



**Executive Committee**

# **Reference Manual**

**April 15, 2013**

# Executive Committee Reference Manual

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## DEFINITION

### **(ROB 1.100.002)**

Each council or committee may establish a Reference Manual, which may contain guidelines, procedures, sample documents and other tools that the council or committee uses in its day-to-day operation. The Reference Manual ensures consistency in the operation of the council or committee and serves as an educational tool for new members. The Reference Manual is an internal document of the council or committee and requires the approval of that council or committee only.



## ASHRAE Speaker's Guide for Officers

ASHRAE Officer Involvement  
In Commercial Speaker Invitations  
(Approved by ExCom 2007-11-12)

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Most speaking engagements give ASHRAE officers the opportunity to build relationships and publicize ASHRAE in a positive way. Occasionally, speaking invitations will come directly from or be closely allied to commercial firms. Guidance is needed to avoid ASHRAE officer speaking engagements from being used to inappropriately imply ASHRAE's endorsement of companies or products.

Commercial firms and even the media can sometimes 'spin' an otherwise innocent and non-commercial appearance into an implied endorsement of a firm or products in corporate newsletters, meeting announcements, press releases, and all forms of electronic communications. Hence, ASHRAE officers must avoid putting themselves in the position where the 'spin' can occur.

ASHRAE officers should not speak at:

- Closed corporate events – Examples include distributor conferences, company-wide management meetings, headquarters grand openings, etc. Note that this restriction applies only to firms active in built environment and related markets. It does not apply to not-for-profit organizations.
- Conference events named for a company – Examples include the "Bry-Air Awards" tied to ACREX ("Bry-Air has instituted the "Awards for Excellence in HVAC&R" to encourage, motivate and award excellence in innovative thinking..."). The line between an event named for a company and sponsored by a company is thin. It would be appropriate, for example, for ASHRAE officers to speak at "ACREX Innovation Awards" which happens to be sponsored by Bry-Air but not to speak at the "Bry-Air Awards".
- Political events that support one particular political party or politician – Examples include fund-raising events.
- Paid speaking engagements – All events in which an ASHRAE officer receives compensation for speaking. The appearance can be made if the payment is turned down and if the appearance does not otherwise imply endorsements.

Because the commercialism involves many 'gray' areas, officers should consult with EVP if they are not sure about whether the speaking opportunity is appropriate.



## Opportunity Fund Procedure

ExCom Procedure for Prioritizing Requests of Opportunity Funds  
Approved by ExCom 06-01-26

1. Decisions on use of Opportunity Funds will be considered at any time of a Society year other than at Society annual meetings.
2. All council chairs will report their requests to ExCom at its Wednesday meeting at Society winter meetings.
3. ExCom requests will be submitted to the Board of Directors.\*

\*See ROB 2.407.003.4 (below)

### 2.407.003.4

The Executive Committee is responsible for prioritizing and setting funding amounts of requests for funds from the Opportunity Fund prior to submitting the requests to the Board of Directors.

# ASHRAE Media Guide for Spokespeople

January 2011

## **ASHRAE Communications Staff**

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# Media Procedures for Publicizing ASHRAE

Media calls received by members or other staff should be forwarded to communications staff to ensure that the most appropriate spokesperson is interviewed and to ensure that ASHRAE's key messages are delivered.

*The ASHRAE president is the chief spokesperson for the Society. When external contacts occur, the ASHRAE staff will identify the appropriate spokesperson for that topic. (ROB 1.201.036)*

## Guiding Principles

ASHRAE, as the worldwide leader in advancing the arts and sciences of HVAC&R, is in a position to create many opportunities to obtain media coverage. To take advantage of these opportunities, ASHRAE has developed clear media procedures that can be utilized by the Society's volunteer and professional leadership. The policy is supported by resources, training and the commitment of ASHRAE leadership.

There are three guiding principles that form the basis for ASHRAE's approach to working with the media to deliver its messages.

1) Communicating to the public has important benefits to ASHRAE

- Member recruitment
- Member retention
- Building support for ASHRAE standards and the process by which they are developed
- Maintaining its status as the leading HVAC&R organization
- Public education
- Increased sales of products and programs

2) Communicating with the media is a very efficient (and inexpensive) way to communicate to ASHRAE key audiences:

- Current members
- Potential members
- Government officials (local/regional/state/federal)
- Opinion leaders
- General public
- Model code officials
- Building owners and managers
- Industry stakeholders

3) Communicating with the media must follow the basic rules of the trade:

- Meet the reporter's deadline (missing the deadline destroys media relationships and diminishes ASHRAE's value to the public and its own members)
- Speak with positive clarity, have a clear message and deliver it with conviction
- Build relationships with reporters, especially those that will cover ASHRAE related issues over time.
- When organizations refuse to speak to the press, the organization loses credibility and reporters assume there is something being avoided, some uncomfortable issue or angle that the group does not want to disclose. Either way, it is a very bad policy.
- There is always something positive to say on any issue. With just a little training this is easy to do.

### **Media Procedures**

The intent of these procedures is to address these communication challenges.

Procedures. Media calls are handled by the communications staff. Media calls received by members or other staff should be forwarded to this section to ensure that the most appropriate spokesperson is interviewed and to ensure that ASHRAE's key messages are used. Communications staff talks to media to determine the subject of the story being written or produced, the deadline and any additional materials that reporters may be interested in (such as studies or position documents). Staff then contacts the most appropriate spokesperson. Our goal is to provide a spokesperson's name and contact information on the same day of the media call and for the spokesperson to speak to reporters in advance of their deadlines.

