



HM Government

# **Government Functional Standard**

## **GovS 011: Communications**

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This standard forms part of a suite of operational standards that set expectations for management within government. Standards may include both mandatory and advisory elements. The following conventions are used to denote the intention:

Term	Intention
shall	denotes a requirement: a mandatory element.
should	denotes a recommendation: an advisory element.
may	denotes approval.
might	denotes a possibility.
can	denotes both capability and possibility.
is/are	denotes a description

The meaning of words is as defined in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, except where defined in the Glossary in **Annex B**.

It is assumed that legal and regulatory requirements are always met.

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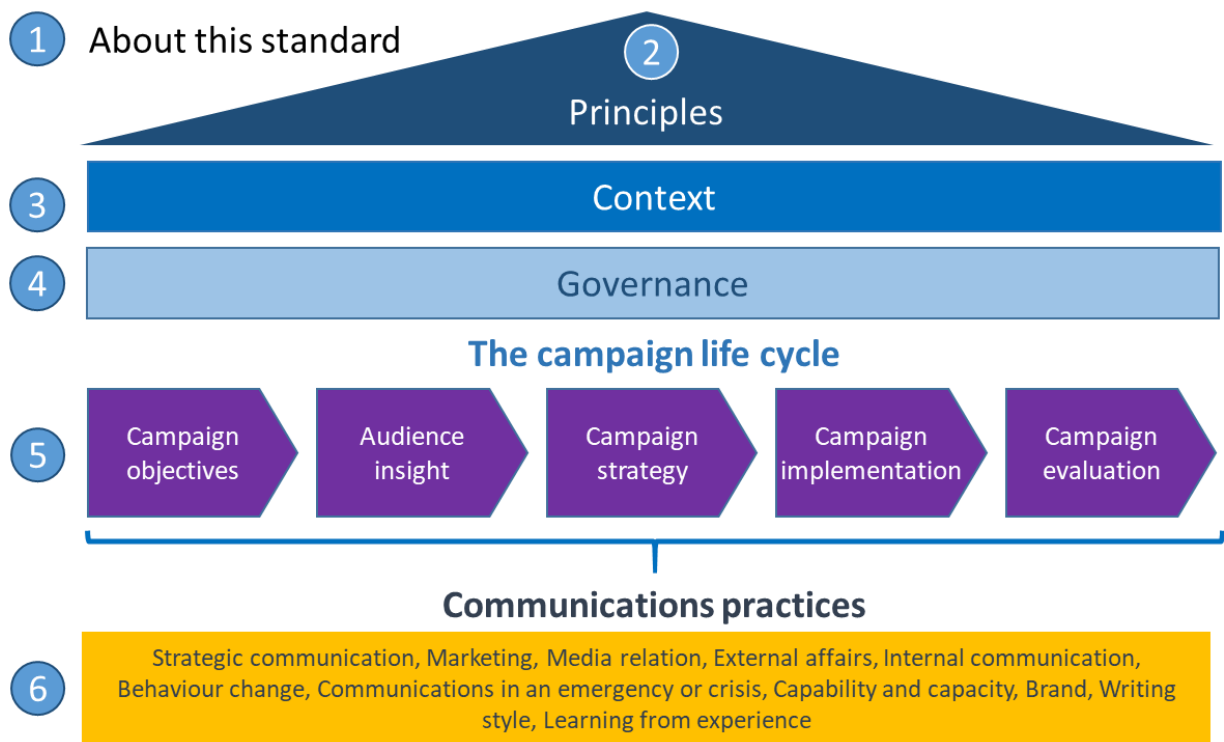


Figure 1 Structure and scope of this standard

# 1 About this government functional standard

## 1.1 Purpose of this government standard

The purpose of this government standard is to set expectations for the management and practice of government communications in order to deliver responsive and informative public service communications that support the effective delivery of HM Government policy and priorities, and assist with the effective operation of public services.

This standard provides direction and guidance for:

- permanent secretaries, directors general (and chief executive officers (CEO) of arm's length bodies)
- senior leadership and board members within organisations
- those commissioning communications
- communications leads within organisations
- those involved in developing, managing and delivering communications
- third parties engaged in government communications, including in partnership marketing

## 1.2 Scope of this government standard

This standard applies to all HM Government departments and arm's length bodies.

Communications, in the context of this functional standard includes announcements, media management, coordinated communications activities (including social media, branded campaigns, external affairs and stakeholder management, aimed to support the organisation's policy and priority objectives. This includes external and internal audiences.

This standard excludes official correspondence, telephony, drafting of official papers and submissions, legal, transactional and operational notices.

