



Media activities aboard NERC ships – outline policy

Introduction

The importance of communicating NERC science impacts has never been greater. NERC recognises that media engagement is an excellent way to showcase the scientific research that occurs on our ships, which provide a unique and dynamic environment in which to film news or documentary footage and take photographs.

NERC currently operates Royal Research Ships through two of its research centres – the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and the National Oceanography Centre (NOC).

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures concerning management of media and set guidelines for the production and publication of film and images taken on NERC ships. It covers film crews, photography and data images taken aboard NERC ships. It provides advice to Principal Investigators (PIs) and their science parties during a research cruise. It also provides advice to staff aboard a NERC ship where media activities are taking place.

General principles

- NERC welcomes approaches from legitimate media to film NERC- funded science aboard its ships.
- Media presence will be arranged and coordinated by the NOC or BAS communications/press office teams.
- Written applications to film on ships will be judged on their individual merits.
- Permission will be given in writing by the NOC/BAS Head of Communications in consultation with the ship's Master and the PI of the science party. NOC/BAS comms will also take responsibility for location agreements and clearance forms.
- A cruise media plan will be agreed between NOC/BAS Head of Communications (on behalf of NERC) and the applicant media organisation.
- Onboard, the ship's Master heads the chain of command and all media personnel on board will comply with his instructions, or those of his nominee. This core principle will be a condition of carriage.
- Generally, there will be no charge for a legitimate media organisation to film aboard a NERC ship and the cost of berths will be met by NERC. However, other costs – such as boat transfers, shipping of equipment, use of satellite communications, etc, will be picked up by the hosted media organisation.

Responsibility for media management

Journalists and broadcasters may signal their interest in a research cruise by approaching either NERC Swindon Office, the NOC or BAS press offices, a member of the science party, or ship operations staff. Media proposals should be submitted through a pro-forma (Appendix 1)

NERC welcomes these outreach opportunities, and will work closely with the PI and the film makers to accommodate them wherever technically and logistically possible.

Depending on home institution of the vessel it is solely the responsibility of the NERC-employed media team at BAS or NOC to handle such enquiries through the relevant press office. This will be managed working with the press office of the PI's university or research centre, if the PI is from neither NOC nor BAS.



**British
Antarctic Survey**
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL



**National
Oceanography Centre**
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL

Therefore, if either a PI or ship operations personnel are contacted direct by media, they should refer the enquirer to the respective press office. They should not confirm to the film maker that they may join the cruise, as this decision will need to be taken by the relevant press office working with the PI and NERC ship management.

For research cruises aboard the RRS *James Clark Ross* or the RRS *Ernest Shackleton*, the BAS press office will handle the enquiry; for cruises aboard the RRS *Discovery* or the RRS *James Cook*, the NOC press office will handle the enquiry.

Briefing for science party and ship's crew

Media engagement aboard ships works most effectively when all parties onboard are well informed from early in the process and an outline plan is in place for filming/photography.

Once the participation in a cruise of a media organisation is agreed, a briefing will be made available to all science party and crew members (through the ship's Master) as well as to NOC, BAS and NERC ship operations personnel. This will outline the agreed filming schedule, will identify media personnel on board, will define areas where filming and interviews will take place and will list potential interviewees and willing participants in filming or photography. A list of ship's crew and science party members who have expressly stated that they do not wish to be filmed or photographed will also be made available.

The briefing will be drafted by the responsible press officer who will be tasked with coordinating media participation - and holding a media briefing in which members of the production company will meet ship's crew and members of the science party. The expectations of all will be explained, and there will be ample opportunity for questions. The press office's role is to ensure that everyone involved is happy with and understands the arrangements *prior* to the cruise departure.

Release forms

Most reputable broadcasters require release forms to be signed by all participants in a documentary or news feature, as well as a location agreement which permits the venue – in this case the ship – to be used in a filmed item. These are a common industry requirement and are generally standardised. Individual participants should sign their own release forms, and it is important that this is completed before the end of the cruise and the forms returned to the media representatives. BAS and NOC Press Offices can advise. The Head of Communications at NOC or BAS can sign the location agreement on behalf of NERC.

