



**Ministry
of Defence**

JSP 579

**Policy and Processes for Non-News Media Projects
– broadcast, manuscripts, digital and features**

Part 1: Directive

Foreword

Defence and the Armed Forces are of great interest to the public and the media, and protecting and improving MOD reputation via media platforms is core business for all in Defence. It is crucial that the work of Defence and the Armed Forces is kept in the public eye, helping to explain the role of Defence and its importance and relevance to those it serves.

As well as fast-paced, reactive news reporting, non-news media engagement with longer lead-in times, such as documentaries, books, features and digital products, can substantially enhance profile and increase public awareness of and support for Defence. JSP 579 provides the overarching policy and processes for all those working on non-news media projects, whether tri-Service or single-Service in nature, led by the communications teams in the Directorate of Defence Communications or the Media and Communication teams across the TLBs.

As well as those working in communications, JSP 579 also provides direction and guidance for financial, commercial and secretariat staff across Defence who need to be aware of the policy and processes when working on media projects other than news. It does not duplicate wider commercial advice covered in JSP 462 - Financial Management Policy Manual.

**Director of Defence Communications
Defence Authority for Communications**

Preface

How to use this JSP

1. JSP 579 is to be used as an informative resource guiding decision-making and process when Defence wishes to engage with non-news media projects, whether traditional TV/radio documentary, book, digital or other media projects that are not time-critical news in nature. It should be used by communications and media staff, as well as those responsible for scoping and advancing the different stages of what can be a complex process, involving areas such as Finance, Commercial and Policy. No media project should proceed unless DDC Strategy (DDC(S)) or TLB Media and Communications (TLB M&C) staff have given approval (either specifically per project or through granted delegations). This JSP will be reviewed at least annually.
2. The JSP is structured in two parts:
 - a. Part 1 - Directive, which provides the direction that must be followed in accordance with statute or policy mandated by Defence or on Defence by Central Government.
 - b. Part 2 - Guidance, which provides the guidance and best practice that will assist the user to comply with the Directive(s) detailed in Part 1.

Coherence with other Defence Authority Policy and Guidance

3. Where applicable, this document contains links to other relevant JSPs, some of which may be published by different Defence Authorities. Where particular dependencies exist, these other Defence Authorities have been consulted in the formulation of the policy and guidance detailed in this publication.

Related JSPs	Title
JSP 462	Financial Management Policy Manual
2014DIN03-024	Contact with the Media and Communicating in Public.
2013DIN03-011	The Media Support Scheme
2012DIN05-006	Consent Form for Defence Imagery
2011DIN05-044	Crown Copyright material: Policy, Responsibilities and Procedures for Use

Further Advice and Feedback – Contacts

4. The overall owner of this JSP is DDC Secretariat, who will coordinate any queries with the relevant subject leads in DDC. For further information on any aspect of this guide, or questions not answered within the subsequent sections, or to provide feedback on the content, contact:

Job title/e-mail	Project focus	Telephone
	DDC Secretariat – ownership of manuscript clearance process	

Contents

Foreword	i
Preface	ii
How to use this JSP	ii
Coherence with other Defence Authority Policy and Guidance	ii
Further Advice and Feedback – Contacts	ii
Contents	iii
Policy & Procedures for MOD Non-News Media Projects (NNMPs)	1
Categorisation of Communications Activity	1
Strategic Approach	1
Defence Communications Priorities	2
MOD Supported v TLB Supported Projects	2
Stakeholder Engagement	3

Policy & Procedures for MOD Non-News Media Projects (NNMPs)

Categorisation of Communications Activity

1. The Directorate of Defence Communications (DDC) at Defence HQ is the media policy lead for determining how Non-News Media Projects (NNMPs) – mainly broadcast and manuscript publishing, but can cover features and digital – are handled. Initial proposals are scoped, categorised and treated by MOD and TLBs in different ways depending on whether they are:
 - a. **News** (owned by DDC PR News and Media) is immediate, time-critical news, including current affairs programmes. These are not covered by this JSP.
 - b. **Non-news ‘PR’ media projects** (owned by DDC Campaigns and/or Top Level Budget Holders) are projects which have the potential to enhance the reputation of Defence and the single Services in the medium to longer-term.
 - c. **Income generation projects** (handled by TLB Commercial teams) are media projects where the benefits to the MOD are primarily commercial, e.g. feature films, but are checked through communications staff to ensure there is no obvious potential for a negative outcome and therefore pose a presentational risk. These are also not covered by this JSP and are largely dealt with under JSP 462 - Financial Management Policy Manual, at TLB level.