## 1.3 Government standards references

The following standards are necessary for the use of this standard:

- Govs 002 Project Delivery
- GocS 003 HR
- Govs 004 Digital
- Govs 006 Finance
- GovS 008 Commercial
- GovS010, Analysis

## 2 Principles

At all times those managing communications shall:

1. promote a shared vision across government, ensuring communications meet the needs of government as a whole in relation to policy and, crisis and emergency management
2. promote a culture of diversity and inclusion which represents the society served.
3. align with government policy and government-wide communications priorities
4. ensure, through tiered accountability, that it is clear who makes decisions and owns outcomes and processes
5. work collaboratively in order to achieve clear, simple and consistent communications on behalf of government; managing duplication and minimising complexity
6. keep processes simple and user-focused
7. promote opportunities for continuous improvement, efficiency, innovation and transformation where this represents value for money
8. ensure that public service codes of conduct and ethics, and those of associated professions are upheld

## 3 Context

### 3.1 Government communications

#### 3.1.1 Government Communication Service

The Government Communication Service is responsible for the development and delivery of the government's annual communications plan and sets the direction for the development of professional capability, talent management, standards and guidance for communications across government.

Government communicators manage more than media handling or the communications that are released. Communications professionals are responsible for managing the reputation and brand of an organisation, both of which are at stake during a crisis or emergency.

#### 3.1.2 Government Communication Service Ministerial Board

The Government Communication Service Ministerial Board oversees the operation of the Government Communication Service and is chaired by the Minister for the Constitution at the Cabinet Office. The board reviews performance against delivery of the government's annual communication plan and is responsible for ensuring:

- an appropriate annual government communication plan is developed and delivered
- plan contributes to the delivery of government policy priorities
- government communications are delivered in an effective and efficient way
- the government can respond appropriately to risks and crises in an appropriate and timely manner
- those involved in communications operate within the Civil Service Professions Best Practice Framework [4]

#### 3.1.3 National Security Communications Committee

The National Security Communications Committee is a forum for determining and addressing national security strategic

communications priorities. Its remit is to ensure that communications is an integral part of the UK's approach to national security and it is attended by Directors of Communications from relevant departments.

### 3.2 Campaigns and communications

The government as a whole and each government organisation (Department and arm's length bodies) has an overall communications plan which sets out the themes and ambitions for the major campaigns for the forthcoming period which fulfil one or more defined objectives.

Each campaign can comprise one or more communications packages, each of which is aligned to the campaign objectives and covers a specific need or event. A communications package can be made up of a number of sub-packages. See Figure 2.

### 3.3 Digital communications

The future of government communications depends upon the ability to connect with target audiences in a timely, appropriate and relevant way, giving them information, and helping change behaviours, in a way that fits in with their lives. In this respect digital media can enable communications teams to integrate more closely, connecting directly and quickly with influencers and audiences in a well-governed and planned way. This means communicators need to master new techniques, including digital technologies and remain at the forefront of the latest practice, revising and updating their skillsets to keep ahead of the extraordinary pace of change.

*Note: reference 5 Trends for Leading Edge Communication [5].*

*Note: see also GovS.004 Digital functional standard*

Senior officer responsible for cross-government communications (4.5.1)

Senior officer responsible for an organisation's communications (4.5.3)

Campaign commissioner (4.5.4)  
Head of campaign (4.5.5)

Communications lead (4.5.6)

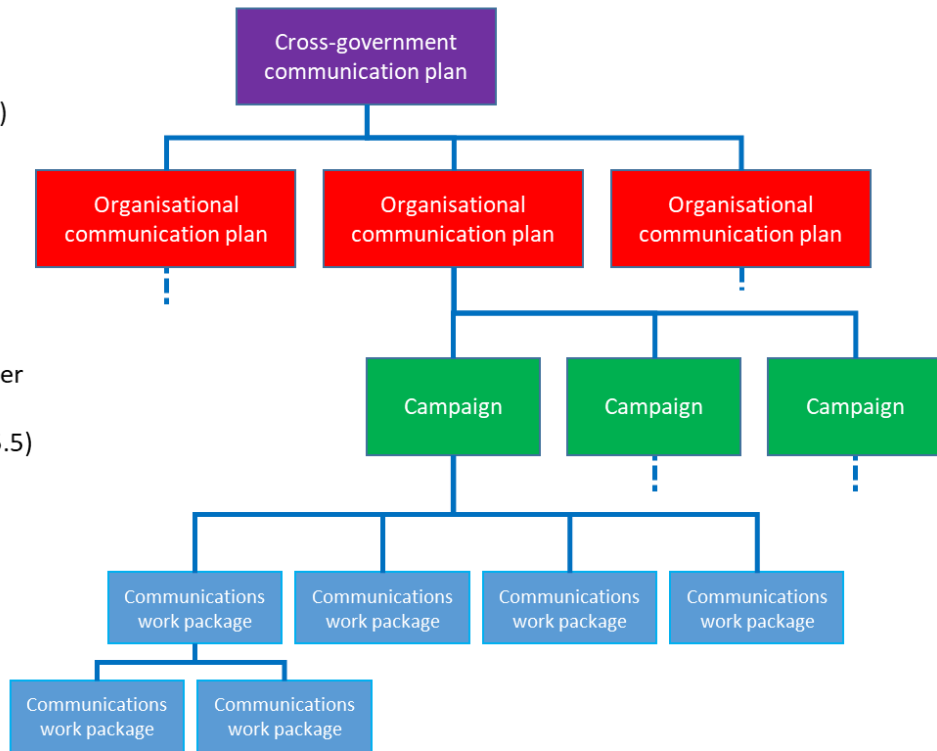


Figure 2 relationship between communications plans, campaigns and communications packages, showing associated roles.

