



Swimming North Coast
**MEDIA
TOOLKIT**
For Clubs



Narelle Duggan

Development Officer – North Coast
Swimming NSW

Peter Brack

Secretary
Swimming North Coast

Faye Rowles

Publicity Officer
Swimming North Coast

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Swimming North Coast Media Toolkit.

This toolkit has been created to assist Swimming North Coast Clubs to promote activities taking place in your Club, announce Club Meets, and generate local interest to increase Club numbers, participation and the sport of swimming in your local area.

It is near impossible for Swimming New South Wales and Swimming North Coast to promote all things swimming across the State and Area. Please use this toolkit within your Club to aid you in your publicity and media endeavours. We hope that this provides your Club with some additional information to proactively promote your swimmers and Swimming Club. This resource has been collated in conjunction with the SAL Media Toolkit.

Please note that your feedback is always welcome so please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to provide constructive feedback on how this toolkit can be improved to assist you further with your needs.

Yours in swimming,

Swimming North Coast Management Committee



Media Tool Kit
For Swimming North Coast Clubs



CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	3
APPOINTING A MEDIA OFFICER.....	4
CLUB MEDIA ACTIVITIES.....	5
WHAT MAKES NEWS?.....	6
DEALING WITH THE MEDIA.....	6
MEDIA ALERTS.....	8
MEDIA ALERT TEMPLATE.....	9
MEDIA RELEASES.....	10
MEDIA RELEASE STEPS.....	11
MEDIA RELEASE TEMPLATE.....	12
PHOTOGRAPHY.....	13
INTERVIEWS.....	13
MEDIA MONITORING.....	14
AREA CONTACTS.....	14
CLUB CONTACTS.....	14
APPENDIX 1 – MEDIA RELEASE CHECKLIST.....	15



APPOINTING A MEDIA OFFICER

To maintain a controlled flow of information to the media and to ensure that the right people are liaising with the media, a Media Officer should be appointed within your Club. The Media Officer is a person that:

- All media enquiries should be directed to
- Oversees the content and distribution of media releases on behalf of your Club, and
- Establishes contacts within the local media.

This person may be the Club President, Secretary or current Publicity Officer if you have one. The Media Officer should be:

- Able to write a media release
- Confident and articulate speaker
- Available to be contacted by the media.

As a sport, swimming has a very positive image with the media and enjoys a good relationship with television, radio and the local print press. The Media Officer should endeavour to develop a good relationship with their local media, as well as keeping incontact with the Area's Committee and Development Officer.



CLUB MEDIA ACTIVITIES

There are many proactive initiatives that may be run within your Club. Below are a few suggestions. For ideas on how to implement such activity, you may contact your Area Executive/Development Committee and Area Development Officer. All of these details maybe found on the Area's website: www.swimmingnorthcoast.org.au

Club Promotion: An example of a Club promotion objective could be to encourage newswimmers to join the swimming Club or retaining swimmers in the sport during winter.

An example of how to achieve this may be to host a Ready, Set, Race night.

Athlete Promotion: Utilising a high-performance athlete to motivate your current swimmers or simply to attract new swimmers.

Fundraising: This is always a positive and necessary function of running a Club. This activity can also be helpful in encouraging members to become part of the team and work together towards the cause.

Sponsorship: In addition to your fundraising efforts, you may wish to take on board a Club sponsor to assist with things like: uniforms, team trips/camps to another swim meet etc...

Education: It is necessary for your Club to ensure that members have the skills and education to run your Club. There are many courses from technical official positions, computer program tutorials or continuing education programs that your members may attend. Your Area Committee and Development Officer may assist you to locate some courses to broaden your current skill set.

Membership: You may wish to execute some membership drives to increase member acquisition in your local community.

Schools and linking with other local organisations: Schools are a constant feeder in the local community. There may be an opportunity to work with your local schools to provide swimming education and awareness which may aid in membership acquisition and loyalty.



WHAT MAKES NEWS?

There are a number of components that can assist you in gaining media coverage. These include:

- Immediate – today, yesterday, tomorrow
- Proximity – to self, family, the community
- Human interest and emotions
- Novelty, bizarre, obscure
- Prominence – high profile, well-known
- Thinking outside the square – What will attract their attention?
- Controversy (this area should be avoided)

Regional and suburban media in particular are always looking for local content and they often struggle to fill their columns.

WHEN TO USE WHAT MEDIA?

