

MAKING THE NEWS: A GUIDE TO USING THE MEDIA

by Michael Ura

Michael Ura has been a print and broadcast journalist since the mid-1970s. He has contributed articles to the Financial Post, the Globe & Mail, Canada Business Magazine, United Press and Canadian Press. His radio reports and documentaries have appeared on such CBC Radio programs as Our Native Land, As It Happens, Canada Watch and the Food Show. He has also been the host of Pacific Noon, a public affairs show broadcast out of CBC Prince George.

and

West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation

West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation is a non-profit, charitable public interest group whose mission is to provide legal services, research, and education to promote protection of the environment and public participation in environmental decision-making. The objectives of WCELRF are to support and conduct legal research to help develop standards and objectives that will ensure the maintenance of environmental quality and to provide the public, industry, and government with information on environmental legal issues.

COPYRIGHT 1992 BY THE WEST COAST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW RESEARCH FOUNDATION

ISBN: 0-919365-00-0

West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation 1001 - 207 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C. Canada, V6B 1H7 phone: (604) 684-7378 fax: (604) 684-1312

MAKING THE NEWS

This document is a clear and concise guide to using the media for yourself or your community group. It teaches you all you need to know about writing press releases, contacting media people and keeping their attention! If you are working on community issues and you need some publicity, this is the book for you!

The West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation is a non-profit charitable society which supports and conducts legal research to develop standards and objectives that will ensure the maintenance of environmental quality.

The Law Foundation of British Columbia provides major funding for the West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation.

The Legal Services Society of British Columbia provided funding for the reprint of this booklet. It was originally published in 1976, with assistance from the Secretary of State and the United Church of Canada.

This report is for educational purposes only. Individuals with specific legal problems are urged to seek legal advice from a lawyer.

Contents may not be reproduced commercially, but any other production is encouraged.

Original printed on recycled paper by Press Gang Printers, a feminist worker-controlled printing collective.

Original cover cartoons are clip art from Graphic Products Corporation, 1989.

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data Ura, Mike, 1952 - Making the news
ISBN 0-919365-00-0 (pbk) 1. Publicity. 2. Public relations. 3. Press releases. I. West Coast
Environmental Law Research Foundation. II. Title HM 263.U7 659.2 C81-
091004.7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Making the News was originally written in 1976 by Mike Ura, and updated by the West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation in the mid-1980s. This current edition has been slightly rearranged from the original -- largely to cover the changes in technology; the introduction of fax machines and computerized networks have enabled us all to spread the news we make more quickly and efficiently.

The Legal Services Society of BC provided partial funding for this updated version, and we are grateful for their support. The research for the revised appendix and changes to the text of *Making the News* are the work of Deborah Curran and Rebecca Kirschman. Thanks also to Denice Regnier, Morgan Ashbridge, Calvin Sandborn and Catherine Ludgate for reviewing the material in this booklet, and suggesting changes.

Responsibility for errors and omissions remains with West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation.

We hope that you will find this guide to be a helpful tool for working with the media and getting your message into the public forum. We wish you every success in making the news! As Mike Ura pointed out in the first edition of the booklet, if you are making the news today, you are helping to shape tomorrow!

INTRODUCTION

Press relations are one of the most important tools at the disposal of community groups today. The news media reaches audiences that are beyond the range of traditional grassroots organizing techniques.

Corporations and government agencies know this and act accordingly. They employ highly-paid professional press relations officers. These are usually well-trained journalists who have been enlisted to 'work the other side of the street' because of their knowledge of the business and contacts in it.

Few community groups can afford the services of professional media officers. They must therefore enlist and train their own. Although most groups understand the importance of press relations, they too often assign press liaison tasks to officers who have other duties, which are often perceived as being more important. So long as the development of media work is left at the bottom of the community group's list of priorities, its full public potential will remain unexploited.

This manual is designed as an aid to novice media officers for public interest groups. It is by no means an all-encompassing guide to the field, but it will impart a basic understanding of the tasks associated with the job.

The question of how your group intends to use this guide has been left open. The reasons for, and the nature of the press relations you wish to establish, should be defined by each organization to address its particular set of needs.

WHAT IS NEWS?

The most important task of a public interest media officer is also the most difficult -- attracting comprehensive coverage on issues of public concern. Community activists often complain that reporters fail to cover important facts or decisions. Reporters respond by pointing out that much information is important, but much less is newsworthy.

Newsworthiness is a unique and at times intangible quality. Its definition varies from journalist to journalist, and the criteria that measure it can change drastically from one news outlet or medium to the next. But there are a number of common features to each news story, and your skill at identifying them for a reporter will determine your ability to draw the coverage you want.

You and the members of your group are probably specialists. You focus your attention on one set of issues. And you know so much about the political or scientific background that you can spot subtle changes that contain important implications for the long run. But reporters are usually generalists who do not have your analytical skills.

It works both ways. Reporters often gnash their teeth with frustration because they know of community groups that fail to recognize a potential front-page story when it's staring them in the face.

By the time the reporter has dug out the facts, the story has become too dated to qualify as news. Potential newsworthy items from community groups can be meetings, campaigns, public events, responses to government action or inaction, and new developments with the organization or the issues at hand.

Your success as a media officer will depend on your ability to translate your group's information and activities into news. To do so you must learn to think as a reporter thinks, and train yourself to develop a nose for news.

News Values

All news stories are about people. Even stories about highly abstract or technological issues will put a human face on the matter by describing how these developments could affect human thought and behaviour.

As well, all news stories deal with change. The emphasis and intensity of coverage that news media devote to an event depends upon how dramatically the event deviates from what is normally expected.

You can learn to think as a reporter thinks by figuring out how an event or decision will change the way that people think and act. And you can teach yourself how to attract the reporter's attention by expressing these changes in terms of news values.

News values are the criteria that determine the newsworthiness of the story you want to publicize. They express the quality or qualities of the information that an audience will find most interesting. As was stated before, different news outlets will emphasize different news values because they compete for different markets. But all stories express one or more of six news values: **conflict, immediacy, novelty, peril, locality or human interest.**

Conflict is the basic element of change. The human mind tends to break down all information into sets of clearly distinguished opposites: yes and no, old and new, rich and poor, government

and opposition, left and right, etc. Reporters will deal with each potential news story by defining which individuals or groups are in conflict, and why.

This works to your advantage, because conflict is very easy to spot, and most public interest groups are in conflict with government, corporations, or other public lobbies. If your group was not involved in conflict, it probably would have no *raison d'etre*.

However, conflict can backfire on you. You may be trying to resolve a conflict between yourself and someone else, and a story in the press outlining your differences may add fuel to the fire. A small minority of reporters will try to artificially inject conflict into a story by emphasizing differences of opinion out of context. But most reporters try to avoid sensationalism, and would prefer to deal with conflict by detailing the measures you are taking to end it.

Immediacy is what makes news new. The ideal news story is the one that happened just before the newscast went on the air, or the paper came off the presses. If one news outlet has scooped another by reporting a story first, the latecomer will try to update the item or focus on some aspect of it that the first outlet's story ignored.

Public interest groups can publicize their platform by linking it to a topical event. A Kitchener, Ontario, womens' group tried for years to publicize their demand for improved police rape-prevention tactics. But their efforts bore no fruit until a night when two rapes occurred in a park within one block of a police station, regional jail and provincial court. The group fired off a media release that started by describing the crime, and then listed the nature of their complaints and how the rapes could have been prevented had the group's recommendations been put into practice. This group made the news.

Novelty is another news value that can publicize a news story that has been previously ignored. The Union of BC Indian Chiefs failed to attract very much coverage of a provincial government decision to allow an oil refinery to operate without state-of-the-art pollution controls. But the story received national coverage when a Union researcher mentioned that the refinery was the last one in Canada without emission scrubbers attached to the smokestacks.

Peril, like conflict, is an obvious news value. In using peril as your news value you run the risk of overworking this approach, as is done by some environmentalists and other public interest groups. Many reporters consider these groups 'alarmist' or even paranoid. In part, the problem lies in the tentative nature of most environmental perils -- we often suspect that a chemical emission is toxic, but cannot say for sure until people start dying in droves of cancer twenty years after they have been exposed to it. Reporters may be more receptive to the 'peril' if an historical and factual parallel can be drawn between the unknown substance you want coverage on and a once unknown substance which now is proven to be toxic.

Locality can be a major factor. People tend to be interested in what happens in their vicinity, to people they know or locations they frequent. Community weeklies in particular will cover a story that is weak in news value simply because it happened in or to a local group. You can hitch a ride on a national story by pointing out what impact it has on your community.

Human interest abounds, but a lot of public interest groups give it short shrift. It is the most vague of all news values, and the one whose definition varies the most from reporter to reporter. Every news value is one of human interest, but some stories about individuals or small groups arrest attention even though they have no definable value. These are the ones that are usually labelled human interest.

An example of this is a senior citizen who was the only person to oppose construction of Alcan's first hydro dams along the rivers of northwestern BC in a public hearing during the early fifties.

Her dire predictions of environmental damage were ignored at the time. When a Canadian Press reporter toured the northwest to gather a local reaction to Alcan's Kemano 2 Expansion proposal, he wrote a personality piece which focused on the woman, and emphasized the fact that her predictions had come true.

The best way to identify human interest is to pick out which stories your local news outlets run that are weak in all other news values. They generally follow a pattern unique to each paper or broadcast.

Actuality is not really a news value because it has little to do with the content of news. But it is a feature of some stories that will attract coverage. Actuality is a visual or audio quality to the story that will attract broadcast news teams although the news values are weak or non-existent.

The search for striking actuality is strongest among television journalists. Video pictures of reporters or interviewees in a studio or in unremarkable surroundings are called 'talking heads' and tv crews try to avoid them like the plague. News stories that are highly newsworthy will not be ignored, but they will receive more prominent coverage if they can be illustrated by exciting visuals. An example involves a Vancouver man who held police at bay for hours by shooting a rifle into the street from his balcony. The story received minimal coverage in the papers. But tv crews captured the gunman on tape, and the story led the broadcasts simply because they had exciting actuality.

Radio reporters tend to be ambivalent towards recording background sounds, called 'wild sound'. Most news reporters have only a few seconds to tell their story, and do not want to waste what little time they have by recording interesting noises. As well, they often phone their reports into the station, and phonelines have a muzzling effect that distorts their voices. Adding background sound can muddy the broadcast beyond comprehension. However, some reporters, especially those of CBC radio, will try to include wild sound in their reports to capture a creative quality unique to radio journalism.

