



INFORMATION SHARING / PRESS RELEASES WITH THE MEDIA & PUBLIC

Purpose

These are sample statements to use if members of the media, public or outside sources call, message or before a press release is issued if necessary. Getting the facts correct is a priority. Do not give information to the media before confirming facts with Directors or authorities. Changing information after it is released can lead to confusion and loss of focus on the key messages.

Directions

Review these statements and adapt them with specific information as necessary, without including too many details.

Official HACSA Statement

“Thank you for your inquiry. We have been advised by authorities and legal counsel not to disclose any details surrounding this investigation, nor can we comment or speculate about the status of any open case at this time. Additionally, as per the “HACSA Confidentiality Policy”, it is the responsibility of the Society and its members to limit the disclosure of confidential information that could be detrimental to any official or internal investigation.

The Board of Directors are acting based on advice from legal counsel and have been advised that it is in the best interest of the society that we take steps to perform our own internal review and to decide on further disciplinary actions towards any individual as necessary.

We will do our best to maintain communication to all society members and the public and hope that during these trying times you will consider confidentiality before discussing further details with anyone.”

Immediate Responses to the Media or the Public

If someone is “at your door” demanding information and you need time to assemble the facts, you can use the statements below or the “Official Statement from HACSA”.

Getting the facts is a priority. It is important that you do not give in to pressure to confirm or release information before you have confirmation (e.g., confirmation that details are approved to be sent out to the general public by authorities).



Other Pre-scripted Responses

If on the phone to the media:

- “We’ve just learned about the [situation, incident, event] and are trying to get more complete information now. How can I reach you when I have more information?”
- “All our efforts are directed at [bringing the situation under control]. I’m not going to speculate about [the situation]. How can I reach you when I have more information?”
- “I’m not the authority on this subject. Let me have your [name, ID, badge] and I’ll call you back.”
- “We’re preparing a statement now. Can I get back to you?”
- “You may check our website for background information, and I will fax/e-mail you with the time of our next update.”

If in person at the incident site or in front of a press meeting:

“This is an evolving [situation, incident, event], and I know you want as much information as possible right now. While we work to get your questions answered, I want to tell you what we can confirm right now:

- At approximately [time], a [brief description of what happened].
- At this point, we do not know how long the investigation will last, how many members are affected.
- We have a plan in place. We are being assisted by legal counsel, members of the society and authorities as part of that plan.
- The situation is under control. We are under advisement of the investigation with authorities to understand how this has happened.
- We will continue to gather information and release it to you as soon as possible. I will be back to you within [amount of time in minutes or hours] to give you an update. As soon as we have confirmed information, it will be provided.
- We ask for your patience as we respond to this situation.”