Strategic Approach

2. **Protecting and promoting the reputation of Defence via non-news media engagement is core business for all in Defence**, and Defence and the Armed Forces are of great interest to the media and the public. The Department should aim to make the most of every good reactive or proactive opportunity to enhance profile and increase public awareness of and support for Defence, especially when the project supports the Defence communications strategy and **core Defence communications priorities** as set by the Defence Communications Board (DCB). Media projects are generally undertaken to:
 - a. inform the public, wider stakeholders and internal audience of MOD policy and activity, value for money, operational success and other relevant core communications objectives set by the DCB.
 - b. portray Defence¹ in a positive manner.
 - c. provide balance (particularly if lack of MOD involvement would result in negative PR).
3. **A strategic approach** is required when considering projects. Head of Strategy within DDC and Heads of M&C within TLBs have responsibility for the strategic overview of

¹ For the remainder of this document Defence refers to the Department as a whole and includes the single Services.

communications projects, determine PR value and provide advice on whether the project should be supported. Consideration is given to:

- a. whether the subject is a communications priority.
- b. the likely communications effect of participation/non-participation considering the return on investment (including the potential audience reach and the messaging opportunities).
- c. our Duty of Care to personnel and personal security issues (PERSEC).
- d. operational security issues (OPSEC).
- e. wider consequential relationships with stakeholders, including Other Government Departments (OGD) and Allies.

Defence Communications Priorities

4. The Department's communications priorities are agreed by Defence Communications Board and endorsed by the Secretary of State and the Chief of Defence Staff. Non-News Media Projects supporting core Defence PR communications priorities must always be placed above general PR and Income Generation projects. Non-News projects of high PR value in support of core communications objectives may be treated in a similar way as currently applies to News (i.e. no charges are levied), but a contract will be required in most cases (see para 5a below and Part 2: Guidance - Section 2). Projects for which a relaxation in this area could apply are subject to support from Senior Finance Officers. Requests for costs to be reduced below marginal are rare and must be authorised by HM Treasury. The core communications priorities support projects that demonstrate that:

- **The Armed Forces and Defence are contributing to the security and prosperity of Britain by:**
 - **keeping Britain safe and providing security at home and abroad.**
 - **investing in capability, bringing jobs and growth.**
 - **investing in all our people and training for the future.**

MOD Supported v TLB Supported Projects

5. NNMP are scoped to determine whether they are MOD-supported or TLB-supported projects. All projects are scoped to consider potential audience, key message dissemination and feasibility of request.

6. MOD-supported projects merit primary-tier engagement, often tri-Service, tied to a major core communications centrally-led campaign or event. These remain within (or are passed to) DDC for delivery, from initial scoping by DDC(S) and DDC Plans and Co-ord (DDC P&C) to DDC Campaigns for further development and delivery with TLB assistance.

7. TLB-supported merit secondary-tier engagement i.e. they are significant from a single Service or wider MOD perspective, and pass (with DDC(S) and DDC (P&C) recommendations including messaging intent if required), to or remain with TLB media and communications teams for further scoping and decision whether to engage, delivery of

filming, and post-production including evaluation. Those that meet the criteria in para 1b should be flagged up to DDC(S).

