

BOWLS SOUTH AFRICA COMMUNICATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Bowls South Africa (BSA) a National sports federation is recognized by the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) as the supreme governing body for the sport of Lawn Bowls in South Africa.

In managing the affairs of BSA and meeting its obligations to all its stakeholders it is recognized that the federation will, from time to time, provide communication in various formats and across various media. BSA has a responsibility to provide effective communication that is open, honest and responsive to requests made.

PURPOSE

This policy has been developed to help BSA to formalise the quality of information that is conveyed within the sport to Members (Council), Associated members (Clubs) and Affiliated members (individuals) and exists to assure that information disclosed by BSA is timely, accurate, comprehensive, authoritative and relevant to all aspects of BSA. Adherence to this policy is intended to provide an effective and efficient framework to facilitate the timely dissemination of information.

Effective communication will ensure all stakeholders are timeously aware of information to facilitate the effective operation and awareness necessary for informed decisions to be made to the mutual benefit of all.

SCOPE

This communication policy applies to all Executive, Standing Committee members and staff of BSA. This policy covers all internal communication and external communication through the following channels:

- News media including broadcast
- Electronic media
- Print media
- Social media.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

All members of the Executive, National standing committees, staff and every player invited to events by BSA or chosen to represent South Africa shall have a responsibility to adhere to this policy and ensure that the integrity and image of BSA is protected, promoted and maintained.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually.

COMMUNICATION AIMS

- To increase understanding among stakeholders of the service we provide.
- To ensure stakeholders are aware of matters pertaining to the management of BSA.
- To promote a positive image of BSA and the sport of Lawn bowls.
- To seek the most cost effective method of dissemination of information. This will include, but not limited to, new technology.
- Open and honest channels of communication
- Timely and consistent response to comments and queries.
- Clear and concise messaging and content
- Two-way – allowing for full involvement with feedback channels which includes horizontal and vertical communication flow.

STAKEHOLDERS

The target audience of communication will vary dependent on the particular piece of information being communicated

Stakeholders include:

- The Executive and Council members.
- Districts.
- Clubs
- Individuals
- Sponsors and potential sponsors
- Parent bodies and their associated provincial bodies.
- Statutory bodies including the Department of Sport and Local municipalities.
- Media (press, radio and television).
- Employees of BSA.

DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

Internal communication

Internal communication is the transmission of information between stakeholders and takes place across all levels of the organisation.

Examples of this are:

- **Verbal** - either person to person, telephonic or through Electronic media (eg. Skype)
- **Written** – either person to person, organisation to organisation and can be done through personal mail or through electronic media.

Print Media

The means of mass communication in the form of printed publications. This may be regarded as static media.

Examples of this are:

- **Newspapers**
- **Newsletters**
- **Booklets**
- **Pamphlets**
- **Flyers**
- **Magazines**

Electronic Media

The means of communication that takes advantage of electronic technology for the end user to access the content.

Examples of this are:

- **Television**
- **Radio**
- **Internet e.g. Website**
- **Fax**
- **CD's and DVD's**

Social Media

The collective of online communication channels dedicated to community based input, interaction, content sharing and collaboration in virtual communities or networks.

Examples of this are:

- **Blogs**
- **Facebook**
- **Instagram**
- **Instant messaging systems**
- **Linkedin**
- **MySpace**
- **Social Bookmarks**
- **Skype**
- **Snapchat**
- **Twitter**
- **YouTube**
- **Pinterest**

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To communicate clear and concise information through the appropriate media channel.
- To inform stakeholders about BSA activities before they are informed by external mediums.
- To use the correct mechanism for such communication.
- To provide meaningful and concise information on the activities of BSA be that operational or on the playing field.
- To help create and increase accurate public awareness of BSA and the sport of bowls.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Internal communication

- Communication on policy decisions should be issued by the office of BSA and should only be released once majority approval from the Executive has been obtained.
- Communication designed to provide stakeholders with updated information should be released from the office and should be done in conjunction with the Operations manager and the President.
- The President may from time to time seek to address stakeholders. Such communication may be undertaken once majority approval from the Executive has been obtained.
- Executive members may from time to time seek to address stakeholders. Such communication may be undertaken once approval has been obtained from the President.
- Staff members, in the normal course of their duties, will be required to communicate with stakeholders. No prior approval is needed unless such communication relates to policy decisions in which case approval must be obtained from the Operations manager.
- Conveners of Standing committees, in the normal course of their duties, will be required to communicate with fellow committee members and other stakeholders. No prior approval for such communication is needed however the Executive member responsible must be copied on all such communication.
- All verbal communication which has reference to queries relating to policy and organizational updates must be followed up with appropriate written confirmation of such discussion.