## 4 Governance

### 4.1 Governance framework

#### 4.1.1 Governance

Governance comprises authorising, directing, empowering and overseeing management.

A governance framework shall be defined and established at cross-government and at organisational levels, which complies with this standard.

The governance framework should include the appropriate delegation of responsibilities, authority limits, decision making roles and rules, degree of autonomy, assurance needs, reporting structure, accountabilities and responsibilities together with the appropriate management frameworks for undertaking the practices defined in this standard.

#### 4.1.2 Cross-government governance of communications

Cross-government policy, directives and guidance relating to the management of government communications should be defined, kept up to date and be communicated to and available for the use of organisational communications teams.

#### 4.1.3 Organisational governance of communications

The governance of communications should be an integrated part of an organisation's overall governance and should comply with government and departmental policies and directives.

#### 4.1.4 Campaign governance

Each campaign shall be undertaken in accordance with the campaign life cycle (see 5) and should be the accountability of a named campaign commissioner (see 4.5.4) who working in collaboration with a named head of campaign will agree the objectives for the campaign (4.5.5). The head of campaign defines the roles, responsibilities, strategy, plan and resources for the campaign.

If a campaign forms part of a wider initiative, such as a programme or project (see GovS002, Project delivery) the governance of the campaign should be integrated with that of the wider initiative.

### 4.2 Communications planning

The purpose of communications planning is to set out the themes, ambitions and risks for the major campaigns for the forthcoming period.

#### 4.2.1 Government wide communications plan

A government wide communication plan should be defined, which sets out the government wide priority communications to be delivered in year. This plan should be approved in accordance with the government communications management framework (see 4.1.2).

#### 4.2.2 Organisational communications plan

Each organisation shall prepare a communication plan annually, which:

- shall demonstrate how the organisations communications supports the government wide annual communications plan and any higher level organisational plan
- should outline how communications support the effective delivery of both the wider government and the organisation's own, policies, priorities and public services
- should include outcome-based metrics summarising what outcomes they are seeking to achieve that year.

The organisation's annual communications plan, and any updates, should be agreed by the senior officer accountable for an organisation's communications (4.5.3) and approved at an executive board level.

*Note: reference GCS Evaluation Framework 2.0 [2]*

### 4.3 Decisions making related to communications

Key decisions required relating to communications include, but are not limited to, the following to the approval of;



- communications policies and directives
- communications spending (see 4.4)
- communication plans (see 4.2)
- campaigns, initiatives and projects (see 5)
- individual communications packages (see 5.5.2)

Decisions should be holistic, taking account of the wider context, risks and possible stakeholder reactions.

## 4.4 Assurance

### 4.4.1 Assurance framework

Assurance is the systematic set of actions necessary to provide confidence to senior leaders and stakeholders that communications are :

- controlled and support the safe and successful delivery of policy, strategy and objectives
- are acceptable to, and understood 'as intended', by the target audiences.

Organisations should have a defined and consistently operated approach to provide appropriate and proportionate assurance that communications are being planned and managed effectively and appropriately. This should be integrated with the organisation's overall assurance framework.

Assurance may be carried out:

- by or on behalf of, operational management within in organisations, who apply their judgement to support successful delivery and monitor adherence with a function's standards
- by, or on behalf of, senior management independent of operational management, to ensure the first line of defence is properly designed, in place and operating as intended
- by independent bodies (within or external to government, such as internal audit and National Audit Office) who provide an objective evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and controls

The work of internal and external assurance providers should be planned to:

- proactively support known events of campaigns
- minimise disruption to the work, overlaps with other assurance activities and duplication of effort, whilst remaining rigorous.

Where assurance includes formal review activity, the customer for the review should be clearly identified.

Assurance of communications should focus on requirements and audiences, not government policies.

### 4.4.2 Advertising, Marketing and Communications spend controls

HM Government organizations shall comply with the GovS 006. Finance, the Professional Assurance process [6] and the advertising, marketing and communications spend controls on campaigns or programmes of communication with a value of £100,000 or over (per year) in accordance with GovS 008, Commercial.

Expenditure should be in line with the annual government communications plan. Where it is not, written approval shall be sought from the senior officer responsible for cross-government communications (see 4.5.1).

Applications for approval of expenditure shall have written approval from the relevant departmental minister and the senior officer accountable for an organisation's communications (see 4.5.3) before being submitted. Arm's length bodies shall seek these internal approvals from their parent department before submitting a request.

### 4.4.3 Buying advertising, marketing and communication services

HM Government departments, agencies and arm's length bodies shall use approved government frameworks for the purchasing of external advertising, marketing and

communication services and support, in accordance with GovS 008, Commercial.

