

## Contributors Guide for Writers and Proof-Readers for *Eumundi Voice* (March 2021) V7

*Thank you for your wonderful contributions to Eumundi Voice over the last months. You have been fantastic and together we have delivered a great magazine on time 15 times so far. All the best for the next 15.*

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News articles cover the basics of community happenings. They answer the questions: who, what, where, how, and when? Small articles 100 words, longer 250 words. Cover article about 130 words. Always include the word count.

Feature articles are longer and more in-depth. They cover one subject from multiple angles and are written in a more creative, entertaining format. About 300 to 400 words.

Other articles include opinion pieces, quizzes, reports, book and movie reviews.

Articles may be edited for length, style, grammar and punctuation.

If you can, submit your article in Calibri Body size 11 in a Word document and a JPG for high resolution photos attached to an email.

Make reference to any sources (person, newspaper, internet URL etc) to allow verification and double-checking.

### Basic Article Outline

Consider our **primary audience** – our communities. Then, write an outline. Then jot down ideas for these six sections:

**Lead sentence** Grab and hook your reader right away.

**Introduction** Which facts and figures will ground your article? Tell your readers where and when this is happening.

**Include quotations** What will give the reader a sense of the people involved and what they are thinking?

**Main body** What is at the heart of your article?

**Closing quotation** Find something that sums the article up in a few words.

**Conclusion** What is a memorable way to end your article? The end quote may be a good way to sum things up. If you are quoting more than one person with different points of view, you should not end with a quote from just one of them. An internet address may be useful for readers to obtain further information.

### The Words

All articles are to be factually accurate and fair, a reasonable and balanced accounts of events. All articles deserve a reasonable level of research and reporting and due regard for the ethos of *Eumundi Voice*.

Value judgement, endorsement, condemnation should be avoided.

The five Ws must be answered in the first two paragraphs: What, where, when, who and why.

Articles should be written as press releases in the third person. Rather than saying "I would like to thank all who helped on the day" write "Chamber secretary, Mr Ian Jones, thanked all who helped on the day."

Articles should generally be in the past tense.

Keep sentences short, simple and direct. Usually one or two linked sentences only to a paragraph.

Consider showing your sources so readers can see where your information came from and so it can be verified.

Make sure the organisation's name is in the article not just on the heading. Include your name and location or organisation you represent if you want to be shown as article author. (Billy Blogs, YADCA). Not listing author is welcome – space and repetition issues.

## Punctuation and Grammar

No full stops in abbreviations (use NSW, SCC, Mr JW Smith).

Spell out long names with the abbreviation in brackets the first time, then the abbreviation afterwards (Eumundi and District Historical Association (EHA) held its annual ...).

For locations use Rd, Ave and St, not Road, Avenue and Street. Use Qld for Queensland. Space saving measure.

Use "&" without spaces (P&C not P & C).

Use Cr David Law not Councillor David Law (and not Clr).

Use double quote marks for quoted (direct) speech. (He said, "Well hello."). Use single quote marks for unusual usage of a word (some native species have the 'smarts' to avoid predation).

Avoid bold, centred or underline, tabs or indents or column layout. Keep it plain and simple.

Use capitalised italics for artworks, books, plays, songs, and movies. (*Mamma Mia*)

Use hyphens to make compound words (first-rate). Two adjectives that precede a noun and can act as one word are hyphenated, otherwise separate with commas: step-by-step guide; five-piece band; mega, all-star band; cheeky, food-stealing cuties. But, her shoes were red, spangly and cute.

Use an em dash (tap hyphen twice = em dash) for an aside within a sentence (Mistakes are—after all—how you improve) and at the end (know your limits—it could save your life).

Web addresses (URLs) should be [www.blogs.com](http://www.blogs.com) (delete the http://).

Use single word spacing, even after full stops (not two spaces). Use the hidden character function in Word, File options, display.

Dates should be "Friday 18 June" without a year if it is the current, previous or coming year. Say next year or last year as necessary. Put the date in front of the month. Not 31st of March.

Use "for example" instead of eg or e.g. (Try "such as").

Use position or role first, then name (Eumundi State School captain, Suzie Greentree). Most positions are lower case (mayor Mark Jamieson).

Use Sunshine Coast Council rather than Sunshine Coast Regional Council.

Use lower case council, association and members throughout stories.

Say "EDCA decided ..." or "The meeting decided ..." rather than "Members decided ...".

Use "said" not "stated" unless you are quoting from a written statement. Try explained, told, described.

Use "more than" not "over". (More than 100 members attended...)

Avoid superlatives (extremely, very, huge). Avoid "etcetera" or etc.

Use apostrophes for possessives (team's success). Possessive "its" does not have an apostrophe (The dog wagged its tail). In direct speech, abbreviation "it's" has an apostrophe (He said, "It's been a long day.").

No apostrophes in plurals (under-16s and CDs).

Don't mix tenses when reporting what a person says (said ... was ... said ... is). If the words are quoted verbatim, they are surrounded by quote marks and the original tense is retained ("Next year I'll be going to Japan," she said). The comma goes inside the quotes.

Recognise collective nouns (The club will hold its ... NOT the club will hold their).

Commas are two matching or none (Member for Noosa, Ms Sandy Bolton, said ...or ... Member for Noosa Ms Sandy Bolton said...)

Use "who" for people and "that" or "which" for things ("the man who" not "the man that").

Avoid overuse of capitals (cane toad not Cane Toad) but South African jumping frog. Use capitals for respect such as Special Forces, but not navy, army when just a list and not a special name). If writing about The Centre for Growth, use full name first time, then The Centre afterwards.

Avoid semi-colons(;) and exclamation marks(!).

Spell out contractions (use "do not" not "don't") except for an informal quote (Bill said, "I'm glad we moved here.").

We are using COVID19.

**They are over there in their** new house. Common error: 'there's lots of reasons' (Use there are)

## The Numbers

Phone numbers as 5442 7197 and 0413 199 766.

A date range in the same month is 19-23 July but 23 July to 24 August.

Numbers 10 and above are numerals, from one to nine are spelt out, except when it is a measurement (5cm but five people). (200 years, 5.8cm, 3kg, 4 hours, 4cm-tick, 2 weeks, in 3 years he will, she won by 5 minutes)

Ages of people are "a five-year-old child" (age before the noun) but "she was 5 years old" (after the noun).

Use a comma for 10,000 and more, but no separator for 9999 and less.

Use 10am, not 10.00 a.m. (Open 10am-12pm).

Use one million or 2.57M, not 1,000,000 or 2,570,000 (\$2.57M).

Use 5sqm (not 5m<sup>2</sup> or 5 square meters).

If you have to start a sentence with numbers, spell them out (Fifty-five volunteers ...) or use an introductory phrase (Last year, 55 volunteers ...).

Placings: first, second, third ... ninth, 10th, 11th ... No superscript.

## Photographs and Captions

Take multiple shots in both landscape and portrait.

Attach full-size images (full-render). Images from SMS and FB are usually very small (<300kb).

Include captions for photos with full names, titles, from left to right (Present at the annual event (from left) YADCA President Sue Blogs, Secretary Bob Blogs and Committee members John Doe and Harold Doe).

Consider if it is appropriate to take photos of children at public events. Wear your *Eumundi Voice* badge and ask first.

Acknowledge the owner of a photograph: Courtesy of...

Assume photos from professionals are copyright which requires permission to reproduce. We can ask.

**Note:** The websites [www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com) and [www.editoraustralia.com](http://www.editoraustralia.com) are useful.