

WIA Policy on publication of contentious material

Introduction

Contentious material is material that, if published:

- could have negative legal consequences
- libels, slanders, defames or negatively criticises individuals
- a reasonable person would deem to be not in the best interests of the Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA) and its members.

The WIA as a publisher has the responsibility to ensure that the content of all WIA publications is appropriate and meets all the conditions set out in:

- the WIA Constitution
- the Licence Conditions Determination
- such relevant legislation as the Corporations Act, the Privacy Act, and the Radiocommunications Act.

WIA publications include print, CD, DVD, Bluetooth and on air material; examples include the monthly AR magazine, the annual Callbook, weekly WIA National News, special events, re-broadcasts, advertising, or general broadcasts.

Guiding principles

To assist the WIA to meet its obligations, these guiding principles have been adopted:

- Material required to be published under requirements of the Constitution or the Corporations Act must be authorised by the Secretary after submission to and approval by the Board.
- Material shall not be libellous, slanderous or defamatory. Material should focus on particular issues, and not criticise individuals negatively (see Note 1). Risk of legal action).
- Material should be for a proper purpose and promote the interests of the WIA and its members.
- Material potentially of a contentious nature must be submitted to and approved by the WIA Board prior to inclusion in a particular publication.
- Material submitted by an individual, a group or club that promotes a cause shall be treated as advertising. Advertising may attract a publication fee.
- The WIA will avoid the publication of material during an election period that could affect the outcome of the election.

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- The Board Comment broadcast on air during an election period shall not present contentious issues, negatively criticise or promote members standing for election.
- The WIA may seek legal advice prior to material being published or distributed through print, CD, DVD, Bluetooth or on air.

Expanded notes:

1). Risk of legal action

The WIA has a duty of care to avoid any publication via print, CD, DVD, Bluetooth or on air, being used as a vehicle to disseminate material that is, or may be seen, to:

- libel or slander any person
- defame individuals, groups, businesses or organisations
- contain overt or covert threats
- harass by nature or intent
- vilify any person or group.

This applies to *all content publishable* via print, CD, DVD, Bluetooth or on air.

Any material that a Team Leader, Anchor or Editor judges to pose such risks may be:

- returned to the author(s) as not suitable for publication, with an accompanying brief explanation
- referred to the WIA Board for consideration, with the author(s) advised of this action by the Team Leader, Anchor or Editor. The WIA Secretary is responsible for subsequently advising the author(s) of the Board's decision.

2). Contentious material

- The Board shall determine the suitability of the material for publication at its next scheduled Board meeting or, if urgent, in an out-of-session Board meeting.
- If publication is consequently approved, those affected by the contentious material shall be given the opportunity to respond in the next issue of the relevant publication. The original material may be held over to allow time for a response.

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Note: Advertising material for financial gain or political advertising will not be accepted for on-air broadcast. Any other advertising to be accepted for publication must:

- comply with the Guiding principles
- be consistent with the aims and objects of the WIA
- promote the interests of the WIA, its members and the Amateur Radio community at large.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Giles-Clark', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Justin Giles-Clark VK7TW
President
Wireless Institute of Australia