

The same general recommendation is made in the Glassco Commission Report:

"The information task in Ottawa cannot be discharged adequately by coldly factual releases. There is urgent need for a focal point where newsmen can get background data and official comment. The departmental officer responsible need not be an experienced pressman, but information experience is clearly desirable and he should have a sympathetic understanding of the problem of newsmen, tempering infinite discretion with ready approachability. Needless to say, he must be well informed on all aspects of policy and operations, sensitive to the nuances of diplomacy, and permitted to use his discretion."

Within the Department, a considerable number of senior officers - Under-Secretary, Assistant Under-Secretaries and Heads of Division - have intermittent contacts with the press and are able to provide useful and appropriate information. These press relations are conducted responsibly and no real problem of control and co-ordination appears to have arisen; ideally, the press office should be aware of the nature of any such conversations in order not to duplicate and perhaps also to be able to follow up and develop any areas of information of particular interest to newsmen. It would be useful to issue a directive to officers, particularly senior officers, of the Department to guide them on the action they should take when they receive press enquiries. The Minister's Office, of course, is another point of contact for the press;