Hooks and Angles

Your success in drawing out the news values of the story you are trying to attract coverage for will increase directly with the number of media releases you write and phone calls you make. Reporters and editors may not use the same terms we have used to label the news values, but they will use these qualities to decide what is newsworthy.

The reporter will make a special point of digging out the single most important fact in the story, expressed in the most unambiguous terms. This is called the **hook**, and it encapsulates the strongest news value in the story.

The editor or reporter you call about a story will likely ask you directly for your hook within the first two minutes of the conversation. If you convey a simple and vivid one quickly, your chances of garnering coverage will improve measurably.

Hooks are related to the general approach the reporter will apply to the issue -- called the **angle**. Although the journalist's subjective opinions are not supposed to surface in the report, he or she must structure the facts inside an analytical framework if they are to make any sense. This analysis is the angle, and both it and the hook can colour a story in subtle ways.

Consider a hypothetical situation: BC Hydro caves in to public pressure over spraying 2,4-D, a toxic herbicide. But instead of cancelling it, Hydro chops its spraying program in half.

One reporter may decide that the angle of the story should focus on Hydro's attempt to defuse opposition by making what is in effect a token gesture. If so, the hook will be, BC HYDRO CONTINUES TO SPRAY WITH TOXIC 2,4-D. But another, who believes that the crown corporation is making a sincere and responsible decision, may use, BC HYDRO CUTS TOXIC SPRAYING DRASTICALLY as the hook. In each case the facts are the same.

Hooks and angles can be extremely important for public interest media officers. Reporters tend to cling to their initial hooks and angles on a story, because it will help them select which people they will interview, and which facts they will research. This is especially true of reporters under deadline pressure and those whose hook and angle have been dictated by the editor who assigned them to the story.

Because of the reporter's tendency to maintain one perspective you should always try to reach the reporter before the story has broken. This tactic gives you the first chance to plant the hook and angle. If the story has already broken, an early call may succeed in changing or altering the angle to express a more balanced story.

Reporters have much more on their minds than news values, hooks and angles. These are merely tools they use to determine if the information on hand can be translated into news stories, and to help them decide how facts can be organized. In fact, breaking the information down into news values is just one phase in the process of refining information into news.

HOW NEWS IS MADE

Non-journalists are often intimidated by the tremendous mystique that now shrouds the news industry. Movies, television programs, and novels have created a number of highly colourful and frequently inaccurate myths about reporters and news outlets.

Journalism is an industry. Information is one of its raw materials, and it undergoes a number of refining processes before it is manufactured into its final form as a commodity -- the printed or broadcast news item.

Most novice media officers limit their effectiveness by ignoring this manufacturing process. It is possible to influence news coverage by intervening in every stage of information-refining. To do so, one must learn who hammers news into shape at each stage.

Think of news production as an assembly line with four separate stages. The first process is **source** -- whence the information originates. The second is **selection** -- why and how journalists decide to cover some stories and ignore others. **Coverage** is the third, and it involves the time journalists actually go out into the field to research the information. The final stage, **preparation**, deals with the news item from the moment it leaves the journalist's computer to the point at which no further alterations of form or content take place.

In this section, you will learn how to intervene directly in each stage to ensure maximum coverage.

SOURCE

The importance of 'scoops' is perhaps the most ridiculous myth about journalism that fiction has planted in the public mind. Of course, news outlets do try to report a story before another agency gets hold of it, because the item's value of immediacy is then much stronger. But most news stories have been anticipated and planned for by news teams far in advance of the moment that they are released. In the case of national television newscasts, for instance, more than 90% of the broadcast deals with stories that have been thoroughly discussed by the news team during the previous day.

Every news outlet's key editorial personnel meet each day to determine which stories will receive coverage. They consult a daybook -- a schedule of potentially newsworthy events that are expected to take place that day.

In most cases, the daybook entries will have been made more than 24 hours beforehand. In the case of municipal elections, for example, the entry may be made a full year before the event actually takes place.

News teams try to plan their coverage of a story as far in advance of its release as their human resources allow. In this way they can prepare and allocate staff time to maximum efficiency. And that means that you must make a special effort to alert them to your story as soon as you encounter it and know how you want it handled.

Media releases are usually the most frequent source of stories. News conferences are also important. Both are so crucial that separate sections have been devoted to them in later chapters.

Meetings are another source. In some cases, like city council meetings, they are regularly scheduled events. In others, like court cases, they may only happen once but are planned in advance.

Monitor your local news outlets to determine which meetings are reported on regularly. If you or your group plan to participate in them by presenting a brief or stating a position, notify the press in advance.

Your own meetings may be newsworthy themselves. You may be bringing a notable speaker, releasing a report, or coming to an important decision. Alert the press by notifying them of the agenda. Do not try to 'con' them into coming if a newsworthy story is not likely to surface. And do not go out of your way to interest them if the agenda covers internal business you want to keep under wraps.

Wire services are a crucial source of news. They are national and in some cases international networks of news teams. Every wire service receives 'dupes' from their members news outlets -- duplicates of stories that the news outlet's own reporters file. The wires also have their own reporters. The local wire service sends the stories via facsimile or modem to their subscribers in other locations.

Wire services are important to public interest groups who want regional or national coverage -- particularly for those in smaller centres. The wires send out their own daybooks on the computer networks so that their subscribers know which out-of-town stories to expect that day. If a local editor or producer has initially turned 'thumbs down' on your story, he or she may decide to cover it if they spot it on the wire daybook. If not, a local competitor who also subscribes to the service may 'scoop' them.

The major service in Canada is Canadian Press (CP), which has full bureaus in Victoria and Vancouver. CP retains reporters for local subscribers in communities outside of the city bureau. These are called 'stringers' and they alert the bureaus to local stories of particularly strong interest.

Treat the wire services as separate news outlets. Send them all your releases and messages. If you live in a community not covered by a bureau, find out which newspaper or broadcast reporter acts as local stringer, and make a special effort to cultivate his or her acquaintance.

News outlet employees are the most important source of news. They bring in their own stories, select which media releases and phone calls to follow up on, and choose which wire copy stories to run. News media staff usually belong to one or two categories -- the reporters and their editors.

Editors

The editor is usually senior to most reporters. Editorial functions vary from outlet to outlet and from medium to medium. Make sure you distinguish in your own mind between metropolitan newspaper editors, who work for big city papers; community newspaper editors, who work for papers in smaller communities, or weeklies; and broadcast editors who work for radio and tv stations.

Metropolitan newspapers sometimes have as many editors as they do reporters. The three most senior ones are the Managing Editor (ME), News Editor (NE), and City Editor (CE). Directly below them in the hierarchy are section editors and assistant city editors.

The ME determines general news policies, and how much attention is devoted in the long run to various types of stories and newspaper sections. The NE applies these general guidelines on a day-to-day basis. The CE supervises the newsroom reporters. Assistant CEs run the newsroom on a shift basis. Section editors supervise different sections of the paper not under the control of the CE -- for example, Business, Editorial Page, Entertainment, Leisure, Sport, etc. Section editors

sometimes supervise a type of story that does not belong to any one section and which could pop up in any of them on a given day: for example, Science and Technology.

Only on rare occasions will a media officer contact an ME or NE. For example, a Victoria group that wants more stories on international trade and development in the local press will approach these senior editors, as should a women's group that wants to protest sexist photos. But in most cases, contacts and complaints should be directed to the CE or section editor.

Metro papers also use other editors to cull stories off the wire or to check reporters' copy for accuracy and style. You will have little contact with them.

Community papers have a much smaller editorial staff. The most senior editor is usually called ME or Editor-in-chief. If the weekly is very small, he or she may simply be called the Editor. In smaller newsrooms, editors have much more direct day-to-day control of copy out of necessity, and hence should be personally cultivated.

Broadcast Editors occupy less authoritative roles in their newsroom than their print counterparts. The broadcast counterpart to the ME is the Director of News, who controls and designs newscasts and public affairs shows. In tv outlets, each show is run by a Producer, sometimes called Executive Producer. Radio shows may call the person in charge a Producer, Director, or Editor. In some radio or tv shows, the term editor is applied to a relatively junior researcher.

Getting confused? The best way to deal with it is to learn the hierarchy of each station and all of its news programs. Find out the functions that are attached to each job title and the pecking order of supervisory news staff. Knowing the right person to call in any given situation will save you and the press a great deal of time.

Reporters

Most editors encourage their reporters to bring in stories they have spotted during their work in the field. And most reporters prefer to do so. They would rather work on a story of their own choosing as a break from the routine assignments their supervising editors hand out.

Beat reporters are those who regularly cover one field exclusively (e.g., energy, environment, city council, education, etc.). They are expected to dig up their own stories from time to time, because they are in close touch with the people and issues associated with their beat. If your group consistently addresses itself to issues that are covered by a beat reporter, it is important to strike up a good working relationship with him or her.

Pool reporters cover the stories that are not part of a beat, or ones that the beat reporter is too busy to follow. Pool reporters also get credit for handing in their own stories. If you are less than satisfied with the job a beat reporter does on your stories, try to find a pool reporter who shows an interest in your group.

Newspaper columnists are the most independent reporters in the newsroom. Most do break stories on occasion, but generally they provide comment and background on stories that have already been covered by other reporters. Columnists usually focus on one set of issues, which are wider in scope than beats. Columnists are of primary importance because they have considerable licence to express their own opinions, analyze issues in greater depth than other reporters, and attack or applaud political platforms and social trends. More so than any other newspaper writer, columnists are allowed to shape public opinion.

In smaller newsrooms the distinctions between editors and beat and pool reporters become vague. The individual reporters have more opportunity to follow stories in a field usually covered

by others in the newsroom. And in very small weeklies and most broadcast stations, beats are for the most part non-existent.

Newsroom bureaucracies can be as rigid and illogical as civil service agencies. It helps to have a friend in the newsroom who will chart out its channels of authority to you.

SELECTION

Too many media officers stop pushing their stories after they have notified the press about them. On any given day, your news competes with hundreds of other news items. Your chances of attracting coverage will increase exponentially if you follow up press notices by intervening in the story selection phase.

The assignment editor of broadcast newsrooms is the key staffer during the selection phase. Usually this job is handed to the senior reporter on each shift. The provincial television newscast teams are an exception -- their assignment editors handle the job on a full-time basis.

The assignment editors match reporters to stories. This gives them considerable control over the priority rating given to each item. Although assignment editors are not usually the most senior newsroom supervisor, they are usually the ones with the strongest 'nose for news'. If you are phoning your story in, ask to speak to the assignment editor. Find out when they show up for their shift and contact them as soon after they walk in the door as possible.

The CE and section editors are the assignment editors of large newspapers. On small dailies and weeklies, this task belongs to the most senior editor.

