

First Nations Media Australia Communications Policy



Definitions

- **Day to Day Communications** are those related to First Nations Media Australia policies, projects, programs, events and other relevant activities that have prior approval from the First Nations Media Australia Board and/or fall within the day to day management delegation of the General Manager.
- **Urgent Communications** are those developments, policy shifts and matters relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications for which no existing First Nations Media Australia policy or position statement is in place and which require an urgent communications response prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.
- **Other Related Communications** are those relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications developments and needs arising from First Nations Media Australia's formal partnerships or agreements with other organisations, as well as those associated with key organisations and programs contributing to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications resourcing and service provision.

1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

In order to ensure that First Nations Media Australia can communicate with the media effectively, the First Nations Media Australia Communications Policy sets out:

- The principles that guide First Nations Media Australia communications with the media.
- First Nations Media Australia staff and Board responsibilities and accountabilities for communicating with the media.
- Protocols for:
 - Day to day communications.
 - Urgent communications.
 - Other related communications.

2. POLICY PRINCIPLES

2.1 Communication Purpose

First Nations Media Australia works with the media in order to:

- **Advocate** for the needs of, and **defend** the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications not-for-profit sector, to the media, the public and government.
- **Represent** the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications not-for-profit sector on relevant matters.
- **Promote** the work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications not-for-profit sector to the media, the public and government, as agreed between First Nations Media Australia and relevant First Nations Media Australia members.
- **Promote** the work of First Nations Media Australia in its peak body roles and activities.
- **Support** the work of organisations that are approved partners with First Nations Media Australia or important complementary contributors to the development of media and communications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

First Nations Media Australia staff and Board members will not make public comment on member organisations or individual members.

2.2 Communications Values

First Nations Media Australia operates on the values of

- **Transparency:** First Nations Media Australia will promote openness and accessibility in its dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
- **Balance:** Information provided to the media by First Nations Media Australia will as far as possible be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.
- **Industry and Community Benefit:** First Nations Media Australia will always act in the best interests of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media industry and identified community needs.
- **Cultural Respect:** First Nations Media Australia will always acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional owners and respect the local customs and culture; First Nations Media Australia will promote the maintenance of languages, culture and customs wherever possible.
- **Ethical practice:** First Nations Media Australia will act ethically in all its communications and dealings with the media.

2.3 Communications Decision-Making

In making a decision to communicate with the media, the First Nations Media Australia General Manager and First Nations Media Australia Board will be guided by:

- The relevance and importance of the matter to:
 - The First Nations Media Australia Communications Aims.

- Board approved First Nations Media Australia media and communications policies as may be in place from time to time.
- The First Nations Media Australia Strategic Plan and Operational Plan.
- The development and resourcing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications programs and services.
- Requests to First Nations Media Australia by its members.
- Relevant First Nations Media Australia Membership policies.
- Agreements or Memorandums of Understanding with partner organisations.

3. PROTOCOLS

3.1 General responsibilities

- First Nations Media Australia staff and Board members should be aware that they may be seen as representatives of First Nations Media Australia and should therefore:
 - Avoid making comments in the public domain or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the reputation of First Nations Media Australia and/or its members.
 - Be aware of probity and/or conflict of interest matters.
- The General Manager, Board members and Communications Officer are to:
 - Ensure that effective media relations are maintained consistent with the role of First Nations Media Australia.

3.2 First Nations Media Australia Spokesperson

The First Nations Media Australia Spokesperson is the General Manager and/or the Chairperson. The General Manager may delegate the Spokesperson role to a staff member or Board member as appropriate to the issue. Delegation of Spokesperson responsibilities for First Nations Media Australia managed projects will be shared with the relevant Project Manager in the first instance or to other project-related staff if necessary.

In the case of *“Urgent Communications”*, the General Manager and the Chairperson may nominate the First Nations Media Australia Chairperson or another relevant First Nations Media Australia Board member as the First Nations Media Australia Spokesperson, with support provided by the General Manager.

