

***MEDIA POLICY
(PROVINCE)***

POLICY 20



**St Francis Xavier Province of the
Christian Brothers
(Queensland and Northern Territory)**

MAY 2003

INTRODUCTION

The Congregation of the Christian Brothers (QLD) is committed to building positive relationships with the media, and to advancing its contribution to the Church's mission in the public arena through being a voice for the voiceless and establishing a recognizable profile.

This Media Policy is a mandatory Policy to be used by any person who has a responsibility for managing their schools' or ministries' interaction with the media.

This document also contains a series of annexures that provide additional information for use in specific situations. Annexure 1 is particularly important, as it describes the type of issues to which this Policy applies.

This Policy should be used in conjunction with the Critical Incident Policy and Privacy Policy.

1. RATIONALE/PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish protocols that will guide media and communication practice in relation to serious issues.
- Assist in the development of skills to manage interactions with the media effectively.
- Ensure that accurate and helpful information is given to everyone involved, the Catholic Community and the public, in a proactive way.
- Provide communication procedures during a critical incident.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Being in the public arena, the Province recognises an obligation to be transparent in all that it does.

People have a right to be well-informed and receive accurate and appropriate information.

This Province is committed to provide support and guidance for people in various ministries of the Province. It recognises comprehensiveness and accurate media information is part of its pastoral responsibilities.

3. OBLIGATIONS

The following obligations underpin this Policy:

- The Trustees of the Christian Brothers (Queensland), St Francis Xavier Province, are responsible for the governance of the work of each Ministry in the Province.
- The Trustees of the Christian Brothers (Queensland) are committed to excellence and consistency of practice across each Ministry in relation to:
 - (a) responding to the gospel values and charism of Edmund Rice,
 - (b) meeting obligations as a member of the Church and its Canon Law,
 - (c) meeting legal obligations under common law and legislation, especially the Privacy Act,
 - (d) meeting standards of industry and professional practice.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

All communication with media relating to serious issues, such as child protection matters, status of a staff member, critical incident, will be made by the Province Leader or delegate, or by the nominated media spokesperson of the Province.

All communication with the news media will be directed towards the Purpose, defined above, of this policy.

Each of the Ministries must apply the Policy to their own Ministry according to this Province Media Policy.

5. DEFINITIONS

Media refers to News media including print, radio and TV media and their associated websites.

Spokesperson is the person appointed by the appropriate authority to speak to the media. Such people will have received Province directed media training. Those spokespersons can be School Principal (or delegate), Ministry Leader, Director, Edmund Rice Schools, Province Secretary.

Issues: when the word issue is used in the Policy, it is referring to such matters as described in Annexure 1.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1.1 **The Province Leadership Team**, acting as the Trustees of the Christian Brothers (Queensland) has overall responsibility for ensuring that this framework is implemented.

Specifically, the Province Leadership Team has responsibility to:

- review this Policy;
- contract a media consultant;
- appoint appropriate spokespeople;
- ensure media training occurs;
- be spokesperson for Province and Ministry issues.

- 6.1.2 **Edmund Rice Education Directorate** has delegated responsibility as follows:

- Director, Edmund Rice Schools has the role as spokesperson for all Province wide Education issues,
- ERED has to ensure all schools implement, monitor and review the Policy.

- 6.1.3 **College Boards** have delegated responsibility to:

- ensure compliance systems are in place.

- 6.1.4 **Principals/Ministry Leaders** have delegated responsibilities in relation to such issues as are described in Annexure 1. Also they are to:

- act as spokesperson for their Ministry/school wide issues, in accordance with 6.2.2

- inform the ERED/Board/PLT representative of issues which would be of interest to the media,
- provide, in a timely manner, the ERED/Board/PLT representative with copies of any media statements.

6.2 IMPLEMENTATION

6.2.1 Critical Incident Management Plan

Any Critical Incident Media communication must be handled within the Critical Incident Management Policy, and the local Critical Incident Management Plan.

6.2.2 Spokespersons

Only delegated spokespersons who have undertaken Province directed media training are authorised to speak with the media on behalf of the Province, or Edmund Rice Schools.

Delegated spokespersons are the Principal, the Director, Edmund Rice Schools, or members of the Province Leadership Team or a person delegated by one of these authorities.

No other staff member is authorised to speak with the media on any Province or Edmund Rice School issue.