Your telephone is the best tool you have to influence the choice of stories during the selection phase. You may use it to spring the story on the pressroom for the first time, although sending in a media release is usually a more effective first step. If your media release is already in the editor's hands, follow it up with a call.

Broadcast editors tend to be very attentive to your calls. They have more competitors than newspapers do, and try to find fresh stories every hour. Be prepared to have your comments taped. The editor may not have enough time before the next newscast to send a reporter. Editors for large papers are less receptive to phone calls, but they too will not pass up an opportunity for a fresh story.

Find out the deadline schedule for every outlet you phone. Make sure you give the editor plenty of time to assign a reporter to the story. If you are calling the editor for the first time, ask him or her the time of day that is best for them to receive calls.

Do not allow receptionists to brush you off before you reach the editor. If you are taking the time to call, you have already decided the editor is interested in a story. Should the receptionist tell you the editor is in a meeting, find out the time he or she will be free. If you leave your name, number and message, chances are the editor will not call you back, especially if it is a busy day, or you have not contacted them personally on other occasions. Keep calling until you get them on the line.

Once you have an editor on the phone, be as brief and business-like as possible (if they wanted to talk about the weather, they'd phone the meteorological bureau). Identify yourself and the group you belong to. Plan your conversation so that the call can be completed in two minutes. Be prepared to deliver a hook, the most important details, and the names and numbers of further sources of information. After you have finished, ask the editor politely if a reporter will be assigned to the story. They will usually give you an honest answer.

Determining an item's newsworthiness is a subjective process. Editors are hired for their news sense, but they will often change their mind on an item that they have initially rejected if a reporter brings it up again. When an editor turns you down you may get good results by contacting a reporter you know in the newsroom. But do limit your calls to a newsroom to one editor and one reporter for each story. You do not want to end up with the reputation of a pest.

The best way to affect the selection process is to limit your calls. If a story is weak, let a media release suffice. Once the editors and reporters realize you only call in with strong stories, they will give your calls more attention.

On some days your story will receive less competition than others. Sundays are notoriously slow days. If you have a story that is borderline in terms of news value, phone it in on the weekends.

COVERAGE

Once a reporter has been assigned to your story, your chances for coverage are about as good as they can be. But do not expect your story to be included in the paper or newscast as a matter of course. There is a chance that the story will be dropped to make room for a more important one.

Being as useful to a reporter as possible on one story is the best way to ensure coverage on future stories. If they know they can rely on you to deliver what you promised, they will return to you in the future. In time you could become one of their most trusted sources of information.

PREPARATION

The preparation process kicks into operation as soon as the reporter has filed the item's copy or script. The hooks and angles may be rearranged, the report may be cut drastically to fit into the newscast or edition, or the entire report may be dropped.

Be prepared for surprises. Editors frequently rewrite a story from top to bottom. They rarely ask for a reporter's advice or consultation in this process.

Editors have an unfortunate tendency to drop qualifying phrases and sentences. If the reporter has suggested that there is a good chance a union will go out on strike, the editor may 'tighten' the story by writing that the union is headed for a strike. Editors try to make facts as 'hard' and unambiguous as possible.

Newspapers in particular can affect a story by putting it beneath a cute headline. For example, one Vancouver story covered a team of ex-prostitutes who received a grant to find new and more constructive careers for streetwalkers. The item was placed underneath a headline that screamed, **HOOKERS ON GOVERNMENT PAYROLL.**

You should try to affect a story that has reached the preparation stage only when you become aware of new information. If you have discovered that one of your statements is erroneous, phone up the reporter right away; likewise if a new and major development to the story has occurred.

At no other time should you intervene in the preparation stage. Doing so will give journalists the impression you are trying to censor them. They will be insulted if you demand to see the story before it is released in print or on-air; in effect you are questioning their accuracy and/or fairness by doing so.

But do complain afterwards if you feel your comments have been unfairly represented. Protests and complaints about how your story has been altered in the preparation stage go a long way to

ensuring it will not happen again. There is a separate section in this manual on when and how you should protest misrepresentation at the hands of the press.

You now have a solid background on what journalists look for in stories, and how you can use each stage of news production to increase coverage. But this is at best a skeletal outline. The one way to develop your skills is to put them into practice. Of course you will make errors in the beginning. But remember that you and your press contacts are mutually dependent on one another. They want news, and you need coverage.

Use journalists as your personal press consultants, especially in the beginning stages of your work. Phone them up after your story has run its course. Ask them ways in which you could have been more helpful and effective. Note their comments well, and go over in your mind how their suggestions could have been applied from the moment you started to work on the story.

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR MEDIA

In choosing your media, pay close attention to the constituencies you wish to contact. Different people turn to different news sources for different reasons. The news outlets know this, and cater to the market they deliver to advertisers -- and advertising is a far greater source of revenue than subscriptions for print outlets. For broadcast outlets, it is the only source of revenue, except for CBC Radio, Vancouver Cooperative Radio, and some campus radio stations.

This means you must plot out which audiences are attracted by the various news outlets. Very few people read trade union newsletters, but if you are trying to establish a labour base, your work in this area will prove far more fruitful than efforts in the mainstream media.

The media can be any source that will help you to get your message across. Traditional media sources are newspapers, magazines, tv, and radio. More selective sources that are targeted at a specific audience or area include posters, flyers, telephone trees, public events, and word of mouth.

Community groups launch media campaigns for two reasons; to influence decision-makers or to spread the word to the masses.

On one hand, they may be trying to reach the 'trend-setters' -- individuals whose influence on social decision-making is particularly strong, such as politicians, civil servants, business leaders, trade unionists, academics, etc. There are specific trade magazines that are directed at each of these markets.

As well, there are newspapers and broadcast shows that attract them. The Globe & Mail has a very influential readership, by virtue of its reputation as the best newspaper in Canada. The Financial Post also attracts this market.

Local papers vary greatly in quality from city to city outside the Lower Mainland, but they are usually the only daily in town, and hence have a monopoly on markets interested in local news.

Certain broadcast outlets run programs that attract similar audiences. In the Lower Mainland, the 'Early Edition' program on CBC am radio has a far smaller listenership than other competing programs, but it is listened to by a far more influential audience. Its counterpart for British Columbia outside of Vancouver is 'Daybreak', which also runs in the mornings, and attracts a similar audience.

On the other hand, public interest groups often concern themselves with 'popular education' rather than influencing the influence-makers. In this case, one is playing a numbers game. An article published in all the community newspapers in the province will likely reach more readers than an article in the *Vancouver Sun* or the *Province* -- and is far easier to get published. The outlets with the largest audience are the most sought-after. But even here care must be taken to research each outlets' market. Some stations, such as Richmond's CISL, are primarily interested in developing a local market, while others in the same area may wish to service outlying areas more intensely.

Finding out about media markets is but one aspect of a group's media officer's task. The others are covered later in this booklet. But there is one part of the job that cannot be taught in a format such as this: the attitudes you need to cultivate to do your job effectively.

As media officer you are the medium that separates the reporter from the story. If you do your job properly, you are a resource that the reporter will call on to get in touch with information and

experts. If you do it incorrectly, you are a barrier. Both the media officer of a public interest group and a reporter have a common goal: getting information out of the filing cabinet and onto the public record.

At the same time you will have another goal that contradicts that of a reporter. You are no doubt passionately committed to analysis as well as freedom of information. As much as possible, you want facts to be placed in their proper perspective, and like as not, this perspective expresses your own ideological stance. But reporters are trained to gather information and put it in as unopinionated a manner as possible, and to balance their articles so that they give access to divergent views. At times, your role as media officer and the reporter's role as an allegedly objective gatherer of facts will collide.

But when all is said and done, a good reporter and a good media officer are each other's best friend.

Once you have integrated the information contained in this manual, you will be ready to take up the work it describes. At times your task will prove to be an exciting adventure. At other times, it will be exasperating. But always remember this: you have a right to be heard, and a right to get your group's views on the public record.

BECOMING A MEDIA OFFICER

You now have the basic tools you need to understand how the media functions. Becoming an effective media officer takes practice and dedication. Some of the skills for this job such as writing media releases are described later on. The only way to hone them to a fine edge is to use them. As you gain more experience, you will learn how to use your time to maximum efficiency, and your group's media profile will improve as your talent at press relations increases.

Get organized. Plot out your media campaigns in detail before you launch them. Pull your lists and files together and update them regularly. And keep a close watch on every piece of information and interview you give that ends up on the public record.

In this final section we will take a look at how the previously mentioned techniques can raise your group's media profile, how to compile and use media lists, how to monitor press coverage, and how to apply the lessons you've learned to specific situations in which you will probably find yourself.

Media Profile

The best way to improve your media profile is to provide accurate information and assistance to reporters.

You are the person who stands between the reporter and the story. You can make yourself an obstacle, or a valuable resource. One cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of knowing what you are talking about. If you are unfamiliar with the topic of discussion, let the reporter know. Steer them to members of your groups who are 'on top' of the issue.

The error that media officers make most often is trying to oversell weak stories. Don't call a reporter to your office for a juicy exclusive if the story is weak. That is why you issue media releases -- to save your time and the time of the journalist.

Your first contact with a reporter is the most important one in terms of long-range strategy. Your entire profile-building campaign depends on the first story you give a reporter. If you do a good job, the reporter will return for more. Once the first story has been filed, call the reporter on some pretense -- congratulating him or her on a job well done is a good one. Then proceed to describe your group and the issues it focuses on. The next time the reporter needs help in this field, he or she will turn to you.

You can build your media profile by taking advantage of direct access to the media. This includes sending out bulletins and public address notices, but it also involves taking advantage of free editorial space.

The most common avenue for doing so is the 'letters to the editor' column. People do read them. If you wonder about how useful they are, follow them for a month and count up the number of politicians and corporate executives who write in.

Letters to the editor should be well-argued and substantiated by facts. Do not fall into the mistake of using them as vehicles for rhetoric or polemics. A reasonable tone and moderate phrasing will do wonders to attract sympathy and understanding for your point of view.

The radio counterpart to the letters column is the hotline show. Why let the loonies hog the airwaves? If you know that a topic of interest is coming up on a program, prepare your comments and questions. Enlist the participation of your members. Have them phone in with prepared questions or comments.

If you are writing or phoning in as part of your official capacity as media officer, identify your group. Always sign your own name, unless you are writing a letter on behalf of a group official. If so, make sure he or she has read the letter and agrees with it.

It helps to have as many people and groups sign it as possible. The opinion of a broad cross-section has more weight than that of one individual.

Many papers have open-editorial policies. They allow experts or special-interest advocates to write editorials on issues of public concern. Contact the editorial page editor and get the information you need to take advantage of this opportunity to shape public opinion.

