

Media Relations Strategy of the Directorate General of PSDKP in Responding to Negative Media Coverage: A Case Study of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)

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ABSTRACT

The Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (Direktorat Jenderal Pengawasan Sumber Daya Kelautan dan Perikanan [PSDKP]) implements the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy to monitor fishing vessel movements in real time and prevent illegal fishing activities. However, the implementation of this policy has frequently received negative media coverage, ranging from technical issues to complaints from fishing industry stakeholders, potentially affecting public trust in the institution's credibility. This study aims to examine the media relations strategy of the Directorate General of PSDKP in responding to negative media coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Based on the Excellence Theory perspective, the findings indicate that the Directorate General of PSDKP implemented a media relations strategy through relationship management, strategy development, and network building. In addition, to support its media relations strategy, the Directorate General of PSDKP utilized an owned-media publication strategy through infographic content published on the organization's official website. However, in its implementation, the organization needs to develop more targeted activities to strengthen media engagement and stakeholder involvement.



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INTRODUCTION

In the era of information openness and digitalization, the media plays an important role in shaping public perceptions of government policies (Ayinaddis & Tegegne, 2023; Eldin et al., 2025; Michalkova & Ponisciakova, 2025; Muchsidin et al., 2025; Ramzan, 2025; Sari et al., 2025). Information conveyed through the media can either strengthen or weaken public trust in state institutions, depending on how an issue is presented. Good media relations are essential as a bridge between organizations and the public, particularly in mass media, where message delivery depends on the ability of public relations practitioners to build positive, trustworthy, and sustainable relationships. According to Diah Wardhani (Wardhani, 2008), media relations are activities conducted by a Public Relations department through various approaches, such as distributing press releases, organizing press conferences, conducting

media gatherings and press visits, organizing special events, conducting special interviews, and involving Public Relations personnel as media sources.

The Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (Direktorat Jenderal Pengawasan Sumber Daya Kelautan dan Perikanan [PSDKP]) is one of the working units under the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan [KKP]) whose primary responsibility is to monitor and ensure that the utilization of Indonesia's marine resources remains sustainable. One of the strategic policies implemented by PSDKP is the installation of the Fishing Vessel Monitoring System (Sistem Pemantauan Kapal Perikanan [SPKP]), also known as the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), on fishing vessels. The Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is a satellite-based monitoring device used to track vessel positions, monitor fishing activities, and ensure that vessels comply with their operational permits and designated fishing areas. This policy is based on Regulation of the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23/PERMEN-KP/2021 concerning the Fishing Vessel Monitoring System, which states: "Every fishing vessel with a minimum size of 30 (thirty) Gross Tonnage (GT) that fishes within the Fisheries Management Areas of the Republic of Indonesia (Wilayah Pengelolaan Perikanan Negara Republik Indonesia [WPPNRI]) or on the high seas must be equipped with a Fishing Vessel Monitoring System (Sistem Pemantauan Kapal Perikanan [SPKP])."

In implementing marine surveillance policies, the Directorate General of PSDKP faces challenges not only related to technical issues in the field but also to media coverage that influences public opinion (Agastia, 2024; Damanik et al., 2025; Muktitama et al., 2023; Priyanto et al., 2026; Trimurni et al., 2025). Negative news coverage can generate unfavorable perceptions of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) installation policy among small-scale fishers, particularly in regions where the VMS has been implemented, such as East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara (Nusa Tenggara Barat [NTB]). According to a report by CNBC Indonesia (Rizky, 2025), titled "Fishers Stage Mass Protest Against VMS Installation, Here's How KKP Responded," protests occurred among fishers in various regions who rejected the installation of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) because they considered it financially burdensome. The report also highlighted that the public had not yet fully understood the benefits of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). This situation has become an issue that the organization must address promptly, as negative media coverage may undermine public trust in the institution's credibility and hinder the effective implementation of the VMS policy.