8. Both of these categories cover:

a. **Bit-part participation in projects** that, in the view of DDC/TLB, are non-contentious, or that could happen with or without Defence involvement but it is beneficial to engage, or facilitating interviews with MOD personnel to add context for core communications areas. These projects often have a shorter lead-in time. Judgements on the PR merit of engagement will need to be made balancing the risk of participation against benefit. In such instances a contract or Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) filming licence is not always necessary but local TLB commercial staff and/or DIO offices must be informed, the relevant Commanding Officer must be content and safeguards observed with respect to OPSEC/PERSEC. Chain of Command authorisation and duty-of-care should be agreed in writing with the 3rd party if the risk is sufficiently high. The decision to proceed must include the views of the relevant TLB media staffs². A contract should be considered if doubts remain regarding aspects such as OPSEC/PERSEC or occupational, environmental or safety risks, the accessing of material pre-broadcast to ensure accuracy, and the recovery of 3rd party costs above marginal level. Rights to footage can only be secured through a contract.

b. **Projects wholly or mainly focusing on Defence.** Projects such as these usually have a longer lead-in time and a contract should be put in place. However, if a short notice approach is made, the DDC or TLB lead should still look to support (if either core communication priorities are supported or where non-engagement might pose a reputational threat). In consultation with commercial staff or DIO staff as appropriate and other relevant stakeholders, the DDC/TLB lead should look at putting mitigating action in place to ensure engagement can proceed. This could include agreement in writing that Defence will be able to review and comment on material pre-publication/broadcast, if a contract cannot be issued in the timeframe. MOD-supported projects will be given contract support by the FLC commercial branch (or DIO) according to who has the most equity involved, and FLC/DIO commercial staff will take on single Service/joint Service projects as applicable.

Stakeholder Engagement

9. DDC works closely with a number of stakeholders to ensure successful delivery of NNMP, and these areas are referenced throughout the Part 2: Guidance of this JSP. In addition to roles referenced at para 1, team roles and responsibilities are defined as:

² As an example, filming an interview away from armour or explosives, on relatively benign land adjacent to a public road would normally be risk free; in the middle of an armoured exercise to achieve impact on television, would not. MOD contractors, such as Landmarc Support Services, the estate management company, are entitled to charge for their services; costs may be reduced by identifying a location and activity where their staff are not required. In respect of risk management and the need for a contract, the TLB project management staff will need to consider the following:

- **Consultative Rights.** If there is a requirement to review the film before its transmission (to ensure balance or because of personal sensitivities, or for reasons of OPSEC, PERSEC), it may be advantageous for a short and simple contract to be put in place if this will not prejudice filming.
- **Contributor Rights.** Consideration should be given as to whether there is a requirement for the film usage rights to remain the property of the MOD or the individual contributor, or whether all rights can be vested in the film producer.
- **Legal Protection.** The relevant Fin staff will need to consider what action is necessary to protect their TLB against the risk of future litigation.

- a. **DDC** is the ultimate authority on whether NNMPs should be taken forward, whether national or regional.
- b. **Top Level Budget Holders** have Media and Communications staff who will handle a large percentage of NNMPs. They are authorised to decide whether to engage based on resources available, but taking into account DDC's view if applicable.
- c. **Financial, Commercial and Defence Infrastructure Organisation staff** within TLBs enable PR projects by ensuring propriety, that the Department is not exposed to unacceptable risk and facilitate the production of a contract or filming licence.
- d. **Staff dealing with manuscripts (fiction or non-fiction) proposed for publication** – either written by former Defence personnel (military and civilian), those supported by Defence and those proposed by currently serving military and civilian personnel - are covered by Part 2: Guidance – Section 5 Book Manuscript Clearance Process Flowchart and Section 6 Process for Clearance of Manuscripts.

10. Appropriate dialogue and agreement between parties is necessary to set the conditions for a project to proceed, but feedback on the progress of projects should be routinely provided via the [Defence Communications Planner](#).

11. The MOD is a complex organisation with many stakeholders and myriad relationships with, for example, OGDs, agencies, industry and contractors. There are consequently four areas of financial consideration which have the potential to affect the outcome of any NNMP project:

- a. **Charging for use of MOD assets** - cost recovery of providing access to personnel, equipment and to MOD Land. See Part 2: Guidance - Section 1 & 11.
- b. **Intellectual property rights** relating to Crown Copyright and trade marks. See Part 2: Guidance - Section 1 para 24.
- c. **Insurance**. See Part 2: Guidance Section 2.
- d. **Occupational rights** (principally with regard to MOD land, the responsibility of Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO). See Part 2: Guidance - Section 1.