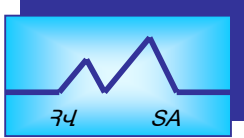


National Statistical Service  
Republic of Armenia

# HANDBOOK “HOW TO ORGANIZE A PRESS CONFERENCE”






National Statistical Service Republic of Armenia

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The publication of this handbook has been initiated by the Statistical Information Dissemination and Public Relations Division of the National Statistical Service of RA. The purpose of the publication of the handbook is to present as much as possible the accessible and complete information on the organization of press conferences, their preparation, format of presentation, types, content and other peculiarities related to their organization.

It is foreseen for the staff of the National Statistical Service of RA.

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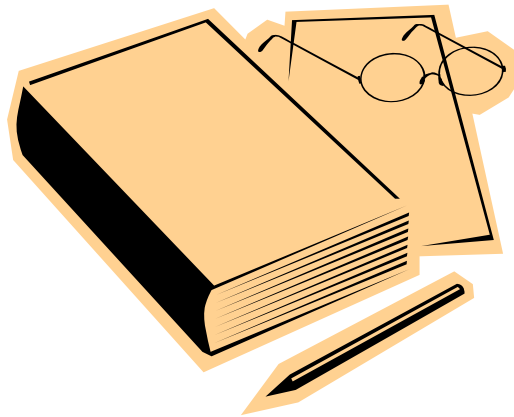
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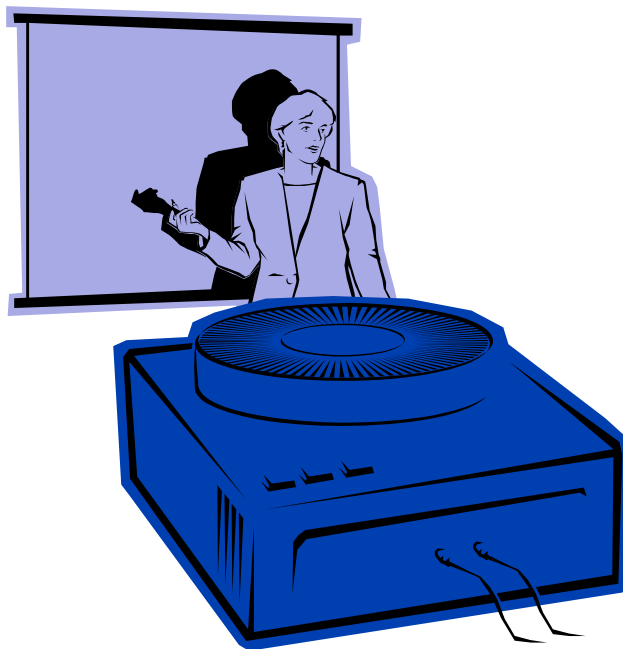
## Introduction

The events organized for the society, particularly, for representatives of media, as a rule, are forming the basis of media relations.

A separate phase of developing strategy for public relations is just the planning of the events to be organized for the media annually.

However, this experience is not widely used in Armenia, because of the number of organizations wishing to have media relations is small. Nevertheless, there are cases when it is not possible without media events. There are two events organized for the media in Armenia: a press conference and press- tour.

Press conferences are applicable in the National Statistical Service of RA (NSS RA).



## What is a Press Conference?

This event is especially popular in Armenia. It should be noted that the press conference should be organized only when it would be spoken about the topic having public resonance.

Today, there are many press conferences that are organized without informative reason; as a result, no journalists and no more the public don't understand anything from them. However, if there is no any reason, but there is a great desire to organize a conference, so a topic could be found in the activity of the organization that would interest the journalists, as well as the public.

If it has been already decided that the press conference should be organized, so, it would require rather serious preparatory work.

The efficiency of the press conference mostly depends on the organizer and chosen topic.



## How to Organize a Press Conference?

First, several days before the press conference the journalists should be surely informed through the special invitations or a press release. The last one is more applicable in the NSS RA.

