

## Media release protocol October 2011

1. Subject:
2. Author:
3. Originator:
4. Planned release date:  
*Put it in the planning diary.*
5. Who is this release aimed at?
6. What does it seek to achieve?
7. What is the central message?  
*NB Check against key messages list below*
8. What are the benefits to the Church of making this public statement?
9. What are the risks associated with making it?
10. What risks or disadvantage could arise from not making it?
11. Who will be the media spokesperson?
12. Sign off – DCC/Cluster head/Strategic leader/other/multiple:  
*Is this release intended for or likely to get secular coverage? If so, needs red sign off.  
Alert the named person(s) now that their sign off will be required, and when.*
13. Which other parties are involved?
14. Is this a JPIT or other multi-partner release?
15. Which media sector should this be aimed at?  
*Research lists now.*
16. What are the accompanying human interest stories/case studies/data?
17. Are there any photo opportunities?

### Sign off:

Version	1	2	3	4	Final
Originator					
Agreed spokesperson					
Agreed sign off					
Third parties					
Media officer					

## Messages 2011-12:

1. The key message is to address these questions: What does a disciple look like? What does a disciple do? If we answer these in our communications, we are well under way.
2. Be confident: churches and circuits are already doing a lot of great work that already fits this.
3. The future builds on the past: this is not trying to go back to some mythical golden age, but using the past – our traditions, and prior initiatives – to build the future.
4. This is based on prayer, meditation, consultation and scripture. We believed it is a God given vision and direction. A lot of the Church is already behind it following earlier discussions and its overwhelmingly positive reception at the Conference (and the high demand for copies of the popular version after).
5. Take risks: God is bold – so can we be.
6. A movement: More than buildings, structures or history – we are a people fired up to live out and share the Gospel.
7. Themes for this year and future years as set out in Jenny's paper.

## Notes:

1. Self explanatory
2. The person principally writing the drafts. Usually a member of the media service or the communications team.
3. The person requesting the release and bringing the information to the author.
4. It is important to be realistic and to be aware of media schedules. We will not issue a release on a Tuesday or after noon except in exceptional circumstances.
5. A major question: who are we trying to influence or inform with this release?
6. The second major question: what outcome – changed behaviour, increased sales or attendance at an event etc. – do we want to see as a result of this.

**BREAK POINT:** Is the best way to seek to influence the identified audience through this press release? If not, do not do the release and use other methods.

7. This is the central point we are trying to get across. For something as brief as a press release, there can be only one. The message should clearly relate to a strategic goal of the Church, and should be

appropriate for the recipient group identified in 6 and help achieve the outcomes in 7.

8. How does the Church gain by making this statement? Would there be more benefit by reaching the target group in private or by other means?
9. Is there anything in the planned statement that could harm the Church, now or in the future? Are we creating a hostage to fortune? How much damage could our worst enemy do with just the text of this statement?
10. Would we miss an opportunity by saying nothing? Are people looking to us to make a statement? Would it harm longer term relationships?

**BREAK POINT:** If the risks outweigh the benefits, do not issue the release.

11. Identify who will be quoted in the release and be available for any follow up media enquiries. Make sure that this person is well briefed and able to handle any follow up. It is very annoying to journalists to be find that the offered spokesperson is absent immediately after a release goes out, so have an alternative if necessary.
12. It is vital that the importance or significance of the release is considered at the start, and the appropriate level of sign-off agreed, as well as identifying the individual(s) and agreeing a time with them.
13. Other parties make the process longer and more complex so allow more time.
14. Including JPIT.
15. Think outside the usual in who might be interested, and research those lists. It is far better to send a release to a smaller number who are likely to be interested than to blanket everyone, so choose carefully.
16. Releases are far more effective when backed up with stories or data. The Church doing something is more newsworthy than the Church saying something.
17. Always look for photos.

**BREAK POINT:** "It is better to keep silent and be thought a fool than to speak and confirm it." Only issue releases that purposefully advance our agenda or further our goals.