the BCCG National Executive.

4. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- to ensure that the BCCG produces high quality media materials and statements
- to protect the BCCG from risk in public forums
- to provide members, branches, the National Executive and its committees with guidance regarding who can and cannot communicate on behalf of the BCCG through media channels.

The specific aims of this policy are to define considerations and procedures:

- for risk analysis in relation to media content
- to ensure authoritative and relevant information for media content
- for approval of media content and appointment of BCCG spokespersons.

¹ The BCCG website will be the subject of a separate policy

5. Policy statement

5.1 *Quality of media statements*

Statements made by BCCG spokespersons to the media, or by persons authorised to administer BCCG social media platforms, must be factually and legally accurate and reflect the BCCG's core role and responsibilities. The BCCG spokespersons, and persons authorised to administer BCCG social media platforms, must not comment on or disclose confidential information.

5.2 *Delegated spokespersons*

The National Executive delegates to the National President the responsibility of providing press releases and responses to the media regarding issues within the BCCG's area of knowledge and influence on behalf of the BCCG. As spokesperson, the National President is responsible for articulating and promoting BCCG's purposes, policies and activities and, where necessary, defends the BCCG against criticism.

The National President as the key spokesperson of the BCCG must ensure that the objectives, views, and interests of the BCCG are pursued, promoted, and advanced.

No other member, Branch Chair, National Executive or committee member is permitted to make comment or engage with the media on behalf of the BCCG, without confirmed delegation of the National President or National Executive. On occasions where the National President or the National Executive approve an alternative spokesperson to make comment on behalf of the BCCG on a particular topic, that person will be referred to as "A spokesperson for the BCCG" and will do so on that topic only.

5.3 *Managing the media*

All proactive and reactive media activity and all BCCG media enquiries are managed by the National Secretary in consultation with the National President. Any member, Branch Chair, National Executive or committee member who receives a media enquiry must promptly refer it to the National President and the National Secretary.

The National President supported by the National Secretary will:

- field all BCCG media enquiries
- if appropriate, seek input from other members of the National Executive
- assess the level of risk associated with each enquiry, which will include analysis of both the nature of the information involved and the nature of the media outlet
- if required, identify an appropriate spokesperson instead of the National President and determine the details of the brief the spokesperson will address.

5.3.1 *Proactive media:*

The BCCG uses media to pursue its objectives by proactively participating in mainstream and specialist media. It is the role of the National Executive to determine the issues on which proactive media activity will be developed and actioned. All media activity must be approved by the National President, including any BCCG spokesperson to be quoted.

5.3.2 *Reactive media:*

The BCCG also pursues its objectives through reactive media i.e., when BCCG responds to media enquiries. This process is inherently more risky than proactive media activity because the BCCG has less control over the timing, the topic, or the content.

5.3.3 *Risk analysis:*

In assessing both proactive and reactive media opportunities, a risk analysis must be undertaken to determine the value or potential for harm of each opportunity.

5.3.3.1 *Low risk media activities*

Where a journalist is filming, recording, or writing an article in either mainstream or specialist media, and that article is based on widely available information, and it is judged that the issue or topic of that article is of medium or low risk, a spokesperson may be assigned by the National President. That spokesperson will be responsible for providing the content subject to any brief received from the National President or National Executive.

5.3.3.2 *High risk or political/governance activities*

Where a journalist is filming, recording, or writing an article in either mainstream or specialist media, and that article is:

- based on new, complex or controversial matters
- judged by the National President or National Executive to be high risk, or
- is of a political, advocacy, or sensitive nature

then the National President will be the spokesperson unless the National President or the National Executive determine a specialist spokesperson is required. Where a specialist spokesperson has been appointed, the media approach should be discussed with the National President. Support may be sought from other members or specialists to prepare briefing notes.

5.3.3.3 *Review prior to publication*

Where possible, an undertaking should be sought from the journalist to enable review of the draft article prior to publication. In the event that this is not possible and the resulting publication contains errors or misrepresentations, a correction should be sought.

5.4 *Social media*

BCCG social media channels (when established) are additional communication channels for the BCCG and the same policies apply as they do to use of traditional communications channels.

Only persons authorised by the National President or the National Executive may represent the BCCG on BCCG social media platforms. Only persons authorised by the National Executive or the National President may have administration access to, and post content on, BCCG social media platforms.

Authorised BCCG social media representatives must ensure that they do not post inappropriate material (i.e., material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including the BCCG, its members, the National Executive or external stakeholders including business related individuals or organisations).

In addition, BCCG social media representatives are required to:

- be respectful of all individuals and communities with which they interact online.
- be polite and respectful of others' opinions, even in times of heated discussion and debate.
- respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure, and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms.

Any BCCG attributed content must be approved prior to posting following the same procedure for proactive or reactive media as set out above.

6. Media contact register

A media contact register will be developed to assist with proactive and reactive media inquiries.

7. Sharing this policy

This policy will be posted on the BCCG website so that all members and sponsors can access it.

8. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least triennially by the National Executive.