Media Lists and Files

A media officer's best friend is a well-organized filing cabinet. You need full lists of media contacts and copies of news items you helped put on the public record.

Make a point of marking down all the names of reporters and the outlets they work for that you come in contact with. Note their function, their beat if they have one, and the show they work for if they are broadcast journalists. Every time you contact or are contacted by a journalist, note the circumstances and the results of the conversation. If you deal with a reporter on a number of occasions, keep a separate file of their articles and reports. Make sure you keep your list current and up-to-date.

Also, keep separate files for each outlet. Every paper or station develops a unique pattern for reporting on news. If you have a file on hand, you can spot the pattern and use it to advantage by figuring out the news values that each outlet appreciates most.

Keep individual files for each media release, news conference, and media campaign you launch. When the story has run its course, go over the file and analyze what you did right, and where you could improve.

As you can see, you will probably need to have several copies of each article. Have members of your group keep their papers and collect them as often as possible. If this is not possible, photocopy the articles.

Broadcast stations may let you have copies of scripts for their reports if you ask them politely. It may be less time-consuming to make notes as you listen in. It is possible to record the reports right off the radio or tv, which makes note-taking easier. If you don't know how, ask a radio reporter to show you.

If you are working with computerized mailing lists for your media contacts, it is pretty easy to keep the lists up-to-date. If you do not have access to a computer, it is useful to type your media lists into a format to match special photocopy-label sheets. Your list can then be copied onto labels, saving you lots of time and effort. If a contact or address for a media outlet changes, you can stick a new label onto your master list.

Media lists and files are especially important if you intend to pass your duties as media officer on to someone else. If you can give your successor comprehensive files, you will save him or her a great deal of time and trouble.

Special Occasions

Some situations come up time and time again for media officers. The best way to handle them is to work out one pattern for each situation.

Hearings and Inquiries are the one time when you may actually want to cut off press coverage. You and your group will be very busy and need every second you get. You don't want to waste time filling in every reporter who just blew in to file a thirty-second or two-paragraph report. As well, there may be details of your strategy you do not want to release. If the opposition gets wind of it, they may make a counter-move to neutralize you.

One way to resolve these problems is to hold daily briefings, with on- and off-the-record segments. Hold one at the lunch break. If the situation warrants, have another when the afternoon session ends. Give reporters your side of the picture about what went on that day, and discuss possible upcoming stories. If they are confused by your tactics and you want the information kept private, go off the record. In effect, put a verbal embargo on it.

Daily press briefings will get reporters off your back. They will also encourage reporters to depend on you to give them an analysis of how the inquiry or negotiations are proceeding. It is better that they get this information from you than from someone on the other side.

Campaigns

Press relations are absolutely vital to the success of your campaigns. Media strategy should be an integral feature of each and every step in planning.

You may be launching a joint campaign with another group. If they have media officers, strike a separate sub-committee for press relations. You will be able to work much more effectively by sharing information and dividing labour. And more importantly, a press relations sub-committee can make sure that divisions among groups are kept off the public record, and that the various allied groups do not step on one another's toes.

It is often very useful to appoint one joint media officer to handle all press inquiries for each campaign. He or she will be more able to coordinate the various bits and pieces of the combined press strategy and eliminate contradictory impressions that arise because different groups have different mandates.

It is very important to pace your press relations around a campaign. Do not release all your facts and strategies in the first news conference. Dole out the stories one by one, so that media interest stays strong and fresh. Anticipate and prepare for the stories that could arise at each stage for the campaign.

Keep the ball rolling. If one outlet reports one story, point out a new angle or approach to another one. If the campaign starts to lag, juice it up by staging a dramatic media event of some sort, such as a march or demonstration. Organize letter-writing campaigns and phone-in program participation.

Once the campaign is over, monitor and analyze each step and move you made. Spot the weeks when interest lagged and the stories that did not receive press coverage. You will thus learn how to stage a more effective campaign -- for the next time!

Public interest groups face major problems when they must respond to government decisions and other fast-breaking stories. On one hand, if you wait too long to phrase a reply, the stories lose immediacy and could be ignored. On the other hand, you do not want to put forth your position until you have studied the event and consulted your members and allied groups. There is just one way to resolve this conflict.

Learn to anticipate. Do not wait for the government to get the first word in. Determine what you want in the form of government policy. If you know that a government agency is planning a new policy of some sort, launch a pre-emptive strike in the form of a campaign. If you do it well, reporters will compare the policy that surfaces to the demands and suggestions you have already put on the public record.

If you have been taken by surprise, you can still respond quickly and at length. Complain strongly and loudly that the public was not consulted. If you think that something about the decision is fishy but can't put your finger on it, say so.

Immediacy is the key element of response to government decisions. Whenever possible, hold a news conference right after the decision is handed down if you cannot send out a release in time to meet deadlines. Hold it as near to the government's press room as you can, so that reporters from that press room can pop into yours on their way out.

Learning to respond quickly is not only good in terms of press relations -- it is a wise political tactic. It lets politicians and civil servants know you are keeping an eye on them. And that in turn will affect their decisions and the way they make them.

TOOLS FOR USING THE MEDIA

Media Releases

Learning how to think like a reporter is relatively easy. Learning how to write like one is more difficult. But its every bit as important. The media release is the most effective method you have at your disposal to attract coverage.

Why Media Releases are Important

At least half the stories that receive press coverage originated in the form of a media release. Major news outlets receive hundreds of them each day.

The media release is the most common tool used to alert newsrooms to stories. The details are down on paper in black and white, along with all the information a journalist needs to follow it up. If you prepare your release, you save yourself a lot of time and bother. It also allows you to organize your thoughts and prepare your arguments.

Editors have nightmares about throwing away media releases that turn into the lead item in their competitors' newscasts and editions. They will read the first two paragraphs of each one -- even sloppily handwritten ones -- to avoid such an eventuality.

Most media releases end up in the waste basket after the editor has read them. Even the best media officers expect only 33% of their releases to attract coverage. But very weak stories have been picked up by a news outlet because the media release was well-written.

Your release will end up in one of three files after it has passed the waste basket stage. One: the editor may file it for coverage on a day when not much else is happening. Or a reporter may be assigned to follow it up immediately.

Two: if you have done your job well, the editor will put it in the rewrite file. A reporter will phone you to confirm the details, and substantiate the facts. Someone with an opposing point of view may be called to provide the final product with a balanced outlook. The hooks and angles will be changed or downplayed, and the story will then be polished by a copy editor.

Three: some editors will pick up a well-written release from a reliable source and run it as-is. This is bad journalism, but supervisors of small, short-staffed newsrooms have few alternatives.

This is why your release should always be written in the form of a news story. It should meet all the criteria of accuracy, structure, style, and objectivity that editors demand from their reporters. Before you learn how to develop your skill at writing releases, consider how one run-of-the-mill media release launched a nation-wide consumers' campaign.

One day in the early seventies, a few women in Brampton, Ontario, exchanged complaints about rising food prices during a mid-morning coffee meeting. They decided to pass the word around when local supermarkets either marked down or raised the price of common commodities.

After only a few weeks the women noticed that all the supermarkets in their neighbourhood would raise the price of one item at the same time. Further investigation revealed that store managers were unable to provide believable explanations for this phenomenon. As well, some managers hurriedly dropped prices back to their original level after only a few people complained.

The group decided to circulate this information to friends, neighbours, and relatives. As the circle widened, the women realized that concerted action and protest had a visible and immediate impact on inflation.

The group decided to go public, and launch boycotts of supermarket goods that had been marked up for no apparent reason. It chose a catchy name for itself -- WARP (Women Against Rising Prices). Finally, it sent out the boycott list in the form of a traditional media release.

The group and its tactics caught the imagination of local news outlets. The story contained every news value that was listed in our section on newsworthiness.

The story was so strong that the wire services picked it up and Toronto papers ran it, even though it was a local Brampton story. In a matter of months local WARP groups had sprung up across Canada, duplicating the original chapter's tactic of consumer boycott and media release publicity. Many local newspapers ran the weekly WARP list as a regular feature, and others assigned reporters to expand the list by comparing prices across the board.

The WARP group did not put an end to inflation, nor did it expose the underlying structural features of inflation. It will take more than media releases to change how our society functions. But WARP did achieve its limited goals quite effectively. The women proved to themselves and others that a small group of non-experts can exert considerable influence on very powerful institutions, in this case supermarket chains. And all because one of them wrote a media release.

Media Release Style

Anyone with an adequate command of grammar and spelling can learn how to write media releases. But it is a skill that must be constantly exercised. Reporters who return to work after a weekend off expect to throw out reams of paper before they are back on track.

A few groundrules about news writing style must be emphasized.

W5 describes the formula of news writing. The five Ws are **Who, What, Why, Where, When**.

Who said/did it?

What did they say/do?

Why did they do/say it?

When did this take place?

Where did this happen?

Every story must include these five Ws. Every single word that does not help reveal the answer to one of the W questions must be removed, and each single W should be clearly explained. If just one of them is too vaguely worded, the entire story could fall apart.

The lead is the first sentence of the story, and the most important one. Few editors or readers will proceed much further if it is badly written. The lead should focus on the one most important fact in the story. In effect, it is the hook boiled down to under twenty words.

Each following sentence should never exceed twenty words in length. One sentence should only express one idea or fact. Drop adjectives, and write sentences in the simplest structure in the English language -- the subject first, verb second, and predicate last.

Paragraphs should never include more than three or four sentences. Each paragraph after the lead should only deal with one of the five Ws.

Don't waste words! An editor who sees a five-page media release may decide it is too long to run as is, or too complicated to assign a reporter to follow up on. Boiling a complex issue down to a few words is excruciatingly difficult to one who is immersed in the story. Make sure you restrict your copy to the Ws and news values.

Verbs should be active and positive, not passive and negative. This will improve your prose and chop down the size of your release. For example:

THE EXPORT PRICE OF GAS WILL BE THE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN ALBERTA AND OTTAWA AT TODAY'S TALKS...

should read:

ALBERTA AND OTTAWA WILL DISCUSS THE EXPORT PRICE OF GAS TODAY...

and:

PREMIER VANDER ZALM DID NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT CHARGES OF VOTE-RIGGING IN LAST YEAR'S ELECTION...

should read:

PREMIER VANDER ZALM REFUSED TO COMMENT ON CHARGES OF VOTE-RIGGING IN LAST YEAR'S ELECTIONS...

Making Words Work for You

The two primary goals for writing releases are mutually contradictory: on one hand you want to use the release as a vehicle for your group's perspective; on the other hand, you want to write in the objective, unopinionated style of news writing. Your two most valuable tools for resolving this conflict are the selective use of quotes, and colourful language.

