

Media and communications – have your say

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We're consulting on updated guidance for media and communications

Consultation 3 mins read

We're seeking views on updated standards that aim to improve how police forces communicate with communities and share information.

Our updated media and communications (formerly **media relations**) standards reflect the rapidly evolving landscape of police communications, build on existing good practice, and ensure vital lessons are learned from recent major incidents, public inquiries and reviews.

The guidance recognises that policing needs to be open and transparent, and share factual information with the public about crime and policing in order to maintain trust. It acknowledges the accredited media's important role in holding police accountable and addresses the risks that false information online can pose to public safety and justice.

These enhanced standards provide clearer frameworks for how the police should communicate during investigations, operations, and major incidents, encouraging improved collaboration with partners from the accredited media.

What's changed

Authorised professional practice (APP) provides the official standards, guidance and evidence-based good practice that supports police officers, police staff and volunteers to deliver high-quality, consistent policing that builds public trust and keeps people safe.

The media and communications APP incorporates several changes that address current realities and challenges, including the following.

New communication standards

- Minimum standards for corporate communications teams to ensure consistent capability across forces.

- Guidelines for disclosing suspect information, including ethnicity and nationality.
- Enhanced frameworks for social media use and tackling information disorder.

Improved support and accountability

- Stronger requirements for supporting victims and families who find themselves in the public eye.
- Greater responsibility for chief officers to ensure appropriate communication expertise and resources.
- Enhanced collaboration between communications professionals and family liaison officers.

Protecting journalists and transparency

- Dedicated journalist safety liaison officers in police forces, supporting the government's National Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists.
- Emphasis on building sustainable relationships with accredited media while maintaining direct public communication.
- Better record-keeping requirements for corporate communications teams.

The guidance also strengthens standards for transparent communication about internal police investigations and misconduct proceedings. Developed from the College's **duty of candour principles** – introduced following the Hillsborough inquiry – it aims to ensure open and honest communication about police conduct while protecting individual rights and maintaining public trust.

Consultation closed

Our consultation closed at 11:59am on 4 January 2026.

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback.

Consultation documents

- [Go to the media and communications APP consultation](#)

Tags

Engagement and communication