

A37 - Media & Communications Policy
Authorised Reviewer: Head of Communications and Specialised
Services



1. Purpose of policy

This protocol aims to create an appropriate balance between managing the potential risks associated with media communication; removing the potential for “surprise” when colleagues and Board members first find out about things in the various media; and ensuring that we can maintain an appropriate relationship with the media.

The protocol aims to recognise that we need to behave and respond differently depending on whether we are:

- ✿ pro-actively contacting the media about a strategically important issue or policy matter;
- ✿ simply keeping them informed of our work via a news bulletin; or
- ✿ reacting to an information request from them

2. Pro-active media communications: Strategic or policy issues

Pro-active media communications relating to strategically important matters are often planned in advance allowing time for press releases and written information to be approved prior to distribution. The process for approving written media information including press releases is:

Management	Approval
Leadership Team approval	All press releases must be approved by the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and relevant member(s) of the Leadership Team.
Board of Directors approval	If time allows the press release should be put on the earliest possible Board meeting agenda for approval Quotes from any member of the Board, must be approved in advance by that Board member. If time doesn't allow for this, the press release will be issued to all Board members through the Company Secretary for their information.
Email distribution of approved press releases	Press releases to be distributed by email (unless otherwise stipulated) in the following order to: 1. Leadership Team 2. All Board members 3. All company colleagues via Yammer

	4. The media
Website & Social Media	All press releases must go on www.andiumhomes.je with links tweeted and posted to Facebook
Ministerial notification	Where relevant/appropriate, press releases should be sent to the Strategic Housing Unit and/or Treasury for their respective Ministers to be notified to ensure compliance with the “no surprises” policy.
Emergency approval and distribution	In emergencies, where the Chief Executive or Chief Operating Officer is not contactable, press releases - which do not include a quote from a member of the Board of Directors – can be approved by the Leadership Team

Note: If the release is produced jointly with another organisation, it will probably require multiple sign-off by both organisations. In these circumstances it is acceptable for changes to be made by the other party to the press release after sign off by the Leadership Team, provided that:

- ✿ any quotes are not changed
- ✿ the press release remains factually correct
- ✿ the changes are relatively minor and do not change the overall focus of the story

3. News bulletins

The Company may from time to time wish to produce news bulletins in order to keep the media and public informed of activities. These news bulletins will generally contain straight forward factual information and will not include a quote. The process for approving written news bulletins is:

Management	Approval
Leadership Team approval	All news bulletins must be approved by the Leadership Team
Board of Directors approval	The news bulletin will be issued to all Board members through the Company Secretary for their information.
Email distribution of approved press releases	News bulletins to be distributed by email (unless otherwise stipulated) in the following order to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership Team 2. All Board members 3. All company colleagues via Yammer

	4. The media
Website & Social Media	All news bulletins must go on www.andiumhomes.ie with links tweeted and posted to Facebook

4. Responding to unforeseen issues

There will be times when we are contacted by the media and asked to respond to a story or to provide information. It is essential that, in these circumstances, we quickly provide the information needed whilst avoiding straying into areas which are inappropriate, or which could result in misinformation.

All media enquiries should be passed to the Head of Communications and Specialised Services, in their absence the Communications and Specialised Services Manager.

The Company will take the following pro-active steps to manage the negative news stories;

- ✚ Daily monitoring of Facebook and Twitter along with the key news sites/blogs – JEP, Bailiwick Express, Channel 103, BBC, ITV, States Assembly, Government of Jersey and Planet Jersey.
- ✚ Weekly States and Media updates will be provided to all colleagues, highlighting any matters relevant to Andium Homes or housing in Jersey generally, via Yammer
- ✚ Regular case discussions regarding clients who are coming up too regularly on the radar – regardless of the issue
- ✚ Carry out regular Estates visits across the stock to identify problems before they become a major issue, reporting via the First Touch online reporting tool.
- ✚ Continue programme of “good news” press releases, relating to improvements to the stock but also the social services we provide

If a potentially negative story is identified the Company will carry out the following re-active steps to manage the impact;

- ✚ Leadership Team (or appropriate members depending on the issue) carry out a quick and immediate assessment;
- ✚ Board to be briefed and updated on any comments/external communications on the issue
- ✚ Identified clients are visited at the earliest possible opportunity
- ✚ If there is any States member involvement, then that States Member will be invited in to discuss the case/situation
- ✚ Interested parties, depending on the issue, are contacted and briefed (e.g. Age Concern/CAB)

- ✚ Brief relevant stakeholders (e.g. Income Support, Environmental Health etc.)
- ✚ Brief appropriate teams within the Company, including on-call Officer and Client Services Team
- ✚ If it is deemed essential for the client to be moved, liaise with Allocations Team and make clear the move is a Leadership Team request which must be prioritised.

5. Responding to a major incident

A major incident is anything with potential for significant;

- ✚ media interest
- ✚ political consequences
- ✚ environmental
- ✚ legal issues
- ✚ health and safety considerations

All major incidents will be overseen by a member of the Leadership Team. Please refer to A35: Major Incident Policy. The Chief Executive supported by the Head of Communications and wider Leadership Team will deal with media and political enquiries.

Approved date: 1st July 2014
Reviewed date: 9th July 2019