3.3 Management of urgent communications issues

First Nations Media Australia staff and Board members should inform the General Manager as soon as practicable of an urgent issue that may require media communications.

No First Nations Media Australia staff member or Board member should engage with the media prior to a decision on media communication being made by the Chairperson and General Manager. Any media enquiries during the decision-making process should be referred to the General Manager.

3.4 Specific accountabilities and responsibilities

Role and accountability	Responsibilities
<p>Board Chairperson <i>Accountable to First Nations Media Australia Board</i></p>	<p>In the case of “Urgent Communications” and “Other Related Communications”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with the General Manager on evaluating the need for, consultation requirements, and content of a media release.
<p>Board members <i>Accountable to First Nations Media Australia Board</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise the Board Chairperson and General Manager on any opportunities or need to communicate messages about relevant and/or urgent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and communications matters.
<p>General Manager <i>Accountable to First Nations Media Australia Board</i></p>	<p>In the case of “Day to Day Communications”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee and approve distribution of media releases on behalf of First Nations Media Australia in line with policies, strategies, projects, programs, events and activities as approved by the Board. • Provides media releases to the Board and staff members at the time of release. • Tables communications activities at the next scheduled Board meeting. <p>In the case of “Urgent Communications” and “Other Related Communications”:</p> <p>Prior to the development of a First Nations media Australia media release:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discusses the issue with the Board Chairperson. (Note: If the Chairperson is not available, the GM will seek advice from all Directors with a clear timeframe for response). ▪ Takes direction from the Board Chairperson on further consultation needs with other Board members and/or the sector. ▪ Takes direction from the Board Chairperson on proceeding or not with a media release. ▪ Prior to public release of a media release, distributes an embargoed copy to all Directors. ▪ Carries out other relevant responsibilities as for “Day to Day Communications”.
<p>Communications Officer <i>Accountable to First Nations Media Australia General Manager</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops media releases on behalf of First Nations Media Australia in line with policies, strategies, projects, programs, events and activities as approved by the Board. See Schedule 1 for a list of current policies, programs/projects, events and activities.

Role and accountability	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a communications contacts database. • Issues approved media releases to agreed media and other stakeholders. • Liaises with the media on interview opportunities, as directed by the General Manager.
<p>All Staff members <i>Accountable to First Nations Media Australia General Manager</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer any media enquiries to the General Manager or nominated contact person in a media release.

Version	Date adopted/revised	Endorsement/Description of change
1.	1 March 2017	General Manager Daniel Featherstone
1.	1 March 2017	Endorsed by IRCA Board
2.	8 May 2019	Endorsed by First Nations Media Australia

SCHEDULE 1

CURRENT FIRST NATIONS MEDIA AUSTRALIA POLICIES, PROJECTS, PROGRAMS/STRATEGIES, EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES AS AT MARCH 2019

Projects

- Indigitube
- Remote Audience Survey
- InDigiMOB
- Remote Archiving Strategy

Policies

- First Nations Media Australia membership policies
- Remote Telecommunications Access and Digital Inclusion Strategy (with B4BA)
- Broadcasting Services Act amendments
- Digital Radio Services expansion

Programs/Strategies

- Employment and Skills Development Strategy
- 9 Calls for Action
- Our Media Matters campaign

Events

- National Remote Indigenous Media Festival - biannual
- CONVERGE Annual National Media Summit
- First Nations Media Awards
- Indigenous Focus Day

Activities

- National Peak Body implementation
- RIMO website and app support
- First Nations Media Australia website
- Remote connectivity mapping
- ACMA broadcast licensing monitoring
- Regular communications with remote, regional and urban members and potential members.

Collaborations

- Remote Archiving Strategy working group
- National Film and Sound Archive
- AIATSIS Steering Committee
- National and State Library Association/ NT Library
- ACCAN
- Jumbunna Institute