

# Survey of Journalists' Views on "Release to One, Release to All"

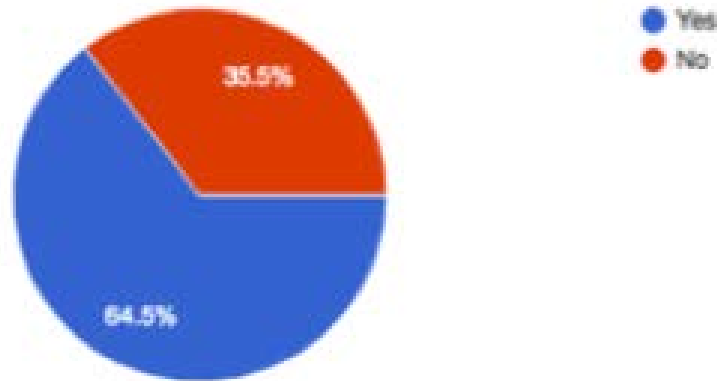


Katie Townsend – RCFP Litigation Director

# Characteristics of Survey Respondents

- The majority of respondents (93.5%) use FOIA in their journalism work, or oversee staff who do

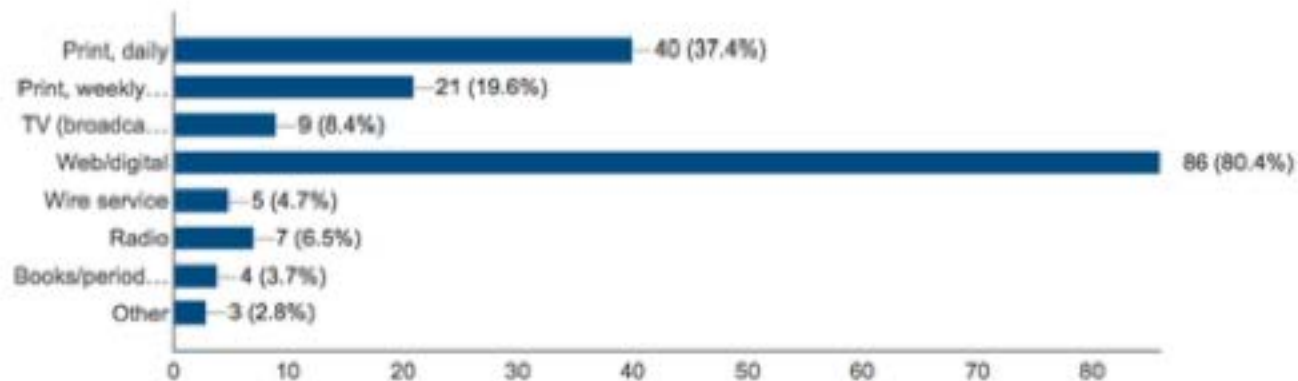
Are you an investigative reporter? (107 responses)



# Characteristics of Survey Respondents

- The majority of respondents (80.4%) stated that their work is published online or in a digital format.

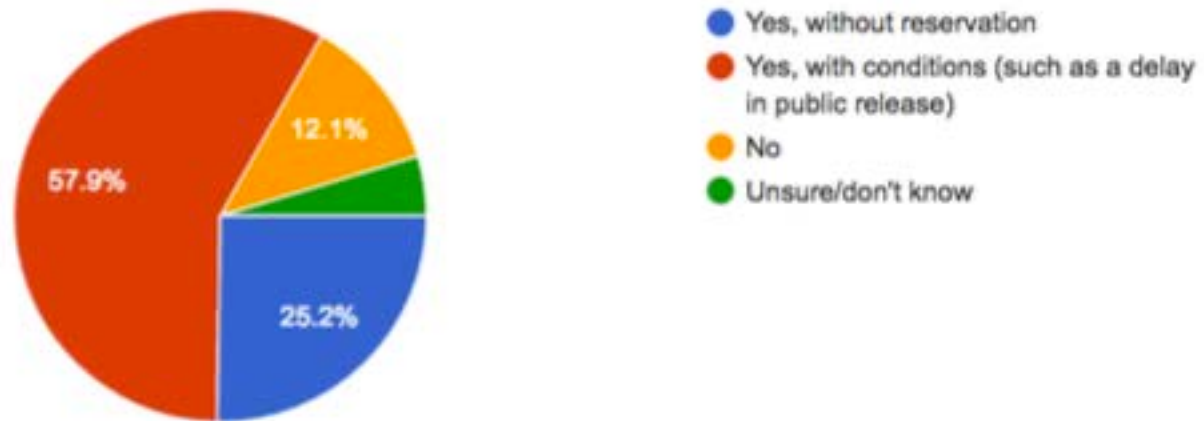
How is your work primarily published? (check all that apply): (107 responses)



# General Support\* for “Release to One, Release to All”

- The majority of respondents (83.1%) support the policy in one form or another. 12.1% do not support the policy. 4.7% were unsure or did not know.

