

## QCAT staff guide: Media queries

The tribunal is committed to a fair and transparent process to allow public (including media) access to QCAT records.

### Tips for dealing with media enquiries

- Remain calm and show the media representative the same courtesy and respect you would to any other member of the public. You may deal with media representatives in person, or via email or phone without even knowing it.
- Observe the same processes and procedures as you would for other member of the public.
- Do not feel pressured to answer questions you are not comfortable with or which you feel may involve confidential information.
- Remember that not all members of the media will be difficult or demanding in their requests. Don't assume all of your contact with media will be negative.
- If there is an issue with a media representative, document your interaction.
- If the media rep threatens to make a complaint – don't panic. Advise them that QCAT has a complaints policy and offer to print them a copy.
- Ask for help if you need it.

### Can the media access QCAT records?

Yes. The media have the same general right to access to the register and records as any other member of the public – subject to any non-publication order, confidentiality order, legislative provisions and payment of any prescribed fees.

For more information see the *Accessing QCAT records or information* fact sheet.

### Media requests over the phone

If a person identifies themselves over the phone as a member of the media:

1. maintain the same courteous phone manner you would use for any member of the public
2. if asked for comment on a QCAT matter, calmly explain that you are unable to comment on the matter. Give the caller the option of holding while you transfer the call, or to leave a message to have their call returned. Transfer the call to (or convey the message to):
  - a. QCAT Marketing and Communications officer on  
Ph: +61 7 3234 0597 or mobile 0400 674 778  
Email: [QCAT.mediaenquiries@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:QCAT.mediaenquiries@justice.qld.gov.au)
  - b. if the officer is unavailable – consult your area manager who may advise the QCAT Executive Director or the DJAG Media Unit – +61 7 3239 0782 or +61 7 3405 3762 or [media.relations@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:media.relations@justice.qld.gov.au)
3. advise your manager of the call. Remember that you will not always know you have dealt with a member of the media.

## **Media requests – accessing QCAT register of proceedings or records (case files)**

Media representatives are entitled to access the register of proceedings and apply to access records of proceedings (case files) in the same manner that members of the general public are – see *QCAT staff guide: Register and file access* for more information.

As with members of the public, immediate access to files is generally not available and a mutually convenient time will need to be established.

## **Advising media on access to proceedings**

Generally all QCAT hearings, except those relating to children, are open to members of the media and public – subject to QCAT ordered restrictions.

Members of the media and public are not permitted to attend mediations. Compulsory conferences are private unless directed otherwise by the presiding Member.

## **Filming and recording at hearings**

Members of the media are permitted to attend hearings and make a private audio recording (using a hand-held recorder) for the purposes of maintaining accuracy of reporting. In making the recording:

- the recording must be done unobtrusively and without interruption to proceedings
- the audio content of the recording may not be broadcast.

Filming or photography of QCAT proceedings is generally not permitted. Specific requests can be made to the QCAT's Marketing and Communications Officer.

## **Interviews and press conferences**

Generally, press conferences and interviews are not permitted to be conducted on the QCAT premises. Specific requests can be made to QCAT's Marketing and Communications Officer.

## **Recordings and transcripts**

Recordings and transcripts of proceedings may be requested for any hearing not subject to non-publication orders or other QCAT ordered restrictions. Recordings and transcripts requested by parties not part of the proceedings are subject to a prescribed fee.

## **Useful links and resources**

- A list of proceedings is published daily on the QCAT website at [www.qcat.qld.gov.au](http://www.qcat.qld.gov.au) (generally proceedings for the next business day are published by close of business the previous business day).
- Written decisions made by QCAT are published on the Supreme Court of Queensland Library website at <http://www.sclqld.org.au/qcat/>

## **Media enquiry contacts**

QCAT Marketing and Communications

+61 7 3234 0597

Mobile: 0400 674 778

[QCAT.mediaenquiries@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:QCAT.mediaenquiries@justice.qld.gov.au)

Department of Justice and Attorney General – Communication Services Branch

+61 7 3239 0782 or +61 7 3405 3762 to speak to a media officer, or email your inquiry to

[media.relations@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:media.relations@justice.qld.gov.au)