Engagement with media outside research cruise participants

During the research cruise, by science party members who are not NOC or BAS employees, engagement with other media not on board should be made, in the first instance through the NOC or BAS press office who will act as liaison with the press office of the scientist's home institution. NOC and BAS researchers are covered by the centres' media protocols in which media liaison through the centre's press office is a requirement.

BAS and NOC have their own policies and procedures, including media protocols, which must be adhered to. PI's for research cruises should contact the appropriate centre at the earliest opportunity.

A separate BAS policy for hosting media visits to Antarctica is available from the BAS Press Office.

Photography – copyright

NERC has a separate policy entitled ‘Photography and NERC’s photo libraries’. This makes it clear that:

Copyright on pictures/film taken by NERC photographers (for example photographers employed by BAS) lies with NERC-UKRI.

Copyright on material commissioned by NERC or our research centres, where we have a signed agreement before filming/photography, lies with NERC-UKRI.

NERC makes no copyright claim on pictures taken by scientists on research expeditions.

Ownership of images, footage and data

Film footage obtained by film crews, or personally obtained by those onboard is not classified as data, and unless commissioned by NERC – eg, through a NOC or BAS in-house photographer or videographer - the rights lie with the documentary film-maker or photographer’s employing media title.

Footage obtained by cameras installed on Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) is classified as data, and will come under the remit of the NERC Data policy. This is shortly to be superseded by the specific NERC data policy on ROV footage.

NERC has a separate policy entitled ‘Data Management’.

Web diaries, blogs and social networking websites

NERC recognises the important value of instantly sharing information and pictures through web diaries, blogs and social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.’

See Appendix 2 as an example of policy guidance.

Contacts

BAS Press Office	Athena Dinar	amdi@bas.ac.uk	01223 221441
NOC Press Office	Lucy Calvert	lucy.calvert@noc.ac.uk	02380 598490
NERC Press Office	Jo Thompson	joatho@nerc.ac.uk	01793 441539
	Mary Goodchild	marodc@nerc.ac.uk	01793 411939
NERC Marine Planning	Natalie Clark	natcla@nerc.ac.uk	07703 380220



Appendix 1

Media visit application to NERC/British Antarctic Survey/ National Oceanography Centre

Please fill in this form and attach any additional information as an appendix – with no more than two pages.

Title of proposal:	
Company name:	
Location(s): Where do you want to go- and on which ship?	
Length of visit: How long would you need to stay?	
Proposed dates: When is the ideal time for you to visit – be flexible	
Team size: How many people are in your team and explain their role	
Proposal details: What are you hoping to achieve? NERC is committed to engaging with its audiences through the media. How will this proposal promote and explain NERC-funded research and operations? In no longer than 200 words max please!	
Details of all broadcasts/reports/online exposure from this visit: Please provide as much detail about the ways this visit will engage with a range of audiences – TV, Radio, Online and Social Media? Please add audience figures.	
Biography or credentials: Tell us about other work you have produced/written	
Is this proposal supported by a commissioner/editor? Don't forget to include your letter with your submission	

Appendix 2.

Communications Policy and Guidance

Digital Communication – social media, web diaries and blogs



Introduction

Digital technology has revolutionised the way in which people communicate and share information at local, national and international levels. This policy guidance is aligned to NERC and Government Communications Service guidance on the use of social media.

All members of staff need to be aware of the advantages and potential pitfalls associated with digital engagement.

BAS official social media channels

BAS proactive communication activities include posting news, job opportunities, images and video on its official social media accounts. The Communications Team, Web Apps Team and HR Team manage 'Admin' rights and are responsible for publishing on the following sites:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter: BAS news](#), [Twitter: BAS jobs](#)

[You Tube](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

From time to time other individuals are granted time-limited permissions to post about particular areas of science or operations.