*Note: see guidance on buying advertising, marketing and communication services [20].*

## 4.5 Roles and responsibilities

### 4.5.1 Senior officer responsible for cross-government communications

The senior officer responsible for cross-government communications is accountable to ministers via the GCS Ministerial Board (see 3.1.2) for the efficient and effective operation of government wide communications

The senior officer responsible for cross-government communications government is responsible for:

- the government's communication strategy
- the effectiveness and efficiency of government communications through the approval of marketing spending and the procurement of external contracts.
- providing advice to ministers and senior officials
- major cross-government campaigns
- the government's communication plan
- standards of professionalism in government communications

*Note: the current job title associated with this role is Executive Director for Government Communications and runs the Government Communications Service (see 3.1) and is advised by the Evaluations Council on the development, understanding and implementation of evaluation best practice.*

### 4.5.2 Accounting Officer

The Accounting Officer is the senior executive in a central government organisation, accountable to Parliament and the public for the stewardship of public resources, ensuring they are used effectively and to high standards of probity. The Accounting Officer has ultimate accountability for commercial activities in their organisation.

*Note: the permanent head of a government department is its Principle Accounting Officer. The Principle Accounting Officer generally appoints the most senior executive in organisations under the department's ambit as an Accounting Officer.*

### 4.5.3 Senior officer accountable for an organisation's communications

The senior officer accountable for an organisation's communications is accountable to their respective accounting officer for:

- developing the scope of communications in the organisation
- setting communications related objectives, terms of reference, and responsibilities as necessary, to underpin the organisation's objectives
- developing the governance and management framework for communications
- developing and maintaining the organisation's communications plan and grid
- setting performance measures and evaluation criteria to assess progress against the plan
- ensuring adequate resources are available and organised to support departmental objectives
- managing expenditure

### 4.5.4 Communications commissioner

A communications commissioner is accountable to their organisation's senior leadership (and ultimately the accounting officer) for setting a campaign's objectives and ensuring they are fulfilled, in particular:

- keeping their senior leadership informed of the progress of the campaign, seeking guidance and direction as appropriate
- developing and defining the objectives and desired outcomes in collaboration with the head of campaign
- keeping the head of the campaign up to date on the context and relevant changes, providing direction and seeking advice, as appropriate
- advising, in collaboration with the head of campaign, on the handling of escalated issues and risks, and approving changes to the campaign plan

### 4.5.5 Head of a campaign

A head of a campaign is accountable to the communications commissioner for developing

and managing a campaign on a day to day basis and in particular:

- mobilising, briefing and motivating the campaign team
- developing a campaign plan, in collaboration with the communications commissioner, and managing progress towards its achievement
- keeping the campaign's commissioner up to date on the progress, providing advice, and seeking guidance and direction as appropriate
- keeping those working on the campaign informed of the context and progress, providing direction as appropriate
- managing issues and risks, escalating as appropriate and requesting changes to the plan, in consultation with the campaign commissioner
- evaluating the outcomes of the campaign and taking preventative or corrective action when needed

#### 4.5.6 Communications lead for a communication package

The communications lead for a communication package is accountable to the head of a campaign for managing the work assigned to them, including:

- ensuring work is completed within defined constraints
- planning, monitoring, forecasting and reporting progress on their work
- managing the resolution of risks and issues, escalating those they cannot deal with
- requesting changes to their work scope

#### 4.5.7 Communications business partner

Communication business partners are communications professionals who work directly with teams to build local, specialist knowledge. Business partners should be expert communicators, ensuring that communication advice is integrated in planning and decision-making from the outset.

*Note: reference GCS business partnering guidance <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/business-partnering/>*

#### 4.5.8 Other specialist communications roles

Other specialist communications roles should be defined to suit the needs of the activity being undertaken. This can be for managing a variety of aspects of communications practice in accordance with this standard and the organisation's communications governance and management framework.

Such roles may be either advisory as part of a team or may fulfil a leadership or executive role with accountability assigned.

*Note: examples include roles for campaigns, marketing, press and media, digital, internal communications; see Government Communication Professional Competency Framework [7]*

#### 4.6 Other requirements

Government communications should be undertaken in accordance with the government's communications governance framework for communications [1].

Staff engaged in communication activity shall follow and be subject to the Government Communications Service's codes of practice in their communication activities [10].

*Note: see also the Handbook [21] page 42.*

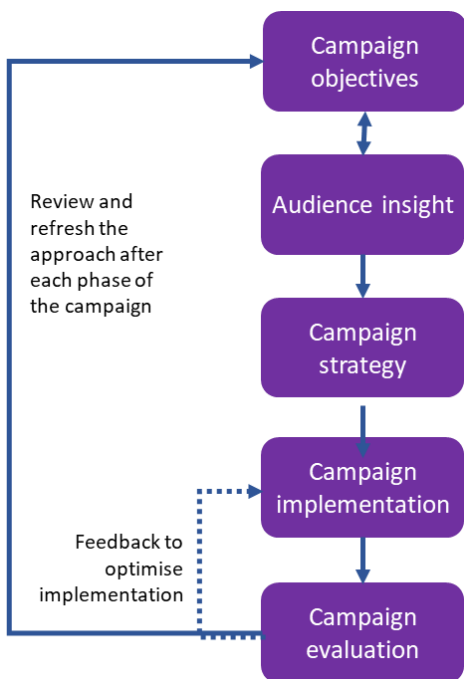
## 5 Campaign life cycle

### 5.1 Overview

The purpose of a campaign is to ensure each communication is viewed in the context of a wider campaign and that an organisation’s communications can be linked to a clear objective so that their impact can be evaluated.