The press release in addition to the standard text should have also an agenda, which would enable journalists to arrange their day, if they decided to participate.

It is necessary to prepare a special press – folder for the press conference that will contain the conference’s speakers name, surname, position, agenda, press release, brief description of the conference reason and other materials, if necessary.

Also some pictures could be provided in advance that could help journalists to prepare the material. Before the press conference it would be desirable to call media or individual journalists and ask about their possible participation in the press conference.

The preparatory work of the press conference also includes the list of invitees, if there are such.



## Press Conference Process

The best time to organize the press conference is considered from Tuesday to Thursday, at 11-16. As newspapers are mostly working passive on Monday, and other media representatives prefer to deal with the summarizing of the last week.

The conferences organized on Friday are also not preferable, as they may appear in the press on Saturday, when the newspapers are mostly publishing culture topics.

As regards the time, the middle hours of the working day are preferred, when the electronic media journalists can refer to the topic several times during the day and printing media representatives will have time to prepare materials for the next day.

Press conference process shall not exceed one hour, except the cases when the topic is extremely actual or public interest.

If press conference is organized in venue that is difficult to find, special map must be made to avoid misunderstandings.

When entering the conference hall the participants should be registered (in papers prepared in advance, which include the journalist's name and surname, media, contact information). The aim is to permanently know how many journalists have attended a press conference, whether they were the same journalists who attended the previous press conference, how many participants have reacted, etc.

The participants' sheet of signature is also an excellent opportunity to create the database of the journalists.

It should be remembered that journalists tend to ask provocative questions and in order to avoid them the answers to the questions should be short and neatly. As long is the given answer as the probability of the new provocative questions that may arise is greater.

If the number of participating journalists is large, it should be guided by the principle "one question to each media". If the number of journalists is small, the Chairperson of the conference has to give opportunity to ask questions. And, if there are no questions at all, so (it could be happened) it still doesn't mean that journalists are not interested in this topic.

There are cases when the journalists need certain time to perceive well the topic. In this case press conference Chairperson has a serious task. He/she can ask the questions and get their answers, as well as answer the questions addressed to participants.

Minimum two persons with the assistants must represent the basic information at the press conference. It doesn't refer to the experts of Statistical Information Dissemination



and Public Relations Division of NSS RA, as their number may depends on the type of the invited conference.

Before the press conference interviews should not be given to any journalist. The purpose is to make the topic of the press conference more interesting. Besides, during a press conference it could be said more than during the preceding interview. For organization of a successful press conference, as well as to make appropriate arrangements minimum three participants from the organization should be present: public relations, IT and administration representatives. The purpose is to help to solve different issues, provide IT support, photography, recording, translation and other organizational and technical issues.. It's just hard to imagine that one person could chair the conference, organize exclusive interviews, as well as to follow the technical part of the press conference.



## **After the Press Conference**

Just, after the Press Conference, it would be desirable that public relations expert should develop a post-press release with photos, references, etc. and send to all media whose representatives participated in the press conference. And the representatives of the media who were invited but haven't participated should receive the press-folder that also includes the post-press release. By this way it would be possible to get the maximum press conference feedbacks.

Often the representatives of the Internet periodicals don't participate in the event being convinced that the press release is available on the official website of the NSS RA and containing the information that meets the needs of their media format. And for checking the results, on the day of the press conference all the issues related to the press conference have to be watched /listened and videotaped/recorded, and on the next day a press review should be compiled and submitted to the immediate manager.

The press review will enable to check or at least to make preliminary conclusions on the impact of the press conference on the society.

The NSS RA often has the practice, when after the press conference the journalists would like to have an individual interview and to get exclusive information. For such interviews there is a need to be preliminarily prepared, and if you are not sure that the interview will be efficient, you need to make an appointment with the journalist for another day to give an interview.

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Responsible for the issue: Statistical Information Dissemination and Public Relations  
Division of NSS RA

Printed by: Printing and Copying Division of NSS RA