



## **Media Relations Policy**

*Created 6/13/2018*

### **Rationale**

Effective communications with the media are critical to Crossmen Productions ability to carry out its mission and promote continued support for DCI and all Crossmen program offerings.

### **Policy**

The executive director of Crossmen serves as the official organization spokesperson on matters pertaining to Crossmen, its operations, and Drum Corps International. The official spokesperson conveys official information on issues of general impact or significance as well as situations that are of a particularly controversial or sensitive nature. Inquiries from the media about such issues are to be referred to the executive director and/or the official communications designee.

- Informing all stakeholders about programs;
- Promoting the Crossmen achievements, activities, and events;
- Expanding the Crossmen brand and general visibility; and
- Ensuring that all stakeholders (i.e. members, staff, parents, alumni, etc.) receive accurate information regarding incidents and issues of a controversial and/or sensitive nature.

Depending on the specific circumstances, the executive director of Crossmen may also assign communications duties to an alternate spokesperson on a specific issue.

No Crossmen stakeholder may speak in a derogatory manner about another participating organization or about DCI. Any questions regarding another organization should be referred to the affected organization, and those regarding DCI are to be sent to the executive director of DCI and/or the official communications designee.

In the event of a crisis or emergency affecting the Crossmen organization, the executive director of Crossmen and the Crossmen communications team will handle all contacts with the media and will coordinate the information flow from Crossmen to the public. In such situations, all stakeholders are to refer calls from the media to the executive Director.

## **Crossmen Guidelines on Media Interaction Policies**

To protect all members, staff, and volunteers, the Crossmen have established the following:

- Refer all media inquiries to the designated spokesperson for the organization.
- Do not speak to the media, without the organization spokesperson present to ensure accuracy of all disseminated information.
- Require a staff member of the Crossmen to be present with the organization spokesperson during all media interaction with members and volunteers.
- If approached separately or in an unsupervised situation, all participants must take reporters to the organization spokesperson.
- These requirements are in effect at the beginning of the year and throughout the competitive season, as needed.

## **General Procedures for Interacting with the Media**

A Crossmen spokesperson will respond to requests from the media regarding their own programs, policies and procedures, activities, events, and other topics related to Crossmen. In such cases, when appropriate and relevant, the appropriate Crossmen spokesperson should receive notification as soon as possible to inform him/her of the contact. Such notification can be particularly important if Crossmen or other DCI participating organizations may need to make follow-up inquiries to ensure a coordinated, consistent response. If the inquiry involves issues with DCI that are significant and/or are of a controversial or sensitive nature, the Crossmen will refer the media representative to the executive director of DCI.

Since positive media solicitation is an integral element of Crossmen's branding program, any story, ideas for articles or pieces that would positively portray the organization, its programs and activities, or its member organizations should route to the executive director and/or the communications team. In a comparable manner, Crossmen will notify DCI about negative occurrences that are likely to rise to the level of media interest.

Guidelines for communicating with the media when the issue is non-controversial and limited to the participating organization:

Obtain the name of the person calling, the media organization and, if available, the anticipated release time of information in print, broadcast, and/or online publication. Ask for a copy of the stories from the reporter and send information to the DCI communications team for expanded use and for coverage records.

Do not answer or respond to questions regarding 1) legal issues, 2) personnel issues, 3) questions that involve Crossmen's or any other participating organization's integrity such as ethics or issues that may result in harm to others, or 4) a crisis or emergency. Refer all such inquiries to the executive director and/or the communications team.

The most effective approach with the media is to be prompt, helpful, and honest. All initial inquiries from the media should be answered as soon as possible and the reporters' deadlines considered in scheduling interviews.

Interview subjects should always make sure they understand each question from the media before answering. If answering would be inappropriate or if the interview subject is uncomfortable providing a response, the organization representative should take the reporter's contact information and advise him/her that someone who can provide the information will contact him/her as soon as possible. Follow up by contacting the executive director and/or the communications team.

Keep the interaction positive. Do not offer speculations or gossip or answer a reporter's question with "no comment." Make sure the reporter understands the responses and ask if there is anything needed. Provide a contact name, phone number and/or e-mail address for follow-up questions.

Remember that in responding to the media, the interview subject can be viewed as representing and speaking for the entire Crossmen organization or even for the DCI community. Individual opinions should be clearly and carefully identified as such.

Any media inquiries involving information about specific people are to be directed to the Crossmen executive director and/or the communications team, the DCI communications team, or the executive director of DCI. Such inquiries will be handled in strict compliance with applicable privacy laws.

**Request assistance from the Crossmen executive director and/or the communications team if needed.**