Print Media

- The organisations designated official media officer should be the first point of departure through which print media communication is directed once it has been cleared with the office of Bowls SA.
- The media officer is designated to disseminate information in a manner and at such time as he considers appropriate in order to maximize exposure.
- Print media communication is often done with a view to 'immediate release' and because of the nature of the industry. It is considered appropriate for the media officer to make such statements as he believes will be best serve the sport. Should he, however, determine that there is potential for dispute in his media release it shall be incumbent upon him to advise the President immediately upon such release.
- No other persons are authorised to make any releases to the print media save if circumstances prevent timeous access to the media officer. In such circumstances explicit permission must be obtained from the President. Such authority to be confirmed in writing or via sms.
- If called on for print media statement members should not say that they are not allowed to speak to the press. Instead please advise the person seeking comment that it is BSA policy that all media inquiries are directed through the media officer.
- It is conceivable that members may be confronted for media statements and ignoring such requests may be seen as detrimental to the image of the sport or organisation. In such circumstances members are advised to limit responses only to the question posed and not offer any additional information. Members should at all times display courtesy and professionalism with the media. Such interventions and the contents of such statement must be shared immediately with a member of the Executive.
- Members are expressly prohibited from making any statements; whether it is their opinion or not; regarding any decision in which they were personally involved or not.

Electronic Media

- The President, or his designated official, should be the first point of departure through which all electronic media communication is directed. This communication could be in the form of verbal interviews or portraying of images.
- Electronic media information should be submitted in a manner and at such time as he considers appropriate in order to maximize exposure.
- Electronic media communication is often done with a view to 'real-time release' because of the nature of the industry. It is considered appropriate for the President, or his designated official, to make such statements or portray such images as he believes will best serve the sport. Should he, however, determine that there is potential for dispute in his media release it shall be incumbent upon him to ensure statements made or images captured are not injurious to the sport.
- No other persons are authorised to make any releases to the electronic media save if circumstances prevent timeous access to the President. In such circumstances explicit permission must be obtained from the President.
- If called on for electronic media statement members should not say you are not allowed to speak to the media. Instead please advise the person seeking comment that it is BSA policy that all media inquiries are directed through the President.
- It is conceivable that members may be confronted for media statements and ignoring such requests may be seen as detrimental to the image of the sport or organisation. In such circumstances members are advised to limit responses only to the question posed and not offer any additional information or images. Members should at all times display courtesy and professionalism with the media. Such interventions and the contents of such statement must be shared immediately with a member of the Executive.
- Members so engaged with the electronic media must ensure that their appearance and use of language is presented in such a manner as to portray a positive image of the organisation and the sport.

Social Media

Surely the fastest growing and greatest exposure to the public domain lies in the huge amount of social media available. It is very conceivable that images and or statements made by individuals make their way onto this platform without consent. The dangers of exposure are unlimited and caution is the watchword in all activities in which members are deemed to represent the organisation.

- The Executive may from time to time make a determination as to who may, in the name of BSA, insert information in this media forum. Only such recognised person/s, as determined by the Executive, shall be responsible for the control of this media platform and may post any information or images on the BSA registered sites.
- No information, verbal or imagery, which could bring BSA or any of its officials or staff into disrepute, may be posted on any social media platform.
- No comments or images that are deemed to be speculative or have an actual or likely negative impact on BSA's reputation or cause embarrassment to BSA, its partners, employees or members should be posted.
- Comments or images with the potential to cause harm or conflict should not be posted.
- Comments or images about reports of national announcements should not be posted until after such announcements have been distributed through the normal communication channels.
- All South African laws applicable to print and electronic media are applicable to social media.

UNACCEPTABLE COMMUNICATION

Each individual must be aware that any communication undertaken has the potential to sit in the public domain and as such parts or the whole thereof may be used to discredit individuals or the organisation. It is often forgotten that anything communicated to one person might be seen by a great many others. Once communicated it is then not possible to revoke. Caution is thus the key word. The words of Napoleon Hill may well apply to all communication.

'Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another.'

The following are deemed to be unacceptable in any communication:

- Communication that could potentially result in operational or reputational risk to BSA or anyone associated with BSA.
- Contains profanity, obscenity, derogatory or abusive remarks.
- Could be viewed as discriminatory whether on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, nationality, religion or belief.
- Contains nudity or images of sexual nature that could cause offence.
- Could be construed as libelous by the person about whom the comment is made.
- May have the effect of creating an intimidating or hostile environment for others.
- Could lead to allegations of bullying or harassment.
- Discloses confidential information or information that is not readily available to those outside of BSA. This would include any information given in confidence that is reasonable for BSA to consider confidential.
- Poor language and text that has not been language edited.

CORPORATE IDENTITY

All media, whether printed, digital, electronic or social, must promote the corporate identity of BSA. It shall be incumbent on the official involved in all of the above media to ensure that all BSA logo's, sub-logo's, co-logo's and sponsors logo's, where applicable, are included in all appropriate media releases, communication brochures, and all correspondence.

CONTRAVENTIONS OF THIS POLICY

Should anyone in any manner whatsoever, whether intentionally or negligently, cause conflict due to non-compliance with the application of this policy, they will be deemed to be in breach of the Code of Conduct policy and subject to the appropriate disciplinary action.