Australian Capital Territory

Corrections Management (Media and Public Relations) Policy 2007*

Notifiable instrument NI2007-446

made under the

***Corrections Management Act 2007*, section 14(1) (Corrections policies and operating procedures)**

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1   Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Corrections Management (Media and Public Relations) Policy 2007*.

2   Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after it is notified.

3   Policies and operating procedures

Under section 14 of the *Corrections Management Act 2007* (the Act), I make the

MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

in Schedule 1 to this instrument, to facilitate the effective and efficient management of correctional services.

James Ryan
Executive Director
ACT Corrective Services
17 December 2007

MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

Purpose
- To detail relevant considerations in judging when to permit or restrict a prisoner's access to the media.
- To outline standard practice for Corrections Officers to adopt when media inquiries are received.

Authority
<u>Legislation</u>
Public Sector Management Act 1994, section 9

Policy
1   Principles

1.1   Corrections Officers employed by ACTCS are subject to section 9 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*. This requires that ACT public service employees are not to disclose, without lawful authority, any information acquired by him or her as a consequence of his or her employment. ACT public service employees may not make a comment that he or she is not authorised to make where the comment may be expected to be taken to be an official comment.

1.2   ACTCS is responsible for managing prisoners safely, effectively and humanely.

1.2.1   Due to the complexity of this role, ACTCS may, from time-to-time, attract media and public attention.

1.2.2   It is therefore necessary to ensure that any, and all, interactions with the media are characterised by personal integrity, and honesty.

1.3   Prisoner access to the media may be restricted when there is a reasonable likelihood that safety and security of a correctional centre, ACTCS staff, other prisoners, or members of the community (including victims) may be jeopardised.

2   Prisoner's access to the media

2.1   A prisoner, amongst other entitlements, is entitled to send and receive mail (subject to the *Prisoner Mail Policy* and *Procedure*), the reasonable use of a telephone (subject to the *Prisoner Telephones Policy* and *Procedure*), and to receive visitors (subject to the *Visits Policy* and *Procedure*).

2.2   A prisoner may be permitted to make contact with the media via mail, or telephone.

2.3   A prisoner may only be permitted a visit with a member of the media with the approval of the Superintendent. In determining whether to allow or restrict a prisoner's access to the media in-person the Superintendent should consider issues such as:
- ensuring the prisoner has a reasonable right to freedom of expression.
- the purpose and nature of the visit; and
- the public interest in the importance of the matter being open to debate.

3   Restricting a prisoner's access to the media

3.1   The Superintendent may restrict or deny access to the media if there is reasonable suspicion that access would:
- undermine security or good order at the correctional centre;
- revictimise a victim and/or their families; or
- cause community distress.

4   Receiving media enquiries

4.1   All media enquiries or requests received by a Corrections Officer must be processed in accordance with the *Media and Public Relations Procedure*.

References
JACS Media Guidelines

Related policies and procedures
Media and Public Relations Procedure

Forms/Templates
Officer's Report Form