The campaign life cycle, shown in Figure 3, provides a framework for implementing communications initiatives, enabling

- problems to be addressed from an audience perspective
- a united course of action to be taken
- communications to be implemented in a coordinated way



**Figure 3 the campaign life cycle**

A campaign should be planned and managed by a head of campaign (see 4.5.5) in consultation with the campaign commissioner (see 4.5.4), key influencers, marketing partners (where appropriate) and other relevant stakeholders. Lessons from previous campaigns should be drawn on (see 6.12).

*Note: see the OASIS model [8] and campaign planning tools [9].*

### 5.2 Campaign objectives

The purpose of defining campaign objectives is to ensure that those managing the campaign and its component parts are clear on what is required and that those component parts are aligned.

Campaign objectives should be developed which:

- support the policy aim; communications objectives should be developed for the activities that are intended to deliver this
- include the part that communication should contribute to achieving the policy aim

Campaign objectives should be achievable, measurable. (expressed numerically) focused on outcomes, not outputs, and related to changing attitudes and/or behaviour. When numerical objectives cannot be measured numerically, the criteria for validating their achievement should be defined.

*Note: see Strategic Communication: a behavioural approach [11] and the evaluation framework [2].*

### 5.3 Audience insight

The purpose of understanding audiences is to determine the target audiences’ attitudes, habits and preferences, so that government communications can be relevant, meaningful and effective.

Government communicators should draw on a range of data sources, quantitative and qualitative, commissioned and publicly available to create a full picture of target audiences and identify the appropriate method to reach them to achieve any given communications objective. Analysis should be undertaken in accordance with GovS 010, Analysis.

*Note: see Annex C for a framework for gaining insight.*

*Note: key audience categories include those in work, businesses, older people, families, young people, international stakeholders.*

*Note: to access content available within the Government Communications Service, or to join the*

*Insight and Evaluation basecamp group, email [insight@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:insight@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)*

## 5.4 Campaign strategy

Government communicators should use audience insight to set out the strategic approach. The strategy shall include:

- a defined target audience (see 5.3)
- a proposition;
- messages; and
- a channel strategy

## 5.5 Campaign implementation

### 5.5.1 Campaign planning

The purpose of campaign planning is to ensure the objectives of the campaign can be achieved within the known constraints (such as time, cost, resources and risk).

The campaign plan should be developed from the campaign strategy (see 5.4) and include:

- the objective
- purpose of the campaign (for example, instruct, influence, inform)
- audience
- internal and external issues
- messages
- channels
- accountabilities
- measurement
- the approach to be taken
- the timescales for delivery
- resources required
- influencers to engage
- partners to be involved

The campaign plan should initially be developed using a channel agnostic approach, with the most appropriate channel, or combination of channels, used to achieve any given communications objective. The chosen approach should be piloted to verify its effectiveness as measured against the defined evaluation criteria. If necessary corrective action should be taken to improve the plan.

### 5.5.2 Communications packages

A communications lead (4.5.6) should manage each communications package, the plan for which should be approved before roll-out. The plan should include the:

- objectives
- audience
- key message(s)
- channels
- timing, resources and cost

Each communications package should:

- be relevant to government responsibilities
- be objective and explanatory, not biased or polemical
- not be – and not liable to being misrepresented as – party political
- be conducted in an economic and appropriate way, and should be able to justify the costs as expenditure of public funds.

Public finances shall be managed in accordance with GovS003, Finance.

### 5.5.3 Campaign roll-out

The campaign should be rolled-out, with each communications package initiated in accordance with the plan. Progress should be monitored in terms of outputs, outtakes and outcomes

## 5.6 Campaign evaluation

Evaluation is conducted to assess the performance in delivering on objectives such as changing behaviour, improving operational effectiveness, building the reputation of the UK and explaining government policies and programmes.

Outputs, outtakes and outcomes should be monitored throughout a campaign and evaluated once the campaign is complete.

It is recommended that approximately 5 to 10% of total campaign expenditure is allocated to evaluation.

Analysis should be undertaken in accordance with GovS010, Analysis.

*Note: see Evaluation Framework [2].*

## 6 Communications practices

### 6.1 Strategic communication

The purpose of strategic communications is to set, co-ordinate and guide the implementation of activity, based on insight, in a timely way, as part of an overarching plan to deliver against the government and organisation's agreed priorities to measurable effect.

Strategic communications should be:

- aligned to the delivery of HM Government priorities
- planned using defined practices
- focused on audience understanding
- evaluated to demonstrate value and capture future insight
- integrated with all other aspects of communications

Strategic communications specialists should work alongside policy, operations, HR and project delivery colleagues from the outset, so they can inform and advise the government and organisational decision-makers on appropriate communications options and strategies.

Communications priorities for the government and each organisation should be agreed in consultation with policy makers and influencers and with the organisation's senior leaders. Priorities should be recorded in an annual communications plan (see 4.2). When necessary, incoming requests for communications support for new or emerging communications priorities from ministerial/policy requests/wider horizon scanning should be evaluated and priorities and plans changed, if necessary.

