

[Home](#) › [Core internal services](#) › [Communication and engagement](#) › [Communication](#) ›

Media management

Updated 29 Sep 2022

What should you do if the media calls? How can you get your information out to media?

Waka Kotahi has a simple set of media engagement protocols to help you navigate this often tricky area.

Purpose

These protocols have been developed to help Waka Kotahi staff in their dealings with the news media.

The purpose of these protocols is to ensure that Waka Kotahi people are able to engage appropriately and professionally with media.

These protocols must be read in conjunction with:

[Representing us in the media policy](#)

Background

As a Crown Entity media have a legitimate interest in our activities. Media are also an important channel for us in communicating with stakeholders and the public.

The following points should guide our approach to media engagement:

1. We aim to be a transparent, reliable and responsive source of information for media.
2. Media are important to us – they are a key channel for communicating with our customers.
3. Waka Kotahi deals with a large number of stakeholders with different objectives, whose interests need to be considered when we engage with media.
4. Waka Kotahi has a wide range of functions and responsibilities – media may need to be reminded of our role and our purpose.

5. It is important that all Waka Kotahi staff authorised to engage with media have the tools and training needed to provide consistent messages on relevant issues.

Spokespeople

The following Waka Kotahi staff are authorised to speak to the media:

1. **National issues:** Chief Executive, Senior Media Manager, General Managers.
2. **Significant region-specific issues:** Directors of Regional Relationships, with the agreement of relevant business groups or operational teams.
3. **Other issues:** The Senior Media Manager and regionally-based media managers may delegate responsibility to other staff to speak on behalf of Waka Kotahi for specific projects or issues. These delegations must be agreed with the relevant tier two or three manager, Director of Regional Relationships and/or the Chief Executive.

All regional media enquiries should be referred to regionally-based media managers in the first instance. Regionally-based media managers may also serve as Waka Kotahi spokespeople for some low-risk or operational issues.

Tips for engaging with media

When the media calls

If you receive a media query, and you are not a designated spokesperson:

1. Advise the caller that you are not the person to help them, but that you will have someone who can help call them back
2. Ask for the name of their news organisation and the nature of their enquiry
3. Ask what their deadline is
4. Refer the query to your regional communications advisor or media manager
5. Always use a polite and professional manner.

If you receive a media query, and you are a designated spokesperson, make sure to:

1. Get a clear understanding of what the query is about, then advise the reporter that you will respond shortly – this provides you with an opportunity to prepare for an interview or prepare a written response (or to decide if it is appropriate for Waka Kotahi to respond at all).

This is a very important step in managing media enquiries. A short delay in responding will not affect a reporter's deadline, and it gives you an opportunity to clear your mind and think about the subject you may be providing comment on.

2. Seek other important information that might provide context for the story, which will help you decide the best way to manage the query:

- ask the reporter for the broader context of their story – that is, why do they want to speak with you about the given topic?
 - ask who else they have spoken to or intend to speak to on the issue
 - ask what their deadline is and undertake to respond within their deadline.
3. Inform the Senior Media Manager or a Regional Media Manager of the enquiry before responding.
 4. Always manage media queries in a polite and professional manner.
 5. Never say “no comment”. If you cannot comment, explain why or who else can.

Keep our staff and partners in the loop

Waka Kotahi staff and partners should always know about issues affecting the organisation **before** they hear about it in the news.

Major news concerning Waka Kotahi should not come as a surprise to staff or to our key partners. Whenever possible ensure that the contact centre, Senior Leadership team, communications staff and any interested partners or stakeholders are given advance notice of major news issues.

Inter-agency protocols

There are connections and links between the work we do and the work done by agencies that we partner or have relationships with. It is important to understand and acknowledge these links when dealing with the news media so that we:

- are (only) commenting on matters that are relevant to the work we do
- maximise positive media opportunities for Waka Kotahi and our partners
- manage issues that are relevant to us appropriately, and provide our partners and stakeholders with a ‘heads up’ on emerging issues.