In the context of addressing issues related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), media relations play a crucial role for the Directorate General of PSDKP, as an appropriate communication strategy is essential for responding to negative media coverage and restoring public trust. Although numerous studies have examined media relations strategies in government institutions, a significant gap remains in describing, mapping, and analyzing communication strategies that are reactive and situational in nature. Existing studies tend to focus on routine media relations activities or general crisis communication without specifically examining how government institutions respond to negative coverage related to the implementation of specific policies. This study aims to address this gap by examining the media relations strategy of the Directorate General of PSDKP, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan [KKP]), in responding to negative media coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. The study applies the

communication model of Excellence Theory (Grunig, 1992) as the theoretical framework and the concept of media relations strategy proposed by Iriantara (2019).

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with an interpretive research paradigm. The researchers applied a single-case study method to examine the media relations strategy implemented by the Directorate General of PSDKP, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (*Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan [KKP]*), in responding to negative media coverage. The research was conducted at Gedung Mina Bahari IV, Jalan Medan Merdeka Timur No. 16, Central Jakarta. The study focused on identifying organizational strategies in managing negative media coverage.

The informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in developing and implementing the media relations strategy. The main informant was Sahono Budianto, Head of Public Relations and Cooperation at PSDKP. Additional informants included Nur Rakhma Novika, Tifa Auliani, and Febri Firmansyah Sudjatomoko, who served as Public Relations Staff at PSDKP and were directly involved in media relations activities.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation using both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data included relevant official documents, archives, reports, and other supporting materials. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consisted of data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification (Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, 2018). Data validity was ensured through source, technique, and time triangulation (Sugiyono, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the findings seeks to present a comprehensive account of the field research results obtained through various methods, such as in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, related to the implementation of the media relations strategy at the Directorate General of PSDKP, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries. This research was conducted from May 13-29, 2026, through interviews with several informants relevant to the study. The media relations strategy of the Directorate General of PSDKP in dealing with negative media coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy follows the principles of media relations strategy (Iriantara, n.d.). The following are the stages of the media relations strategy implemented:

Managing Relations

Managing relations with the media is a communication process regularly planned by an organization, with the aim of strengthening a mutually beneficial relationship between the organization and the mass media. The stages of managing relations include knowing the media well, forming a media team, and providing a personal touch to information/news service. In practice, managing relations with the media is carried out through several steps, including:

1. Knowing the Media Well

"We find out what issues they cover, and then what type of media outlet it is—whether it's a tier 1-3 media outlet. We also provide press releases to media outlets so they can obtain

accurate information, and we also hold audiences with the media. Of course, we always maintain good relationships with the media." Interview (Tifa, May 18, 2026).



Figure 1. Mass Media Activity with the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)
Source: Researcher's Documentation

In getting to know the media well, the Directorate General of PSDKP maps media outlets into tiers. This is very important for identifying the sources and flow of information when dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

2. Forming a Media Team

"Media monitoring is very important for the Directorate General of PSDKP to know what steps we should take; it helps us shape the strategy we will implement to address negative coverage. Of course, we will issue press releases, conduct outreach, produce infographics, and inform the public about prices and benefits—we communicate all of it. Media monitoring also helps leadership make decisions; if leadership sees that the tone of the coverage data is negative, they immediately implement a strategy to address it." Interview (Febri, May 29, 2026).



Figure 2. Media Monitoring Activity of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)
Source: Researcher's Documentation

In forming a media team, the Directorate General of PSDKP established a media monitoring team. This helps with data collection, monitoring of media coverage, and leadership decision-making in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

3. Providing a Personal Touch to Information/News Service

"In our view, the most important media relations strategy is that we must have broad and good relationships with the media. So we don't just have professional relationships, but also good personal ones. This strategy usually makes it easier to communicate when a particular issue arises; if we have materials or a press release, we can share them directly with them." Interview (Tifa, May 18, 2026).