There are a number of different avenues including print, radio, television and online. Certain avenues can be more or less appropriate depending on what message you are trying to convey.

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

PRINT MEDIA	RADIO MEDIA	TELEVISION MEDIA
<p>Print is good to use when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story and issues are detailed and/or complex • The story is based around facts, statistics or numbers in general • Human interest story • If you need to rebut allegations or correct facts. <p>Print media will also often generate news that the radio will then often pick up on.</p>	<p>Radio is good to use when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You need to quickly rebut allegations or a story that appeared in the morning papers • You want to reach a large audience quickly • You are looking for an instant reaction or comment on a running story. <p>Developing a relationship with radio media is a great way to raise the profile of your Club or swimming in general. If you have a specific expert too (e.g. a knowledgeable coach) you can continually put them forward for stories and if the station likes them and respects them you will find them coming to you to comment on other related issues.</p>	<p>Television is good to use when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have a strong visual story • There is need to reach a maximum audience • You have good talent/spokesperson for interview. <p>It is very important to have good visuals for a TV story. Visuals make the story and are often the difference between what makes the news and what does not.</p>



SOME HELPFUL TIPS WHEN DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

- Always be courteous with members of the media
- Never lie to the media – if you are unsure, don't guess
- If you are uncomfortable with answering a question, say you are unable to comment on it or speak about something positive
- Be contactable by the media
- If details of your story change, let the media know ASAP
- Involve the media in your activities – invite them to award ceremonies, championships etc...

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Media Officers should aim to develop a comprehensive list of local media contact lists to which press releases can be sent.

CONTACTS IN PRINT MEDIA

The most useful contacts in print media are:

- Chief of Staff – organizes the news for the day and assigns journalists to jobs
- News Editor
- Individual Journalists who write about sport or swimming and have links to the sport.

If you are not sure about who to contact, the Chief of Staff or Editor is usually the best place to start. Each paper has editors for various sections, like sport. Get to know the sports editor.

As you develop a relationship with journalists you will find that you will end up going straight to them with a story and they'll then go to their Editor for approval to put the story together.

There are also news wire services such as AAP. These services allow you to place a media release at a single source which numerous media agencies can access and look to report on. Visit www.aap.com.au for more information about its services or email the AAP Sports Desk at new.sport@aap.com.au.

Medianet is another useful and free service. Medianet can distribute media releases 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Visit www.medianet.com.au for more information on its services.

CONTACTS IN RADIO MEDIA

The most useful contacts in radio media are:

- News Editor
- Producer (for current affairs or talkback radio).

Producers are generally who you will have the most involvement with. They are generally your first point of contact for breakfast, morning or afternoon shows, drive programs etc.



CONTACTS IN TELEVISION MEDIA

The most useful contacts in television media are:

- News Editor or Chief of Staff
- Producer (for current affairs/morning television)
- Researcher (current affairs)
- In regional areas – Specific Journalists.

It is the Executive Producer who makes the decision on what goes to air and what doesn't, however they are often very difficult to contact. Get to know the Producer! For the North Coast Area, it is often best to just contact the journalists directly.

MEDIA ALERTS

A media alert is a short written communication designed to inform the media about something you would like them to attend.

A media alert can also be used as a news item on your website.

Just like a media release, a media alert needs to be clear and concise. It is shorter and more succinct than a media release (discussed below) and it doesn't contain too much information, rather just key details.

Where a journalist is able to write a story based from a media release itself (as a media release contains detailed information), they would not be able to achieve the same outcome from a media alert.

STEPS TO PREPARING A MEDIA ALERT

- Identify the **who, what, when, why** and **how**.
- Draft your alert (the templates below may be helpful) – keep it to one page.
- Check the details (names, times, etc).
- Ensure your contact details are correct and most appropriate to contact you on.
- Send the alert (fax or email) 48 hours before an event.
- Call to follow up the media contacts that you sent the media alert to.
- Ask the media if they need any more information or want an interview.
- If details change, let the media know ASAP.
- If the media does attend your event, make an effort to greet them and introduce yourself when they arrive. This helps build rapport and puts a face to a name.

MEDIA ALERT TEMPLATE

It is wise to have a template from which all of your media alerts can be created so they look consistent.

