

MEDIA ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES FOR IWC PLENARY MEETINGS  
*The Secretariat*

1. INTRODUCTION

At its London meeting (June 2014) the Bureau asked the Secretariat to present ways to develop the press accreditation procedure for future Commission meetings. A fee of £80 is currently applied to media attendees but this has recently been waived for local/host nation media (at IWC64 - Panama, and IWC65 - Slovenia).

2. RECOMMENDATION

This paper recommends that fees are waived for all media attending future IWC Commission meetings, and that this policy is supported by a new accreditation process, similar to systems in use with UN agencies and many other comparable organisations.

3. DETAIL

The IWC has introduced a number of measures designed to increase transparency and enable sharing of nearly seventy years-worth of research and expertise. These measures include free and open access to the Journal, and free and open access to newly created electronic archives. Efforts have also begun to inform (but not influence) the public debate on some of the IWC's more complex policy areas. Continuing to charge a media attendance fee at Commission meetings would seem to run counter to these initiatives.

Accompanying the proposed change in policy would be new, clear eligibility guidelines for media representatives. Comprehensive eligibility criteria and accreditation processes are in place for many comparable organisations.<sup>1</sup> Media are usually asked to submit a letter of assignment signed by the relevant member of editorial staff, a copy of the relevant professional ID card, and sometimes recent, published work samples. An IWC version would follow a similar procedure which is familiar and therefore not laborious for journalists, and similarly straightforward for the Secretariat to manage.

Comparable organisations also define those outlets not normally accorded accreditation. This category generally includes the information outlets of non-governmental organisations and freelance journalists without a commissioning letter. A further common specification is that online journalists must represent websites of recognised media organisations with verifiable postal addresses, 60% original news content, and regular content updates.

The IWC registration process does not currently define media, nor is there a definition of 'local' to assist in deciding when the fee should be waived.

Attached at annex is a draft Media Accreditation Policy, showing in detail how the proposed accreditation procedure would work.

---

<sup>1</sup> UN agencies and organs including the General Assembly and International Maritime Organisation, the Convention for Biological Diversity and the Convention for Migratory Species.

DRAFT

ANNEX

PROPOSED IWC MEDIA ACCREDITATION POLICY

The IWC welcomes media interest.

An accreditation process is in operation for media wishing to attend Commission plenary meetings.

Accreditation is for the duration of the meeting, although every effort will be made to streamline the re-accreditation process for those also wishing to attend future meetings.

If you would like to apply for media accreditation to {IWCXX} please complete and return this form.

We would also ask you to provide us with:

- A letter of assignment, on the official letterhead of a media organisation, signed by the Publisher, Editor or Bureau Chief, and containing that person's contact information. This letter should specify the name and functional title of the journalist.
- A photocopy of a valid press card or equivalent form of professional ID.

In addition, and on first application only:

- Print media are asked to submit a recent issue of the publication they represent containing a by-lined article in their own name.
- Photographers are asked to submit original tear sheets or photos with their credit.
- Radio and TV media are asked to submit a recording of a recently broadcast report.
- Freelance journalists and photographers, and independent film production companies are asked to provide a letter of assignment signed by the appropriate commissioning editor.
- Online media are asked to demonstrate that their website belongs to a recognised news organisation, with a verifiable postal address, at least 60% original news content, updated at least weekly.

Please note:

Media accreditation will not be accorded to the information outlets of non-governmental organisations, newsletters, federations or associations.

Double accreditation will not be possible (e.g. media + NGO)

The IWC Secretariat reserves the right to withdraw accreditation in the event that the Code of Conduct for IWC meetings is considered to have been breached.

The decision of the IWC Secretary is final.