Long term communications requirements should be identified, and threats and opportunities noted by long term horizon scanning.

Short term planning should be managed through a forward planning grid (published weekly).

Research should be carried out to understand the audiences and the impact of communications on them.

Analysis should be undertaken in accordance with GovS010, Analysis.

*Note: see Strategic Communications [19].*

### 6.2 Marketing

The purpose of marketing is to help fulfil operational and policy objectives by effectively understanding and meeting the needs of citizens.

Marketing campaigns include research into citizen behaviour, insight generation, strategic planning and the implementation of communications programmes across multiple channels.

Marketing campaigns should:

- focus on delivering a high-quality end-to-end service and customer experience
- support the raising of awareness of policies, influences attitudes and behaviours
- aids the operation of services
- based on reliable data
- use appropriate and validated creative techniques to influence attitudes and behaviours
- be founded on established behavioural science
- build confidence and trust in the government's institutions and brands
- be measurable in terms of effectiveness and achievement goals

Analysis should be undertaken in accordance with GovS010, Analysis.

### 6.3 Media relations

The purpose of media relations is to explain the policies and services of government departments and agencies through partners in the media to create public understanding of the aims of government and build the trust that the public place in the government's services.

The media has a duty to hold the government to account and media teams should promote, explain and justify the government's policies accurately and in an appropriate style. Those advising ministers and officials shall be prepared to communicate (verbally and in writing) with

honesty and based on professional expertise and evidence, to advise ministers and officials on the appropriate approach to meet the needs of the media and achieve the government's objectives.

The government and each organisation shall have a media relations operation which shall maintain a media planning schedule and forward look (in some organisations, referred to as the 'grid') to plan announcements which should be coordinated with the government wide 'grid'.

Practitioners should have the expertise to work across all media platforms and channels (broadcast, print, online), including:

- proactive media handling, such as making announcements
- reactive media handling, including monitoring the media, handling calls and managing crises (see 6.7)
- relationship management including engaging policy makers, ministers and special advisors and winning journalists' trust
- content creation, both proactively and reactively using appropriate channels
- insight and evaluation including communications impact assessment and tracking across media

*Note: see Modern Media Operating Mode, a guide [17].*

## 6.4 External affairs

The purpose of external affairs is to build and maintain, for the public benefit, relationships with an organisation's external stakeholders, including influential individuals.

External affairs practitioners and teams should:

- gather intelligence to inform internal thinking and provide early warning of issue which might need to be addressed
- take a balanced approach, encouraging supportive voices and mitigating criticism, and disseminate messages through selected stakeholder channels
- explain government and the organisation's policies to influential individuals and organisations for public benefit

- co-ordinate high-level stakeholder engagement, providing advice based on gathered intelligence and an evaluation of impact of related campaigns and communications packages

*Note: see External Affairs Operating Model [18].*

## 6.5 Internal communication

The purpose of internal communications is to inform and engage employees in a way which motivates staff to maximise their performance and deliver the business strategy most effectively.

Organisations should develop, in consultation with senior business leaders and representative stakeholders, an internal communications strategy describing the current situation, agreed future and state and means to achieving that future state.

Internal communications should be designed to support the organisation's leaders by helping:

- the organisation to deliver its objectives;
- staff see the connection between their job and the organisation's vision Understand employee engagement and what drives it; and
- managers communicate better with their teams.

Internal communications should:

- add value to the organisation in the short and long term
- support the organisation's reputation and brand
- be agreed with the organisation's commissioning manager(s)
- be authentic, achievable, actionable and compelling
- engage line managers in action
- consider employees' views and challenges
- be authentic, and consistent in style and content

*Note: see Internal Communications Operating Model [15] and Engage for Success [16]*

## 6.6 Behaviour change

One of the primary purposes of government communication is to encourage changes in behaviour which benefit individuals and the public at large and help the government to run more effectively and efficiently.

Behaviour change should be a consideration in government communication campaigns, regardless of discipline.

The behaviours necessary to meet the wider government policy objective(s) and any barriers to change should be identified and those which can be addressed by communications included within campaign planning, considering how people are likely to behave in response. In this respect, it should be determined whether the audience has the:

- right skills, mental and physical ability, and knowledge to change their behaviour
- the resources and systems and support
- the motivation to change

*Note: see Strategic communication, a behavioural approach [11] and GovS002, Project delivery.*

## 6.7 Communications in an emergency or crisis

The purpose of communications management during an emergency or crisis is to ensure the flow of reliable accurate, relevant and timely information to those who need it.

A crisis communications plan should be developed and validated in advance for known risks and should aim to:

- keep stakeholders informed
- build and maintain public trust in government and the organisation
- ensure accurate information is being reported by the media
- recover lost reputation

The plan should be updated to reflect the emerging situation. The plan should include:

- who would be affected in the crisis
- the worst case scenario and how to handle it

- key messages to be used
- channels to be used

Roles and responsibilities should be established as soon as a crisis has been identified. If not already planned, a crisis communications plan should be developed as soon as the crisis has been recognised, drawing on existing crisis plans where possible.