A similar view was expressed by Novika, PSDKP Public Relations Staff handling media relations, as follows:

"We also produce press releases on the link between VMS and the sustainability of fish resources, as well as the link between VMS and the protection of conservation areas. We always try to publish from various angles to provide accurate information, because different media outlets pick up information differently, so we provide alternatives and make sure all the information reaches the media." Interview (Novika, May 13, 2026).



Figure 3. Mass Media with the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Public Relations of the Directorate General of PSDKP

In providing a personal touch to information/news service, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses a personal and humanistic approach, providing all the information and materials the media need when dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

Developing Strategy

Once a good relationship with the media has been established, an organization must build a more structured communication strategy to maintain that relationship, especially when facing issues or situations that may attract public attention. Therefore, several forms of media relations strategy development that can be applied include:

1. Initial Statement (Holding Statement)

"Regarding this VMS installation, the narrative circulating suggests that it is mandatory for everyone, including small-scale fishers. However, this is not accurate, and we have clarified the information. According to Regulation of the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23/PERMEN-KP/2021, installation is mandatory only for vessels of 30 GT or more operating at a distance of 12 nautical miles." Interview (Sahono, May 13, 2026).

A similar statement was made by the institution's leader, the Director General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP), Dr. Pung Nugroho Saksono, A.Pi.,

M.M., through a Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries press release Number SP.153/SJ.5/IV/2025. This is stated in the KKP press release titled "VMS Installation Provides Many Benefits for Fishers," published on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, as follows:

"We are encouraging the installation of VMS as a tool to improve the safety and security of fishers at sea, as well as to provide traceability for fishery products that are export commodities—not merely as a surveillance tool."

"The obligation to install and activate VMS applies to fishing vessels that have transferred their business licenses from regional to central government authority." He explained that VMS installation is continuously evaluated every three months. Based on the results of these evaluations, VMS installation is carried out in stages so that fishing vessels are still given the opportunity to carry out their fishing activities.

"We routinely check VMS installation every three months and continue to ensure that vessels install VMS in stages in accordance with applicable regulations."



Figure 4. Director General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)
Source: Website of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia

In issuing an initial statement (holding statement), the Directorate General of PSDKP uses a holding statement to clarify inaccurate information, presenting accurate information and regulations in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

2. Press Release

"First, we produce a press release on the VMS installation requirements and the benefits of using VMS. Of course, the focus is on protecting fishers—fishers also benefit from the relocation of fishing grounds that have become overcrowded, and from catch traceability. We also produce press releases on the link between VMS and the sustainability of fish resources, as well as the link between VMS and the protection of conservation areas. We always try to publish from various angles to provide accurate information, because different media outlets pick up information differently, so we provide alternatives and make sure all the information reaches the media." Interview (Novika, May 13, 2026).



Figure 5. Press Release of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Website of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia

In distributing press releases, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses press releases as its main strategy for conveying accurate and consistent official information to the media, emphasizing benefits and concrete evidence in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

3. Press Conference

"We always emphasize that it's not only the government that needs VMS, but fishers need it too. After monitoring public response, we found that soft approaches are what work best with the public. We told leadership that this information would be good to convey to the media. Leadership then arranged a press conference or audience with the media, and leadership conveyed all the information in detail to the media." Interview (Novika, May 13, 2026).



Figure 6. Press Conference of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Website of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia

In holding press conferences, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses press conferences as an interactive communication medium to provide official explanations and create an open space for discussion, offering information and concrete evidence in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

4. Media Audience

"We also provide press releases to media outlets so they can obtain accurate information, and we also hold audiences with the media. Of course, we always maintain good relationships with the media. There are certainly no obstacles regarding audiences; in

fact, the media are waiting for the information we want to convey. The process of inviting the media is made easier because we have good relationships with them. Furthermore, we believe that if there's an interesting issue, the media will come." Interview (Tifa, May 18, 2026).