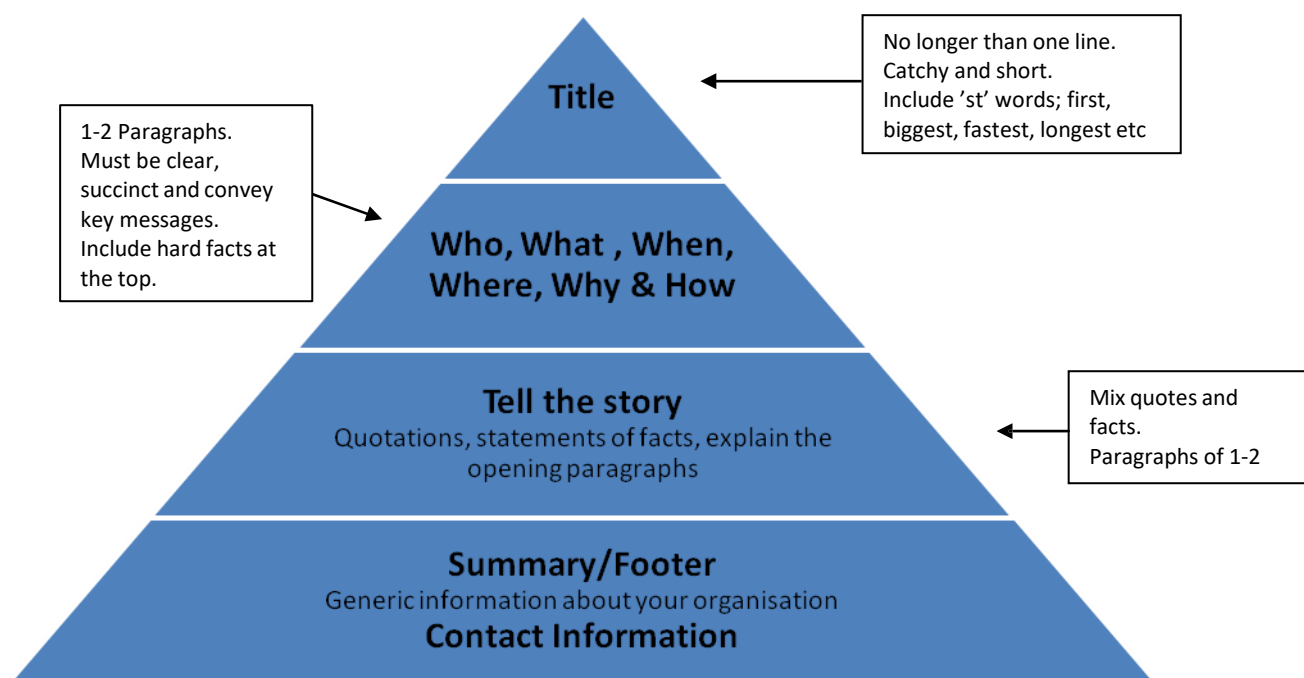


MEDIA RELEASES

A media release is a written communication designed to inform the media about something on which you would like them to report. A media release contains more detailed information than a media alert. A media release can also be used as a news item on your website.

There are some basic guidelines to follow when putting together a media release:

- Use clear and concise language
- Assume the person reading the release knows nothing about swimming
- Avoid jargon and acronyms
- No longer than 1.5 pages **MAXIMUM** (generally one page is best)
- Use clear and easy to read font (**ALWAYS** Arial or Times New Roman)
- **BOLD** swimmer names (eg **James Magnussen** swam his personal best time)
- Use 12 pt text for the body and 14 to 24 pt text for the heading (depending on length)
- Include the date
- 1.5 to double line spacing looks neat and easy to read.



Refer to the media release example on page 12.



MEDIA RELEASE STEPS

These are simple steps, which can be easily followed to make your media release the best possible.

STEPS

- Identify the **who, what, when, where, why** and **how** (that's your first two paragraphs done!).
- Be sure to include any key messages.
- Draft your release (the template following may be helpful).
- Check the details (names, times etc).
- Ensure your contact details are correct and appropriate.
- Send the media release (fax or email) immediately after the event/launch.

Refer to Appendix 1(Page 15) for a Media Release Checklist.

MEDIA RELEASE TEMPLATES

It is good to have a template from which you create your media releases so they look consistent.