When an issue is identified, the Principal, Ministry Leader or Director, Edmund Rice Schools, must be notified immediately. They will determine the severity of the issue according to the Issues Identification (Annexure 1). In all cases involving suspected or reported child abuse, the Child Protection Officer must be contacted first.

In the case of any issue that has the potential to generate media interest, the Principal, Ministry Leader or Director, Edmund Rice Schools, must contact the Province media consultant and will advise the Director, Edmund Rice Schools, or PLT representative.

The Principal, Ministry Leader or Director may nominate an authorised spokesperson for an issue requiring particular expertise and knowledge. Where possible, the same spokesperson will be used for all communications with the media for a particular event.

6.2.3 Media Enquiries

Staff are to make no comment to media enquiries. Staff inform the journalist that they are unable to make any comment, but will arrange for the appropriate person to get back to them, as soon as possible. Staff would record relevant information required on the Media Enquiry – Response Form (Annexure4).

School staff refer any enquiry to the Principal's office or to the Director, Edmund Rice Schools. Ministry staff refer the enquiry to the Ministry Leader's office or Province Leadership Team.

6.2.4 Media Releases

Generally, all information prepared by staff for the media must be reviewed and signed

off by the Principal of the school or the Director, Edmund Rice Schools, or a member of the Province Leadership Team prior to distribution to the media.

If a media release concerns any controversial matter, the person responsible, contacts the Director of Edmund Rice Schools, or their PLT representative.

Province media advisor will be contacted to:

- Provide advice and guidelines concerning media releases;
- Advise the Province regarding the quality and style of general communications.

In all matters concerning child abuse, the only person who will give information or respond to media, will be the PLT representative. For more information regarding child abuse and the media refer to the Child Protection Policy.

6.2.5 Media Training

Each leader responsible for a Province ministry will be required to undertake media training, as well as anyone appointed as spokesperson.

6.3 COMPLIANCE

The internal audit schedule is completed each year.

An external audit is carried out at least every 3 years, or as required.

Evidence needed to comply with the Policy is appropriately recorded and stored.

6.4 REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years, or as necessary. Should there be any difficulty in implementing this Policy, which results in any variation to the Policy, the record of variation forms need to be completed and submitted to the appropriate person. (See Province Policy Framework Annexure 3).

6.5 POLICY BREACH

Any deliberate breach of this Policy, may lead to disciplinary action as defined by the Disciplinary Policy (Staff).

Annexures For Media Policy

Annexures Content

1. Issues Identification and Spokesperson
2. Key Media Contacts
3. Flow Chart for Media During Critical Incident
 - (a) For Schools
 - (b) For Other Ministries
 - (c) For Issues of Child Abuse
4. Media Enquiry Response Form
5. Media Call Log
6. Privacy response

**ANNEXURE 1 (MEDIA POLICY)
ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND SPOKESPERSON**

Type of issue	Spokesperson (one only)
Lifestyle inconsistent with ethos	
Involving students/staff at a particular school or Ministry (inappropriate behaviour).	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Involving students/staff across several schools (inappropriate behaviour).	Director, Edmund Rice Schools
Involving Ministry staff and members.	Representative of Province Leadership Team
Child abuse	
Involving past staff or students (eg allegations of physical, psychological or sexual abuse).	Representative of Province Leadership Team
Involving current staff and students (eg allegations of physical, psychological or sexual abuse).	Principal (school) (after consultation with media consultant and Representative of Province Leadership Team) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Danger to people	
Death or injury of student/s or staff during school or Ministry activities or on premises	Principal or Province Leader/Delegate
Death or injury of a member of the outside community as a result of actions of a student or staff-member during school or Ministry activities.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Students and/or staff detained in a hostage/siege situation.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Natural disaster that threatens lives and/or property (eg fire, flood).	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Food poisoning related to school or Ministry activities.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Gas leak, electrical incident etc creating a dangerous situation at school or Ministry.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Illness/epidemic at school or Ministry facility	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Danger to property/security	
Actions of a student or staff member that adversely affect the school or Ministry (eg defrauding the organization, financial mismanagement, vandalism, petty theft, criminal activities).	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Activities of students or staff that affect others (such as pranks, criminal activity).	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Large-scale burglary or theft at school or Ministry facility (eg major break and enter, computers stolen).	Principal (school) Province Leader (Ministry)
Involving legal action	
School or Ministry sued for any reason.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Civil action involving more than one school.	Director, Edmund Rice Schools
Resumption of school property by government.	Director Finance and Administration
Resumption of Province property by government.	Director Finance and Administration