Guiding principles for personal use of social media

It is recognised that many members of staff use personal social media sites to communicate and share stories about their BAS/Antarctic/Arctic experiences with families and friends. Sometimes the lines between official and personal can become blurred.

The principles covering the use of social media by BAS (NERC) employees in both an official and personal capacity are the same as those that apply for any other media. Social media is a public forum and the same considerations apply as would, say, to speaking in public or writing something for publication either officially or in a personal capacity outside of work.

Social media can be used effectively and safely to enable BAS to:

1. communicate with citizens in the places they already are
2. promote science and operational activities
3. drive social media visitors to the BAS website for more information
4. consult and engage with communities
5. be more transparent and accountable about how public money is spent
6. be part of the conversation with all the benefits that brings
7. comply with NERC and Government policies and procedures for using social media



All members of staff must comply with Research Council and Government guidance on the use of social media. In brief employees should:

- ensure that no information is made available that could provide a person with unauthorised access to BAS/NERC confidential work-related information
- refrain from recording any confidential information regarding BAS/NERC on any social networking website
- always comply with NERC and BAS and local policies/guidance, as well as national and international legislation

Your personal social media activity

The following 'common sense' points are worth bearing in mind when posting or blogging on your social media sites on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube etc:

- Social media sites can be read by anyone – not just families and friends. Journalists find them a good source of background information
- BAS's computing facilities must not be used to distribute material which might reasonably cause offence or which would be considered socially unacceptable or embarrassing to others
- Unless authorised to do so, staff must not give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the organisation in personal websites/blogs. If an individual wishes to express their own personal views, he/she must make it clear. Phrases such as "I am a member of staff of but I am expressing my own personal views" should be used
- Members of staff should be aware that voicing their complaints through blogs, websites or directly to the media is not an appropriate way to comment on organisational policy
- Posting information which is privileged or has been supplied in confidence is not acceptable
- Permission to publish should be obtained from people appearing in photos or video before posting. A credit should be given in the caption if you post a photo that is not your copyright.

NERC social media policy guidance

Annex to NERC Electronic Communications Policy

Introduction

NERC is increasingly exploring how social networking can aid its business by enabling collaboration and interaction. New online collaboration systems are fundamentally changing the way NERC staff work and engage with each other and their stakeholders, including the public. NERC supports responsible involvement in this rapidly growing online community as do many Government Departments

Your choice, your responsibility

It is up to you, as a NERC employee, to decide whether you, or the staff you manage, create or participate in a blog, wiki, online social network or any other form of online publishing or discussion which is related in some way to your work. This could be formally through work in public relations, marketing and communications, promoting your science, or even informally during your personal involvement in the online community.



There are however, serious risks to both NERC and its stakeholders in inappropriate use of social networking sites: disciplinary action has already been taken against public sector workers, including NERC staff, who have misjudged their comments online and caused damage or offence as a result. No matter how limited your networking is – it will become public property once it is visible to any user outside NERC, so we want to ensure that all staff can safely and successfully make use of this important media.

This guidance forms an Annex to NERC's Electronic Communications Policy which all users of out IT systems should familiarise themselves with.

Keeping it simple

Be sure that you are treating social networking no differently to any other form of communication. NERC's existing policies already cover all the aspects of social networking e.g. communications, behaviour, acceptable use, security, data protection, system access etc. This Annex distils the key issues and gives practical guidance on using social networking.

Core Expectations – your duty of care.

NERC's Core Expectations set out clearly what NERC should reasonably expect of us. They set out what we should all do at work and the interpersonal skills we should demonstrate. The key message to take away is - *be professional at all times and consider the wider implications of your actions.*

NERC Electronic Communications Policy Modified: 10/12/10 Page: 16/17 C522756

Further information:

Linda Capper, lmca@bas.ac.uk tel: 01223 221448; mobile: 07714 233744;

Athena Dinar, amdi@bas.ac.uk tel: 01223 221441; mobile: 07909 008516

Layla Batchellier, laytch@bas.ac.uk: 01223 221506

References:

[Guidance on propriety in digital and social media](#)

[NERC Policy on e-communication](#)

