

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Triathlon Canada is committed to a sport and work environment that supports responsible and respectful communication – be it in traditional or social media – by its athletes, coaches, officials, staff, Members and Board of Directors. All dealings with media – be it traditional media (someone reporting on a particular event or situation) or social media (self-reporting on a particular event or situation) postings - are to be treated as ‘public’ and must be recognized as making comments in a public forum.

This policy outlines Triathlon Canada’s commitment to communications and provides the mechanism for our organization to drive media attention and public awareness for the national body, while implementing a strategy to deal with damaging situations quickly, responsively and effectively.

2. POLICY DETAILS

2.1 Scope

This policy applies to all employees, directors, coaches, athletes, officials, volunteers and Members of Triathlon Canada. It applies to behaviour when serving as a representative of Triathlon Canada, and when participating as a sole individual both in a public media forum.

This policy covers traditional and social media messaging and actions that fall within Triathlon Canada’s organizational jurisdiction and includes, but is not restricted to, protection of individuals, our brand, our sport profile, and relationships with our sponsors and funding partners.

2.2 Spokespeople

All media requests and inquires must be directed to the Communications Manager first who will steer the request to the appropriate spokesperson in an effort to best steer the interview, while protecting the Triathlon Canada brand and individual.

All media requests will be directed and managed by the Communications Manager. The primary spokesperson for Triathlon Canada is the Chief Executive Officer. Working with the Chief Executive Officer, the Communications Manager will determine the best spokesperson within the national sport organization for each particular media situation. Triathlon Canada’s President will be copied and engaged in all media requests that are political in nature, involve governance-related topics, or issues with regards to the chief executive officer.

Depending on the situation, other spokespersons who may be called upon by the Communications Manager, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer include:

- President (political topics, governance, CEO-related matters)
- High-Performance Director
- Coaches
- Individual Athletes

It is recognized and understood that athletes and coaches will be asked to participate in media activities immediately following races at designated media areas. All other requests should be directed to the Communications Manager to support with coach/athlete time-management, while protecting the interviewee and the Triathlon Canada brand.

2.3 Standard of Conduct – Traditional Media

Triathlon Canada endorses a high standard of behaviour when acting in all forms of traditional media, and does not condone any messages that:

- May constitute harassment, discrimination, bullying or violence;
- Are hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual(s)
- Refer to controversial or inflammatory subjects including politics, sex, religion;
- Are damaging to the Triathlon Canada brand and/or relationships with our stakeholders and funding partners;
- Divulge confidential or proprietary information that belongs to Triathlon Canada;
- Fail to respect the privacy of others by disclosing personal information without requisite consent.

2.4 Standard of Conduct – Social Media Postings

A specific Social Media Policy has also been created. It must be reviewed, and agreed to, by all Triathlon Canada staff, contractors, athletes, coaches and board members.

Triathlon Canada recognizes that social media can be used for organizational purposes to increase communication and advance the promotion and positive profile of our sport and athletes to a large audience.

Triathlon Canada actively encourages and supports those affiliated with its brand, most notably athletes, taking part in social media to share their experiences. Athletes are one of our best sources of social media content, and act as brand ambassadors for our organization and sport. As coaches, officials, staff, Members and Board of Directors, it is also a great opportunity to raise the profile of our athletes and help them connect with fans of the sport.

Triathlon Canada recognizes the importance of online conversation, and respects the right to freedom of speech and the use of social media for personal purposes. However, all postings made to social media are treated as 'public', comparable to comments or actions in a public forum or in front of traditional media.

Unless otherwise authorized by the Chief Executive Officer or Communications Manager, social media on Triathlon Canada affiliated channels is restricted to the Communications Manager.

Messages posted on personal online sites cannot be attributed to Triathlon Canada, and must not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the national sport organization.

2.5 Personal Responsibility

You are personally responsible for the content of your comments in front of traditional media, and for the content of your blogs and social media posts, both professional and personal. You can be held personally liable for any content deemed to be defamatory, obscene or offensive, proprietary or libelous. For these reasons, you should exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted material, legal conclusions and derogatory remarks or characterizations.

2.6 Issue and Crisis Response

The crisis plan will be activated to minimize damage to Triathlon Canada – both internally and externally – and to protect relationships with all partners: sponsors, government, sport and media, and bring a sense of calm to all emergency situations.

Crisis situations include, but are not limited to, situations characterized by a negative media situation, internal organization issue, or controversial comment made on social media. When deemed a crisis by the Chief Executive Officer or Communications Manager, Triathlon Canada will exercise its crisis plan.

Only the Communications Manager, President or Chief Executive Officer will conduct all communications internally and publicly about crisis events.

2.7 Imposing Disciplinary Sanctions

An individual who uses traditional or social media irresponsibly or disrespectfully in a manner that may bring Triathlon Canada into disrepute and/or is contrary to the standards of conduct for messaging and posting noted in the above policy will be subject to discipline internally from the Chief Executive Officer. The Board of Directors will manage disciplinary actions if the breach of conduct has come from the President. The behaviour that is already expected in traditional media is also expected in the new world of social media.

Disciplinary sanctions will reflect the seriousness of the infraction. Minor infractions are single, largely unintentional breaches of this policy that generally do not result in harm to individuals and/or Triathlon Canada. Major infractions are either single breaches of significance or multiple breaches that violate Triathlon Canada's Code of Conduct and that result, or have the potential to result, in harm to individuals and/or to the Triathlon Canada brand.

3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer and Communications Manager have shared responsibility and accountability to implement and enforce this policy.

4. POLICY EXCEPTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

There are no exceptions or exclusions to this policy.