

MEDIA RISK MANAGEMENT

Tell the truth and tell it quickly!

Keep in mind that four biases prevail, both in media response and in audience responses:

- 1) alarm over reassurance
- 2) extremes over the middle
- 3) opinions over data
- 4) outrage over hazard

Media crisis checklists

At all times:

- Keep media lists up-to-date
- Keep executive members up-to-date with policy and protocols
- Regularly review your position on particular issues that might impact on you
- Have a regularly updated fact sheet available for media or for promotional purposes
- Be proactive about using the media – make them work for you in the good times to mitigate damage from potentially negative publicity

When a crisis occurs the following steps must be followed:

- Get a copy of the story, document or whatever the source of information is that you're responding to
- Ensure that all the executive are briefed about the situation and its implications
- Determine the facts
- Plan and prioritise the messages you or your group will use to respond to the situation
- Notify any others who may be impacted on by the situation and/or your actions
- If appropriate, write a media release – get advice if you are unsure of how to use it though
- Organise the distribution of your response (media release or statement) – this may be a press conference or one-on-one contact with key media
- Ensure that in your response you provide a fact sheet about you or your organisation as background
- Continue to update the media in a timely manner
- Monitor media coverage and be quick to notify the media of incorrect reporting or information
- Keep the executive informed throughout the process
- Get advise from professionals or other advisory staff throughout the process if needed

Post-crisis monitoring:

- Continue monitoring issues for the likelihood of them flaring up again – rate them as hot, warm or cold
- Continue monitoring the media's coverage of these issues – stay in touch with the media
- Keep all parties informed of progress on issues – within your group and with groups who have an interest in your activities

For more information refer to the fact sheets on *Media strategy*, *How to write a media release*, and *10 tips for the media spokesperson* located at oranaarts.com under Resources.