JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Head of Media Relations
Division: Communications (COM) Division
Grade: F

Reports To: Director and Spokesperson - Communications Division

General Information

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal sovereign states. Its special strength lies in the combination of its diversity and its shared values. The Commonwealth Secretariat in London is the principal intergovernmental organisation of the Commonwealth. It convenes summits and high-level meetings; executes plans agreed by Commonwealth Heads of Government; promotes Commonwealth values and supports the work of the Commonwealth family of organisations.

The Communications Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat is responsible for supporting the Commonwealth (and the Commonwealth Secretariat) with communicating with member states and the general public through the media, online and across other appropriate channels. It is responsible for projecting the brand of the Commonwealth and raising its profile to member governments, the media, specialist groups, young people, and the general public. It does this through a range of strategic communications channels, including proactive media relations, online outreach through social media and the Commonwealth’s website, publications and knowledge management.

Job Summary

The Head of Media Relations is responsible for managing the media team and ensuring that they are effective in raising the profile of the Commonwealth and its programmes in mainstream media: newspapers, radio and television channels. Cultivating and maintaining sound relations with the media across the Commonwealth is essential to improving its reputation, brand recognition and its relevance as an international organisation committed to democratic governance and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Head of Media Relations will ensure that media organisations from across the world are effectively engaged with and are informed about the Commonwealth, its work and its role in the international community, and that the work of the organisation is communicated to as wide an audience as possible.

Reporting to the Director and Spokesperson - Communications, the Head of Media Relations will manage a team, where appropriate deputise for the Director and Spokesperson - Communications in internal and external meetings and play a leadership role in the Communications Division. They are supported by a Communications Adviser, two Senior Communications Officers and two Communications Officers and an Internal Communications Officer. The Operations Officer will also support the Media team along with other sections of the Division.

Task Description

The Head of Media Relations participates as a core member of the Communication Division’s Senior Leadership team. As key tasks, they will:

1. Develop and implement a media strategy and workplan - with appropriate indicators of success - as an integral part of the broader divisional Communications Strategy, to help deliver the Secretariat’s Strategic Plan;

2. Lead and supervise the Media team so that they engage in proactive communications with the media at all levels - UK-based media, national media in Commonwealth member countries and international media generally;

3. Where appropriate, deputise for the Director and Spokesperson - Communications in internal and external meetings and play a leadership role in the Communications Division;

4. Oversee the preparation by the Media team of concise media messages on all relevant topics for use by the Director and Spokesperson - Communications Division and other members of the senior management. These messages should be updated on a regular basis;

5. Organise press briefings/press conferences for the Secretary-General and other senior management staff as needed;

6. Work closely with the Office of the Secretary-General to ensure that all public messages and activity generated by the Office of the Secretary-General is fully consistent with media messages and strategies, and is integrated, planned and executed appropriately;

7. Ensure that the Communications Division provides leadership on strategic press and media output across the Secretariat, overseeing the development and production of media engagement campaigns, material and programmes;

8. Ensure the production - including drafting, as well as editorial oversight - of media advisories, press releases, public statements, presentations and speeches, ensuring that these products are produced to a high standard;

9. Ensure the targeted distribution of media advisories, press releases, statements and speeches of the Secretary-General, ensuring wide coverage across the Commonwealth;

10. Where appropriate, attend internal and external meetings to represent the Communications Division and the Secretariat, and provide advice where required;

11. Alongside the Director and Spokesperson - Communications Division, lead on the planning and delivery of the Communications Division’s outputs relating to the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government summit;

12. Manage, motivate and appraise the performance of section staff;

13. Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and in the Secretariat’s Gender Equality Policy;

14. Organise and participate in out of hours press office cover as part of a rota system;

15. Perform any other duties as may be required from time to time.

**Person Specification**

**Education**
• A degree or equivalent experience in Communications, Journalism, Media Studies, International Affairs or any other appropriate field.

**Work Experience**

• A minimum of 10 years’ experience in media or communications roles and five years’ of communications and media management experience, gained at a senior level.
• Significant experience within a multilateral organisation or within an international NGO would be an advantage.

**Skills**

The post-holder should be able to demonstrate:

• Creative and strategic thinking.
• Good managerial skills and a thorough understanding of tracking performance against delivery.
• Excellent oral and written communication skills.
• Good organisational skills.
• The ability to perform well under pressure.

**Competencies**

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<th>Respect for Diversity</th>
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<td>Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.</td>
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<td>Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.</td>
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<td>Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and in decision-making.</td>
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<td>Examines own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.</td>
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<td>Encourages others to evaluate systems, processes and behaviours to ensure that respect for diversity is demonstrated.</td>
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<th>Working with Others</th>
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<td>Manages conflict and works towards mutual solutions.</td>
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<td>Identifies organisations with which to partner for specific solutions.</td>
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<td>Encourages others and provides them with the autonomy to pursue relationships.</td>
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<td>Uses personal influence to establish compromise and agreement when faced with conflict.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates balance between directness and diplomacy in negotiations.</td>
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<td>Uses influence to persuade partners and third parties towards Commonwealth Secretariat aims.</td>
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<td>Encourages and supports others in demonstrating cultural awareness when working with others.</td>
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<th>Planning and Analysis</th>
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Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level.

Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states’ goals.

Able to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information.

Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical information.

**Communication**

Mentors a number of employees at a senior level.

Recognises the talent in the Section, seeking to develop, support, and grow it.

Directs the energy of the Section towards a common goal.

Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances.

**Managing Resources**

Manages programme and cross-team activities against specific objectives/results.

Manages available resources in order to meet objectives e.g. by effective and efficient use of budget inter alia.

Identifies the best method of delivery and resources when high level course of action has been identified.

Analyses available resources and what activity they will enable.

Takes responsibility for multi-team/programme activities.

**Adapting and Innovating**

Identifies opportunities to improve sectional operations and effectively gains buy-in.

Evaluates the impact of improvement initiatives.

Keeps abreast of developments in their area of work and takes a proactive approach to adopt or adapt innovative ideas and methods.

Determines what can be realistically achieved when deciding on strategic solutions.

Is proactive and responsive in making decisions on complex technical issues, based on appropriate information.

**Accountability**

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

Ensures the timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Takes responsibility for own shortcomings and compliances.

Supports subordinates, provides oversight and takes responsibility for all delegated assignments.
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<th>Leadership and Development</th>
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<td>Reinforces vision throughout the section and the division by acting accordingly inter alia.</td>
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<td>Identifies and develops leadership skills in others.</td>
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<td>Empowers others to take control of their own development and progression.</td>
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<td>Offers sound guidance and direction on complex and critical issues.</td>
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<td>Maximises the potential of others e.g. by creating suitable opportunities for development inter alia.</td>
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