

## Job Description

A Post Details	
<b>Job Title:</b> Senior External Affairs Advisor	Grade: B002
<b>Department:</b> Communications and Engagement	Division: A Select Division
<b>Reports to:</b> External Affairs Lead	Contract Type: Select Contract Type
<b>Level of Vetting:</b> Management Vetting	Numbers in Post: 1
B Purpose of the Post	
<p>This post will provide direct support to the External Affairs Lead in enhancing engagement with the rail industry, central Government, wider political arena and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Senior External Affairs Advisor will act as the first escalation point for the External Affairs Advisors, providing advice and guidance and signing off lines.</p> <p>The External Affairs team will play a central role in helping build collaborative and strong partnerships between BTP, BTPA and their stakeholders. They will manage and review the stakeholder engagement plan, brief Chief Officers, BTPA and senior management ahead of stakeholder meetings, and identify trends and risks across the stakeholder matrix. The external affairs advisors will work closely with local stakeholder managers, embedded officers and the wider communications and engagement department to ensure joined up and consistent messaging both internally and externally.</p> <p>This post will provide press desk resilience and participate in the 24/7 on call rota, responding to journalists and incidents outside of office hours.</p>	
C Dimensions of the Post	
<p><b>Financial – Direct or Non-Direct</b> None</p> <p><b>Staff Responsibilities – Direct</b> Line management of 3 x External Affairs Advisors.</p> <p><b>Staff Responsibilities - Non-Direct</b> None. Assist the External Affairs Lead in matrix management of the Stakeholder Managers.</p> <p><b>Any Other Statistical Data</b> The communications and engagement team provide services critical to British Transport Police being able to professionally communicate and engage with its workforce, the media, stakeholders, and the public, in order to deliver its strategic objectives and values. Leading influential and trustworthy relationships between the Force, BTPA and their key external stakeholders is paramount to building confidence. The role of the external affairs advisor is to support this objective by championing effective stakeholder relationship management at local and regional levels. They ensure that the Force and BTPA have access to information and insights about threats, risks and opportunities across the operating environment to aid evidence-based decision making.</p> <p>This post will make decisions on behalf of the External Affairs Lead in their absence.</p>	

## D Principal Accountabilities

Support the External Affairs Lead in delivering effective engagement, building positive working relationships and advocacy with key stakeholders across the rail industry and political arena.

Line manage the External Affairs Advisors and act as an escalation point for Government/Industry issues, deputising for the External Affairs Lead when necessary.

Build and maintain relationships at local and regional level including but not limited to members of parliament, TOCs and Home Office Forces. Provide support, advice and guidance to local stakeholder managers to assist them in managing their relationships and offer an escalation point for complex stakeholder matters.

Lead on the implementation of the Force's Stakeholder Engagement Plan ensuring that it is regularly reviewed, developed and updated.

Maintain an accurate and timely database management system of stakeholder interactions, producing a regular summary report of engagement and outcomes - ensuring that risks, trends, opportunities and insights are all recorded. Work with stakeholder managers and embeds to ensure that local stakeholder insights are captured and available to inform communication briefings and products. This includes the identification of reputational risks, for escalation as required.

Identify and build new relationships as key stakeholders change and new stakeholders emerge in the operating environment.

Produce clear and concise briefings, responses to reports, correspondence and presentations for stakeholder meetings, events and speaking appearances, and responses to requests for information for senior officers, including the Chief Officer group.

Continually identify lessons learned in stakeholder engagement for the Force and implement any critical actions/improvements.

Manage the response to Parliamentary Questions and submissions to select committees.

Undertake horizon scanning across the industry to identify opportunities and risks and monitor local industry and/or political nuances and landscape

Provide resilience for the press desk and build your knowledge and experience of handling media enquiries by working on the press desk for up to 20% of your time.

Participating in the 24/7 on-call rota, the Senior External Affairs Advisor needs to be able to confidently respond to incidents and enquiries out of hours. This involves quickly researching information and making decisions, and being accountable for those decisions, on responses to a wide range of often complex issues and critical incidents.

Work closely with all communications and engagement colleagues to ensure joined up working across the department ensuring consistent messaging to different audiences across the most appropriate channels.

## E Decision Making

Deputises on behalf of the External Affairs Lead in their absence.