Quotes are unavoidable. They add the personal touch that distinguishes a media release from a memorandum. They bring out the point that people are taking action and expressing opinions.

The quotes in your media release can express the controversial, rhetorical, or ideological flourish that news writers are supposed to eliminate in their copy. They also bring together diverse points in your argument by putting the clinching points in an individual's mouth. And you have an added advantage over reporters -- you can make the quote up yourself. Find an official of your group who will agree to be the attributed source of your quotes. Make sure he or she understands the issue, and has seen the quotes before the release is sent out.

Colourful language is another way of packing your releases with ideological punch. Certain words have subtle nuances you can use in your favour. For example, if a corporate executive states that he has received no evidence to substantiate your charge that his company pollutes a nearby

stream, you may wish to write that he claimed as such. To claim implies that the speaker may not be telling the whole truth, a nuance not revealed by the use of the verb, **to state**.

Colourful verbs also put you on the offensive or your opponent on the defensive, which is always a wise tactical strategy. Someone you are criticizing should never be allowed to say something in response to a charge when he or she can be made to deny your accusation. Similarly, you never deny. You point out, explain, or indicate your position. This is where a thesaurus comes in handy, simply because it lists all the verbs you can use instead of 'to say'.

Format

There is a standard format for laying out media releases to include all pertinent information.

- The head at the top of the page should list your group's name, its business address, fax number and phone number. If possible, have some headed stationary printed up. If not, type it out in block letters. You may wish to have one of your members do up a group logo, but this is not really necessary.
- The release date should be typed into the upper left-hand corner beneath the head. If the news outlet can use the release as soon as it has it in hand, type **For immediate release**. If you wish to hand it to the news outlet earlier than you want them to make the information public, type **For release no sooner than ...**, followed by the date and time it can be released. This is known as an embargo, which is outlined later in this section.
- The date on which the release has been printed is typed in the upper right-hand corner.
- The headline should be simple and factual. It should state briefly what the release is about. For example: 'ENVIRONMENTALISTS OPPOSE NEW ENERGY POLICY', 'CHURCH LEADERS CALL FOR BOYCOTT', 'UNION DEMANDS IMPROVED JOB SAFETY', etc. Do not try to outdo the newspapers in writing cute and alliterative headlines.
- Margins should be wide, say about four centimetres.
- Type **-more-** at the bottom of each page except the last, which should have **-endendend-**, **-endit-**, or **-30-** typed on the line beneath the last sentence. Every page after the first one should have the first three words of the headline typed in lower case in the upper left-hand corner. Each page after the first should be numbered in the upper right-hand corner.
- The name, business and home phone numbers, and business address of the person to contact for more information usually ends the release, although it can be entered just above the headline. It is often the most important piece of information after the lead sentence. Don't forget it!
- Do not allow sentences or paragraphs to carry over from one page to the next.
- Media releases should be typed double-spaced.
- Media releases should always be photocopies. Never send a carbon-copied media release out -- it smudges. Use one typeface for the entire release, in black ink. Some groups like to use fancy coloured paper, but ordinary paper is easier on the eyes.
- The release should be stapled in the extreme left-hand corner. Never send out a media release bound with a paper clip, or with no form of attachment at all.

The Embargo

There are times when you want your release in a reporter's hands before you want the information to be released. You may want a story with little real news value to be held until a slow news day, when it stands a greater chance of coverage. Or you may not want your opponents to know you are taking some form of action until they read it or hear it from a news outlet.

As noted before, you must state clearly at the top of the release that it is to be held until a certain date or time. Reporters and editors will almost always respect an embargo, unless there is a special reason to ignore it.

If your embargo has been broken, find out why fast. Unless the outlet gives you a very strong reason, complain loudly and at length. Once one outlet breaks a story embargo, the others will follow suit. If one outlet consistently ignores your request for an embargo, don't send them any more releases.

Release Delivery

Once you have the release written, special attention should be paid to ensuring that it falls into the right hands.

Media releases are usually sent via post. If you want immediate delivery, a media release can be faxed, dropped off, or sent by courier. Personal delivery and courier are extremely time-consuming and expensive, but not all small outlets (community papers, weeklies) have facsimile machines.

If you are rushing a release in for the earliest possible delivery, try to phone the editor to let him or her know it is on the way, and what it contains. They won't stop the presses for you, but they can make sure that enough space is left open for the release.

As a last possible resort, you may wish to phone up the outlets and read a prepared statement. But this is acceptable only on rare occasions, when speed is of the essence and you have reason to believe that they would be extremely interested in what you have to say. An example of this might be an environmental group phoning in a statement from a blockade of a logging road as they are served with an injunction.

After a few months on the job, you will have compiled extensive media contact lists. You will probably list a number of editors and reporters in each outlet. Send the release to every single contact you have reason to believe would be interested. This included CEs, section editors, beat reporters, pool reporters, and columnists. If you can interest just one individual in each news team, you can attract coverage. If you interest more than one, your chances of success are even greater. Do not be concerned that one outlet will assign more than one of its reporters to cover the story. This is unlikely to occur, because editors let each other know which stories they are following up.

However, do limit the number of phone calls you make to follow up media releases. As we suggested before, try calling your most friendly reporter if the editor has turned you down first, and leave it at that.

Monitoring the Use of Media Releases

The final task involved in issuing media releases is finding out how much press coverage they attracted.

Make sure you have a separate file for each release and the clippings of the newspaper coverage it received. Include notes about the way in which it was reported by broadcast outlets. Radio and tv stations will probably let you keep copies of the script they used for your release. And keep a special file for releases that received no coverage at all.

If your release laid an egg, find out why. Read it and reread it. Did you express all five Ws and potential news values? Was the release written as a news story? Was it sent to the right people?

If your releases consistently fail to attract coverage, phone an editor on a slow news day and explain your predicament. The editor will probably not remember your previous releases, but he or she may be able to spot the problem the next time you send one in.

Make sure you have a record of media releases that ran with little or no rewriting. This is an indication that the newsroom in question is short-staffed, and will probably make few alterations to future releases. They may also be interested in much longer articles and editorial comments you might like to write.

Writing media releases can be fun. This task poses a creative challenge, but it does not take very long to gain enough skill to do an adequate job of it. If you learn how to write releases effectively, you have mastered basic news writing. If you enjoy it as well, you may have the makings of a professional journalist.

Reference Books

There are too many groundrules for correct news writing style to list in detail here. But those rules have been compiled and simply presented by the Canadian Press. The CP Style Guide is the standard reference text for all newspapers in Canada, although some insist on minor variations. You can't go wrong if you use the CP Style Guide as your basis. Copies are free for the asking if you write your nearest CP bureau and ask for one politely. Chances are your local newspaper has extra copies.

Next on the list is an inexpensive but thorough dictionary. You want one that includes US spellings, because most newspapers use the US system. The best one on the market is the paperback edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary, but almost any one will do in a pinch.

Pick up a good paperback thesaurus (dictionary of synonyms and antonyms). It will save your time and brighten up your prose. Fowler's English Usage, the standard reference book on English grammar, comes in handy (but is not really necessary).

There are many journalism textbooks on the market these days. Pick up two or three current ones from your local library, or ask a reporter to suggest one.

News Conferences

News conferences require a great deal of work and careful planning. And even the best organized ones will attract few reporters if a major story happens to break shortly before they are scheduled.

There are times, however, when only a news conference will do. You should always call one when you are about to launch a major campaign, especially if it is a joint effort between two or more groups. You want all the reporters in one room so that you can go over your reasons, goals and tactics in one sitting.

You may be involved in a series of crucial hearings or negotiations. A series of daily briefings will save you time, because you will not have to go over each event every time a new reporter shows up.

There are times when the issue is simply too complex to break down into the form of a media release. You may be presenting a major report that examines the situation in great detail. You may want a panel of specialists on hand to fill reporters in on difficult technical data. Whatever reason you choose, make sure the story is strong enough to warrant the time and travel that journalists must spend on a news conference.

Suppose you held a news conference and nobody came? Do you really need to call one? They require so much work that even comprehensive news coverage may not justify the effort. Therefore, apply a general guideline each time you consider holding a news conference: if you can send out a media release instead, don't call one!

Advance Notice

Only on rare occasions should you call a news conference on the spur of the moment.

These should be restricted to times when a cluster of reporters are harassing you for a comment. Tell them to meet you down at the end of the hall in fifteen minutes, and to spread the word to their colleagues.

Your conference should be announced as far in advance as possible. Send out a release stating the time, date, topic, place and speakers. There's an art to writing such a media release. You want to put in sufficient information and 'hooks' to ensure that the media will attend -- but not so much information that they simply write a story based on the media release, without attending the news conference. Put an embargo on the release for the day of the conference if you want to include a brief rundown of what will be covered -- but only if you do not want the details to become public beforehand.

Follow the release up with phone calls to the editors. Ask them if they will be able to cover the event. You need this information because you will send a full release on what transpired at the news conference to outlets that did not send a reporter.

Timing

Choose a date and time that gives reporters leeway to file their reports before deadline. In most cases, all outlets from the various media can meet their deadlines if the meeting is held between 9:30 am and 11:00 am. That gives afternoon papers the time to file for their final afternoon edition, and morning papers an afternoon to update the story by digging up more details.

Radio and tv stations almost always have a noon newscast. If the meeting is wrapped up by 11:30 am, the radio reporters can file voice reports. The tv reporters will write up stories for their newsreaders, because they will not have enough time to process and edit the videotape before noon. Their filmed reports will be carried on the early evening newscast.

You may be holding a news conference to gather national attention. Remember that national newscasts and papers are in different time zones than in the west. Find out beforehand if they need advance details to package their reports in time.

Do not schedule news conferences on the day before a public holiday. Only afternoon papers will have a chance to run a story in the final edition, and by the time the morning papers publish two days later, the news will be too stale to report.

Never hold a news conference on a public holiday or in the middle of a holiday season. Chances are the news outlets will be too short-staffed to attend.

Location

Choose a quiet, well-lit, spacious room for your conference. It should be fairly central to all news outlets, probably somewhere in the central business district.

Make sure the room is relatively sound-proof, and that no other distractions are taking place in the room during the conference. Radio reporters in particular need a quiet background to record actuality.

Photo crews need good lighting. Newspaper photographers and tv cameras like to show up early to test exposures and set up equipment, so make sure someone is on hand to assist them.

Don't have your speakers sit in front of a blank wall. TV coverage will be enhanced if the speakers sit in front of an interesting visual backdrop, for example, a large wildlife poster.

The reporters should be seated so that they face the speakers' table directly. They will expect that they must scribble notes on their lap, but do set up desks wherever possible.

