

Australian Capital Territory

Corrections Management (Media and Public Relations) Policy 2009

Notifiable instrument NI2009-138

made under the

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

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Corrections Management (Media and Public Relations) Policy 2009*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after it is notified.

3 Policy

I make the

MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

attached to this instrument, to facilitate the effective and efficient management of correctional services.

James Ryan
Executive Director
ACT Corrective Services
25 March 2009



Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC)



MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

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Purpose

To outline the way in which corrections officers are to manage any media enquiries and to detail relevant considerations in judging when to permit or restrict a prisoner’s access to the media.

Authority

Legislation

Public Sector Management Act 1994, section 9(m) & (n).
Corrections Management Act 2007, section 14 and 222.

Policy

Principles

Within the context of this policy, corrections officers employed by ACTCS are subject to section 9(m) & (n) of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*. This requires that ACT Public Service employees not disclose, without lawful authority, any information acquired by him or her as a consequence of his or her employment. An ACT Public Service employee may not make a comment that he or she is not authorised to make where the comment may be expected, or could be construed to be taken to be an official comment. This is further reflected in the *ACTCS Code of Ethical Conduct*.

ACTCS is responsible for managing prisoners safely, effectively, and humanely. Due to the complexity of this role, the AMC may, from time-to-time, attract media and public attention.

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

Prisoner’s access to the media

Prisoners are entitled to send and receive mail (subject to the *Prisoner Mail Policy and Procedure*), use of the telephone (subject to the *Prisoner Telephones Policy and Procedure*), send and receive email (subject to the *Prisoner Email Policy and Procedure*), and to receive visitors (subject to the *Visits Policy*).

Prisoners may have contact with the media via mail, e-mail, or by telephone, subject to approval.

Prisoners may only access a visit with a member of the media with the prior approval of the Superintendent. In determining whether to allow or restrict a prisoner's access to the media in person the Superintendent will consider the following issues:

- the purpose and nature of the visit;
- whether the visit is likely to have a negative impact upon the security and good order at a correctional centre, be used to revictimise a victim, or cause community distress; and/or
- the public interest and the importance of the matter being open to debate.

Restricting a prisoner's access to the media

The Superintendent may restrict or deny access to the media (by mail, telephone, email, or by a visit) if there is a reasonable suspicion that access would:

- undermine security or good order at the AMC;
- revictimise a victim and/or their families; or
- cause community distress.

Receiving media enquiries

All media enquiries or requests received by a corrections officer must:

- be processed in accordance with the *Media and Public Relations Procedure*; and
- be promptly notified to the Policy Unit .

Forms and templates

Officer Report Form

Related Policies and Procedures

Media and Public Relations Procedure

ACTCS Code of Ethical Conduct (May 2008)