Social media

Many of Waka Kotahi social media followers are journalists and media organisations. Our *Social media policy*, *Social media guidelines* and *Code of conduct*, and the *State Services Code of Conduct* apply to you when you represent Waka Kotahi on social media.

[Social media policy](#)

[Social media guidelines](#)

[Code of conduct](#)

[State Services code of conduct](#)

Key points you should take into account

- you must be authorised to represent Waka Kotahi on Twitter

- you must be aware of and comply with [security and privacy policies](#)
- you should be aware that Twitter account comments are permanently available to the public and can be posted on other media
- responses to media enquiries and comments directed to Waka Kotahi via social media must be managed by Waka Kotahi media managers. Media managers have administration access to all of Waka Kotahi's social media accounts
- if you're using Twitter in a personal capacity, bear in mind that your comments may be connected to Waka Kotahi account. Always be careful about what you post in a personal context.

Social media representatives

We have a number of employees that represent the organisation on social media, including:

- Traffic Operations staff
- State Highway Project Communications advisors
- Contact Centre Customer Services representatives
- Media managers
- Senior Manager Channels and Standards
- Channels and Design Services staff

Social media guidelines

The social media guidelines outline the types of communication we send out via social media channels. These guiding principles apply:

- **Be credible** – Be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent
- **Be consistent** – Encourage constructive criticism and deliberation. Be cordial, honest and professional at all times.
- **Be responsive** – Answer questions in a timely manner. Share your insights where appropriate.
- Be integrated – Wherever possible, align online participation with other offline communications.
- **Be a public servant** – Remember that you are an ambassador for your agency. Wherever possible, disclose your positions as a representative of your department or agency.
- **Be a good custodian** – If you've introduced and/or are managing your organisation's social media profile, make sure you're posting content and checking messages regularly. An untended and out-of-date account looks unprofessional. Also ensure that information is created, kept and, if necessary, disposed of in accordance with organisational policies.

[Social media guidelines](#)

Social media spokespeople

Note that only media managers (in bold) are authorised to have conversation with media via Waka Kotahi social media accounts.

<p>National office</p>	<p>Andrew Knackstedt – National Media Manager Stephen Moore – Senior Manager Channels and Standards Devang Tailor – Manager Channels and Design Services Matthew Floratos – Senior Advisor Social Media</p>
<p>Auckland / Northland</p>	<p>Andrew Knackstedt – National Media Manager Kaity Alexander – Media Manager Stephen Moore - Senior Manager Channels and Standards Devang Tailor – Manager Channels and Design Services Matthew Floratos – Senior Advisor Social Media</p>
<p>Waikato / Bay of Plenty</p>	<p>Andrew Knackstedt – National Media Manager Natasha Utting – Media Manager Stephen Moore - Senior Manager Channels and Standards Devang Tailor – Manager Channels and Design Services Matthew Floratos – Senior Advisor Social Media</p>
<p>Manawatū / Taranaki / Hawke’s Bay / Gisborne / Whanganui</p>	<p>Andrew Knackstedt – National Media Manager Megan Heffield – Media Manager Stephen Moore - Senior Manager Channels and Standards Devang Tailor – Manager Channels and Design Services Matthew Floratos – Senior Advisor Social Media</p>
<p>Greater Wellington / Top of South</p>	<p>Andrew Knackstedt – National Media Manager Felix Marwick – Media Manager Stephen Moore - Senior Manager Channels and Standards Devang Tailor – Manager Channels and Design Services Matthew Floratos – Senior Advisor Social Media</p>
<p>West Coast / Canterbury / Otago / Southland</p>	<p>Andrew Knackstedt – National Media Manager Frances Adank – Media Manager Stephen Moore – Senior Manager Channels and Standards Devang Tailor – Manager Channels and Design Services Matthew Floratos – Senior Advisor Social Media Bob Nettleton – Senior Advisor (Dunedin) Jan McCarthy – Engagement and Communications Manager</p>