Radio reporters will want to place their microphones right in front of the speaker's mouth to pick up good voice actuality. Book special equipment with enough outlets so that they can plug their recorders into the public address system. If this is not possible, make sure there is a wide enough space on the desk in front of the speakers for the mikes. Have masking tape on hand to wrap mikes around each other so that all of them are close to the speakers' mouths. Make a point of taping your own news conference for future reference.

Press Kits and Lists

You will need extra people on hand to assist reporters and leave you free for last minute details.

One person should be assigned to register each reporter and record the outlet they work for. You will then know which outlets were not in attendance, so that you can rush a release to them when the conference ends. This will also give you the names of reporters who were in attendance, which will help you build your media list.

Have as full a press kit on hand as possible. It should include brief biographies and resumes of the speakers, background and research papers, fact sheets with relevant information, texts of the speakers' remarks, and press clippings of previous news stories related to the topic of the meeting. This information will save the reporters valuable time in terms of research. Make sure the kits are packaged in individual folders.

It is considered a courtesy to have coffee and doughnuts on hand for the reporters. If you must call a media conference during a meal period, have sandwiches available. But there is no need to go overboard. Catered banquets won't win you extra coverage and friends.

News Conference Groundrules

You are probably the best person to chair the meeting. Welcome the reporters and briefly lay out the groundrules for the meeting.

Start the ball rolling within ten minutes of the announced time. Tell the reporters that questions will follow formal remarks by the speakers. Tactfully but firmly put an end to any conversations or distractions among the reporters during the main presentation that are loud enough to throw your speakers off.

The formal presentation should be short: about twenty minutes is a good amount of time. It should never extend beyond a half-hour. If the speakers fall in love with the sound of their own voices during their presentations and threaten to drag things out, send them a pre-arranged signal to wrap up their comments.

Chair the question period yourself from the speakers' table. Make sure the speakers do not answer questions from reporters who shouted out their queries while you were recognizing someone else. Do not allow questions to drag on. Allow a maximum of twenty minutes for questions. Wrap it up sooner if the questions are trivial.

Audio-Visual Aids

There has been a growing tendency among media officers lately to throw in fancy audio-visual material during the conference. This requires a great deal of extra effort and expertise. When machines break down (and at conferences, they usually do) the results are embarrassing and time-wasting.

Most visual material you need can be included in the individual press kits. Make sure your speakers point out that the material is in the kits, and refer to them only when necessary.

If you must use audio-visual material, make sure you do a dry run dress rehearsal in the meeting room immediately before the meeting. Unless you are an expert, recruit one to operate the equipment.

Individual Interviews

Radio and tv reporters may want individual interviews for actuality after the meeting has officially ended. Establish the order of interviews before the first one begins. Do not allow a reporter to drag an interview on. You may wish to set a three-minute time limit for each session. Consult with the reporters if you do. They may have good reasons for wanting more time.

Follow-Up

You know what the topic will deal with, and what the speakers will say, so prepare a media release on the morning before it actually takes place. This release, unlike the one announcing the press conference, should tell the entire story you want distributed. Drop them off at news rooms that did not send a reporter.

The real test of the effectiveness of the conference has little to do with how many reporters showed up. The amount of coverage is the true standard. If the room was packed and the story received poor coverage, you did something wrong.

Do not be discouraged if no one showed up. You may merely have had the bad luck to call a media conference on an unusually busy news day. Don't mourn -- get on the phone and find out why

attendance was sparse. Monitor the effectiveness of your news conferences in the same way you do media releases. Have special files with full notes on each one.

Handling the Media and Doing Interviews

Now that you know how to attract news coverage, you must learn how to deal with reporters and their interviews. There are no magic formulas for turning yourself into a media star. But there are a few pointers you should brush up on. Learn them yourself first. Once you have them down pat you can transmit them to members of your group, and colleagues in other organizations.

In this section we discuss how to get reporters on your side: how to handle confidential information; how to prepare yourself for broadcast interviews; and how to complain when you have been abused by the press.

Learning to Trust Reporters

The best way to get sympathetic news coverage is to build good working relationships with reporters. You do it by learning which ones to trust, and by showing that you yourself are worthy of their trust.

Ideally reporters should be removed from the people and groups they report on. Distance improves one's perspective on issues and movements, according to the concept of objectivity. But journalists are human beings. They have personal and ideological biases. As well, a reporter's life can be as pressured as anyone else's, and in many cases more so. A little bit of sympathy and courtesy can go a long way towards improving coverage -- and it's free.

Reporters can and will act as *de facto* press consultants for public interest groups. They can point out news angles that you previously ignored. They can help you tighten up your media releases and news conferences. They will advise you on how to time the release of information for maximum impact.

Reporters can also help you cut corners. They could use their status as public information gatherers to pry loose reports from the sticky fingers of civil servants. They are frequently privy to information you may not even know exists.

Developing a trusting relationship with journalists is also an excellent defensive tactic. They will prove far less likely to break a confidence or deny your right to balanced reporting. It will not prevent them from coming down hard on you if you step out of line, but they will go to extra lengths to give you a fair chance to respond.

There are no secrets or tricks involved in building that relationship. Being friendly, courteous, and helpful will suffice.

Do not make promises that you cannot keep. If you arranged to meet them, be there on time. If you promised them an exclusive, do not spread the story around the press club. Do not try to hype them on your story if it is a weak one.

You find out if you are building a good working relationship with reporters by monitoring their items closely. How much prominence do they give your comments and information? How sympathetic is the portrait they draw of your group and its positions? How accurately do they report your statements?

Once a reporter has learned to trust you as a fair, informed and articulate source of information, she or he will return for more stories, and more comments. If you begin to lose touch with reporters you like, give them a call on a slow news day to say hello. They welcome constructive criticism and praise, as we all do. And sometimes it is pleasant just to hear a friendly voice on the other end of the line.

Exclusives and Confidential Information

Letting a reporter have an exclusive on your story can be touchy. Other reporters do not like to come out second-best. If they think you are giving them second-class treatment, they may turn to someone else. That person could very well be someone with whom you disagree.

You should give an exclusive story to reporters who will spend extra time fleshing it out and convincing their editors to give it maximum space. If one reporter brought the story to your attention, you should let that reporter have first crack.

There will be situations during which you want to keep your information confidential. You may be involved in the middle of negotiations, or your group could be in the midst of an internal debate over future tactics. Reporters will respect your right to keep information private, as long as they do not suspect you are trying to hide something the public has a right to know.

There will be times when you want certain information to remain confidential between you and the reporter. Perhaps you want your comments to be put on the record but are unwilling to use your own name. Ask the reporter not to attribute the quotes to you directly.

At times you may want to fill a reporter in on an issue's background but want the details to remain private. In this situation, you ask for 'off the record' status. Do not abuse it, and do not use it too much. Any encounter between a media officer and a reporter that may lead to a news story can turn into an interview. Unless you specifically state that something is off the record, and the reporter specifically agrees beforehand, the reporter may print the information.

Interviews

Work hard at becoming a skilled interview subject. You want to be informed, helpful, to the point, and articulate. In most cases, this can be accomplished by simply reviewing the material you will discuss before the interview.

However, there are skills you must work on if you are to be an effective broadcast interview subject. One skill you probably already have is knowing how to dress appropriately. Avoid white, which tends to blind video cameras; and houndstooth patterns, which shimmer and shiver on videotape. The same is true of shiny fabrics. Fancy jewelry can glint into the camera and jangle into the microphone.

There are two types of broadcast interviews: the first is designed to get 30 to 60 seconds of your voice as actuality for a short report for a tv or radio broadcast; the second is a much longer interview that will be broadcast with little editing. It lasts from five minutes to a half-hour, and will end up as part of a documentary or lengthy public affairs show.

If the first type of interview is being prepared for radio, you may wish to consult notes; but never read a prepared statement into the microphone. If it is for tv, make sure you have nothing in your hands which you are likely to twist and wrench nervously. Generally speaking, the best place for your hands during an interview is in your pockets.

The short television interview can be especially important, simply because it reaches more people than any other medium. It is also the most brief, and special attention must be paid to sticking to the point, and delivering your comments effectively.

Look directly at the face of the reporter and ignore any distracting movements in the crowd or camera crew. Focus all your attention on the questions. Keep your head as still as you can, and do not glance at the camera.

During short tv interviews you must constantly return to the main theme you want to push in each answer. Do not be diverted into areas that are peripheral to the main reason for the interview. Answer each question in the first sentence, rephrase the theme in the second by linking it to the question, and use the next few words to build your case.

A sample interview might go as follows:

Reporter: WHY ARE YOU OPPOSED TO THE CLOSING OF THE HOSPITAL?

Interviewee: WE NEED AS MUCH HEALTH CARE IN THIS COMMUNITY AS WE CAN POSSIBLY GET. HOSPITAL BEDS ARE SCARCE. THERE ARE LOTS OF KIDS AND OLD FOLKS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WHO NEED A HOSPITAL CLOSE TO HOME.

Reporter: WHY DID YOU WAIT SO LONG BEFORE PROTESTING THE SHUTDOWN?

Interviewee: WE STARTED TO OPPOSE THE SHUTDOWN AS SOON AS IT BECAME PUBLIC INFORMATION. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WAIT, BECAUSE WE NEED AS MUCH HEALTH CARE AS WE CAN GET. BY THE TIME A YOUNG CHILD OR SENIOR CITIZEN GETS TO THE HOSPITAL AT THE OTHER END OF TOWN, THEY MAY HAVE ALREADY SUSTAINED PERMANENT DAMAGE.

Reporter: DON'T YOU THINK THAT A MARCH LIKE THIS PLAYS INTO THE HANDS OF THE LEFTISTS WHO WILL TRY TO USE THIS ISSUE TO DISCREDIT SOCIETY IN GENERAL?

Interviewee: WE ARE MARCHING HERE TODAY TO DRAW THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE VERY YOUNG AND VERY OLD TO STAY IN HOSPITALS CLOSE TO HOME. MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, THEY NEED THE SUPPORT OF THEIR FAMILIES WHILE THEY ARE ILL.

By sticking to the point, hammering away at one theme, and slowly building your argument, you make sure that your comments will not be taken out of context. Any thirty-second clip the reporter chooses to use will get your message across.

This technique is inappropriate for longer interviews. You have more time, can marshal more facts, and can move off the main topic to bring out indirectly-related but important points.

The key for success on hot-line programs and talk shows is a relaxed, confident, authoritative sound to your voice. Again, this all depends on knowing your material thoroughly. Always approach the interview as a personal conversation between yourself and the interviewer.