Communications should be open, transparent and informative, and based on established facts; trusted sources and channels should be identified.

Senior management should be advised, at the start and as the crisis evolves, of the key messages to be communicated.

*Note: an emergency or crisis can include incidents such as flooding, terror attacks, civil insurrection, acts of war, death of a major public figure.*

*Note: for more information on practical crisis communications, see the PRIMER framework [12].*

## 6.8 Partnership marketing

The purpose of partnership marketing is to provide a cost-effective way to reach audiences, by harnessing relevant third party's influence and insight to increase the impact of government communications.

Partnerships shall be negotiated on an in-kind basis and partners shall not be required to pay a fee to be associated with a campaign.

Partners may be from the business sector, civil society or public sector bodies (such as fire and rescue service, police, local authorities and other government departments or their arm's length bodies).

Partnership campaigns should be undertaken in accordance with section 5 together with the requirements and recommendations contained in this functional standard.

The objectives of a campaign should be defined and an assessment of potential partnership organisations undertaken against reach, relevance and impact to the target audience. Additional criteria may be used depending on



the campaign subject and/or audience to be addressed and determine the role the partner is intended to take. Existing relationships should be identified reviewed against the organisation's current and previous partners and, where necessary, across government to determine the potential partner's reputation and the risks of working with them.

A partnership agreement shall be drawn up taking into account, but not limited to, requirements, roles, time considerations (including embargo and restricted periods), resource needs, budget, funding sources, value exchange, data security, governance, risk allocation and performance indicators).

The relationship with the partner shall be managed in accordance with the agreement with, changes (if any) formally agreed. Performance should be measured and preventative and corrective action taken if needed. If the campaign is significant in terms of size, duration or complexity, it should be managed in accordance with GovS002, Project Delivery.

Commercial partnerships should be defined and managed in accordance with GovS 008, Commercial.

*Note: reference GCS Delivering Excellence in Partnership Marketing [13].*

## 6.9 Capability and capacity

Resource, capacity and capability management balances the supply and demand for appropriate communications resources (such as people, equipment, material and facilities) to be deployed when needed. Communications resources may be sourced from within government, by recruiting or from the supply chain.

A comprehensive view of future resource needs should be developed and maintained, with possible shortfalls identified and addressed.

Planned resources should include the expertise and capability to provide consistent and effective application of contemporary technologies and data across all disciplines, and

the use of online (such as web, mobile, social media and related channels) for the dissemination of content.

Communications resources should be developed or acquired, and work prioritised to meet the planned needs.

Development of communications staff should be undertaken in accordance with GovS 003, Human Resources.

## 6.10 Brand

HM Government departments, agencies and arms length bodies shall comply with the government's brand guidelines [3].

The unifying element of the government's identity is the Royal Coat of Arms, approved by Her Majesty the Queen in 1956. Only departments of HM Government and its organisations are permitted to use the Royal Coat of Arms and associated insignia.

*Note: reference Government Brand Portal <https://communication.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/hmg/>*

## 6.11 Writing style

Communications should be written using the most appropriate language to effectively engage with target audiences to achieve the given communications objective. Writing should be:

- clear
- concise
- following consistent editorial practice

*Note: see Style guide [14]*

## 6.12 Learning from experience

The purpose of learning from experience is to avoid repeating mistakes and help spread improved practices to benefit current and future communications work.

Lessons should be continually captured, evaluated and action should be taken to mitigate risk and facilitate continual improvement of communications practice, including an evidence base of what techniques work best with different audiences. Organisation leaders,

(including arm's length bodies) and owners of standards, processes, methods, guidance, tools and training, should update their knowledge sources and communicate learning as appropriate.