Do you support a "Release to One, Release to All" policy? (107 responses)

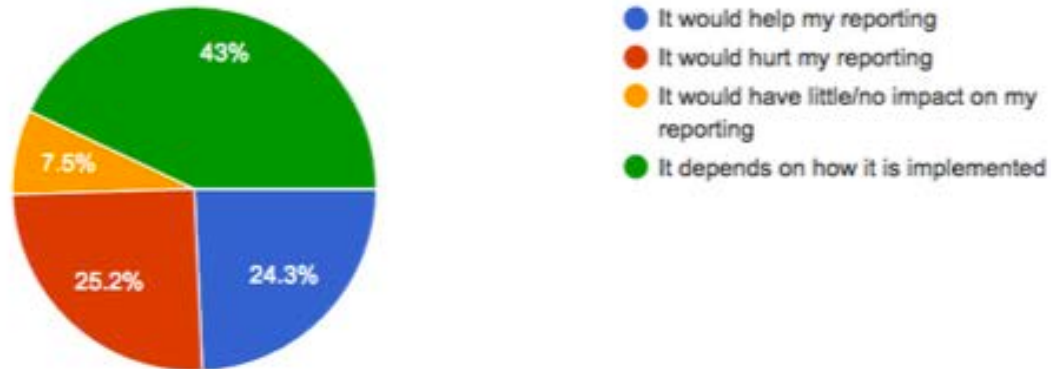


# Journalists' Views on the Impact of "Release to One, Release to All" on their Work

- The majority of respondents (83.1%) support the policy in one form or another. 12.1% do not support the policy. 4.7% were unsure or did not know.

Thinking about your reporting, how would a "Release to One, Release to All" policy affect your work?

(107 responses)



# Journalists' Views on the Impact of “Release to One, Release to All” on their Work

- *“I think my editors and I would be less interested in investing the time for FOIA requests and responses, etc. if the resulting release of documents would be shared simultaneously with others. Scoops still matter!”*
- *“Taking the time and effort to identify valuable public records, negotiate for their release (often at great time and some expense) and in some cases paying applicable fees, only to have them dumped out to the world immediately would discourage records-based and dataset-based investigative reporting.”*

# Journalists' Views on the Impact of "Release to One, Release to All" on their Work

- *"Releasing formerly hidden documents to everyone would force reporters to pull together stories more quickly — hastily — in an effort to retain their advantage on the story and could easily lead to stories published without critical information or fully vetting both sides of an issue, or worse yet, with incorrect information."*
- *"Release to one release to all with no delay would enable reporters who might not have a full grasp on a topic to snatch documents upon release and put out a cheap and dirty version of a story that relies more on documents than on fully developed themes that frame a story in its proper context."*

# Journalists' Views on the Impact of “Release to One, Release to All” on their Work

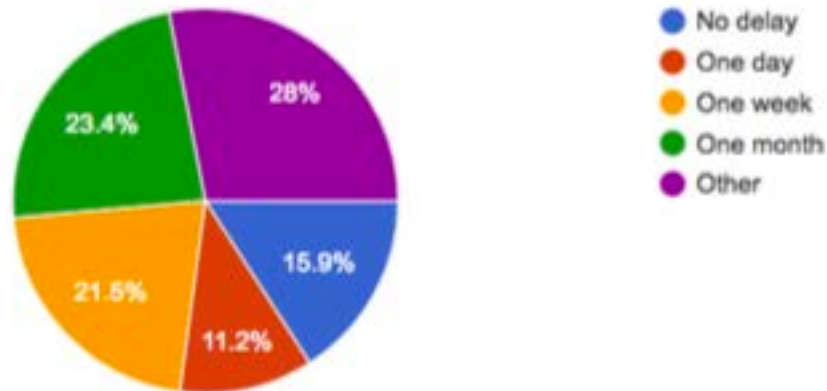
- 24.3% of respondents said they thought the policy would *help* their reporting.
  - Increase accessibility to federal records for journalists with limited resources;
  - Eliminate the need for duplicative requests
  - Enable reporters and experts with different areas of focus and expertise to analyze the same records



# Journalists' Preferences for a Delay between Release to the Requester and the Public at Large

Some journalists argue a delay between the time records are released to the requester and when they are posted would be appropriate. Do you support a delay? If so, how long should the delay be?

(107 responses)



# FOIA Litigation

- 35% of respondents said a simultaneous “Release to One, Release to All” policy would dissuade them to some extent from filing a FOIA lawsuit

Some have expressed concerns that a "Release to One, Release to All" policy would reduce the incentives for filing a FOIA lawsuit. Would the simultaneous public release of records obtained through a lawsuit:

(100 responses)

