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# ISSUES MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – RAPID RESPONSE (May 2017)

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## DAILY MEDIA SUMMARY

All members of the executive team, vice-chairs, associate general counsel and directors of strategic policy will receive a daily media summary in the morning, which consists of a brief, high-level summary of the media coverage from the previous evening and early morning. The summary will:

- Provide an overview of any news articles that mention the OEB;
- Summarize relevant topics that are of interest or may have a direct impact on the OEB
- If necessary, flag specific media clips or social content that are urgent and require immediate response or further discussion;
- Trigger the need for an issues management discussion at the Issues Management Executive Team

## EXECUTIVE ISSUES MANAGEMENT TEAM (EIMT)

The Executive Issues Management Team is comprised of the Vice President, Public Affairs, Advisor, Executive Office and Associate General Counsel. At the request of the EIMT, the Chair, other executives, subject matter experts and communications staff may be engaged.

The EIMT will, as necessary, meet to discuss a news item or issue to determine an appropriate response strategy. If triggered by the Daily Media Summary, the meeting will occur as soon as possible in the morning of the same business day – preferably before 9 a.m. This meeting/call can be triggered by any member of the EIMT.

The EIMT may also convene on an ad hoc and urgent basis to determine a response strategy to an incoming media requests that presents a risk concern. Most often, this meeting/call will be triggered by the Vice-President, Public Affairs, Director Consumer and Corporate Communications or the Media Relations Advisor.

### Response Strategy Considerations

In developing a response strategy, the EIMT will consider a number of questions:

- Is the media question more appropriately answered by another organization?

- What is the goal of the OEB's response?
- What are the risks and opportunities inherent to the response?
- Are there key messages/past responses available on-file?
- Who are the subject matter experts or others within/external to the OEB who should be engaged?
- What is the media deadline and what is the OEB's strategy for a timely response?

## MEDIA REQUESTS

The following process will guide the internal management of day-to-day media requests to better enable the Public Affairs team to deliver accurate and timely responses to media in an efficient manner. Reporters operate on strict deadlines and therefore, if staff are contacted to work on an issues call, they must be prepared to concentrate solely on this task until the response is finalized.

### Step 1: Receive Media Request and Gather Information

- The Public Affairs team will gather information from reporter and fill out a Media Request Form, which identifies:
  - Date request is received
  - Media outlet name
  - Reporter
  - Subject
  - Reporter's deadline
  - Type of response required i.e. telephone interview, email, on-air etc.
  - Request classification (Standard, Risk/Issue)
  - VP/Subject Matter Expert
  - External Contacts Engaged (i.e. Ministry, Utilities)
  - Any available previously approved key messages on the subject
- The Director, Consumer and Corporate Communications in consultation with the VP of Public Affairs will determine whether or not the request is a Standard Request or an Issues Request and indicate this in the media request form. The VP of Public Affairs will consult with the Executive Advisor and Associate General Counsel on requests requiring further information (See Executive Issues Management Team section above).
- In the Request Classification section on the media request form, the Public Affairs will indicate whether or not information is on file or if subject matter experts have been engaged to assist with the response. There will also be a clear indication of whether further action or engagement is required from VPs.
- At this time, the Ministry and Minister's office and any relevant agency will be advised of the media inquiry

## Step 2: Inform Executive Team

The Public Affairs team will send the Media Request Form to the members of executive team relevant to the subject of the media inquiry and to the Advisor Executive Office and Associate General Counsel for either informational purposes or to indicate that relevant executives or their designates need to be engaged, depending on the following scenarios:

- **Scenario A – Standard Request, Information On File**
  - This scenario is based on a basic media request where information is already on file on the website and can be issued by Public Affairs. (This information will be housed in a shared drive with special protocol attached to it – see attached.)
  - If the media request is routine and approved messaging exists, the communications team will respond.
  - The response provided to the reporter will be included with the Media Request Form.
  - In this case, the Media Request Form will be circulated and marked for informational purposes only and requires no further action from VPs, Executive Office or Associate General Counsel.
- **Scenario B – Standard Request, More Information Needed**
  - This scenario is based on a standard media request but requires additional information from a subject matter expert, including data or background that is not currently available to the Public Affairs team.
  - The Media Request Form will be circulated and marked “Action Required”
  - The VP overseeing the subject area will be responsible for assigning a subject matter expert to meet face-to-face with the communications team to develop a response in accordance with the reporter’s deadline. The appropriate VP will be identified and, as soon as possible, notified through the emailed request form and by telephone.
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- **Scenario C – Issues Request, Immediate Action Required**
  - This scenario is based on more sensitive, issue-based requests that require discussion by the Executive Issues Management Team.
  - Public Affairs team will complete and email the Media Request Form, marked “Urgent Action Required”
  - VP of Public Affairs convenes an urgent ad hoc meeting of the EIMT to develop the response.

