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POLICY

The Public Affairs Office (PAO) is responsible for handling media and public inquiries and providing effective and orderly dissemination of information. It is the policy of the Department of Public Works to provide accurate and complete information in a timely manner to the news media and others seeking information on the Department's operations and activities. The PAO staff is experienced in providing such services and guidance, and can do so in a manner that best represents the Department and the City of Los Angeles.

Information, which has been requested by or prepared for the Board of Public Works, should not normally be discussed publicly or with the news media until the Board has approved it.

Public Works employees shall not make misleading, false, malicious, derogatory or disparaging statements about the Department, its employees, contractors, or other city Departments, offices or employees. Employees should be cautious in providing information to others, which tends to impair the efficiency of the Department or interfere with the ability of the Department supervisors to maintain discipline.

PROCEDURE

All employees should politely refer news media requests for information about the Department of Public Works' business to the PAO. The PAO will ascertain the nature of the inquiry and, if necessary, arrange for the news media representative to speak with the appropriate management representative. In general, the PAO will arrange interviews with the Board of Public Works, Bureau Directors, or Division Managers about inquiries that concern their fields of expertise or immediate areas of responsibility unless otherwise directed by the Board of Public Works. This includes general background information about daily operations or special projects or activities in which they are principal participants.

For inquiries and questions of a sensitive or controversial nature, the PAO will arrange for the President or a Commissioner of the Board of Public Works to respond to the inquiry.

NEWS RELEASES, MEDIA ADVISORIES, PSAs

The Public Affairs Office writes, edits, and distributes all news releases, media advisories, and public service announcements for the Department of Public Works (DPW) to inform the public and the media about the activities of the Department. All DPW news releases must be issued on "DPW News" letterhead.

Bureaus are welcome to submit hard copy or electronic drafts of news releases to the PAO. The PAO may edit the draft to conform to news writing standards and submit a final draft of the news release to the appropriate Bureau for their review and approval of the content, and/or quotes.

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When urgent or unexpected circumstances dictate the immediate issuance of a public statement or news release by the affected Bureau, a copy of the document immediately forwarded to the PAO.

News releases are distributed to local daily and weekly newspapers, television and radio stations, elected officials, trade/industry/association journals, and business, public safety, environmental, health, and consumer publications. The PAO news release distribution list will be tailored to the appropriate audience. The Bureau requesting the news release will be advised by the PAO as to the planned distribution for the news release. Also, Bureaus are encouraged to inform the PAO about additional sources to distribute the news release.