Figure 7. Media Audience with the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Website of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia

In holding media audiences, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses these sessions as a relaxed venue for discussion, building closer communication and providing deeper understanding directly, by offering accurate information in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

5. Special Event

"What we prioritize most in implementing a communication strategy through media relations is regularly inviting various media outlets to come to our office or media center. We tell the media about the price and benefits of VMS, so the information provided is more complete and easier to understand. In addition, we also hold external activities." Interview (Sahono, May 13, 2026).



Figure 8. Special Event of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Researcher's Documentation

In holding special events, the Directorate General of PSDKP strategically uses specific events as a means to increase the organization's positive exposure, by inviting the media, holding exhibitions, and organizing other activities in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

Developing Networks

Media relations strategy involves efforts to expand and maintain relationships with journalists. This network is considered a very important form of social capital in supporting the success of organizational communication. Networks are built through sustainable, mutually beneficial professional relationships. In some cases, organizations hire people with a journalism background for public relations positions. This is done because former journalists generally have good writing skills, a deep understanding of the media's role, and many contacts within the press.



Figure 9. Public Relations Staff of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Public Relations of the Directorate General of PSDKP

In developing networks, the Directorate General of PSDKP implements this strategy as a strategic step to strengthen and maintain good relationships with journalists. This represents important social capital in supporting the success of organizational communication in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

Another finding of this study is that, in addition to implementing the media relations strategy (Iriantara, n.d.), the Directorate General of PSDKP was found to employ a new field-level strategy that supports that media relations strategy. Based on interviews, observation, and documentation, an owned media publication strategy in the form of infographics on the organization's official website was identified. The following is the owned media publication strategy in the form of infographics carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP:

1. Infographic Publication

"We regularly create content, ranging from infographics to videos about VMS, based on the information in our press releases—covering protections for fishers, the benefits for them, how to install VMS, and where to buy it." Interview (Novika, May 13, 2026).

A similar view was expressed by Febri, PSDKP Public Relations Staff handling media relations, as follows:

"Of course, we will issue press releases, conduct outreach, produce infographics, and inform the public about prices and benefits—we communicate all of it." Interview (Febri, May 29, 2026).



Figure 10. Infographic Publication of the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP)

Source: Website of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia

In publishing infographics, the Directorate General of PSDKP implements an owned media publication strategy in the form of infographics to disseminate information to the media and the public. This information aims to educate and raise awareness in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy.

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the media relations strategy carried out by the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Resources Surveillance (PSDKP), as an effort to deal with negative media coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. This discussion is based on a combination of qualitative data obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation. The main focus of this analysis is the strategy implemented by the organization. Using the Excellence Theory approach (Grunig, 1992) as an analytical tool, this study reviews the communication models used. The following are several media relations strategies implemented by the Directorate General of PSDKP:

Managing Relations

A relationship management strategy is naturally important for maintaining good relations with the media. Managing media relationships is a fundamental basis for carrying out media relations. Having a good relationship with the mass media helps an organization gain trust and opens up more effective channels of communication for conveying information to the public (Iriantara, n.d.). The media is not merely a channel for publishing news, but also a strategic partner whose nature, needs, and working methods need to be understood. In daily practice, the process of managing media relationships is carried out through several stages, namely:

1. Knowing the Media Well

In getting to know the media well, the Directorate General of PSDKP maps media outlets into tiers. This is very important for identifying the sources and flow of information when dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. The success of media relations depends heavily on a structured research process as a foundation for planning before a communication program begins (Wijaya et al., 2024). This strategy of getting to know the media well, as carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP, is a concrete example of applying the Two-Way Symmetrical Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This two-way symmetric communication model aims to

create mutual understanding between public relations and the mass media, with public relations seeking to understand the media's duties and roles, while also respecting and meeting their needs (Grunig, 1992).