TEMPLATE – MEDIA RELEASE EXAMPLE

Area or Club logo

Sponsor logo
(if applicable)

MEDIA RELEASE

Date

PUT YOUR HEADLINE HERE IN BOLD

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW need to be explained here in the first two paragraphs. This is the most important information. Don't save it for later! Always assume that this is the most important section of the release. **Bold** names of Clubs, athletes and events.

Keep paragraphs short, preferably 1-2 sentences per paragraph. Ensure all information is clear, concise and conveys the key messages.

The following paragraphs need to contain more details in relation to the first two paragraphs. These should contain a mix of quotations and statements and fact.

A good media release should fit onto one A4 page.

If images are available, mention this, as the media will contact you if they would like some to use.

ENDS

Media enquiries

Contact name, title/position, address, phone (include mobile), fax number email address and website.

Provide generic information about your organisation (see page 13 for example)

ABOUT XXXX SWIMMING CLUB:



Club Example

ABOUT XXXXXX SC

XXXXXX Swimming Club is based in XXXXXX Aquatic Centre in the North Coast of NSW and was founded in XXXX. The Club has in excess of XXX members and provides training, racing and social opportunities for swimmers of all standards. At the elite level, XXXXX has produced XXXX National Age and Open Representatives. For more information on XXXXX Swimming Club or our learn to swim programs, go to www.xxxxxxsc.com.au

PHOTOGRAPHY

Images can add value to your media releases, particularly for the print media. Sending out high resolution photographs (at least 300 dpi) will slow down a lot of computers so it is often more effective to mention in your press release that print-quality images are available on request.

You might also consider a caption with your images, or at least identify the individuals in the image, if appropriate.

IMPORTANT NOTE WHEN SENDING YOUR MEDIA RELEASE:

- When sending media releases via email, utilize the blind carbon copy (BCC) function so other recipient email addresses are not able to be seen. This is important for privacy reasons.
- Always try to embed the content of the media release into an email, rather than the release being included as an attachment.

FOLLOW UP

Once you have sent your media release, it is a good idea to follow up with a phone call within 24 hours of sending it to make sure they received it and see if they would like to do an interview or require any more information.

INTERVIEWS

Media Officers may be required to do interviews for print, radio or television. If you are contacted by a media representative assume that whatever you say is 'on the record' and that the camera is always rolling.



WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD YOU ASK IF YOU ARE CONTACTED

- What is the journalists name and the media agency he or she represents.
- Will the interview be live or will it be pre-recorded? (for radio or TV calls)
- Will the interview be conducted in the studio or remotely (e.g. via phone or at the pool)?
 - If on the phone, try not to do it on a mobile. Landlines are much clearer.
- Is anyone else being interviewed on the topic?
- What sort of questions will I be asked so I can prepare?
- Will there be talk-back? (relates to radio)

If it is an interview regarding a sensitive or complex issue you can sometimes ask to see the article before it is published to check the facts (this is not common though so don't assume they will take in to account any of your changes!) If the matter is sensitive, you may wish to refer to SNSW or SAL.

MEDIA MONITORING

MONITORING THE MEDIA COVERAGE YOU RECEIVE IS IMPORTANT

You should try to monitor any media coverage you receive. There is a lot of value that can be derived from such coverage. Tracking, and where possible, valuing your media coverage can assist in 'selling' your organisation to potential sponsors or reporting to existing sponsors.

Knowing how much media coverage you receive at different times assists you in reviewing what worked, what the media picked up and what was missed. Media monitoring can be done very simply by keeping an eye out on the local paper or local TV news channel.

YOUR AREA CONTACTS

President:		
Secretary:		
Publicity Officer:		
SNSW Club Support Officer:		lyn.connell@nsw.swimming.org.au

YOUR CLUB CONTACTS

President:	Contact:	Email:
Secretary:	Contact:	Email:
Media Officer:	Contact:	Email:
Club Captain:	Contact:	Email:



APPENDIX 1

MEDIA RELEASE CHECKLIST

Put the date on top

Determine who, what, when, where, why and how

Choose a short, snappy heading

Include 'st' words, eg: first, biggest, fastest etc

Check formatting

1.5 or double spacing

Check font size

12pt for body, 14-24 pt for heading

Don't use acronyms

Bold font for titles and names

Check facts and numbers

Confirm they are correct

Avoid the use of jargon

Make sure you spell out acronyms

No longer than 1.5 pages

Aim for 1 page

Is it clear and concise?

Have you added your key messages?

Check details

(names, dates, times, etc)

Are the contact details correct?

