

Pacific Northwest Swimming Rules and Procedures	Crisis Communication Policy
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1. Purpose

To effectively manage communications through a formal, clearly defined channel in order to mitigate crisis, or serious negative repercussions for Pacific Northwest Swimming Association, or the Sport of Competitive Swimming in general, and maintain a reputation of leadership and transparency on vital issues and breaking news. In speaking with the media and public, Pacific Northwest Swimming will provide factual information and messages most beneficial to the organization and to the sport of swimming. We will help the media by providing information that enables them to do their jobs and positions Pacific Northwest Swimming as a reliable resource and leader. In all communications, Pacific Northwest Swimming will create a positive opportunity for the public positioning of the sport of swimming as a whole. Messages should be responsive and solution/action oriented, reinforcing the organizations position of leadership.

2. Policy

- A. All crises should be reported to the General Chair immediately.
- B. Only the chief spokesperson and back-up spokespeople are authorized to release information to the media and to the public. All other staff, board and committee members should be professional and helpful to the media by connecting them with the spokespeople, but will neither speak to the media, nor provide any information.
- C. There should be one designated crisis management lead person, directing and coordinating all aspects of the organization's response including managing the messages and the media. There should also be one designated spokesperson that actually interacts with the media and other inquirers. In some cases, particularly in the event of a "small crisis," the two may be the same person. In others, the jobs may be divided to facilitate efficient handling of the situation. Most likely, but not necessarily, the role will be filled by the General Chair.
- D. All comments should be guided by professionalism and transparency, and serve to mitigate the crisis while reinforcing the leadership role of Pacific Northwest Swimming Association.
- E. "No comment" is never an acceptable response. If an answer is unknown or cannot be immediately answered, make note of the question, tell the inquirer you will get back with him/her, and do so. If the question cannot be answered due to a policy (such as sharing personnel information, etc.) let the inquirer know that.
- F. Personnel matters are to remain confidential. When possible, responses should be proactive, responsive, and action-oriented.
- G. PNSA recognizes the importance of media relation to public trust. In times of crisis, maintaining effective media relationships will be particularly critical in bolstering public confidence in the sector as a whole.