

The Blue Hand Group



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BACKGROUND

External communication and outreach is an integral role of The Blue Hand Group (BHG), and this includes building community awareness. The BHG Business Plan 2022 states that:

'The Blue Hand Group's purpose is to continue to provide benevolent support to those seeking: relief from poverty, sickness, disability, destitution, suffering, misfortune, or helplessness. In doing so we can promote well-being amongst those in need throughout NSW via sustainable, eco-friendly, and cost-effective practices. Redirecting usable items away from landfills and into the hands of the underprivileged and sickly helps to reduce global warming, and foster skills, learning, and happiness amongst the vulnerable.'

This document provides guidelines for the public liaison activities of the Charity, including the definition of BHG public liaison principles, and the formation of a Public Liaison Working Group.

BHG PUBLIC LIAISON PRINCIPLES

BHG public liaison activities should adhere to the following principles:

- The BHG will encourage the public, local businesses, and the community to get involved and redirect usable items away from landfills and into the hands of the vulnerable. This is especially relevant in regards to businesses that donate excess stock for BHG to redistribute.
- The BHG aims to encourage its membership to provide accessible support and input when needed.
- The BHG does not aim to engage in public liaison activities to lobby for a particular outcome.
- Whilst representing the BHG, any member involved in the policy process must clearly understand the objectives of the charity.

THE PUBLIC LIAISON WORKING GROUP

Those involved in Public Liaison(PL) work will engage with and consult the CEO. Any developments will be outlined in the AGM and in the Annual Report.

Members will have suitable qualifications and/or experience to enable them to undertake PL activities on behalf of the charity.

The PL activities will be assisted by the BHG CEO, who will serve as a link between the PL workers and the BHG Board.

PL work is to be conducted throughout the year and anyone from a volunteer to a board member is welcome to participate in said activities, once they have consulted the CEO.

The CEO has the final say on which public liaison opportunities the BHG participates in, which members or individuals are best suited to conduct the liaison and whether or not the opportunity aligns with the charity's purpose.

HOW WILL PUBLIC LIAISON OPPORTUNITIES BE IDENTIFIED?

PL participants members and the general BHG membership are invited to suggest public liaison opportunities for the charity to pursue. As part of their role, PL members are expected to seek out such opportunities.

WHICH PUBLIC LIAISON OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE

The PL working group will determine which PL opportunities to pursue by considering:

1. The alignment of the opportunity with the mission and objectives of the charity,
2. The alignment of the opportunity with the current Strategic Plan and Business Plan of the charity;
3. The potential benefits and risks for a. our community, b. global warming, c. recycling;
4. The expertise and suitability of members available to provide comments;
5. Whether the time frame given will allow an adequate response;
6. The relative costs and benefits of intervening, in light of members' limited resources; and
7. Any travel or other costs required.

FOUR APPROACHES TO PUBLIC LIAISON

1. Invite members to contribute individually (not representing the BHG) by advertising public liaison opportunities to as many members as possible on the BHG website, AGMs, through the membership email list.
2. Endorse certain members to contribute/comment as individual experts, nominated by the charity but not representing the particular views of the charity.
3. Formulate comment on behalf of the charity - which would include, but not necessarily be limited to, the development of position papers.
4. Select members to represent the BHG at a meeting, or on a Committee or Board (see next section).

FORMULATING COMMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CHARITY

A draft submission prepared on behalf of the BHG shall be circulated to BHG members via the BHG news list, before it is submitted, with at least 2 weeks allowed for members to submit comments. However, this is not required. Comments will then be considered for inclusion in the final submission.

Preparation of the submission on behalf of the BHG may be halted if there are significant contradictions in members' comments that cannot be resolved. The final draft submission will be reviewed by at least the BHG Vice President, Public Liaison, and 2 other members of the Public Liaison Working Group (who can also be the authors) before it is submitted. A copy of the final submission is to be sent to the BHG CEO, Vice President, Public Liaison, and the BHG President upon submission. All submissions prepared on behalf of the BHG can be lodged on the BHG webpage unless there is a specific reason not to do this.

SELECTING MEMBERS TO REPRESENT THE BHG AT A MEETING, OR ON A COMMITTEE OR BOARD.

The PL working group will select members to undertake specific public liaison activities based on merit and suitability for the role. 'Suitability' may include, but is not limited to, knowledge of a particular field/policy/procedure, and written and/or oral communication skills.

Members may be required to submit a current curriculum vitae and a declaration of any known or potential conflicts of interest as part of their expression of interest. Approval by the PL working group can allow a member to represent the BHG at a meeting, or on a Committee or Board. Members who represent the BHG in this way will report on their activities to the CEO, who will include this in their report to the BHG Board during AGM and in the Annual Report.

POSITION STATEMENTS

Position statements are regarded as important public policy documents for the BHG, but particular position statements lose currency over time. A disclaimer will be posted on the website to advise readers that the information in the position statements was current at the date of writing, and may not reflect new information that has since become available. Ideally, a position statement should be revised every 5 years and may be taken off the website if it is not revised after 7 years, or placed within a historical archive on the website. It is the responsibility of the VP PL to coordinate the experts/champions who will be creating/revising position statements. The PL working group will also comment on the draft guidelines for position statements.

WEBSITE

The BHG website will be expanded to present other public liaison material/info/submissions as well as position statements.



This document was developed on the 23/10/2022 and will be updated as needed.