2. Forming a Media Team

In forming a media team, the Directorate General of PSDKP established a media monitoring team. This helps with data collection, monitoring media coverage, and supporting leadership decision-making in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. A media relations strategy depends heavily on an intensive and measurable monitoring process for formulating key messages to help set the public agenda (Nurhayati, 2025). This strategy of forming a media team, as carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP, is a concrete example of applying the Two-Way Asymmetrical Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This two-way asymmetrical communication model aims to conduct measured persuasion; Public Relations collects data on the public's characteristics and attitudes to find the most appropriate arguments so that the public will accept the organization's views (Grunig, 1992).

3. Providing a Personal Touch to Information/News Service

In providing a personal touch to information/news service, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses a personal and humanistic approach, providing all the information and materials the media need when dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. Media relations are not determined solely by formal processes, but are also strongly influenced by more active communication methods and efforts to build networks through cooperation and personal relationships with journalists to facilitate the dissemination of information (Adila et al., 2021). This strategy of providing a personal touch to information/news service, as carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP, is a concrete example of applying the Two-Way Symmetrical Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This two-way symmetric communication model aims to build lasting relationships based on mutual respect, in which the public relations team and journalists understand each other's duties and meet each other's information needs to achieve good mutual understanding (Grunig, 1992).

Developing Strategy

An organized communication strategy is essential for maintaining media relations and managing issues of public concern on an ongoing basis. Once a good relationship with the media has been established, an organization must build a more structured communication strategy to maintain that relationship, especially when facing issues or situations that may attract public attention (Iriantara, n.d.). To build good communication, an organization needs to develop its strategy. Therefore, the following are several media relations strategies that can be applied:

1. Initial Statement (Holding Statement)

In issuing an initial statement (holding statement), the Directorate General of PSDKP uses this to clarify inaccurate information, presenting accurate information and regulations in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. A reputation management strategy is carried out by providing ongoing explanations of the necessary information, offering compensation in accordance with applicable operational

standards, and maintaining good communication and relationships with the media (Oktavia, 2020). This holding statement strategy by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Public Information Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This public information communication model aims to ensure the public receives sufficient and accurate information to support the organization's smooth operation. Public Relations within an organization or company is tasked with providing the information needed by the mass media regarding the organization or company where they work (Grunig, 1992).

2. Press Release

In distributing press releases, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses press releases as its main strategy for conveying accurate and consistent official information to the media, emphasizing benefits and concrete evidence in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. Press releases are used as a way to convey an organization's official information to the media in written form. Press releases are written following journalistic principles so that they are easy to understand and can be published by the media with minimal changes (Iriantara, n.d.). This press release strategy carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Public Information Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This public information communication model aims to ensure the public receives sufficient and accurate information to support the organization's smooth operation. In this model, Public Relations acts like a "journalist" within the organization, tasked with sending out press releases and other communication materials to provide information about the organization's activities (Iriantara, n.d.).

3. Press Conference

In holding press conferences, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses press conferences as an interactive communication medium to provide official explanations and create an open space for discussion, offering information and concrete evidence in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. A press conference is an effective two-way communication method for dealing with negative news and conveying information accurately (Yoga et al., 2023). Press conferences play an important role in dealing with crisis situations by regularly conveying key messages, thereby opening opportunities for honest and open discussion for the public and the media (Nurhayati, 2025). This press conference strategy carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Two-Way Asymmetrical Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This two-way asymmetrical communication model aims to conduct two-way communication that has already incorporated research functions and public input. There is indeed a response from the receiving party, but that response is very limited (Grunig, 1992).

4. Media Audience

In holding media audiences, the Directorate General of PSDKP uses these sessions as a relaxed venue for discussion to build closer communication and provide deeper understanding directly, offering accurate information in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. Media relations can be achieved through an active communication approach and by building strong networks through cooperation and personal relationships with journalists (Adila et al., 2021). An effective

media relations strategy needs to include the management of relationships, both institutional and personal, to maintain a positive image (Nabila Nur Azizah, 2025). This media audience strategy carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Two-Way Asymmetrical Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This two-way asymmetrical communication model aims to conduct two-way communication that has already incorporated research functions and public input. Although there is an exchange of information between the party initiating the communication and the party receiving it, that communication is not equal in quantity (Grunig, 1992).

