

## **Attachment 1.**

### **BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE DEPUTY MINISTER**

#### **Launch of the Industry in Action Program**

#### **ISSUE**

On January 15, 2004, the department will launch the Industry in Action Program. Stakeholders or the media may ask you about this program.

#### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

##### **Q.1 What are Qs & As used for?**

**A.1** Qs & As should anticipate questions that might be posed to your minister at a meeting or event, or in dealing with the news media. They should prepare the minister for possible criticism, questions on contentious issues, and requests for explanations of complex concepts.

##### **Q.2 Who needs to sign off on Qs & As?**

**A.2** You will probably need to get a sign-off from your communications branch if the Qs & As are for use by your minister with the public or the news media. Your director and your director general will probably need to sign off on them as well.

##### **Q.3 Are all Qs & As for use in public?**

**A.3** No. For example, in some cases Qs & As would be used in a meeting with stakeholders with no media present. However, it is still possible that those present might quote the minister to the media.

## Sub-Headings

### **Q.4 Can Sub-Headings Be Used in Qs & As?**

**A.4** Yes. With lengthy Qs & As, sub-headings should be used to enable quick reference.

## **BACKGROUND**

Note that Qs & As are similar to responsive talking points.

Background provides information, history or explanations that will help the Minister to understand the nature of an issue or its context.

Background can be supplemented by annexes to the briefing note. However, that starts to create a complex format for what is basically a memo to your minister. You might want to consider creating a briefing book instead of a complex series of briefing notes and annexes to briefing notes.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

Considerations are used to show that the answers we provide are reasonable responses to the questions. This entails providing options, pros and cons, analyses arguments and key policy priorities as needed, given:

- the issues at stake;
- your knowledge of what your minister knows and does not know; and
- your knowledge of the minister's position on the issues.

### Where to Place the Background and Considerations

In some cases, it will be a judgement call in deciding whether background and considerations are placed in the memo or in the attached briefing note.

If several sets of Qs & As are provided – i.e., one briefing note for each of several issues – it is probably best to put the background and considerations in the briefing notes along with the Qs & As.

If, however, the background and considerations apply equally to all the sets of Qs & As, you will probably want to either:

- place them in the memo (if there is room); or
- place them in a briefing note of their own that covers all the sets of Qs & As.

### Approach

Considerations can be used to provide a general approach that your minister is advised to take in making remarks.

### Conclusion

As a rule, briefing notes that provide talking points do not end with a conclusion. The Qs & As themselves represent the conclusion.

### Subdividing Qs & As

Sometimes you might find that the Qs & As are becoming lengthy or that you are using many sub-headings and sub-sub-headings. This is a sign that you may need to split the Qs & As into more than one briefing note, each dealing with a different subject.

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