



SOUTH WEST ACADEMY OF SPORT

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Owner: SWAS

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Approved By:

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1. Purpose:

To define the key elements of appropriate professional communication by SWAS and between staff and key stakeholders.

2. Background:

Consistency in communication style and timing is essential in positioning an organisation as credible and professional. This policy defines the manner and guidelines that SWAS has adopted to ensure its communication is consistent with our organisational values.

SWAS has a large number of varied stakeholders including the general public, government departments and officials; corporate sponsors; media organisations; sport organisations such as State Sport Organisations (SSO); National Sport Organisations (NSO); along with SWAS staff, athletes and their families. Numerous SWAS staff are required to interact with these stakeholders. To help deliver a consistent quality of interaction for our stakeholders a standard communications protocol is considered a valuable aid.

This policy serves to complement SWAS' other guidelines which mandate that SWAS values 'people' and excellence:

- Media Policy
- Brand and Visual Standards Manual
- Rules of Engagements for Meetings

3. Policy:

SWAS staff and athletes will communicate in an appropriate and timely manner with all SWAS stakeholders.

4. Standards:

4.1 Internal Communication

4.1.1 Style

Communication should always be direct, open, honest and respectful. In line with supporting the mandate that SWAS values 'people'; personal interaction is encouraged. Written communication whether electronic or paper must meet acceptable levels of Australian – English, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

4.1.2 Format

Communication may occur on a formal or informal basis. However formal communication via memorandums, letters or emails should occur to document discussions addressing key objectives relating to SWAS operations.

4.1.2.1 Formal Communications

These occur during structured meetings. Examples of these include:

- Staff meetings – Department meetings
- Organised work groups
- Staff reviews

Such meetings should conform to the “SWAS Rules of Engagement for Meetings.”

4.1.2.2 Informal Communications

The nature of the SWAS operating environment lends itself to informal communications. Communication in this manner should follow the guidelines outlined at 4.1.1 above.

E-mail communication is considered legal correspondence and content should therefore meet all guidelines.

4.1.3 Timing

If a party receives a communication that cannot be responded to immediately receipt must be acknowledged as soon as practical. Ongoing or at least regular communication is encouraged to ensure there is effective transfer of knowledge and information.

4.2 External Communication

SWAS Coaches, Staff and athletes are ambassadors for SWAS whenever they communicate with external stakeholders who include the general public, government departments and officials; corporate sponsors; media organisations; sport organisations such as State Sport Organisations (SSO); National Sport Organisations (NSO); and athlete families. External communicate should follow the formal guidelines set out below;

4.2.1 Style

As with internal communication guidelines.

4.2.2 Format

SWAS communications to stakeholders should be consistent utilising SWAS approved templates only (i.e. letters, memo's, emails).

4.2.2.1 Formal Communications

i) Branding Consistency

As outlined at 4.2.2, SWAS representatives should present external stakeholders with a consistent message. The SWAS brand sends key messages to our stakeholders about who SWAS is and what SWAS stands for – that is Excellence. The SWAS brand is represented on letterhead, business cards, strategy booklets, signage and clothing.

ii) Media Relations

The CEO is the main contact with the media. This is because having one main contact makes it easier to:

- Maintain consistency of message
- Manage requests for information
- Manage interviews with SWAS staff and athletes

SWAS is represented in the media by the CEO, coaches and athletes or persons nominated by the CEO. The SWAS Chairperson represents SWAS in all matters around:

- Policy decisions
- Investment and funding decisions
- Organisational opinion or stance

Coaches and athletes should make themselves available to the media to promote their successes as a result of the support provided by SWAS (Refer SWAS Media Policy).

4.2.2.2 Informal Communication

The nature of the SWAS operating environment lends itself to informal communications between SWAS coaches, staff and athletes and external stakeholders. Communication in this manner should follow the guidelines outlined at 2.2.1 above.

4.2.3 Timing

If a party receives a communication that cannot be responded to immediately receipt must be acknowledged as soon as practical. Ongoing or at least regular communication is encouraged to ensure there is effective transfer of knowledge and information.

Periodic communication with external stakeholders is critical to ensuring their ownership and engagement with SWAS to achieve agreed objectives.

5. Review

The above guidelines will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure they adequately reflect the objectives of SWAS and can be fulfilled readily by SWAS staff and athletes.