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## A. References

ID	Description
1	Government Communications Service (2015) Modern Communications Operating Model <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/modern-media-operation-guide/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/modern-media-operation-guide/</a>
2	Government Communications Service (2018) Evaluation Framework 2.0 <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/evaluation/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/evaluation/</a>
3	HM Government Brand Guidelines and artwork: <a href="https://communication.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/hmg/">https://communication.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/hmg/</a>
4	Civil Service Professions Best Practice Framework
5	Government Communications Service, 5 Trends for Leading Edge Communication [
6	Government Communications Service, Professional Assurance: <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/campaigns/professional-assurance">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/campaigns/professional-assurance</a>
7	Government Communication Professional Competency Framework <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/professional-development/competency-framework/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/professional-development/competency-framework/</a>
8	Government Communications Service, OASIS Campaign Framework <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/campaigns/guide-to-campaign-planning-2/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/campaigns/guide-to-campaign-planning-2/</a>
9	Government Communications Service, Campaign planning tools <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/OASIS-Guide-1.pdf">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/OASIS-Guide-1.pdf</a>
10	Government Communications Service, , Propriety code of Practice <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/propriety/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/propriety/</a> .
11	Government Communications Service, Strategic communications, a behavioural approach <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/campaigns/behaviour-change-is-one-of-the-primary-functions-of-government-communications/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/campaigns/behaviour-change-is-one-of-the-primary-functions-of-government-communications/</a>
12	Government Communications Service, PRIMER framework <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/primer-emergency-planning-framework/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/primer-emergency-planning-framework/</a>
13	Government Communications Service, Delivering Excellence in Partnership Marketing <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/delivering-excellence-partnership-marketing/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/delivering-excellence-partnership-marketing/</a>
14	Government Communications Service, Style Guide <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/gcs-style-guide/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/gcs-style-guide/</a>
15	GCS Internal Communications Operating Model <a href="https://communication.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ic-space/">https://communication.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ic-space/</a>
16	Engage for Success <a href="https://engageforsuccess.org/s">https://engageforsuccess.org/s</a>
17	Government Communications Service, Modern media operating model, a guide <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/modern-media-operation-guide/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/modern-media-operation-guide/</a>
18	Government Communications Service, External Affairs Operating Model . <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/external-affairs/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/external-affairs/</a>
19	Government Communications Service, Strategic Communications <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-communication/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-communication/</a>
20	Government Communications Service, Buying communications support <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/buying-communications-services/">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/buying-communications-services/</a>
21	Government Communications Service, Handbook <a href="https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/6.4043_CO_GCS-Handbook_Web_Jun2019.pdf">https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/6.4043_CO_GCS-Handbook_Web_Jun2019.pdf</a>

## B. Glossary

Term	Definition
campaign	A planned sequence of communications and interactions that uses a compelling narrative over time to deliver a defined and measurable outcome.
communications package	A communication covering a specific need or event as part of a campaign. A communications package can be made up of a number of sub-packages
channel	The communication channels available to deliver a message to an end audience. Often categorised as either 'paid', 'owned' or 'earned'.
channel (earned)	The publicity gained through means other than paid-for advertising or own channel
channel (owned)	Owned media refers to media channels that a party has complete control over such as their website, blogs, email newsletters, social media and internal communications.
channel (paid)	Covers all paid media, including TV and radio advertising, display, programmatic, search, media partnerships and sponsorship
communication	Communications, in the context of this functional standard includes announcements, media management, coordinated communications activities (including social media, branded campaigns, external affairs and stakeholder management) aimed to support the organisation's policy and priority objectives. This includes external and internal audiences.
communication package	A communications package, managed by a communications lead, is an element of a campaign which covers a specific need or event and is aligned to the campaign objectives. A communications package can be made up of a number of sub-packages
external affairs	External Affairs is about building and maintaining relationships with influential individuals and organisations for the public benefit
fillers	Low cost government TV and radio public service announcements, containing public welfare, health and safety messages, which are aired entirely at the goodwill of media owners who have donated free airtime
grid	A media planning schedule and forward look to plan announcements.
internal communications	Internal communications help leaders in an organisation inform and engage employees, in a way which motivates staff to maximise their performance and deliver the business strategy most effectively.
marketing	In a government context, marketing is the strategic application of a range of techniques that help fulfil operational and policy objectives by effectively understanding and meeting the needs of citizens.
media	Communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data, or promotional messages are disseminated. Media includes every broadcasting and narrowcasting medium on and off line such as websites, social media platforms, newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail and telephone.

Term	Definition
partner long list	A list of potential partner organisations who are able to reach a defined audience before prioritisation has taken place.
partner shortlist –	A prioritised list of partner organisations to be approached for campaign support.
partnership marketing	The development and delivery of government messages via partnerships with private sector organisations, the public sector and civil society, utilising one or more elements of the partner’s marketing communication channels.
reach	The number of people reached by a communications activity.
Sponsorship (communications)	A contractual arrangement where an organisation pays for the rights (exclusive or nonexclusive) to be associated with an activity. This may be financially or through the provision of products or services.
strategic communication	Strategic communication sets, co-ordinates and guides the implementation of activity, based on insight, in a timely way, as part of an overarching plan to deliver against agreed priorities to measurable effect.
value exchange	Ensuring that each side of a marketing partnership is content with what they are receiving from the relationship relative to what they are giving.

## C. Framework for gaining audience insight

### GENERAL

#### Vital statistics

How many people are like this? Trends? Indices and comparisons

#### Who they are

Key economic or demographic characteristics (individuals age, sex etc.)

#### General lifestyle

How they live. What they like doing. Priorities. Aspirations. Consumer trends. Attitudes to government/life in general.

### THIS AREA/ISSUE

#### Needs, benefits and motivations

Rational needs, emotional  
or hidden needs. What motivates them?

#### Behaviour – what they do

What drives and triggers action? Where do they do what they do? How frequently? Barriers to doing/thinking? Key words / language used?

#### Influencers

Who or what influences them? Why? (See also 'Media', below.)

#### Beliefs and attitudes

Thoughts, beliefs, attitudes to this? What values do they hold that relate to the issue?  
What makes them feel good? Bad? Why?

### MEDIA

#### Getting information and messages

Place, time & how they get info  
How much info they want/need  
Where they get it from-media used  
When & where they're most receptive?

#### Who influences them

Who they do/ don't listen to and respect  
Who delivers for them? In contact with?