Media contact. ASHRAE encourages its officers and spokespeople to speak with the media. This document, in large part, was prepared to offer guidelines on how best to work with the media in order to advance ASHRAE's mission and continued growth. The answer to the question, "Is it okay to talk with the media?" is yes, absolutely.

When The Press Calls. All media contacts should be reported to the ASHRAE Communications office. This allows the entire organization to benefit from the media interest and it allows for a more strategically executed media plan.

Authorization. While it is helpful to have ASHRAE represented in the general and trade press as a leader in the field of standards development and industry expertise, it is also useful to calibrate how members speak to reporters. Based on ASHRAE's organizational structure, a system of using members trained in media contact makes the most sense. This approach enables reporters to report on ASHRAE activity more accurately and assists ASHRAE in providing to the media messages that advance the Society's mission. Two tiers of media contact are used by ASHRAE:

#### Tier One

The first tier utilizes pre-determined spokespersons, including members of the Executive Committee, to respond to media requests. Spokespersons will be identified by Communications staff based on past media experience with those members. Topics include:

- Role of ASHRAE (standards, research, professional development)

- Current issues of interest to the general public and media (indoor air quality, energy design guidelines, etc.)
- Positions on more specific technical topics that generate media interest, such as air craft cabin indoor air quality, office productivity, etc.

### Tier Two

The second tier outlines messages limited to the current president and Executive Committee of ASHRAE. Topics would include everything in the first tier and sensitive issues related to specific ASHRAE activities. In these cases, the ASHRAE Communications staff can prepare tightly designed message points that will allow ASHRAE to have a voice in media coverage without taking a conflict-causing position. Examples would be Society positions on specific challenges to standards or research projects.

### The Interview Process

Pre-Interview. When a reporter calls for information, there are a few questions that ASHRAE's professional staff asks to help make the subsequent interview more successful. These questions may include:

- 1) Asking for the reporter's deadline (when they have to turn the story in to their editor).
- 2) Asking the reporter about the story. What is it about? Who have they spoken to already? What do they see as the key issues of interest to their readers? What does the reporter know about ASHRAE?
- 3) Asking if their questions can be made available ahead of time. Don't expect they will comply (the more sophisticated the publication, the less likely you are to see any questions in advance).
- 4) Asking if the spokesperson can fact-check their portion of the story once it is completed. Again don't expect a yes every time.

Interview. Keep in mind that this is an ASHRAE interview. You should identify your ability to talk on the reporter's topic by citing your ASHRAE qualifications, your past or current committee membership, for example. There is no benefit to ASHRAE if your company name and affiliation are used to identify you in articles.

*Key Messages.* Your goal in talking to the media is to share the important work that ASHRAE is doing. Reporters have only so many inches or seconds in which to tell a story. Your focus should be on sharing the Society's work and how it positively impacts the industry. Try to avoid providing too much background or too many details about the inner-workings of ASHRAE – readers don't care how a committee is established – they just want to know how the committee's work impacts them.

Follow-up. Once an interview is over, there is still important work to be done. Make sure the ASHRAE media interview procedures have been followed. If the reporter typically covers issues related to ASHRAE's mission, it may be useful to establish a relationship with the reporter in order to encourage further interaction. ASHRAE professional staff can provide guidance in this regard. Follow-up is also called for once the story is published to either compliment the reporter on a job well done or to correct misinformation if the reporter got it wrong.

Post-Interview Perception. It is not uncommon to feel disappointment once the final story is published. Reporters can get the facts wrong; they can misquote you or take your quote out of context. While media training can help to minimize these challenges, they do happen and spokespersons should know that ASHRAE professional staff and elected officers understand that there is always some risk when speaking to the media. On balance, however, ASHRAE has decided that the overall benefits of a more proactive media policy far outweigh the occasional misquote or misinformation.

Rehearse. Practice the procedures using simulations. Do they work well? What adjustments are necessary? Also, once an interview is scheduled, have someone play the role of the reporter and ask the tough questions. Everyone benefits from this kind of preparation.

Collateral material. ASHRAE has a number of fact sheets, issues papers and other background materials specifically designed for reporters that can answer many of their basic questions. These materials are supplements to, not a replacement for, a media interview. Reporters want to be able to quote a person, not a piece of paper.

**Communication Assistance Contact List.** When ASHRAE members have questions or need help with media related issues they should contact:

- Jodi Scott at [jscott@ashrae.org](mailto:jscott@ashrae.org)
- Amanda Dean at [adean@ashrae.org](mailto:adean@ashrae.org)

## **ExCom Minutes Posting on ASHRAE Website**

On March 16, 2014, ExCom passed the following motion:

That approved Executive Committee open minutes and attachments be posted to the website within 30 days after approval and that this motion be placed in the Executive Committee's Reference Manual.

The motion was reported to the Board of Sunday, June 29, 2014/

On July 14, 2011, ExCom passed the following motion:

That approved Executive Committee minutes and attachments be posted on the ASHRAE website within 30 days after approval and that this motion be placed in the Executive Committee's Reference Manual.

The motion was reported to the Board on July 21, 2011.