

Public Prosecutions New Brunswick	Media Relations	DPP Guideline 32 March 10, 2003
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General

The Director of Public Prosecutions and the Regional Crown Prosecutors are expected to handle all media inquiries respecting matters which are within their respective areas of responsibility. Any response to questions of policy should be referred to the Director. In matters of high profile or of major public concern, the Regional Crown Prosecutor should consider referring all inquiries to the Director.

The response to media inquiries must be tempered in cases where an inordinate amount of time would be required to prepare such a response or involving those matters which must remain "confidential". The "confidential" category includes personnel matters, criminal investigations, the details of budget and legislative proposals.

Concerning Specific Charges

In relation to specific charges, since the information once laid is a public document, the media are entitled to:

- a) the name and address of the accused
- b) the charge
- c) the current standing of the case.

A reasonable effort should be made to ensure that the accused has been served before this information is released to the public.

Crown Prosecutors should never comment to the media on the merits of, or on the evidence relating to any case that is pending or before the court. To do so may prejudice the accused's right to a fair trial and may result in mistrial.

However, Regional Crown Prosecutors upon request from the media may provide general information on substantive criminal law and procedure. Regional Crown Prosecutors are encouraged to respond to media requests for information on the operation of the criminal justice system and the Office of the Attorney General.

Where appropriate, the Regional Crown Prosecutor may authorize the local Crown Prosecutor to deal with such matters at the local level.

In cases where there is doubt about the appropriateness of a response, the Director should be consulted.