Signs off the decisions made and the messaging going out by External Affairs Advisors.

Act as an escalation point for complex external affairs and stakeholder management matters.

Makes decisions on how to respond to or manage stakeholder management issues that are escalated by an embedded officer or local stakeholder manager.

Makes decisions in their capacity of a part of the 24/7 Press Desk on-call rota, this involves deciding how to respond to incidents and enquiries that are often complex and/or critical in nature.

The post holder may need to work alongside the Gold Commander in the Gold Suite providing advice and guidance that will influence the handling of communications relating to critical incidents or planned events.

## F Contact with Others

### Internal

Regular contact with officers and staff at all levels within the Force and BTPA, from frontline officers to members of our Chief Officer Group. They are expected to be able to offer sound advice to colleagues on public affairs and politically sensitive issues.

Collaborate with other members of the Communications and Engagement Department, ensuring a consistent and corporate approach to issues and that knowledge is shared.

Proactively ensure that there are relationships and governance mechanisms to work alongside the embedded officers and stakeholder managers.

### External

Regular contact with stakeholders and other agencies, representing the Force at meetings with colleagues from other organisations and building important relationships with the Force and Authority's partners.

Responsible for engaging with stakeholders at mid-manager level across the rail industry, political arena and other agencies e.g. Home Office Forces.

## G Essential Criteria

### Qualifications and Training:

Educated to a degree level in Media, Communications, Politics or Public Relations

### Experience:

Experience of working in Government and/or stakeholder relations and providing support to colleagues who engage with a range of stakeholders (rail industry / political environment would be an advantage)

Experience of developing and delivering plans to engage with external stakeholders.

Experience of advising colleagues, either through direct line management or by leading them through projects or campaigns to deliver specific objectives.

Experience of supervising the work of others.

### Skills:

Demonstrable ability to deal with colleagues and other stakeholders at all levels of seniority, building relationships of trust

Demonstrable passion for communications, and a track record of being creative and imaginative in finding new ways to engage audiences

Strong organisational skills and the ability to prioritise work, deliver to tight deadlines, respond to changing situations and use personal initiative.

Ability to work collaboratively with stakeholders and identify, develop and maintain a strong network with those stakeholders

Proven influencing, engagement and stakeholder management skills

Flexibility to deal with ambiguity and a fast-moving environment

Excellent verbal and written communication skills

Intermediate level Microsoft Office, including Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Excel

The confidence and gravitas to offer advice to senior management and other members of the Force and Authority – including the ability to challenge decisions when in the force's best interests.

The ability to act, particularly out of hours, without having to seek advice each time, on breaking incidents and incoming media queries.

#### Knowledge:

Knowledge of how communications can influence audiences and affect behavioural change.

Understanding or willingness to learn about police and crime-related issues on the news agenda.

Good knowledge and experience of digital communications tactics, tools and techniques

Understanding of Scottish and Welsh political nuances

#### Desirable criteria:

Experience (or demonstrable appreciation) of the challenges facing policing and/or the rail industry

Project management skills, working with internal and external stakeholders to deliver high quality outcomes within deadlines

A proven understanding of all relevant political calendars and legislative assemblies and experience of working within a politically sensitive environment

Welsh language skills

Experience of working within a newsroom, press office or similar environment.

Training and an understanding of media law – what BTP can and cannot say, and why. This will be part of mandatory training required for this role.

#### H Additional Information

You will be a resilient individual, able to work collaboratively in a fast-paced environment and quickly adapt to changing and evolving circumstances and priorities. Believing that understanding the audience is at the heart of all effective communication, you will be keen to build knowledge of your audience and use that to guide your communications outputs, anticipating and adapting to audience trends.

You will have excellent interpersonal skills that allow you to communicate at all levels in a clear manner and with a commitment to delivering exceptional customer service. Believing that effective communications are crucial to the delivery of policing and keeping the public safe, to achieve this objective you will be able and willing to challenge at any level in an appropriate manner.

British Transport Police covers 3 countries, and this role will require travel across the countries to meet with stakeholders, members of staff, management and suppliers as needed.

British Transport Police believes in inclusivity in public service, and as such your working hours will be reflective of operational and public needs.

**For Panel to complete only:**

**Panel Approval:** Pauline Okirie

**Date:**24/10/2024