



Tennessee National Guard Unit Public Affairs Representative Handbook 2016



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Tennessee National Guard

Unit Public Affairs Representative Handbook

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Welcome to the world of Public Affairs. Actually, if you're no stranger to the National Guard, you've probably been doing "public affairs" for some time, although you may not have called it that.

So, why a Unit Public Affairs Representative Handbook?

Good question. You really can't avoid public affairs. It's all around you and in your dealings with the members of your unit and the community. Public affairs doesn't just happen when you're talking with a reporter. It is an all-encompassing effort which has its principal goal of ensuring your unit is well accepted and supported in the community. Public affairs also means your members, their families and their civilian employers are equally well informed about National Guard programs and requirements which affect them.

To stand the best chance of establishing and maintaining the good will and public acceptance that is essential for your unit to be combat ready and succeed, you have to exercise an element of public affairs. Call it what you will, it still comes down to doing public affairs work, whether it's meeting with a newspaper or television reporter, or publishing a unit newsletter so your members and their families will know what is going on. And that is why one of the first things we suggest is that you read and become familiar with this handbook. Only then will you be able to fit the suggestions into specific public affairs goals for your unit.

This handbook is designed to simplify your public affairs efforts. It provides you a ready reference for dealing with public affairs issues. The handbook will not make you a public affairs officer, but it can help make your public affairs work easier and more effective. This effort should leave you with more time to concentrate on other important tasks to ensure your unit is at its best.

ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

The handbook has been written with as much common language as possible. For example, the chapter titled "Working with the Media," would be called "Media Relations" in the public affairs career field. "How to Publicize Your Unit" would be called "Command Information" in the Army Guard and "Internal Information" in the Air Guard public affairs office.

This handbook is a starting point - a tool to help you break the ground of the often confusing and mysterious field of public affairs. Get to know the full-time public affairs officer in your State Headquarters, and establish a relationship with other public affairs unit members in your state. Do this for both your Army and Air National Guard colleagues; public affairs is very much a joint effort. Also, there are many fine books on public affairs in local libraries and from bookstores.

CHAPTER 2

Getting Started

One of the first things a commander should do is appoint a Unit Public Affairs Representative, or UPAR, as they're often called. As you consider a person to appoint, here are some suggestions to guide your choice:

- Your UPAR should be someone who is familiar with your unit and has proven himself or herself as dependable. You need someone you can rely on to work independently, without a great deal of supervision.
- The UPAR should be able to communicate well... that is, they should be able to talk clearly and effectively to unit members, or reporters, if needed, although we're not suggesting the UPAR replace the commander as spokesperson for your unit. That's a task that properly remains with the leadership of a unit.
- The UPAR must be well organized. Time is precious for you and the UPAR. There's isn't time to repeat instructions or closely supervise someone's work.
- Whomever you appoint will need at least three important things from you, the commander, and your unit: time, material and support.

Time - It takes a while to get established as a UPAR, and it takes time to become efficient as a UPAR. Commanders need to allow for a period of adjustment while the UPAR learns the job. And to be fair to the person's career, consider appointing them to the UPAR assignment on orders so their performance reports can record the person's extra effort and skill. It also takes time for a UPAR to plan and carry out tasks. Time is especially important for a major project such as an open house or family day.

Materials - The need for materials (supplies) will vary. But if you're planning to have a UPAR publish a unit newsletter, obviously that person will need access to a computer with appropriate software and a copy machine, it can also be emailed to unit personnel.

Support - This may be the most important element that a commander can provide a UPAR. Ensure the members of your staff know your UPAR and are aware that you support the UPAR's efforts. UPARs should attend appropriate staff meetings and be included in the planning process for unit events. A good UPAR is very much in the know regarding a unit's schedule. Post the UPAR's name prominently on your bulletin board and encourage unit members to talk with the UPAR about possible newsworthy events.

If you have questions about using this handbook, contact the full-time public affairs officer at your State Headquarters. Suggestions on improving the handbook may be sent to:

**Joint Public Affairs Office
Tennessee National Guard
Houston Barracks, P.O. Box 41502
3041 Sidco Drive
Nashville, TN 37204-1502
615-313-0633**

Good luck with your unit's public affairs program!

RECOMMENDED UPAR DUTIES

- Meet with unit commander and establish a unit public affairs plan.
- Establish liaison with Tennessee National Guard Joint Public Affairs Office, local news media - newspapers, television, cable television and radio.
- After clearance from the Joint Public Affairs Office, make news releases to local media on unit personnel and activities.
- Work with your recruiters to publicize local Guard enlistments and events.
- Tell the National Guard story.
- Invite news reporters to visit your armory or local training sites.
- Recommend items of interest/need to the commander for presentation to troops during weekend training.
- Keep an inventory of command information items available from the Departments of the Army and Air Force, and from your State Headquarters.
- Maintain a bulletin board with command information items.
- Assist in planning a unit open house or family day.
- Publicize unit participation in community projects or activities.
- With permission and proper presentation, serve as a spokesperson for your unit commander.
- Serve as the public affairs point of contact for your unit.
- Keep your full-time state public affairs officer advised on public affairs matters in your unit.
- Determine your resources and ask for assistance from your chain of command.
- Manage a social media presence for your unit and ensure your Family Readiness Groups are updated on Operational Security (OPSEC) and social media guidelines.
- Keep your commander advised of your activities.
- Monitor Social Media. (For more information on social media, go to the Army or Air Force Social Media Handbooks)
- Develop a Public Affairs submission (Press Release, Photo with Caption, etc.) each month following your drill and send to the Joint Public Affairs Office.

CHAPTER 3

Working with the Media

In most circumstances, a UPAR will be seeking out a reporter as part of a unit's campaign to tell its story to the public. You will be the first to contact local journalists with news of a promotion, or the arrival of new equipment, or the selection of your unit for an innovative training program. On the other hand, when you have the least amount of time to talk with journalists or when there's been an accident or incident, journalists will call you.

Working effectively with reporters -- whether the news is good or bad -- requires preparation and practice. This chapter provides information on how to improve your media relations skills.

First, a few words of caution. *If a serious incident takes place involving members of your unit, or something happens in your area involving National Guard property or equipment, work with your chain of command to ensure that the full-time public affairs office in your State Headquarters is notified immediately.* If an accident involves serious injury, death or significant loss of property, the moment you finish calling for help from the police and/or fire departments, begin the process of notifying proper public affairs officials. This is one of the most valuable things a UPAR can do. If you've done your homework and made advance contact with your full-time public affairs office, these procedures should be part of every unit's Standard Operating Procedures.

By notifying the state public affairs office immediately, you engage the horsepower of higher headquarters. Avoid the temptation to wade into a potentially complicated public affairs issue alone, the risks are too great. Rely on the full-time public affairs office to take over the public affairs mission and stand by to help.

With that warning in mind, here's a brief analysis of the relationship that the National Guard has with the media along with recommendations on how to make the most of all situations.

Fact - Reporters have a job to do. Their stories and pictures serve an important function in our democratic society. Remember from history that the first item in our nation's Bill of Rights deals with freedom of the press. It is a cherished freedom that many of others in the world do not enjoy.

Fact - Reporters have bosses to serve and often work in a fiercely competitive marketplace. To be successful, they must be accurate and fast. Their eagerness to work quickly doesn't always mesh with the military's careful way of doing its business, but a smart UPAR can learn how to serve the media's requirements for speed and accuracy while at the same time protecting the best interests of the National Guard.

