**Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

[Date]

**Interesting – Capture attention and Interest – be relevant and current**

[CITY, STATE, DATE.] Always open with something really interesting. Generally the key point of your message is the best place to start. You need to grab the reader’s attention within the first 10 words, or you will lose them before you even start.

**The Headline**

It is ABSOLUTELY vital that you have a compelling headline. This is the bait on the end of your fishing line. Without the right bait, you won’t get any bites. The headline should give a clear indication of the release’s topic and show your angle on the story.

Don’t overthink it! Keep your headline short, sweet and to the point. There is nothing worse than a long, drawn out headline, full of sensationalist language. Whilst it might sound great, a media release should not include emotionally charged language, especially in the headline.

**The "You Attitude”**

Always try to remember the “You Attitude”. The “you-attitude” is a writing style and a philosophy which places the reader's interests foremost in your writing. It is based on the principle that the readers are more concerned about their own needs than they are about yours.

**STOP!**

Don’t start writing just yet. Take a moment to figure out why you are going down this path.

Before you begin writing a single word, you must ask yourself some important questions.

* Is my story actually newsworthy?
* What am I trying to achieve by writing this media release?
* Is a journalist going to read or delete my email?

Asking yourself these questions will ensure that you are writing a media release for the right reasons. If you don’t have a newsworthy topic, don’t worry! *Forcing out a media release on a topic that has no substance is the worst thing you could do.*

You should also consider your purpose for writing a media release.

* Is your release trying to educate the reader on a particular Honorary Justice issue?
* Are you announcing changes to your Branch or team?
* Do you want to promote an event you are organising in your local area?

Your media release MUST have a clear purpose which can easily be picked up by the reader. If the reader can’t see a clear point to your media release, it is unlikely they will spread the word to their friends.

**Grammar**

To never have your grammar scrutinised, remember the following framework:

* Always use quotation marks! DO NOT forget quotation marks as they signify the opening of dialogue in the release.
* Always put the comma INSIDE the quotation marks. This separates the dialogue from the tagline and lets the reader know what is being said and by who.
* Always attribute the person you are quoting by including their business name and their personal name.
* If a quote ends a sentence, the final punctuation must be included inside the quotation marks. The period is placed here as it signifies the end of the sentence and the quotation itself.
* Always use a spell checker and/or Grammarly. A poorly written piece, with spelling and grammar mistakes reflects badly on you and the Association.

**About the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices**

The Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices (RVAHJ) is the peak membership body for Bail Justices and Justices of the Peace (known collectively as Honorary Justices) in Victoria. Founded in 1910, the Association head office is located in our own premises in the Melbourne bayside suburb of Elwood, Victoria. Through our commitment, experience and expertise we have established relationships with our stakeholders that makes the RVAHJ the voice of Honorary Justices within the Courts System, Government and the Community. We provide Membership, Training and Support services for Honorary Justices along with great customer services to the general public.

Honorary Justices Victoria

*Independent, Trusted, Respected*

*###*

**Ending the Release**

Once you have finished writing the body copy of your release you must finish with ‘Ends’ or three hash signs (###). This signifies the end of the release.

You MUST provide media contact details for journalists or news publications to reach out to you.

Details of your name, Branch, our website (www.rvahj.org.au), phone number and email address must be provided at the end of the release. Ensure this is easy to read and clearly stated:

Media Contacts:

Your Name

[Your] Branch

Your Phone Number

Your Email

Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices

03 9525 7099

social@rvahj.org.au

**Photographs/Graphics**

Always try to include a relevant photograph or graphic with your release. High quality (300dpi) is best for magazine articles – 120dpi is ok for online. Avoid boring pictures of people standing around – try to find something more interesting if at all possible.

*If you need more than two pages, your release is too long:*

*edit it down to be more concise and compelling.*