



strategy + support for  
**musicians** creating change

Air Traffic Control

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## INTERVIEW PREPARATION FOR MUSICIAN ACTIVISTS

Musicians are often asked to speak in interviews on the issues that they care about. Publicists who have worked successfully with bands on many issues prepared these guidelines for ATC. They all have said that the first step is to determine if doing the interview is the most strategic way to support the issue and overall efforts of the campaign/issue, or if another action might be more strategic (fundraiser, donation, statement, press release, etc.). If an interview is the best next step, here are some ways to prepare:

- Avoid being thrown off track by a hostile interviewer by knowing what the issue is, where they stand on that issue and why, and what role they are playing in the movement. (For more on hostile media, see ATC's report on the Dixie Chicks in the research section of these materials.)
- Pair up with a credible expert on the issue. These experts should be responsible for citing facts and figures, while the artist can personalize the issue. It is also helpful to clarify what is opinion and what is fact.
- Know the overall communications strategy in place around the issue, the plan for handling, mitigating or responding to dissention on the issue and for keeping the right message in the media. Ask the campaign or an organization working on the issue for the opposition's top three arguments against the issue/stance artist is supporting.
- Identify the two to three things to convey, and how to best convey it. Keep bringing the conversation back to these points.
- Know the audience for the interview, and speak to it.
- Know the interviewer, who else is being interviewed on the issue, and the scope and format of the interview.
- Always have a call to action, or a place to send people for more information.
- Prepare.
- Practice.

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Air Traffic Control (ATC) exists to help musicians play an effective, unique and vital role in the promotion of social justice. Musicians and managers established ATC five years ago to assemble an experienced and trusted team of leaders, resources and tools that would help them to create more effective social change collaborations with each other and with social justice organizations. As a result, ATC became an artists' air traffic control—one that develops capacity, efficiency, and coordination to produce stronger and more creative social change partnerships. For more information, please go to [www.atctower.net](http://www.atctower.net).