Longer interviews allow you more control over the direction of the questioning. You will usually be pre-interviewed, and can use this opportunity to suggest possible questions and areas of discussion.

The interviewer will not be as tuned into the issue as you are. This offers you an excellent opportunity to take over the interview. You can shift gears in the middle of an answer and steer the conversation onto a topic that you feel is noteworthy. At times, you may be able to pose rhetorical questions which you then proceed to answer. If the interviewer's question is based on erroneous information, you have a first-rate opening to set the record straight.

There are two points to remember during all taped interviews: humour rarely works; and you always sound worse to yourself than you do to the audience.

Humour almost always falls flat. Sarcasm and irony are not recognized as such by many in the audience, and those that do realize you are making a joke may be put off by what they perceive as arrogance.

You always sound more nervous and inarticulate to yourself than you actually are. Time tends to slow down when you are on air, because you are focusing so much on your answers and the interviewer. A simple 'un' sounds to you as though you have emitted a neanderthal-like grunt. Don't allow this to throw you off the track. Learn to pause briefly before each answer to phrase your first sentence. This will improve your pacing and sense of timing.

Some people do have more of a knack for coming across well on radio and tv. But anyone with decent pronunciation can use broadcast media to advantage. It may be useful to practice in front of a video camera and then study the video, to see how you can improve your performance. Once you have mastered these techniques, you can also coach other community activists to improve their performance. In turn, this will take pressure off you because you can count on someone else to handle broadcast interviews.

Complaints

Despite all the techniques on hand for attracting and handling press coverage, you will still have cause for complaints. No one ever bats one thousand. Reporters and editors working under the pressure of deadlines can and do make serious errors from time to time.

Knowing when to complain is as important as knowing how to. Put the journalist's error in proper perspective. Does it misrepresent your position significantly? Does it make you look foolish by attributing an erroneous statement to you? If not, wait until you meet the journalist on another matter, and bring the complaint up in passing.

But you should complain immediately if you have been misrepresented or have become the subject of serious inaccuracies. The sooner you complain, the more seriously the newsroom will take your protest.

Complaining is a form of negotiation. At best you can hope for an apology in print or on the air. Failing that, an official retraction will do. A promise that you will be accurately represented in future articles is less than useless. You have a right to expect that treatment all the time.

If a reporter you have complained to seems truly apologetic, suggest a positive, upbeat story that can be done by way of an apology.

If the reporter does not seem apologetic at all, or if this is the second occasion you have had reason to complain about his or her coverage, you may wish to send a letter to the editor.

At all times be clear and exact about the nature of the complaint you are making. A general diatribe about unfair treatment won't get you very far. And you can forget about complaining about being attacked by a commentator or columnist, unless you have been misrepresented. Try

to convince the editor to run a counter-editorial or response in the letters column to balance the original attack. The journalist then knows that you are closely monitoring how your group is treated.

Complaining is the only way to ensure effective and accurate press treatment. Reporters who are assigned to a story will read previous articles or scripts related to the issue. If you do not protest an error in an initial article, it could be picked up and carried in future pieces without alteration.

APPENDIX

Listed below are a number of newspapers, radio stations and television stations useful for making the news' in British Columbia.

A more comprehensive list for Canada that also includes the weekly papers in BC is available in the Canadian Almanac and Directory. This is published yearly by Canadian Almanac and Directory Publishing Company, and can be found in the reference section of many public libraries.

Daily Newspapers

- Cranbrook/Daily Townsman

E. Kootenay Newspapers Ltd. 882 Cranbrook St. N. V1C 3R9 426-5201 - Fax 426-5003

- Dawson Creek/Peace River Block News

901 100th Ave. V1G 1W2 782-4888 - Fax 782-6770

- Fort St. John/Alaska Hwy. News

9916 98th St. V1J 3T8 785-5631 - Fax 785-3522

- Kamloops/The Kamloops Daily News

Southam Inc. #106 63rd W. Victoria St. V2C 6J6 72-2331 - Fax 374-3884

- Kelowna/Daily Courier

Canadian Newspapers Co. Ltd. 550 Doyle Ave. V1Y 7V1 762-4445

- Kimberly/The Daily Bulletin

E. Kootenay Newspapers Ltd. 335 Spokane St. V1A 2E7 427-5333 - Fax 427-5336

- Nanaimo/Daily Free Press

Thomson Co. Ltd. 233 Commercial St. PO Box 69 V9R 5K5 753-3451 - Fax 753-8730

- Nelson/Daily News

255 Baker St. V1L 4H3 352-3552

- Penticton/Herald

Canadian Newspapers Co. Ltd. 186 Nanaimo Ave. W. V2A 1N4 492-4002

- Port Alberni/Alberni Valley Times

Sterling Newspapers Ltd. 4918 Napier St. PO Box 400 V9Y 7N1 723-8171 - Fax 723-0586

- Prince George/The Citizen

Southam Inc. 150 Brunswick St. PO Box 5700 V2L 5K9 562-2441 - Fax 562-7453

- Prince Rupert/Daily News

Sterling Publishing Co. Ltd. PO. Box 580 V8J 3R9 624-6781 - Fax 624-2851

- Trail/Times

1163 Cedar Ave. V1R 4B8 368-8551 - Fax 368-3818

- Vancouver/The Sun & The Province

Pacific Press Ltd. (a division of Southam Inc.) 2250 Granville St. V6H 3G2 732-2513 - Fax 732-2704

- Vernon/Daily News

Thomson (B.C.) Newspapers Ltd. 3309 31st. Ave. V1T 6N8 545-0671 - Fax 545-7193

- Victoria/Times Colonist

Canadian Newspapers Co. Ltd. 2621 Douglas St. V8T 4M2 380-5211

AM Broadcasting Stations

- Abbotsford/CFVR 850

Fraser Valley Broadcasters Ltd. 2722 Allwood St. V2T 3R8 859-5277 - Fax 859-9907

- Burnaby/CFML 940

B.C. Institute of Technology 3700 Willingdon Ave. V5G 3H2 432-8809 & 432-8511 - Fax 432-1792

- Campbell River/CFWB 1490

CFCP Radio Ltd. 909 Ironwood Rd. V9W 3E5 287-7106

- Castlegar/CKQR 760 Valley Broadcasters Ltd. 525 11th Ave. V1N 1J6 365-7600 - Fax 365-8480
- Chilliwack/CHWK 1270

Fraser Valley Broadcasters Ltd. PO Box 386 V2P 6J7 795-5711 - Fax 792-6940

- Courtenay/CFCP 1440

CFCP Radio Ltd. 1595 Cliffe Ave. V9N 2K6 334-2421 - Fax 334-1977

- Cranbrook/CKEK 570

Columbia Kootenay Broadcasting Co Ltd. 19 9th Ave. S. V1C 2L9 426-2224 - Fax 426-5520

- Dawson Creek/CJDC 890

Mega Communications Ltd. 901 102 Ave. V1G 2B6 782-3341 - Fax 782-3154

- Duncan/CKAY 1500

CKAY Radio (1979) Ltd. #102, 435 Trunk Rd. V9L 2P5 748-2529

- Fernie/CFEK 1240

Columbia Kootenay Broadcasting Ltd. PO Box 1170 VoB 1M0 423-4449 - Fax 423-6009

- Fort St. John/CKNL 560

NOR-NET Communications Ltd. PO. Box 6310 V1J 4H8 785-6634 - Fax 785-4544

- Golden/CKGR 1400

Copper Island Broadcasting Ltd. 825 10 Ave. S. PO Box 1403 VoA 1H0 344-7177 - Fax 344-7233

- Grand Forks/CKGF 1340

Boundary Broadcasting Ltd. 128 11th St. N.E. PO Box 1570 VoH 1H0 442-8221

- Hope/CKGO 1240

Fraser Valley Broadcasters Ltd. PO Box 1600 VoX 1Lo 869-9313

- Kamloops/CFJC 550

CFJC, A Division of Jim Pattison Industries Ltd. 460 Pemberton Terrace V2C 1T5 372-3322 - Fax 374-0445

- Kamloops/CHNL 610

NL Broadcasting Ltd. Lansdowne St. & 6th PO Box 610 V2C 1Y6 372-2292 - Fax 372-0682

- Kamloops/CMMD Cariboo College PO Box 3010 V2C 5N3 828-5000, loc. 5080 or 5081 Fax 828-5086
- Kelowna/CKIQ 1150

Four Seasons Radio Ltd. 2419 Hwy. 97 N. V1X 4J2 860-8600 - Fax 886-8856

- Kelowna/CKOV 630

Seacoast Communications Group Inc. 3805 Lakeshore Rd. PO Box 100 V1Y 7N3 762-3331 - Fax 762-2141

- Kitimat/CKTK 1230

Skeena Broadcasters Ltd. 350 City Centre V8C 1T6 632-2102

- Langley/CKST 800

Western World Communication Ltd. #201, 20627 Fraser Hwy. V3A 4G4 534-0800 - Fax 534-4140

- Merritt/CJNL 1230

NL Broadcasting Ltd. PO Box 1630 VoK 2Bo 378-4288

- Nanaimo/CHUB 1570

Benchmark Ventures 22 Esplanade Cres. PO Box 1570 V9R 4Y7 753-4341 - Fax 753-4819

- Nanaimo/CKEG 1350

Central Island Broadcasting Ltd. 2231 E. McGarrigle Rd. V9S 4M5 758-1131 - Fax 758-4644

- New Westminster/CKNW 980

NW Radio Ltd. 815 McBride Plaza V3L 2C1 522-2711

- 100 Mile House/CKBX 840

Cariboo Broadcasters, A Division of Cariboo Central Interior Radio Inc. PO Box 939 VoK 2E0 395-3848 - Fax 395-4147

