



# The National Association of Government Communicators

201 Park Washington Court, Falls Church, Virginia 22046-4527  
Phone: 703-538-1787 Fax: 703-241-5603  
Internet: [www.nagconline.org](http://www.nagconline.org) E-mail: [info@nagconline.org](mailto:info@nagconline.org)  
Fed. ID # 52-1046350

For Immediate Release

Contact:  
Dawn M. Shiley  
(703) 538-3542

## NEWS RELEASE

### **New Survey on Government Communicators Breaks Down Stereotypes** *NAGC report reveals enlightening statistics on overlooked profession*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 24, 2008)** -- While the world of politics and public service is still considered a man's world, those advising the leaders of government agencies and devising media strategies are predominately female, according to a new survey released today.

The National Association of Government Communicators' first "Trends and Salary Survey" of the government public information profession shines a spotlight on an industry often overlooked. A summary report categorizes the average government communicator to be a woman between 42 and 53 years of age, with 10 to 20 years of experience in government communications who works at least 41 to 45 hours each week.

"For the first time, we're able to supply some data that confirms our observations that the government communications field is full of dedicated and creative people," said NAGC President Gene Rose. "This is a field where technology and trends are changing rapidly."

Some of the survey's findings:

- Women dominate the profession. Nearly two out of every three government communicators are female.
- The largest percentage of government communicators are between 36 and 60 years old, suggesting that people do not enter government communications directly from college, but come from other fields.
- Most government communicators are pleased with their agency's attitude toward public relations and most believe the media does a fair job of covering their agency. But more than 80 percent believes their agency's Web site needs to be improved.
- At least 72 percent of government communicators say writing, editing, drafting news releases, producing web content and holding media events are core parts of their jobs. Only five percent write for blogs and only seven percent produce podcasts. However, they see this changing dramatically in the next two years, while they see less use of celebrity spokespersons and producing magazines, brochures and other publications.
- Nearly three-fourths of communicators find it impossible to do their jobs in a 40-hour work week.
- About 58 percent believe public cynicism is at an all-time high.

-- more --

## survey 2-2-2

- In terms of contracted services, government communicators see more need for media measurement, Web conference and Web hosting.
- About three in 10 seek out higher educational degrees.

"The iconic position in our industry is the White House press secretary," Rose said. The current White House Press Secretary Dana Perino is the second female to hold that position (the first was Dee Dee Myers in the early years of Bill Clinton's administration). "Based on our survey results, we should be seeing several more examples of women holding major spokespersons roles in government," Rose noted.

While women dominate the industry, they don't dominate the pay scale. In terms of percentages, the salaries for men and women are fairly even between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Women actually have a larger percentage when the salaries fall between \$50,000 and \$90,000. Men hold a slight advantage in the \$90,000 to \$110,000 ranges, but men have nearly twice as many in the \$110,000 to \$150,000 range.

More than half of government communicators believe they do not receive adequate compensation for the services they provide. The survey found that federal and local government communicators tend to be more satisfied with their salary and benefits, with more than half of each group believing they are adequately compensated. "There is great dissatisfaction, though, for those that work for state government," Rose noted. Only 27 percent of state government communicators are satisfied with their salaries and benefits.

While government communicators typically receive an annual pay hike between 2 and 4.9 percent each year, promotions are rare. About 85 percent of respondents did not expect to receive a promotion that year and 86 percent had not received one the year prior.

Government appears to be implementing programs to keep employees. With baby boomers nearing retirement, the survey revealed that bonuses and longevity pay is being offered for one out of every five government employees.

"While there is a lot of discussion about outsourcing jobs traditionally held by government communicators, particularly at the federal level, this survey suggests that more agencies are doing their best to keep good employees," Rose said. "When I first started working in government, bonuses, longevity pay and telecommuting were rare and often were criticized. The survey indicates this attitude is changing."

Other highlights of the survey include a look into the future of communications and where government communicators see their roles. Electronic and 'new' media are beginning to dominate the industry as places the public turns to for its news. With that in mind, nearly 94 percent of government communicators see themselves putting much more emphasis in the future on delivering news via their Websites, with about 88 percent expecting an increase in their Website role. About 80 percent see their functions increasing emphasis on e-newsletters instead of hard-copy newsletters and magazines, and on podcasts (80 percent) and blogs (72 percent).

Copies of the complete report are available through NAGC's home office and can be ordered via their Website [www.nagconline.org](http://www.nagconline.org).