Type of issue	Spokesperson (one only)
Social and environment issues	
Accusations of cheating or soft marking within a school.	Principal
Allegations of discrimination within a school, Ministry or Province.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Staff member involved in any form of misrepresentation.	Principal (school) Representative of Province Leadership Team
Use of Edmund Rice Education Directorate, school or Ministry websites by non-approved interests.	Principal (school) or Representative of Province Leadership Team Director, Edmund Rice Schools
Environmental issues (eg chemical spill, land clearing) at a school or Ministry facility.	Principal (school) or Representative of Province Leadership Team
Inadvertent appointment of an individual with a criminal record of significance.	Director, Edmund Rice Schools Province Leader (Ministry)
Allegations of bullying.	Principal (school) or Representative of Province Leadership Team
Amalgamation, closure, or significant development of Property.	Director / Principals
Transport or other utility failures strike that causes hardship to students or Ministry members	Principal (school) or Representative of Province Leadership Team
Use of computers for non-authorized activity	Principal (school) or Representative of Province Leadership Team
Suggestions of privilege or inequality with State school system	Director, Edmund Rice Schools or Principal (if specific school)
Industrial issues	
Issues relating to co-curricular activities across several schools	Director, Edmund Rice Schools
Strike or other industrial action	Province Leader
Enterprise bargaining arrangements or negotiations – organizational	Province Leader (Ministry) Director, Edmund Rice Schools
Industrial issue relating to a single school	Principal
Industrial issues relating to several schools	Director, Edmund Rice Schools
Finance and asset management issues	
School fee increases – all ER Schools	Director, Finance and Administration
Government funding issues – relevant to schools	Director, Finance and Administration
Building and site issues	Director, Finance and Administration

**ANNEXURE 2
KEY MEDIA CONTACTS**

(@ May 2003 – to be updated every six months by the Media Consultant)

Media	Location	Phone	Fax
Television			
Channel 10	Queensland	3214 1010	3214 1030
Channel 7	Queensland	3368 7389	3368 2973
Channel 9	Queensland	3214 9942	3369 8070
Channel 2 (ABC)	Queensland	3377 5222	3377 5596
Press - Brisbane			
Albert and Logan News	Logan area	3826 2626	3826 2627
Bayside Bulletin	Redland Shire	3821 8336	3286 4758
Bayside Star	Shorncliffe area	3269 0233	3269 8277
Catholic Leader	Queensland	3224 3380	3236 4897
City and Shire Leader	Browns Plains	3806 7600	3806 7599
City News	Brisbane CBD	3377 7777	3377 7788
Courier Mail	Queensland	130 0304020	3666 6696
Northern News	Nudgee area	3350 4788	3359 4215
Northern Times	Strathpine and Nth	3205 5666	3881 1620
Northside Chronicle	Chermside area	3350 4788	3359 4215
North West News	Ferny Hills/Stafford	3350 4788	3359 4215
Queensland Times	Ipswich	3817 1717	3817 1736
South West News	Indooroopilly West	3377 7777	3377 7799
South-East Advertiser	Sth/Est Brisbane	3396 0999	3393 5564
Southern Star	Springwood	3826 2626	3826 2627
Southern News	South Brisbane	3377 7777	3377 7788
Pine Rivers Press	Pine Rivers	3205 5666	3881 1620
Redcliffe and Bayside Herald	Redcliffe	3283 2066	3883 1030
The Ipswich Advertiser	Ipswich	3817 1844	3817 1845
Westside News	City-Indooroopilly	3377 7777	3377 7799
Press - Regional			
Townsville Bulletin	Townsville	4722 4427	4722 4559
The Morning Bulletin	Rockhampton	4930 4222	4930 4366
Capricorn Local News	Rockhampton	4927 6977	4927 8527

Critical Incident Management Flow Chart

ANNEXURE 3 (a)

SCHOOL Critical Incident
(not involving child abuse)

Critical incident occurs

Immediate response
Take appropriate action

- Immediately**
- Ensure safety / DRABC
 - Account for everyone
 - Establish the facts
 - Contact emergency