- Osoyoos/CKOO 1240

Okanagan Radio Ltd. PO Box 539 VoH 1Vo 495-7226

- Parksville/CHPQ 1370

Nanaimo Broadcasting Corp. Ltd. PO Box 1370 VoR 2So 248-4211 - Fax 753-4819

- Penticton/CKOK 800

Okanagan Radio Ltd. 33 Carmi Ave. V2A 3G4 492-2800 - Fax 493-0370

- Port Alberni/CJAV 1240
CJAV Radio Ltd. 2970 3rd. Ave. V9Y 7N4 723-2455
- Port Hardy/CFNI 1240
CFCP Radio Ltd. PO Box 1240 VoN 2Po 949-6500 - Fax 949-6580
- Powell River/CHQB 1280
Sunshine Coast Broadcasting Co. 6816 Cortenay St. V8A 1X1 485-4207
- Prince George/CJCI 620
CJCI Radio 1940 3rd Ave. V2M 1G7 564-2524 - Fax 562-6611
- Prince George/CKPG 550
Radio Station CKPG Ltd. 1220 6th Ave. V2L 3M8 564-8861 - Fax 562-8768
- Prince Rupert/CFPR 860
CBC #1, 222 3rd Ave. W. V8J 3S5 624-2161 - Fax 627-8594
- Prince Rupert/CHTK 560
Skeena Broadcasters Ltd. 346 Stiles Place V8J 3S5 624-9111 - Fax 624-3100
- Quesnel/CKCQ 920
Cariboo Broadcasters Ltd. 160 Front St. V2J 2K1 992-7046
- Revelstoke/CKCR 1340
Copper Island Broadcasting Co. Ltd. PO Box 1420 VoE 2So 837-2149
- Salmon Arm/CKXR 580
Copper Island Broadcasting Co. PO Box 69 VoE 2To 832-2161
- Smithers/CFBV 870
CFBV Ltd. 1139 Queen St. PO Box 335 VoJ 2No 847-2521 - Fax 847-9411
- Summerland/CKSP 1450
Okanagan Radio Ltd. Main St. PO Box 1770 VoH 1Zo 494-0333 - Fax 494-9610
- Terrace/CFTK 590

Skeena Broadcasters, a div. of Okanagan Skeena Group Ltd. 4625 Lazelle Ave. V8G 1S4 635-6316 - Fax 638-6320

- Trail/CJAT 610

Four Seasons Radio (Trail) Ltd. 1560 Second Ave. V1R 1M4 368-5510 - Fax 428-5311

- Vancouver/CBU 690

CBC PO Box 4600 V6B 4A2 662-6000 - Fax 662-6335

- Vancouver/CFUN 1410

CFUN, Division of CHUM Ltd. 1900 W. 4th Ave. V6J 1M6 731-9222 - Fax 731-6143

- Vancouver/CHQM 1320

Q Broadcasting Ltd. 1134 Burrard St. V6Z 1Y8 682-3141 - Fax 682-5564 or 684-3293

- Vancouver/CHRX 600

Jim Pattison Industries Ltd. 1401 W. 8th Ave. V6H 1C9 731-6111 - Fax 731-0493

- Vancouver/C-ISL 650

South Fraser Broadcasting Ltd. #20, 11151 Horseshoe Way, Richmond V7A 4S5 272-6500 - Fax 272-5428

- Vancouver/CJVB 1470

Great Pacific Broadcasting Ltd. 814 Richards St. V6B 3A7 688-9931 - Fax 688-6559

- Vancouver/CKLG-LG73 730

Moffat Communications Ltd. 1006 Richards St. V6B 1S8 681-7511 - Fax 681-9134

- Vancouver/CKWX 1130

Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. 2440 Ash St. V5Z 4J6 684-5131 - Fax 873-0877

- Vancouver/CKXY ROCK 1040

Monarch Broadcasting Ltd. #101, 1199 W. Pender St. V6E 2R1 669-1040 - Fax 684-7911

- Vancouver/CNBC

Vancouver Community College 100 W. 49th Ave. V5Y 2Z6 324-5348

- Vanderhoof/CIVH 1340

c/o CFVB Radio Smithers Vanderhoof: 567-4914

- Vernon/CJIB 940

Interior Broadcasting Ltd. 3313 32nd Ave. V1T 2E1 545-2141 - Fax 545-9008

- Vernon/CIBF 1050

High Sierra Broadcasters Ltd. 2800 31st St. V1T 5H4 545-9222 - Fax 594-8375

- Victoria/CAMO

CAMO Radio, Camosum College 3100 Foul Bay R. V8P 4X8 592-1113

- Victoria/C-FAX 1070

CFAX Radio 1070 Ltd. 825 Broughton St. V8W 1E5 38601070 - Fax 386-5775

- Victoria/CJVI 900

CJVI Radio (A Division of Rogers Broadcasting Ltd.) 817 Fort St. PO Box 900 V8W 2S2 382-0900 - Fax 382-4358

- Victoria/CKDA 1200

Capital Broadcasting System Ltd. 1450 Douglas St. PO Box 1200 V8W 2S5 384-9311 - Fax 384-1213

- White Rock/KARI 550

Radio Station KARI Ltd. PO Box 9 V4B 4Z7 536-7733 - Fax 536-7733

- Williams Lake/CKWL 570

Cariboo Broadcasters Ltd. 83 S. 1st Ave. V2G 1H4 392-6551 - Fax 392-4142

FM Broadcasting Stations

- Burnaby/CJIV 93.9

CJIV Radio TC 216 Simon Fraser University V5A 1S6 291-3727 - Fax 291-4455

- Chilliwack/CKSR-FM 107.5

Star FM Radio Inc. #520 45715 Hocking Ave. PO Box 386 V2P 6J7 795-7827 - Fax 859-9907

- Kamloops/CHRK-FM 97.5

CFCW Ltd. 220 4th Ave. V2C 3N6 372-2197 - Fax 372-9322

- Kamloops/CIFM-FM 98.3

CIFM-FM, A Division of Jim Pattison Industries Ltd. 460 Pemberton Terrace V2C 1T5 372-3322 - Fax 374-0445
- Kelowna/CBTK-FM 88.9

CBC 243 Lawrence Ave. V1Y 6L2 861-3781 - Fax 861-6644
- Kelowna/CKLZ-FM 104.7

Seacoast Communications Group Ltd. PO Box 100 V1Y 7N3 762-3331 - Fax 762-2141
- Kelowna/CILK-FM 101.5

SILK-FM Broadcasting Ltd. 1598 Pandosy St. V1Y 1P4 860-1010 - Fax 860-0505
- New Westminster/CFMI-FM 101.1

Radio New Westminster Ltd. 815 McBride Plaza V3L 2C1 521-4808 - Fax 522-3413
- Penticton/CIGV-FM 100.7

Great Valleys Radio Ltd. 125 Nanaimo Ave. W. V2A 1N2 493-6767 - Fax 493-0098
- Penticton/CJMG-FM 97.1

Okanagan Radio Ltd. 33 Carmi Ave. V2A 3G4 492-2800 - Fax 493-0370
- Prince George/CBYG-FM 91.5

CBC 1268 5th Ave. V2L 3L2 562-6701 - Fax 562-4777
- Prince George/CIRX 94.3

Cariboo Central Interior Radio Inc. 1940 3rd Ave. V2M 1G7 564-2524 - Fax 562-6611
- Prince George/CIOI-FM 101.3

CKPG Radio Ltd. 1220 6th Ave. V2L 3M8 564-8861 - Fax 562-8768
- Squamish/CISQ-FM 107.1

Mountain FM Radio Ltd. PO Box 1068 VoN 3Go 892-1047 - Fax 892-6383
- Terrace/CJFW-FM 103.0

Skeena Broadcasters, div. of Okanagan Skeena Group Ltd. 4625 Lazelle Ave. V8G 1S4 635-6316 - Fax 638-6320
- Vancouver/CBU-FM 105.7

CBC PO Box 4600 V6B 4A2 662-6000 - Fax 662-6335

- Vancouver/CBUF-FM 97.7

Societe Radio Canada 700 Rue Hamilton CP 4600 V6B 2R5 662-6165 - Fax 662-6161

- Vancouver/CFOX-FM 99.3

Moffat Communications Ltd. 1006 Richards St. V6B 1S8 684-7221 - Fax 681-9134

- Vancouver/CFRO-FM 102.7

Vancouver Cooperative Radio #110-360 Columbia Street V6A 4J1 684-8494 - Fax 681-5310

- Vancouver/CHQM-FM 103.5

Division of CHUM Ltd. 1134 Burrard V6Z 1Y8 682-3141 - Fax 684-3293 or 682-5564

- Vancouver/CITR-FM 101.9

UBC Radio 6138 SUB Blvd. V6T 2A5 228-3017 - Fax 228-6093

- Vancouver/CJIV-FM 93.9

Simon Fraser University Rm. 216 T.C. V5A 1S6 291-3727 - Fax 291-4455

- Vancouver/CJJR-FM 93.7

JR Country 1401 W. 8th Ave. V6H 1C9 731-7772

- Vancouver/97-FM 96.9

Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. 2400 Ash St. V5Z 4J6 684-2111 - Fax 873-0877

- Victoria/CFMS-FM 98.5

Capital Broadcasting Systems Ltd. PO Box 1200 V8W 2S5 388-5544 - Fax 384-1213

- Victoria/CFUV-FM 101.9

University of Victoria Alma Mater Society PO Box 1700 V8W 2Y2 721-8607 - Fax 721-8653

- Victoria/CKKQ-FM 100.3

Victoria Communications Ltd. 3795 Carey Rd. V8Z 6T8 382-0100 - Fax 380-6556

- Williams Lake/CFFM-FM 97.5

CFFM-FM, A div. of Jim Pattison Industries Ltd. #102, 197 N. 2nd Ave. V2G 1Z5 398-2336 - Fax 392-4046

Television Stations

- Dawson Creek/CJDC-TV

Mega Communications Ltd. 901 102nd Ave. V1G 2B6 782-3341 - Fax 782-1809

- Kamloops/CFJC-TV

CFJC-TV 460 Pemberton Terrace V2C 1T5 372-3322 - Fax 374-0445

- Kelowna/CHBC-TV

Okanagan Valley TV. 342 Leon Ave. V1Y 6J2 762-4535 - Fax 860-2422

- Prince George/CKPG-TV

Q Broadcasting Ltd. 1220 6th Ave. V2L 3M8 564-8861 - Fax 562-8768

- Terrace/CFTK-TV

Skeena Broadcasters, a div. of Okanagan Skeena Group Ltd. 4625 Lazelle Ave. V8G 1S4 635-6316 - Fax 638-6320

- Vancouver/CBUFT-TV

Societe Radio Canada CP 4600 V6B 4A2 662-6165 - Fax 662-6229

- Vancouver/CBUT-TV

CBC 700 Hamilton St. PO Box 4600 V6B 2R5 665-8000 - Fax 662-6414

- Vancouver/CHAN-TV

B.C. Tel. Broadcasting Systems Limited PO Box 4700 V6B 4A3 420-2288 - Fax 421-9427

- Vancouver/CKVU-TV

Canwest Pacific Tel. Inc. 180 W. 2nd Ave. V5Y 3T9 876-1344 - Fax 874-8225

- Vancouver/KVOS-TV

KVOS-TV Ltd. 1764 W. 7th Ave. V6J 5A3 681-1212 - Fax 736-4510

- Victoria/CHEK-TV

B.C. Tel. Broadcasting Ltd. PO Box 4700 Vancouver V6B 4A3 477-1821 - Fax 384-7766

End of Making the News