

Public Affairs (Communications)

The Public Affairs Section provides the Auditor of State (AOS) and each AOS division with strategic public and media relations services, supported by a range of communications, educational, and marketing tools.

Responsibilities

Public Affairs is responsible for delivering strategic communications guidance to the Auditor and executive staff, promoting key messages aligned with AOS priorities, and keeping the public informed about the Office's activities. The section reviews all audit reports before release to assess potential newsworthiness and anticipate media effects.

Statutory Responsibilities

Serves as the clearinghouse for public/media inquiries to support AOS Sunshine Law and open-records compliance

Communications Planning / Counsel

- Provides strategic planning for communications initiatives
- Advises internal departments on communications matters

Media Relations / Social Media / Web Content

- Manages media relations for the office
- Drafts and distributes news releases, op-eds, and columns
- Serves as primary spokespersons for the Auditor; arranges interviews, editorial meetings, and press conferences; and responds to public/media inquiries
- Maintains strong relationships with Ohio reporters and editors to support media strategy and preserve credibility through timely, accurate responses
- Monitors coverage, maintains a media archive, and distributes daily news summaries
- Logs daily relevant news clips and distributes them to select staff
- Maintains and updates the Office's master media contact list
- Maintains AOS homepage, rotating most timely and relevant content as necessary

Executive Communications

- Researches and drafts briefing materials, talking points, and speeches
- Assists with other executive messaging

Writing for Publications

- Researches and writes AOS brochures, educational pieces, and marketing materials
- Prepares guest columns for publications (e.g., Ohio Township Association, OASBO magazine)

Web Content

- Writes, edits, and updates web content as needed
- Posts press releases, publications, guidance documents, training schedules, department updates, and other requested content.

Publications Management

- Researches, creates, and coordinates all AOS print and digital communications
- Writes and distributes the General Standard regional newsletter distributed to subscribed clients and stakeholders

Photography / Videography

- Coordinates photography and A/V services

Current Staffing

Director of Communications

- Serves as executive staff member and leads all Public Affairs functions
- Advises the Auditor and executive team on public/media strategy
- Oversees sensitive communications, policy support, educational materials, media contact, and coordination with audit and legislative teams

Deputy Director of Communications

- Assists Director in ensuring Public Affairs functions are carried out as necessary
- Meets with AOS Administrative Assistant weekly to ensure calendar and events are appropriately staffed by Communications team
- Acts as lead video/photo content producer for the office.
- Provides AV needs for trainings and events
- Maintains archives, handles photography/videography, and manages research projects

External Communications Specialist

- Oversees department activity, materials, audit releases, and public/media responses
- Represents the Auditor in the media
- Coordinates with Regional Liaisons and the scheduler
- Leads audit pre-release meetings and drafts most audit-related press releases
- Writes and edits articles and online content

Press Secretary

- Primary AOS spokesperson
- Writes, edits and distributes quarterly regional newsletter *The General Standard*
- Maintains social media presence
- Assists with video and photography

Works closely with Visual Communications Manager in IT

The Visual Communications Manager's duties are:

- Graphic designer, copy editor, and website manager for internal and external content; monitors brand usage
- Designs, edits, and distributes the monthly internal newsletter *Checks & Balances*
- Produces multimedia, designs special materials (maps, posters, slides, etc.), and coordinates printing
- Assists with website updates and posts press releases

Former roles or not currently staffed: Public Information Officer, College Intern, Graphic Designer (moved to IT).

Subscriptions

- Columbus Dispatch, Dayton Daily News, Toledo Blade, Cincinnati Enquirer; Wall Street Journal, Gongwer News Service; Hannah; Meltwater media monitoring.
- Some materials are delivered to 65 East State St.; others are accessed digitally.

Recurring Duties

Daily

- Compile and distribute news clips.
- Respond to press inquiries.
- Monitor news organizations for content and response items.

Weekly

- Host pre-release meetings with the Chief Deputy Auditor.
- Distribute audit advisories.
- Issue press releases (Tues. & Thurs.).

Monthly

- *Checks & Balances* internal newsletter (distributed the first Monday of month).
- Guest column for Ohio Township Association (due every two months).

Annually

- Fraud Conference (May): photos, social media
- AOS Annual Report in collaboration with Visual Communications Manager (due Aug. 1)
- State Fair
- Community Schools Conference (August): visuals
- IPA Conference (mid-August): photos
- OPT Annual Report (due March 30)
- ACFR (due Oct. 1): Content from Finance due mid-September; designed by Visual Communications Manager

As Needed

- Enforce blackout period before elections
- Update website content
- Special reports