Inform Principal

Critical Incident Team activated

Inform Director

Inform PLT

- Once safety assured**
- Notify relatives
 - Identify holding & briefing areas
 - Evacuation/non evacuation plan
 - Documenting facts
 - Convening staff meeting
 - Informing students
 - Informing parents, board members
 - Activating help/gift register

- Within 24 hours**
- Prepare for counselling: allocate rooms, identify groups
 - Update and document facts
 - Prepare report for ERED

Develop Action Plan

Activate Incident Media Team if appropriate

Province Media Agency
Province Leader

- Draft media statement
- Draft all information documents
- Draft phone enquiry response
- Media Liaison incl. conferences
- Media monitoring and response

- Beyond 24 hours**
- Ongoing debriefing
 - Encouraging everyone to access support
 - Prepare for post traumatic stress
 - Monitoring survivors, administration and care givers
 - Planning to update facts
 - Supporting absent staff/students
 - Planning for return of injured staff/students
 - Planning for formal proceedings: inquests, court, funerals, liturgies
 - Accessing specialist providers
 - Recognising different cultures

SHADED AREA PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO CRITICAL INCIDENT

Critical Incident Management Flow Chart

ANNEXURE 3 (B)

MINISTRY Critical Incident
(not involving child abuse)

- Immediately**
- Ensure safety / DRABC
 - Account for everyone
 - Establish the facts
 - Contact emergency

Critical Incident occurs

Immediate response
Take appropriate action

Inform Ministry Leader

Critical Incident Team activated

Inform PLT contact

- Once safety assured**
- Notify relatives
 - Identify holding & briefing areas
 - Evacuation/non evacuation plan
 - Documenting facts
 - Convening staff meeting
 - Informing students
 - Informing parents, board members

Develop Action Plan

Activate Incident Media Team if appropriate

- Within 24 hours**
- Prepare for counselling: allocate rooms, identify groups
 - Update and document facts
 - Prepare report for PLT
 - Sharing updated information
 - Planning normal routines

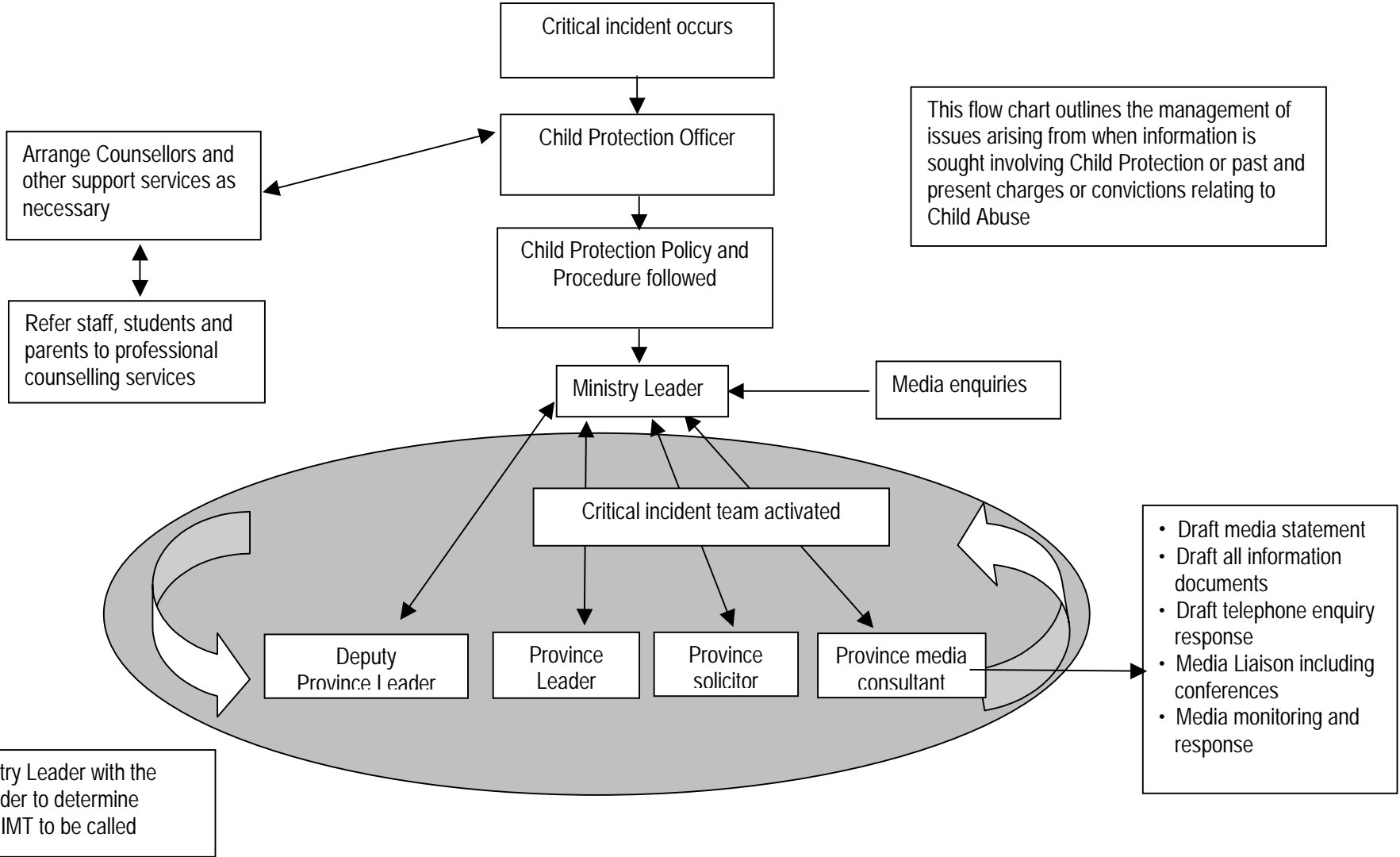
Province Media Agency
Province Leader
Province Solicitor