5. Special Event

In holding special events, the Directorate General of PSDKP strategically uses specific events as a means to increase the organization's positive exposure, by inviting the media, holding exhibitions, and organizing other activities in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. Special events are designed to generate newsworthy stories while strengthening the organization's positive exposure in the eyes of the public (Iriantara, n.d.). Managing special events involves several stages, such as research, design, planning, coordination, and evaluation (Wuisang et al., 2023). This special event strategy carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Public Information Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This public information communication model aims to ensure the public receives sufficient and accurate information to support the organization's smooth operation (Grunig, 1992).

Developing Networks

In developing networks, the Directorate General of PSDKP implements this strategy as a strategic step to strengthen and maintain good relationships with journalists, which represent important social capital in supporting the success of organizational communication in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. Good networks are developed through an active communication approach, a variety of media activities, and by building strong networks through partnerships and personal relationships with journalists (Adila et al., 2021). This network development strategy carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Two-Way Symmetrical Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This two-way symmetric communication model aims to create conditions of mutual understanding between Public Relations and the mass media. This communication emphasizes two-way exchange in order to achieve shared understanding and mutual respect, and focuses on building long-term relationships (Grunig, 1992).

This study also found an owned media publication strategy that supports the implementation of the media relations strategy. This owned media publication is part of the PESO model (Paid, Earned, Shared, and Owned) in digital communication. The PESO model is an approach that unifies four types of media to ensure an organization's message and image remain consistent. Owned media serves as the foundation of the strategy, followed by earned media, shared media, and paid media. Owned media refers to communication channels owned and managed by an entity, such as a website, blog, or social media (Afgiansyah, 2023). The following is the owned media publication strategy in the form of infographics carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP:

Infographic Publication

In publishing infographics, the Directorate General of PSDKP implements an owned media publication strategy in the form of infographics to disseminate information to the media and the public. This information aims to educate and raise awareness in dealing with negative coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy. Owned media refers to communication channels owned and managed by an entity, such as a website, blog, or social media. This gives the entity the opportunity to build credibility and a direct relationship with its audience (Afgiansyah, 2023). This infographic publication strategy carried out by the Directorate General of PSDKP is a concrete example of applying the Public Information Model within the Excellence Theory framework. This public information communication model aims to ensure the public receives sufficient and accurate information to support the organization's smooth operation (Grunig, 1992).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study regarding the media relations strategy of the Directorate General of PSDKP in responding to negative media coverage related to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) policy, and referring to the Excellence Theory approach, it can be concluded that the Directorate General of PSDKP implemented a comprehensive media relations strategy consisting of three interrelated dimensions. First, the organization managed relationships by understanding media characteristics, establishing a dedicated media team, and providing personalized information and news services, thereby building trust and familiarity with journalists. Building on this foundation, the organization developed communication strategies through various activities, including initial statements (holding statements), press releases, press conferences, media briefings, and special events, which aimed to manage public narratives and respond promptly to unfavorable coverage. This strategic effort was further strengthened through the organization's network development approach, particularly by recruiting Public Relations staff with backgrounds in media and journalism, ensuring that the institution possessed the professional expertise required to navigate complex media dynamics.

Beyond these three core dimensions of the Excellence Theory framework, the Directorate General of PSDKP also utilized an owned-media publication strategy to support its overall media relations efforts, particularly through the publication of infographics on the organization's official website. Overall, these findings demonstrate that the Directorate General of PSDKP addressed negative media coverage not through isolated actions but through an integrated strategy combining relationship management, proactive communication planning, network development, and independent media publication. This approach contributed to safeguarding the organization's public image amid challenges associated with implementing the VMS policy.

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