## Step 3: Draft Response

Once the executive team is informed of the request, the Public Affairs team will draft a response based on the scenario as appropriate. This includes:

- **Scenario A – Standard Request, Information On File**
  - Response will be drafted by Public Affairs based on the existing information.
- **Scenario B – Standard Request, More Information Needed**

- After meeting with the subject matter expert, the Public Affairs team will draft a response based on information provided.
- **Scenario C – Issues Request, Immediate Action Required**
  - The Issues Management Team meets and develops the initial response to the media request, including:
    - Assigning a messaging lead
    - Identifying spokesperson (if needed)
    - Identifying affected stakeholders
    - Deciding on FAQs
    - Drafting response text that includes key messages
    - Reference the facts in the response and who has verified them
  - The team evaluates information gaps in the response and assigns to subject matter expert for resolution, schedules follow-up meeting (if necessary).
  - The team reconvenes and develops a response with new information, ensures all gaps are filled.
  - Final draft response is written.
  - The final response goes to the identified subject matter expert for a final fact check. This person will own the accuracy of the entire response.

#### **Step 4: Approval**

Once the final response is drafted and approved by the subject matter expert, it will go for final approval based on the following scenarios:

- **Scenario A – Standard Request, Information On File**
  - Responses to Standard Requests will go to the VP of Public Affairs for final approval with a 'CC' copy to the Executive Advisor and Associate General Counsel.
  - Target completion time and response to reporter: 1-3 hours
- **Scenario B – Standard Request, More Information Needed**
  - ⊖ If additional information was provided by a subject matter expert for a Standard Response, the VP Public Affairs with the Executive Office Advisor and Associate General Counsel and the relevant VP will provide final approval.
  - Target approval completion time: 2-4 hours
- **Scenario C – Issues Request, Immediate Action Required**
  - Once fact checked by the subject matter expert, responses to Issues Requests will be reviewed by the Associate General Counsel.
  - The response will then be reviewed by the VP of Public Affairs for a final message check.
  - In some cases as determined by the EIMT, the response will be sent to the Chair for final approval.
  - Target approval completion time: 3-5 hours

**Step 5: Respond to Reporter**

Once response goes through the necessary approval process, the Public Affairs team will send the final response to the reporter.

**Step 6: Information Sharing and Record Keeping**

- The Media Request Form will be updated, marked “Complete and Final” and recirculated for record keeping purposes to all involved in the developing the response and in particular, the Associate General Counsel.
- The Ministry and Minister’s Office will receive copy of the final response from the Media Advisor
- All new messaging will be added to the OEB Message Binder for future reference.

***\*The above process is for basic media and issues requests. A separate process will be developed for crisis scenarios.***

**TEAMS****EXECUTIVE ISSUES MANAGEMENT TEAM (EIMT)**

- Vice President, Public Affairs
- Associate General Counsel
- Executive Advisor

**Support to the EIMT**

- Director, Consumer and Corporate Communications
- Media Relations Advisor
- As needed, Subject Matter Expert(s), usually a senior manager assigned by the VPs and supported by their staff.

**TOPIC CHART**

The following is a draft chart that outlines key subject areas and the overseeing vice presidents. The chart will be filled out to identify subject matter and legal experts that are best suited to address topics to guide information gathering for media requests.

| TOPIC                                                                                                | SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT | LEGAL EXPERT   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Mary Anne Aldred, General Counsel &amp; Vice President, Legal Services &amp; Strategic Policy</b> |                       |                |
| Governance and Jurisdiction                                                                          | M. Aldred             | } Martine Band |
| Policy (i.e. cap-and-trade, low income etc.)                                                         | C. Bishop             |                |

| TOPIC                                                                      | SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT | LEGAL EXPERT     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Brian Hewson, Vice President, Consumer Protection and Industry Performance |                       |                  |
| Codes, Rules and Investigations                                            | A. Mand               | } Martine Band?? |
| Consumer Programs                                                          | D. Kinapen            |                  |
| Data                                                                       | B. Robertson          |                  |
| Audit and Performance                                                      | B. Robertson          |                  |
| Licenses                                                                   | A. Mand               |                  |
| Cybersecurity                                                              | A. Mand               |                  |
| Consumer Protection (Rules)                                                | C. Marijan            |                  |
| Lynne Anderson, Vice President, Applications                               |                       |                  |
| Applications                                                               | T. Antonopoulos       | } Martine Band?? |
| Rate Setting Gas                                                           | P. Duguay             |                  |
| Rate Setting Electricity                                                   | D.Gapic               |                  |
| Mergers and Acquisitions                                                   | N. Marconi            |                  |
| Julie Mitchell, Vice President, People, Culture and Business Solutions     |                       |                  |
| Executive Compensation                                                     | J. Mitchell           | } Martine Band?? |
| Corporate Financial Reporting                                              | J. Mitchell           |                  |
| OEB Cyber Security                                                         | J. Mitchell           |                  |
| Expense Management                                                         | J. Mitchell           |                  |
| Procurement of Consulting Services                                         | J. Mitchell           |                  |
| Audit Findings                                                             | J. Mitchell           |                  |

## APPENDIX: FACTUAL ERROR RESPONSE

### Purpose

These protocols are intended to ensure a timely and consistent response to coverage and commentary in all media on the role and activities of the Ontario Energy Board.

### Current Situation

Electricity prices have become a dominant public policy issue in Ontario. As such, prominent, ongoing media coverage of electricity prices and energy related issues can be expected.

This includes increased public attention and media coverage of the Ontario Energy Board and its role in protecting consumers, particularly given the series of proactive announcements planned through spring, 2017 that will build and reinforce the OEB's consumer protection brand.

### Guiding Principles and Approach

1. Responses will be guided by the Ontario Energy Board Messaging Strategy (Draft 7), now being finalized.
2. A key element of the OEB's consumer protection mandate is to inform and educate. As such, the OEB will:
  - a. Correct the record in cases where major factual errors have been made that could have a significant negative impact on consumers;
  - b. In cases of minor errors, work with journalists, bloggers, commentators, editors and media outlets to help inform and educate them on the OEB's role and, in the process, build stronger relationships;
  - c. Not respond to negative coverage or commentary unless it contains or is based on major errors in fact or will harm consumers by presenting inaccurate information; and
  - d. Not engage in a debate with media or consumers through the media.
3. Media coverage of the previous day will be assessed at the scheduled daily media meetings (8:50 and 9:30 a.m.) and a decision will be made on whether and how to respond.
4. A same-day response will be issued if the decision is made to respond and the situation clearly falls under the following protocols.
5. In other situations, approval of the Chair and CEO will be sought.

### Factual Error Response Protocols

#### News Coverage

The following apply to news coverage in print, broadcast and digital media:

##### a) **Accurate coverage, where possible:**

- If the reporter has not contacted the OEB for information or a comment, where possible, the OEB will contact the reporter or blogger, say that we noticed the story, thank him or her for it, and offer to provide additional help or information whenever he or she needs it; and

- If the reporter has contacted the OEB, thank him or her for the story and offer further help whenever it is needed.

**b) Minor errors:**

The OEB will contact the reporter or blogger, thank him or her for the story, identify where an error has been made, and ask that the correct information be included in the next story.

**c) If a major error has been made:**

- The OEB will contact the reporter or blogger and ask for a correction.
- If a correction is not made, the OEB will contact the editor of the publication and ask for a correction.

**d) If the error appears in a quote in the story:**

A decision will be made whether or not to respond based on whether the overall story is factual and balanced, keeping in mind the guiding principle that the OEB will not engage in debate.

### **Editorials (Print and digital media)**

In keeping with the guiding principle that the OEB will not engage in debate, the OEB will not respond to editorials critical of its role or performance.

Whenever possible, the OEB will contact the editorial board editor to offer to provide a briefing, additional information on its role or other information to inform future editorials.

If the editorial contains inaccuracies or is based on inaccurate information, the OEB will contact the editorial board editor to correct the record and, in cases where a major error has been made, request a correction.

### **Letters to the Editor (print)**

It is a commonly accepted practice in journalism that the reader or listener has the last word. As a general rule, and in keeping with the guiding principles above, the OEB will not formally respond to Letters to the Editor that are critical of the OEB.

Exceptions will be considered in cases where the letter contains inaccurate information that will harm consumers if they act upon it.

Wherever possible, the OEB will send an email to the editor or editorial page editor offering to provide information or help them if they would like to develop a story about energy and the OEB's role.

In cases where a publication has received a number of letters, the OEB will consider developing an Op-Ed piece to correct the record.

### **Online comments on media**

The OEB will not respond to readers' comments on online news stories.

**Twitter**

Detailed social media response protocols will be developed as part of an overall digital/social media strategy.

In the interim, responses on Twitter and other social media will be guided by the same principles outlined above.

Our primary focus will be on responding to journalists and leading bloggers on Twitter and correcting the record when there is a clear factual error.

Responding to other thought leaders on Twitter will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

DRAFT