- Beyond 24 hours**
- Ongoing debriefing
 - Encouraging everyone to access support
 - Prepare for post traumatic stress
 - Monitoring survivors, administration and care givers
 - Planning to update facts
 - Supporting absent staff/students
 - Planning for return of injured staff/students
 - Planning for formal proceedings: inquests, court, funerals, liturgies
 - Accessing specialist providers
 - Recognising different cultures

- Draft media statement
- Draft all information documents
- Draft telephone enquiry response
- Media Liaison including conferences
- Media monitoring and response

SHADED AREA PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Critical Incident Management Flow Chart **ANNEXURE 3 (c)** **SCHOOL AND MINISTRY Critical Incident**
(involving child abuse)



This flow chart outlines the management of issues arising from when information is sought involving Child Protection or past and present charges or convictions relating to Child Abuse

- Draft media statement
- Draft all information documents
- Draft telephone enquiry response
- Media Liaison including conferences
- Media monitoring and response

(1) The Ministry Leader with the Province Leader to determine necessity for IMT to be called

**ANNEXURE 4
MEDIA ENQUIRY RESPONSE FORM**

MEDIA ENQUIRY – RESPONSE FORM

Staff are to complete this form when media call.

Take as much detail from the caller as possible.

Date:

Time:

Caller's name:		Direct number:	
Media organisation:		Switch number:	
Position:		Fax number:	
Has a deadline of:		Email:	

Details of Inquiry/request:



ACTION TAKEN

Call back by: Date: _____ Time: _____

Completed by: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Comments:

ANNEXURE 6 PRIVACY RESPONSE
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**RESPONDING TO A TELEPHONE ENQUIRY FOR A CURRENT
OR PAST STAFF MEMBER OR STUDENT**

Please keep this information sheet close to your telephone

THE PRIVACY ACT

The Privacy Act came into force in December 2001 and changed the way we are permitted to deal with requests for information regarding current and past staff, and current and past students.

Below are *guidelines* that should be implemented immediately on how to handle enquiries of this nature. *They are guidelines only*, so you may put them into your own words while adhering to the main message. *The caller should not get the impression that you are reading a script.*

Past Staff

If an enquiry is received regarding the whereabouts of a past staff member, tell the caller you are not sure where the person is located. If the caller persists, then refer them to the St Francis Xavier Province Secretary on (07) 3327 2203.

Current Staff and Students

If an enquiry is received for address or telephone details of a current staff member or student, tell the caller you are bound by the privacy laws and can't give out that type of information. Offer to put the person through to the staff member, or take the person's name and telephone number and arrange for the staff member to telephone him or her back. Telephone messages will only be taken for students in emergency cases.

Past Students

If an enquiry is received regarding the whereabouts of a past student, tell the caller you are governed by the Privacy Act in this case, and can't give those details out. ***This unfortunately applies even to requests for information for school reunions.*** Organisers should obtain year and class lists from the year book, which is already in the public domain.

Date: