

## **SOCIETY POLICY**

### **EXTERNAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT**

#### **I. PREFACE**

- A. As a knowledge-based, technical organization, ASME is often called upon by members of the media to provide information and commentary on matters related to engineering. Media inquiries may be related to new or emerging technologies, employment trends, the viewpoints of engineering experts, ASME activities, positions or standards, or even matters related to alleged technical mishaps or current events.

ASME's response to media inquiries, in a professional, accurate and timely manner, is essential for maintaining the Society's stature as an essential resource and trusted voice in the engineering community and the general public.

In order to establish coordinated guidelines for communications between ASME staff and/or volunteer leadership with members of the press, ASME Strategic Communications Department has established the following protocols for responding to media inquiries.

To ensure maximum benefit for the Society from interactions with external media outlets on newsworthy topics, including newspapers, radio, television, digital platforms and others, ASME members, volunteers and staff are required to coordinate such interactions through staff in ASME's Strategic Communications Department.

ASME has a crisis communication plan in place in the event an emergency needs to be addressed.

#### **II. PURPOSE**

Thorough coordination with members of the media is essential to ensure maximum leverage and benefit for the Society. ASME staff in the Strategic Communications Department will manage and facilitate interaction with reporters from external journalistic outlets in order to ensure accurate and cohesive messaging which aligns with the Society's mission, vision and strategic priorities. Additionally, such interaction provides ideal opportunities for staff in the Strategic Communications Department to cultivate relationships with key reporters who routinely write about engineering and related topics while laying the groundwork for ASME to be included in future stories.

The primary purpose of this policy is to cover media interviews and other interactions with journalistic entities on newsworthy topics. This policy is not intended to apply to routine announcements of events or meetings posted on Facebook, LinkedIn or other social media platforms.

#### **III. POLICY**

- A. It is Society policy that any member, volunteer or staff who is approached by, or interacts with, any external media outlet which has inquired or requested an interview regarding any ASME-related activities or affiliation must immediately direct such inquiry to the attention of designated staff in ASME's Strategic Communications Department before answering the journalist's questions. (If the inquiry is *unrelated* to ASME activities or affiliations, the Strategic Communications Department would nonetheless appreciate being notified as per above in order to fully leverage the potential benefits, and mitigate the risks of, the media engagement.)
- B. All media inquiries and interactions will be coordinated, facilitated and managed directly by staff in the Strategic Communications Department. Staff in the Strategic Communications Department will in turn coordinate with the appropriate ASME member, volunteer or staff to ensure that ASME is fairly and accurately represented in the media inquiry or deliverable, while ensuring maximum benefit and leverage for the Society for future media coverage.

The Strategic Communications Department accesses ASME's Position Statements, which are developed by subject matter experts and described on Society Policy P-15.1, and a database of subject matter experts to address inquiries of a technical nature.

#### IV. PROCEDURE

- A. Upon being contacted (or coming into contact with) a member of any external media outlet, an ASME member, volunteer or staff must immediately refer the inquiry to a member of ASME's Strategic Communications Department. The member, volunteer, or staff should obtain the name of the person calling, the media organization, and, if available, any relevant deadlines. Inquiries should be referred to [media@asme.org](mailto:media@asme.org) and will be handled in a timely and appropriate manner. An external media outlet may request a response by a certain date, and the ASME Strategic Communications Department will attempt to satisfy that request. However, the accuracy of the response as well as an assessment of whether participating in the media inquiry serves ASME's strategic interests both take precedence over an externally-imposed deadline.
- B. ASME members, volunteers and staff are prohibited from granting interviews or offering statements to members of the media without the guidance, coordination and direct involvement of the Strategic Communications Department.
- C. ASME members, volunteers and staff must inform the press representative that the ASME Strategic Communications Department is responsible for arranging interviews and issuing statements on behalf of the Society. ASME members, volunteers and staff must not take it upon themselves to make comments or answer any questions on behalf of ASME, regardless of media deadlines.
- D. Interview requests will be arranged by the ASME Strategic Communications Department in consultation with the appropriate Executive Management Team (EMT) member or their designated representative. When possible prior to the actual interview, the ASME Strategic Communications Department will provide anticipated questions and prepare appropriate

responses and key messaging guidelines. All interviews should be confined to that person's area of expertise and responsibility, without providing personal thoughts or opinions.

- E. Authority to reference ASME Affiliation: A member, when expressing their personal views, may only mention their affiliation with ASME if they include a disclaimer that the views expressed are theirs alone, and are not necessarily the views of the Society in accordance with Society Policy P-14.6.
- F. Outreach to media: Announcements of local section meetings for calendars of local media do not need the approval of the ASME Strategic Communications Department.

Any unit of ASME may propose a press release, which must be approved by the ASME Strategic Communications Department before it is distributed. The Strategic Communications Department may be able to leverage the press release by suggesting additional media outlets for it.

- G. Information regarding this policy will be added to material included in the Welcome Kit provided to ASME members.

Responsibility: Board of Governors

Adopted: February 11, 2016  
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