Fact - Reporters are eager to learn about new things, experience new situations and meet interesting people. All of these factors contribute to their mission of informing the public. Harness this natural curiosity to your unit's advantage. Even during a crisis or when something has happened that doesn't put your unit in a positive light, a savvy UPAR works hard to ensure the story is accurate, fast and fair.

When you are dealing with reporters it is important to keep in mind the spirit of a Department of Defense document called the "Principles of Information." Briefly, these published principles require that everyone in the military must maintain open, honest and fair dealings with civilian journalists.

Information may not be withheld from a reporter who asks for it merely because the information may be embarrassing to the military.

HERE ARE MORE GUIDELINES:

Security - *Under no circumstances may classified information be released to a civilian journalist.* Do not render any comments on matters which are, or may be classified. If you know that information being sought is classified, indicate just that and decline to comment further, even in an indirect manner. If you're not certain whether something is classified, find out before you respond to the reporter. Then, act accordingly. Use common sense, but don't use "it's classified" as a shield, either. A good UPAR should be notified in advance by proper military authorities if an operation or equipment contains classified information.

Accuracy - Along with speed, this is an equally important factor to any good reporter. *Know what you are talking about.* Use notes. Provide fact sheets or information papers to reporters, especially if the subject is complicated. While you want to be prompt with your response, take adequate time to be certain your information is accurate. Don't guess at an answer or be bullied by a reporter into responding with information that isn't correct. It is perfectly OK to say "I don't know". If you make a mistake, contact the reporter quickly and set the record straight. Likewise, if a reporter had made a blunder in a story, contact them and politely explain the error.

Privacy - *Be cautious when giving out information about members of your unit. A federal law called the Privacy Act is designed to protect the privacy of everyone and limits the types of information which you may provide about an individual.* Check with your full-time state public affairs office for details of how the Privacy Act is handled in your state. The rules are grounded in common sense and are not that difficult to follow.

Freedom of Information - Along with the Privacy Act, another federal law called the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is designed to keep government papers, documents and records open to the public. As a UPAR it is very unlikely you will ever get involved in FOIA actions. But understand that the law is designed to prevent government agencies, including the military, from withholding its documents in response to a legitimate request from a reporter or other individual, even if the information is potentially embarrassing.

Regulations and Policies - Military regulations and policies, including those by the National Guard and your state, also may have an impact on what types of information can be released to reporters and by whom. As a UPAR, it is unlikely that you will be involved in many of these situations. But it is useful to be aware there are regulations regarding the release of information regarding an accident, for instance. Notification of next of kin and discussions as to the cause of an accident are matters covered by military regulations. Policies, on the other hand, often are developed in response to local situations and should be discussed with your state's full-time public affairs office.

Propriety - Often, this involves common sense. It's not proper, for example, to discuss the gruesome details of an accident with a reporter. To help you know when and what to release, a UPAR should consult with higher headquarters or your state public affairs office. This might add delay to your ability to respond quickly, but it ensures accuracy and compliance with the rules that govern public affairs actions.

Spokesperson - *Who speaks for a unit when a reporter wants to interview someone? The commander.* A UPAR is likely to be very much involved in the process by providing support, and on occasion may

have to pinch-hit, but it is the commander who has the responsibility of being the spokesperson for a National Guard unit. This doesn't mean that a reporter can never speak to someone else in a unit. A situation might require that a subject matter expert regarding a piece of equipment talk with journalists, but the commander remains responsible.

REMEMBER: All media contact MUST be coordinated through the Joint Public Affairs Office (State Public Affairs Office).

Taking Questions - Sometimes, a UPAR can't respond to a reporter's questions. Time is short, the question too delicate or complicated, or you're not sure about the authority you have to discuss a certain situation. When that happens, the common sense answer is to courteously respond, "I don't have any information for you. Let me check and get back to you." This answer won't make the reporter happy and they're not likely to give up on the topic, but it provides you the opportunity to forward their question to your higher headquarters or the state public affairs office.

Public Affairs Guidance - Even if you're dealing with reporters on what you would consider a "good news" story, the development of well prepared and coordinated public affairs guidance can be your most valuable tool. Public affairs guidance, or "PAG" as it is sometimes called, is your plan for action or plan for defense.

The best way to start preparation of guidance is to pretend you are a reporter. What are the questions you'd like to ask, especially the really tough ones that get to the heart of an issue? Once you have your list of questions, work with subject matter experts in your organization to develop the answers. Make sure your answers are accurate; within the boundaries of laws, regulations and policies; and have been coordinated with your higher headquarters. Rehearse giving your answers with someone and make sure you don't forget to make your points.

The effort required to develop good public affairs guidance can be considerable, but it often can be the single most effective tool you can have in talking with reporters.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

On occasion, a unit commander or UPAR may find themselves responding to a reporter's questions that deal with accidents, criminal matters or political activity. Obviously, you will want to either turn the questions to your higher headquarters or the full-time public affairs office. In those situations where help isn't immediately available, or you are waiting for assistance, here are suggestions to aid your efforts:

ACCIDENTS

When accidents happen, especially if there are major injuries or a death, you can count on being contacted by reporters. This will happen very quickly. Your first knowledge of an accident might come from a reporter who has learned of the incident from independent sources and is calling you for a reaction.

At the same time that proper military authorities are getting involved, the UPAR should swing into action by first gathering accurate information about the accident. This information becomes the basis of a statement that you can prepare, or that you can forward to your full-time public affairs office so they can take the lead and begin responding to reporters. The statement is likely to be very brief; it will acknowledge obvious details and explain that military authorities are involved in the investigation of what happened. Often, you may have to work in cooperation with local civilian law enforcement authorities or rescue personnel.

Two important things to remember:

1. Names of dead or injured victims must not be released until the victims' next of kin have been properly notified. Before releasing any names, check with your higher headquarters to make certain that relatives have been properly notified. If you are uncertain, use this statement: "The names of the victims are being withheld pending notification of next of kin." DoD regulations prohibit comment on fatalities until 24 hours after the last next of kin is notified. Most reporters are aware of this regulation and will not press the issue. Occasionally, the family will have talked to the media before we can verify that a fatality has occurred. This sometimes puts the UPAR in an awkward position, but it is necessary.

2. Do not speculate about the cause of an accident. An investigation will determine the cause. You can't deny the obvious. If an aircraft has crashed and burned, say that a crash and fire have taken place, but don't speculate as to the reasons why.

CRIMINAL MATTERS

Reporters may call your unit for information about a person who may be suspected of, or charged with committing a crime. The event may or may not involve the military or the person's affiliation with the National Guard. That won't stop a reporter from contacting you.

When this occurs, you need to work quickly and carefully to alert your higher headquarters and the full-time state public affairs office. These people have the responsibility to prepare any media statements. Just as with an accident statement, you may be asked to help. And once a statement has been approved, you may be permitted to provide it to reporters.

Remember this:

The rights of a person accused of a criminal offense must be carefully guarded. This applies whether you are issuing a statement or responding to a reporter's questions concerning allegations of criminal activity. You must not provide any information that would interfere with an accused person getting a fair trial:

- If you have received permission to release information about a criminal act, do not release any information except verified facts.
- Do not comment on an accused person's character or behavior before, during or after a start of an investigation or arrest.
- Do not comment on evidence.
- Do not offer any opinion about the guilt of the accused.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

The realm of politics at any level - local, state or national - offers another public affairs challenge to commanders and UPARs.

Remember this:

As a member of the National Guard you have the right to vote and are encouraged to do so. You may encourage others to vote, but when you are on duty, you cannot participate in partisan political activity. Do not attend political events in uniform.

Material supporting or commenting directly or indirectly on a political party or candidate must not appear in your unit newsletter.

As a member of the National Guard, when you are on duty, do not solicit votes for a candidate or issue; do not make or solicit political contributions; do not influence or interfere with an election.

Check with your Judge Advocate General office if you are not certain about a matter dealing with possible political bias.

CHAPTER 4

How to Publicize Your Unit

Understanding the news media -- how they work -- what they look for -- what they consider news -- how best to convince journalists that your unit is newsworthy -- is a skill that can take years to develop. When you are the commander of a National Guard unit or a newly appointed UPAR, you never have enough time. This chapter is designed to provide you with some insight into news media and suggestions on how best to present your story to journalists who are just as busy as you. This chapter won't make you an instantly successful news writer. You will find sample news releases at the end of the chapter that you can modify to fit your unit's needs. That's a start. From there the success of the program depends on how hard a commander and UPAR work at developing and maintaining relationships with journalists in your area.

Some words of caution. As you begin to develop your unit's public affairs program, do not assume you can create something the news media will accept as news. All too often, a flimsy or contrived news event backfires, and reporters then really have a news story on how they were manipulated. A newsworthy event should stand on its own. Don't be timid about presenting finished stories and story ideas to reporters, but make certain your offering is sincere, complete and timely.

Here are some observations about the news media and how you can work with journalists to best tell the story of your unit:

- Reporters are professionals. They value the work they do as a service to the community. They judge what is "news", that is their responsibility. Reporters may be willing to listen to your suggestions and read your submitted stories, but they reserve the right on what to publish or broadcast. Be prepared to hear the answer "no". Don't take their response personally. Many factors are involved in determining what is newsworthy. Ask for their advice on meeting their needs and keep trying!
- The news business is intensely competitive. Don't consider this a problem or obstacle. Take advantage of the competitive marketplace by offering the best you can and allow talented reporters to make the most of your story. Because the marketplace is competitive, many other news sources are working just as hard as you to place their story ideas with reporters. The news space in any newspaper or air time on a broadcast station is limited. Don't get pushed out of the way simply because you were late with information or not responsive to a journalist's request. Think of it like combat - shoot first, shoot often and shoot straight!
- News organizations have their own bureaucracies, especially in large metropolitan areas. Reporters have first line supervisors who report to managers, who report to owners. Most news organizations are profit-making corporations that must serve their readers, listeners and viewers, and advertisers in order to stay in business. Be aware that reporters you deal with in the field could be very junior in rank, and they do not have complete control over finished products that you see in print or view on television. As you grow more confident in your public affairs efforts, get to know the right people in a news organization to better ensure your stories and story ideas get fair consideration by the news bureaucracy.
- Time is critical to any news organization. This factor cannot be emphasized too strongly. Miss a deadline and you miss your chance! Don't wait for months to tell your story. In the information

age, people want to know right now, not later. Waiting too long destroys the story's newsworthiness.

FIND THE BEST PATH

When you set out to tell your unit's story to the local media, it is important to find what medium works best to tell a certain type of story. Especially at the local level, hometown weekly or small daily newspapers work best to tell your stories about new recruits, community-based programs or changes of command. Likewise, hometown radio stations, small market television stations and cable television are productive places to present stories about local Guard unit activities.

Social Media:

In today's society, the majority of information is shared through electronic media on social websites like Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Flickr, etc. The Department of Defense recognized social media as a viable form of communication. The critical element of social media is to remember: Once it's out there, it cannot be taken back. Social media is instantaneous and can reach millions within hours. Chapter 11 provides information about the Tennessee National Guard social media presence.

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers, especially community weeklies, small daily papers and free-distribution "shoppers" often are the most favorable place to publish National Guard stories and photos. Don't overlook major daily newspapers if one serves your community, but be realistic in expending effort.

Key individuals - Smaller papers often have just one or two reporters who cover all news events. Get to know these journalists and work directly with them. At larger daily papers, often one or more reporters will be assigned to cover a military beat. As with their colleagues at a smaller paper, work with these individuals and, when appropriate, their first line supervisors.

What works best - Announcements about new recruits, troops graduating from military schools, promotions, changes of command, new equipment, construction projects and community relations events sponsored by National Guard units, especially those that benefit youth. Realistically, there are no limits to subject matter for newspapers. In cooperation with your full-time state public affairs office, consider inviting a reporter from newspapers to accompany your unit to annual training or on an overseas deployment. Check with your full-time public affairs officer before issuing invitations and be prepared to assist with coordination.

RADIO

Radio is fast-paced and short-lived. Remember that radio works best at making announcement-type stories about your unit or an individual. Because radio reporters are limited to a listener's sense of hearing, they work hard at making their stories sound energetic. Reporters also like to vary the kinds of voices by interviewing newsmakers, sometimes "live," but most often with an "actuality" that is recorded on the scene or over the telephone and then edited for broadcast. Although radio station news departments tend to be very small and have limited resources to cover events from the scene, don't overlook inviting radio reporters to visit your training locations to record the voices and sounds of National Guard activities.

Talk Radio - Talk radio has developed large and faithful audiences across the country. Seek out the local talk or call-in shows that suit your needs. Choose the program carefully to ensure you will be reaching a worthwhile audience, as some talk show followers come from very narrow interest groups.

Don't waste your effort. The person who acts as a spokesperson for your unit must be very knowledgeable about the National Guard and they must be able to keep their cool. Always work in coordination with your full-time state public affairs office before you make commitments to appear on a talk radio program.

Key Individuals - A station's news director runs the news operation of a radio station. With the exception of major city stations or ones that feature an all-news format, most radio stations have very small news operations, sometimes the news director is the entire news department. In many states, stations will link together in cooperative networks to share statewide news stories. This can be another outlet for mass distribution of National Guard stories via radio. Get to know how the networks operate in your area to see how they could assist your efforts.

What Works Best - Be prepared to work fast with radio stations. Use the telephone, fax machine or e-mail to deliver your messages as quickly as possible. With very rare exception, anything sent to a radio station in the postal mail is wasted effort. In cooperation with your full-time state public affairs office, consider inviting a reporter from radio stations to accompany your unit to annual training or on an overseas deployment. Check with your full-time public affairs officer before issuing invitations and be prepared to assist with coordination. Final thought: Some radio stations, especially those in the Public Broadcasting format, are capable of producing unique and rather lengthy news stories. Get to know the reporters from these stations and work to provide them with story ideas that match their format. They reach rather small but important audiences.

TELEVISION

Television has come to dominate much of the news business with its immediacy and ability to show the emotion of sounds and color pictures. Like the newspaper industry, television markets come in many sizes. You are most likely to have success getting a local National Guard story told on a station from a smaller market than from a major metropolitan area. And like other media, you can count on reporters from nearly any size television station showing up without an invitation when your National Guard unit is involved in a breaking news story - favorable news (responding to a natural disaster) or bad (when there's trouble with personnel, equipment or facilities).

Key Individuals –

News Director - A station's news director runs the news department. Reporters cover general assignments or might be assigned to the military beat if the station is large enough. Front line supervisors at the news room often are called producers rather than editors.

Reporters – the State Public Affairs office will send out media advisories to invite reporters to high visibility events with the Tennessee National Guard. If this is at your unit, be prepared to identify subject matter experts of Soldiers and family willing to share his/ her story.

What Works Best - Television is a visual medium that thrives on colorful, fast-paced action. Be prepared to provide access to reporters and their camera crews (that's usually a minimum of three people plus gear) with front line access to the action if you want to better ensure your story will make it on the air. And remember that like radio, television is a medium of immediacy. You will do best when a television crew has the opportunity to get its interviews and video quickly, so they can return to their station to finish editing their stories. While a commander has the responsibility of being the spokesperson for a unit and should be involved in meeting and working with journalists, consider carefully who is recommended to be interviewed on camera. Doing this well takes confidence and

practice. If there is time, ask your full-time public affairs office for assistance. In cooperation with your full-time state public affairs office, consider inviting a reporter from television stations to accompany your unit to annual training or on an overseas deployment. Check with your full-time public affairs officer before issuing invitations and be prepared to assist with coordination.

WEEKEND REALITIES

Most hometown National Guard training takes place on weekends when news organizations are thinly staffed. Plan ahead by making your contacts during regular business hours so that a newspaper or broadcast station's key individuals can consider your story ideas and make proper assignments to their weekend crews. Ironically, while weekend staffs can be small and inexperienced, especially at small-market stations, these same stations often have the most air time to fill with what could be your story!

STORY IDEAS

Here's a list of events that could take place in your unit. Evaluate where best to offer the story in your community by considering the "what works best" suggestions found in this chapter. Some ideas could be strong enough to offer to all media, others will require tailoring to meet the needs of print or broadcast:

- Deployments and homecomings
- Unique training programs
- Distinguished visitors
- Charitable work by individuals (human interest)
- Programs that benefit the community's youth or elderly
- Major awards and honors, and individual achievements
- Unit open house

INTERVIEW HINTS FOR THE COMMANDER AND UPAR

You can successfully communicate with the public and have more positive control of an interview situation with:

- Knowledge of your subject
- Honesty and candor
- Positive attitude
- Use of concise, simple language
- Familiarity with the media

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- You represent the National Guard and the larger active-duty military establishment when you deal with journalists. Always keep your personal views and opinions out of the interview.
- Begin with the attitude that a reporter represents the public, and the public has a right to know about the military.

- Avoid technical language, jargon and military acronyms. Be aware that very few civilian journalists have military experience.
- Put your conclusion into the front of your interview remarks, then expand on the topic.
- Speak in short, effective sentences. Long answers are seldom used in broadcast or print stories. The more you talk, the more chance for saying something that can be misunderstood.
- Stop talking when you've made your points.
- Stay "on the record." Don't say anything outside the interview you wouldn't want to see or hear in the news. Don't agree to respond "on background" or go "off the record" with a reporter.
- Keep your cool when under verbal fire.
- Don't automatically accept a reporter's facts or figures as correct.
- Don't answer hypothetical questions. Generally, these questions begin with "what if?" situations proposed by a reporter.
- If you don't know the answer, say so. Offer to find the answer.
- Never use the phrase "no comment." Explain why you can't answer the question. (Remember matters of security, accuracy, military policy and propriety.)
- Most reporters are generalists. You are the expert on military matters. Do not be timid if you have an opportunity to educate a reporter about military issues.
- Don't try to "snow" a reporter. Be polite, professional and sincere.
- Arrive on time for news media appointments. Talk to reporters about the subject points that are key to the story or that you would like to discuss.
- Prepare for interviews. Know the talking points that you want to make, and remember why you were asked for the interview.
- Establish ground rules and subject matter to be discussed prior to the start of a formal interview.
- Do your homework. Practice talking about the subject with someone who will ask you questions, especially the difficult questions. Even in your specialty, a brush-up is wise.
- Provide reporters with fact sheets that explain the technical specifications of equipment or the organization of your unit. Very few reporters have military experience, so they appreciate fact sheets that help them with nomenclature of equipment and correct spellings.
- Call on your full-time state public affairs office for assistance.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PUBLICIZE YOUR UNIT

Your Joint Public Affairs full-time staff will be able to assist you with the following:

- Provide PA tools (Fact Sheets, briefings, media advisories, talking points) on the Tennessee National Guard
- Assistance to units large and small
- Full-time coordination for support from your state's Army public affairs detachment or higher headquarters public affairs assets
- Coordination of a public affairs support plan for your unit's annual training
- Conduct training for your Unit Public Affairs Representative (UPAR)
- Publish a statewide newspaper or magazine and World Wide Web site
- Speech file references
- On-site public affairs support during an emergency

The 118th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) can provide:

- * Support to the state's overall public affairs program

- * Support to National Guard units in your state
- * News release support to newspapers, television and radio stations
- * Still photo support. Increasingly, this is being done with digital cameras
- * Videotape capability
- * On-site assistance during emergencies
- * Support for production of a statewide National Guard newspaper, magazine or World Wide Web site

TOPICS TO WRITE ABOUT AND TAKE PHOTOS OF

There are a number of activities in your state each year that result in what might be described as expected or predictable coverage by the news media. Remember, even a topic that generates routine interest requires effort on your part to ensure your story is presented in an interesting, accurate and timely manner. Here's a list of story topics that should be on your "must do" list:

- * Annual training for your unit, especially if it involves a deployment to an unusual place or involves activities with a significant local impact
- * Changes of command
- * Changes to the force structure or mission of your unit
- * Officer and NCO academy graduations
- * Presentation of awards and decorations to your unit or individual members
- * Participation in competitions such as marksmanship contests, marathon races, the biathlon or other events
- * Involvement in youth programs
- * Involvement in drug demand reduction programs
- * Construction or significant remodeling/repair of military facilities in your area
- * Changes to recruiting/retention benefits
- * Changes to significant pieces of equipment in your unit
- * Events in your unit that have an impact on the local environment
- * Events in your unit that have an impact on the local economy

HINTS FOR RADIO OR TELEVISION INTERVIEWS

The following suggestions are aimed at broadcast interview appointments. Most of the recommendations also apply to print interview situations, especially when a newspaper photographer will be present:

- * Know as much as possible about the subject. Don't guess at an answer or respond to hypothetical questions. If you don't know an answer, say so.
- * Be aware of your speed in talking - not too fast, not too slow. Regional accents and dialect add interest to broadcast stories, so don't let this be a barrier to someone being interviewed. At the same time, the interviewee must be able to communicate clearly and effectively.
- * Gestures and mannerisms can be very distracting. Be careful what you do with your hands, legs and facial gestures.
- * Wear the proper uniform and wear it correctly. If you're in a studio, Class A is likely to be appropriate. If you're in the field, match what the troops are wearing. Be alert that proper safety gear and other uniform items are worn correctly, especially when in a field environment. At the same time, don't interrupt an interview if you notice an unfastened button or something that the civilian audience won't notice as being out of regulation. Use common sense when it comes to uniforms and equipment.

- * Rehearse what you want to say with someone who asks you questions, especially the tough ones you might expect.
- * Be on time for interview appointments. If you're the guest on a call-in show or other live interview, the station is counting on you to be on their program.
- * Get rid of the gum or dip!

MEDIA LISTS

An important tool for a UPAR or unit commander is a listing of news media organizations in the local, or, in some cases, the regional area. This list permits quick and reliable contact with newspapers and broadcast stations in your area. If you are careful when you establish the list and keep it maintained, the list can be especially helpful during an emergency when you might have the need to contact a specific department within a news organization very quickly.

Make copies of the fill-in-the blank forms included in this handbook, or make up your own computer database. Maintain the list at your National Guard unit office and keep a copy at your home and civilian workplace. A news event involving your National Guard unit can happen at any time, you may not have the opportunity to travel to your unit office before you must react.

NEWSPAPERS / MAGAZINES

Name of Publication	
Mailing Address	
E-mail Address	
Contact's Name/Title	
Telephone	
Deadline Day and Time	
FAX Number	
Other Information	

TELEVISION OR RADIO STATIONS

Call letters	
Network Affiliation	
Mailing Address	
Street Address	
E-mail Address	
Telephone	
Fax Number	
News Director	
News Director Phone	

Weekend Phone	
Night Phone	
Public Service Director	
Phone	
Weekday Deadline	
Weekend Deadline	

CHAPTER 5

Photography Tips

Providing local newspapers with good photographs can go a long way toward getting your story into print. When you lack either the time or the manpower to receive photo support from a higher headquarters your UPAR or other designated person can step in and fill the bill. Thanks to the technology of digital cameras and high quality cell phone cameras, and the availability of photo editing software, much of the mystery has been removed from taking good photos. But easy-to-use cameras still require some care and practice.

First, a good photograph must meet certain technical standards. To be used in a newspaper or magazine, a photo must be in sharp focus - no exceptions. The photo should have a good range of contrasts, that means it should not look washed out or muddy. And since most photos are printed in color, the colors should be rich and vivid.

Second, a photo must have eye appeal. It should grab your attention and the attention of a reporter or editor who makes the decision on whether it is published or not. From the smallest weekly newspaper to a big city daily, all papers want to publish photographs with visual stopping power. Don't settle for second best.

Third, a photo must serve the purpose of illustrating the story you are telling. If your story is about a change of command, a good head and shoulders picture of a new commander illustrates the story, probably much better than a group picture of the unit's senior leadership, or the customary "passing the flag" picture. If your unit has received new equipment, take photos of the equipment in action, not in a parking lot or resting on the armory floor.

Any subject - a person, equipment, or training area - can be photographed in an unlimited number of ways. Each picture will give a different impression of the subject. Close-ups can be very powerful images. Taking a photo at an unusual time of day or during stormy weather can add additional impact to a photograph and increase your chances for having it published. Armed with a dependable camera, a good photographer needs to develop his or her ability to observe the action and decide how best to tell a story with one or more photographs. Be willing to experiment, be willing to practice, and ask for help from professionals.

Here are more tips:

- * For low-cost training, cut a 4"x5" rectangle in the middle of a piece of cardboard that is the size of a sheet of stationery. Look through the opening with one eye to "see" what your finished photo will look like. By shifting the frame back and forth, vertical and horizontal, you can quickly visualize what kind of scene your camera shots will capture. ***Don't depend on what you see in the viewfinder or LED Screen! Normally, this view is larger than your actual photo. Allow room to crop the photo to the appropriate size, in other words don't get or zoom in too close to your subject. Leave some space around the key element.***
- * Look for informal or unrehearsed scenes. Posed pictures look "posed" and don't have the stopping power that will catch an editor's eye. Since you can't always take pictures without others noticing, spend a few moments with your subjects to put them at ease as much as possible.

- * ***Beware of things in the background of your photos.*** Is a tree branch or howitzer barrel "growing" out of the back of the head of your subject? And be aware that it is hard to see troops in camouflaged uniforms when they are posed against trees and shrubs. That's the point of military camouflage, but there are times when you must avoid it with news photography. Shoot from a lower angle and make the sky your background, or search for other viewpoints that reduce the chance your subjects will blend into the background too much.
- * ***Take a few moments for a "safety check" of your subjects.*** Are they in a proper military uniform? Are they working with equipment or weapons in an approved and safe manner? If you must, put things in order before you take the picture. It is unreasonable to make every scene appear inspection-ready, but be sensible.
- * ***Don't crowd a photograph with people or subjects.*** A flexible limit of four or five people to a shot should be the maximum. And in your finished prints, each person's face should at least be the size of a dime for it to reproduce well in a newspaper.
- * ***Avoid grip-and-grin photos for newspapers.*** They're just fine for scrapbooks, but most editors avoid these photos at all costs. If a person is receiving an award for a job well done, the best photo is a picture of the Soldier or Airman on the job.
- * Watch the horizon when you are shooting indoors. Unless you are trying to dramatize the action, the horizon should be as level as it is in nature. If the picture isn't straight, it marks you as a beginner and reduces your chances a photo will be published.
- * ***Speed is important. Your photos and articles should be delivered to a newspaper, together, as quickly as possible.*** The news value of a story and pictures is very perishable. This often means meeting deadlines in hours, not days, and certainly not from one month's training assembly to another. If you can, use e-mail to deliver your products.
- * ***Avoid the temptation to flood a newspaper office with prints. Don't be skimpy, but send only your very strongest photos.*** If it is necessary, especially with pictures of equipment or events that a non-military journalist might not understand, include some background information that explains why certain photos are more important than others, but let the editor decide which ones to print.
- * ***Every photograph must have a caption.*** Take extra care to ensure that names are spelled correctly and that equipment or the action in the photo is adequately described. A good caption explains WHO, (Rank, Name and Unit), WHAT, WHERE, and WHEN in one sentence. Follow up with WHY in the second sentence. Don't forget to give proper credit to the photographer!

CHAPTER 6

DVIDS (Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System)

DVIDS is a state-of-the-art, 24/7 operation that provides a timely, accurate and reliable connection between the media around the world and the military serving worldwide.

Through a network of portable Ku-band satellite transmitters located in-theater and a distribution hub in Atlanta, Georgia, DVIDS makes available real-time broadcast-quality video, still images and print products as well as immediate interview opportunities with service members, commanders and subject matter experts.

DVIDS...

- Facilitates interviews with military personnel and subject matter experts engaged in fast-breaking news.
- Links local, national and international media to military units around the world.
- Enables embedded journalists to transmit broadcast-quality video from the field.
- Fulfills requests for products quickly via satellite, fiber and the Internet.
- Provides a variety of newswire services for media.
- Delivers personalized customized subscription email alerts instantly.
- Coordinates holiday greetings, “shout-outs” and special events programming involving U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines around the world.
- Maintains a searchable archive of video, photo, news articles and audio products.
- Makes content available on a variety of external platforms including social media channels, apps and podcasts.

Mission

The DVIDS mission is to serve as a turnkey operation that facilitates requests for Public Affairs video, audio, still imagery and print products; coordinates interviews with soldiers and commanders in a combat zone and provides an archive for ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain.

How do I get started with DVIDS

Contact your Unit Commander or NCOIC to determine if your unit is already registered for DVIDS submission. If not, your unit must first be registered to use the DVIDS system. Contact the DVIDS Training Chief at 678-421-6741 or **Email:** dsilvano@dvidshub.net for assistance in this process. Once your unit is online, you may submit content subject to proper release authority through your chain of command.

CHAPTER 7

Sharing Command Information

When you have an event or activity you want posted, be sure to send the information to the Joint Public Affairs Office for posting. The following are links to website used to share the Tennessee National Guard Public Affairs products:

www.tnmilitary.org

<http://tennessee.gov/military/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Tennessee-National-Guard-183335701690711/?ref=hl>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TNMilitaryDept>

<http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/TNG-JPAO>

Points of Contact for the Tennessee National Guard Joint Public Affairs Office:

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Rob Pennington (615) 313-0608

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Graphic Design & DA Photos

YOUR FAMILIES

In previous chapters, we've covered how to work with the news media and how to publicize your unit to people who are not part of it. However, there is another audience of people who must be reached if you are to have an informed and capable unit. These include the members themselves, and their families. In many instances they are not only the most difficult to reach with your message, but the most important.

Part of the difficulty in contacting or keeping this audience informed is recognizing the importance of an effective, local-level command internal information program which uses a variety of methods to reach both the members of your unit, and their families.

In this chapter we will cover:

- * What materials are available to help you in this effort
- * Ways that you can make the best use of this material
- * Considerations in setting up and maintaining an effective unit information program
- * Ways to publish a unit newsletter to help keep the members of your unit and their families informed about programs that affect them

WHY FAMILY MEMBERS?

Increasingly, being an active, consistent participant in the National Guard is requiring a significant amount of each member's time and energy. The days of the stereotype that the Guard is a "club" are long gone. Our nation and states place too much reliance on the capabilities of the National Guard to permit that luxury. Longer, more intense training periods and the increased tempo of training have resulted in increased demands on each member, and on their families.

Maintaining support from a Guard member's family is critical to ensure they understand what is going on in your unit and how that is important to the welfare of your state and the defense of our nation. The key word is "understand," and in order for family members to continue to understand and support their spouses' participation in the Guard, they have to be continually informed of the reasons why the Guard is important and why the contribution of their spouse and family is necessary.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO HELP?

The list of materials is nearly endless. However, an effective local command information program requires imagination and a clear idea of the subject you need to address, and the amount of effort you can contribute.

Sites - The National Guard Bureau and the National Guard of each state maintain websites on the Internet. One of the best ways to start your search is to look up the following World Wide Web sites:

- | | |
|---|--|
| www.tnmilitary.org | The official website of the Tennessee National Guard |
| http://www.ngb.army.mil/ | The official website of the National Guard Bureau |
| www.defenselink.mil | The official website of the Department of Defense |

Army and Air Force Public Affairs - The public affairs offices of the active Army and Air Force publish a wide variety of command information products. You receive most of them at your unit already, especially publications such as *Soldiers* and *Airman* magazines. As with our own Volunteer State Guard online magazine, ensure that these publications are widely distributed and read.

Audiovisual - Modern technology and the Internet are fast replacing much of what once was called audiovisual materials. The movie projector has long ago been replaced by the DVD, and the National Guard continues to produce a wide variety of materials that can be used to inform unit members and their families. Many units and states, too, produce excellent programs.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE COMMANDER

Time - Your challenge is balancing your need for providing timely, needed information against all other training requirements. It takes innovation and effort to win at this game.

Facilities - Some things are appropriate for presentation in a troop formation or large classroom, others are not. Finding the right combination and then fitting them into your schedule is another piece of the puzzle.

Personnel - Hopefully, your UPAR can be a significant help in setting up and assisting your command/internal information efforts. In some states, there is a list of experts available to help on complicated projects. A member of the legal staff, for instance, may be best suited to present information on the need for writing your will.

These may seem to be common sense suggestions, and that's just what they are. Much of a successful information program requires common sense. But these suggestions also reflect the fact that a good command/internal information program requires planning and action.

UNIT NEWSLETTER:

One of the best ways of reaching your members and their families is with a regular unit newsletter, either printed or online. Notice, we've used the word newsletter instead of newspaper. There's a difference.

The Joint Public Affairs Office at State Headquarters publishes the Volunteer State Guard online magazine, and maintains a website, Facebook, Flickr and Twitter site. Your newsletter is a close-to-home publication and should be much more informal. An energetic UPAR with decent computer skills and a copy machine are all you need.

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

At a minimum, the unit newsletter should include:

- * Comments from the commander on what he/she wants to emphasize for the upcoming training periods.
- * Latest promotions and awards given to members.
- * Dining hall menus and other "nice to know" information that keeps everyone in the loop.
- * Family news or news related to your family such as information about the PX or BX, commissary, pay, benefits, up-coming events.
- * Important telephone numbers and schedules.

PRODUCTION TIPS:

Most word processing software contains templates for newsletters. Try one of these for starters and

modify it for your needs. The real key is the dedication of the UPAR and the commander to ensuring the newsletter includes good information, is produced consistently, and is clearly backed by the commander.

Don't think you have to be elaborate. Look at the newsletters of schools, clubs and religious groups for examples.

Be careful with what your newsletter says. Avoid the temptation to be too cute or clever. Funny often can mean embarrassing, and that can mean trouble.

Keep your higher headquarters informed about your newsletter. Include them on your distribution list.

Think ahead -- that is, plan ahead. If your unit holds an awards ceremony each quarter, plan your newsletter to coincide with the ceremony (but don't forget to send news releases to the local newspaper, too).

Be consistent. Members and their families will come to depend on your publication for important information.

Ask for help when you need it. Seek assistance from your state public affairs officer or public affairs unit.

Keep it simple!

CHAPTER 8

Additional Activities

Up to now, this handbook has addressed dealing with the news media and your unit personnel and their families. However, these are not the only audiences that have an interest in National Guard activities. They are not the only persons who would be interested in or important to your unit's existence and acceptance in the community. It's important to consider the entire community as your audience, and that includes groups such as civic leaders, employers, other government agencies and citizens in general.

A unit with an effective public affairs program includes these groups as often as possible. Two time-tested methods for reaching these audiences include the operation of a speaker's bureau and the production of open houses at your armory, base or training site.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Operating a speaker's bureau within your unit provides an opportunity for your most effective and knowledgeable members to make presentations to local audiences. Some places to promote the availability of National Guard speakers include: Service clubs, Chambers of Commerce, religious groups, community groups, youth organizations, schools, colleges and Veterans groups.

Check with your higher headquarters and the full-time state public affairs office for speech-writing ideas along with audio-visual aids such as videotapes and printed material.

OPEN HOUSE

An open house at your unit is an excellent way to tell the National Guard story directly to citizens or a select group of individuals you invite. If your unit does not have the capacity to host a public open house, consider conducting a more limited program for the employers of your members.

For any open house event, the key to success is adequate and thorough planning. Allow several months lead time for planning, and check with your higher headquarters for guidance on regulations and policies that govern what you can do and what funds can be spent to host your guests. Since planning for, setting up and conducting an open house will compete for precious training time, be certain that everyone understands what duty status will cover their participation. You will find that preparation for an open house requires a generous amount of volunteer effort, so you will have to plan accordingly.

Work with local news media to spread the word about a public open house, and don't forget to issue reporters special invitations to attend the event. When you're hosting a boss night for employers, work with your unit members to ensure invitations are issued to appropriate people within that person's civilian workplace chain of command.

Contact your headquarters and full-time public affairs office for additional assistance with audio-visual materials and other presentation items that could be used during an open house.

CHAPTER 9

Preparing a Subject Matter Expert (SME)

Part of the UPAR mission may involve preparing a spokesperson to address the media. That person must be able to speak in a positive, correct and effective manner and can respond to questions while stating the command's position, understanding PA doctrine, and knowing release guidelines. When prepping a spokesperson, a UPAR should:

- Determine if the spokesperson will address the media in a one-on-one interview dealing with one subject or in an open forum where reporters can ask about anything. Develop a draft script and prepare answers to anticipated questions for the briefer.
- If the topic of the interview involves an extremely complicated or highly technical subject, call on a subject matter expert to help you put the information in understandable terms. In most cases it is better to have the SME as the briefer. If that is not possible, ensure he is at the briefing and at the training session.
- Try to find out who the reporters are and how they handled previous military briefings.
- Establish enforceable procedures/ground rules on what will be covered and how much time will be allowed for questions.
- Determine uniform and protocol requirements.
- Prepare a draft script to familiarize the briefer with the format of a media briefing and the kinds of questions he will be asked based on the presentation and the current situation.
- Setup: Provide all the materials and equipment at the briefing site. Provide handouts/fact sheets to the media prior to delivering the opening statement.
- Visual aids: prepare handouts/fact sheets for the briefing.

Add cues to the briefing text for visual aids. Ensure you have the proper equipment (video playback, projectors, chalkboards, flip charts, maps, etc.).

Interview Techniques

Blocking

- Deftly avoiding the question
- Never say “No comment” or refuse to answer with hostility
- Block only when there is good reason for doing so
- Try to explain briefly why you cannot answer, usually OPSEC
- Bridge to your message
- Stay in your lane!

- Only talk about things in your area of expertise and things of which you have direct knowledge
- “There’s a lot you can talk about without talking about what you can’t talk about!”

Bridging allows you to:

- Turn the discussion to your agenda
- “Asked about a problem? Talk about a solution.”
- Present your message and support it

When bridging: block or answer the question briefly, then use a transitional phrase as a bridge to your message. Common bridging phrases are “what I can tell you”, “what you should consider”, “what’s important to realize”, etc.

Interview “DO’S”

- Be polite but firm
- Discuss how you would like to be addressed
- Ask the reporters their names and try to break the ice
- Use the reporter’s first name instead of “Sir” or “Ma’am”
- Respond to hard questions with “bad news” as willingly as you do good news to establish credibility and a good relationship
- Take your time: formulate the answer in your mind before speaking
- Be brief & concise – 10-20 second responses are the rule of thumb
- Try to avoid using large words, military words, jargon, and acronyms – the audience for your interview is the American public
- Ignore the camera and talk to the interviewer
- Remain in control of the interview
- Reasoned (thought out) responses will help you stay in control even if the questions are silly or aggressive.
- Always think OPSEC.
- If you don’t know, say so.

- Don't make anything up or speculate.
- If you can't talk about something, tell the media why

Interview “DON'TS”

- Do not participate in an interview that will interfere with your mission
- Do not attempt to cover negative events with a cloak of security or secrecy.
- Don't offer “off the record” information – you are ALWAYS “on the record”
- Never lie – you represent the South Carolina National Guard and your unit
- Do not discuss exact numbers or troop strength (Use descriptions like “Light,” “Heavy” or “Moderate”)
- Do not discuss political or foreign policy matters – you don't speak for the President, State Department, Governor or Adjutant General
- Don't give the enemy propaganda.
- Don't try to answer something OUTSIDE your lane!

Reminders

- Control your eyes: Look at the reporter in one-on-one.
- Use appropriate nonverbal reactions and facial expressions.
- Listen carefully and attentively.
- * Take off sunglasses and headgear. Get rid of the gum or dip!
- Keep it simple but don't talk down.
- Usually your audience knows little or nothing about the National Guard. Explain necessary points and make analogies.
- Avoid jargon, acronyms and bureaucratic/pretentious language.
- **No profanity**

CHAPTER 10

Crisis Communications

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

- a. Serious accidents or incidents attract considerable media attention or may be of significant interest to internal and external publics. They include, but are not limited to, death or serious injury, potential environmental damage or hazardous-material release (for example, oil and fuel spills), hostage situations and terrorist events, and accidents between military and civilian vehicles or involving aircraft or heavy military equipment. PAOs must decide whether or not an accident or incident is serious.
- b. An initial news release should be made within 2 hours (**by JFHQ's PAO, not the UPAR**) after an accident or incident occurs to ease concerns of effected families and personnel and maintain command credibility.
- c. The Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Office must be notified immediately following any incident that might attract media attention. The UPAR should be ready to represent the unit to the media until a full-time public affairs representative is on the scene. **The UPAR should only confirm to the media that an accident or incident has occurred. UPARs should refer the media to a JFHQs Public Affairs Representative (Pg. 22) for comment.**
- d. The following section will help you determine what is and isn't considered a crisis.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

Definition of a crisis: An event that creates or threatens to create a firestorm of harshly negative media coverage that could damage the reputation or future viability of an organization.

Definition of an issue: An external or internal factor – usually lasting over a mid- to long-range time frame – that could represent a serious obstacle to achieving an organization's objectives and cause damage to its reputation if not managed well.

13 Crisis Management Principles

Goal: Establish the command's credibility in dealing responsibly and with compassion during a crisis.

1. Start early to anticipate the possible crises within your command. When deployed, use the commanders CCIR as your starting point to anticipate potential crises. If you accept that "it can happen here", you'll develop a detailed internal plan of what you will do about it. Externally, you'll build a "bank account" of goodwill with your key publics and with the media. Work with key publics and third-party allies by building ongoing relationships (such as office-post neighbors, elected officials, business leaders and community emergency response crews). Educate them on potential issues that may affect them prior to the crisis.
2. Know a crisis when you see one, especially those that can be identified from a distance. A sudden emergency that affects your organization is obviously a crisis. But so is an "issue" as it comes to a boil. It is a good idea to identify potential crises and to have a system for that helps you track their status.

3. Be part of the internal response task force: Ensure a Crisis Action team is operational with good communication between all sections involved. Have SOPs on hand to speed any actions to be taken.
4. Get and give the facts: Gather information only from highly reliable sources. Coordinate with the necessary offices and provide as many facts as possible, as early as possible, as long as necessary. Don't deal in conjecture or unconfirmed reports. Base decisions only on facts.
5. Know your target publics: The expression "know your customer" applies in a crisis and there are many key communications stakeholders who will want to be informed about the crisis as quickly and as fully as possible. Identify these groups and individuals well before the crisis, and know how to reach them.
6. Work with media and have them work with you: Remember:
 - Media inquiries and coverage can cause the incident to become a crisis quickly.
 - Sometimes, the media become the crisis.
 - Develop no more than 3-5 key, clear messages. These messages must reflect responsibility.
 - Help yourself by preparing documents – such as master message points or talking points, questions and answers, and draft fill-in-the-blank releases.
 - Identify the central spokesperson and support him or her with an information-gathering team or person.
7. Appearance and tone do matter: Information needs of your publics change as a crisis unfolds as to what types of information releases are required. Depending on the situation, examples of statements of public concerns may include:
 - Sympathy - Empathy; Care – Concern
 - Doing everything we can for survivors
 - Investigating to determine the cause
 - Want to avoid any other/further damage
 - Want to assure our publics we're doing everything possible to help the survivors and prevent a reoccurrence
 - This is what we're doing to avoid this in the future... (specific examples to re-establish credibility)
 - Establish hot lines for concerned citizens
 - Making information available or posting it on a web site

8. Identify the central spokesperson: Everyone will want to hear from the boss. A crisis requires a spokesperson that is obviously at, or near the levels of power. Ideally, the commander who is responsible for the organization's handling of a crisis will also be articulate and will have had media training for pressure situations. But be sure that whoever speaks for the organization is totally informed of the commander's intent.

9. Mind the emotions/intellect pendulum as a crisis unfold. There is a time for "cold, scientific facts" and there are circumstances where they'll just not be heard. Generally, issues can be discussed between groups of professionals. But in public hearings, or in demonstrations, facts often give way to emotions. If you can address a crisis early, as it begins to develop, you'll have a greater opportunity to win with intellectual arguments – and a greater number of alternatives for action.

10. Command the information: Stay ahead of the story by maintaining follow-on press releases, statements, making responders or support network officials available for escorted media interviews. Be perceived as having nothing to hide without speculating on causes or specifics that may be part of an administrative, criminal or safety investigation.

11. Understand the media's goals.

Stay tight organizationally, but stay loose tactically. Sometimes a crisis will unfold in ways that can't be predicted. Flexibility is essential and options should be continuously re-examined.

12. Develop third-party allies and alliances:

An outside agency's favorable perception carries much support with all publics. Develop these relationships with elected officials, emergency response planning councils, assistance agencies like the local Red Cross, civilian law enforcement and chambers of commerce well before the crisis situations.

13. Constantly evaluate your messages and their feedback:

- Keep the communications lines open after the crisis. Good communications never really ends. Internally, review what the crisis has taught you about the effectiveness of your crisis communications plan.
- Externally, you may have to replenish your goodwill "bank account." Opinion research can tell you how well you've weathered a crisis and point the way for your communications between the crises.
- Watch the situation on an hourly or daily basis.
- Maintain contact with your allies and other publics.
- Use clippings, surveys, personal and public meetings, or focus groups to gauge their information needs and perceptions.

CHAPTER 11

Social Media

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

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- 2.4. How to Protect Yourself and Your Critical Information when Using Social Media
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3 – Establishing and Maintaining a Social Media Presence

- 3.1. Social Media Guidance
- 3.2. Terms of Participation to be Posted on Sites
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Attachment 1 – Web Posting Response Assessment

Attachment 2 – Tennessee National Guard PAO Social Media Presence Request Form

Attachment 3 – References

Preface: Use of Social Media technologies

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: The Tennessee Military Department Joint Public Affairs Office endorses the secure use of approved social networking and social media tools to enhance communication, outreach, and information exchange. This standard establishes policy and enforces DoD and National Guard Bureau policies on the proper use of these tools, consistent with applicable laws, regulations and policies.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES: This Standard provides mandatory instruction for all Tennessee Military Department agencies. As such, they apply to all employees of the Tennessee Military Department, Tennessee Army National Guard, Tennessee Air National Guard, contractors, vendors and all entities that use or whose activities affect official Tennessee Military Department social networking and social media sites.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Tennessee National Guard Joint Public Affairs Office - Social Media Manager. The most current version of these standards can be found at the Tennessee Military Department website at http://tnmilitary.org/pdfs/TNNG_JPAO_Social_Media_SOP_Version_2.pdf

CERTIFIED BY:

/s/
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BY DIRECTION OF THE TENNESSEE MILITARY DEPARTMENT PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR:

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1 - What is Social Media?

1.1. Social Media

1.1.1. **Definition.** The definition of Social Media as it pertains to the Tennessee National Guard Soldiers and Airmen is any external official presence that represents the Tennessee National Guard or one of its units on any social media site.

1.1.2. **Social Media Sites.** Social Media sites include Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Digg, Delicious, blogs, and any other online platform that can be used to disseminate information other than the unit's official Web page. Official uses of Internet-based capabilities unrelated to public affairs are permitted. However, because these interactions take place in a public venue, personnel acting in their official capacity shall maintain liaison with public affairs and operations security staff to ensure organizational awareness.

1.2. Local Posts can have Global Significance

1.2.1. **Never disclose non-public information.** Never disclose non-public information about the Tennessee National Guard or violate operational security. Ensure that the information posted is relevant and accurate, and provides no information not approved for public release, including Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Provide links to official DoD content hosted on DoD-owned, -operated, or -controlled sites where applicable.

1.2.2. **Public Positions.** Be aware that taking public positions online which are counter to the Tennessee National Guard's interests could cause or result in conflict.

1.2.3. **Rights.** Give credit where credit is due and don't violate other people's rights. Do not claim something that is not yours. If you are using or referring to another's content, make certain that they are credited for it in your post and that they approve of you using their content. Include a disclaimer when personal opinions are expressed (e.g., "This statement is my own and does not constitute an endorsement by or opinion of the Department of Defense").

1.2.4. **Convergence.** Online efforts spread faster than traditional email, fax, or mailings. For example, a converged product employed by the Air Force Public Affairs Agency was a collaboration of internal and external print, photos and social media efforts. It highlighted an impromptu memorial in the Area of Responsibility for a fallen Soldier, who was the brother of an Air Force U-2 crew chief. Photos were emailed to AFPAA and were posted on various Web sites, including CNN's iReport. The photos and story were then posted to Reddit, LinkedIn, StumbleUpon, Delicious, Digg and other social media sites, with the whole process taking three hours. In less than a week, it had been viewed hundreds of times. The photo was eventually the lead photo for CNN.com.

1.3. The Internet is Permanent

1.3.1. **Permanence.** Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if Soldiers and Airman "remove" or "delete" it later, or attempt to make it anonymous. The way you answer an online question may be accurate to you, but inaccurate to others. Keep in mind the "world view" when participating in online conversations.

1.3.2. **Be responsible for your duty assignment.** The Tennessee National Guard understands that Soldiers and Airmen sometimes engage in online social media activities at work for legitimate purposes and that these activities may be helpful for the Tennessee National Guard Public Affairs. However, Soldiers and Airmen are encouraged to exercise sound judgment and common sense to prevent online social media sites from becoming a distraction at work.

2 - Operations Security (OPSEC) and Social Media

2.1. **Maintaining OPSEC.** Sharing what seems to be even trivial information online can be dangerous to loved ones and fellow Guard members. America's enemies scour blogs, forums, chat rooms and personal websites to piece together information that can be used to harm the United States. When using social media, avoid mentioning rank, unit locations, deployment dates, names, or equipment specifications and capabilities.

2.1.1. **What is OPSEC?** Operations Security is the process of identifying critical information and subsequently analyzing friendly actions attendant to military operations and other activities. Operations Security protects critical information from adversary observation and collection in ways that traditional security programs cannot. Basically, OPSEC is identifying what small pieces of information can be put together to obtain a larger picture of operations.

2.2. **Regulations.** Army Regulation 530-1, Operations Security (OPSEC), prohibits disclosure of critical and sensitive information in any public domain to include, but not limited to, the World Wide Web, open source publications and the media. Do not publicly disseminate or publish photographs displaying critical or sensitive information. Do not publicly reference, disseminate, or publish critical or sensitive information that has already been compromised.

2.2.1. **Required OPSEC courses.** Per ALARACT 289/2013, the new annual course for anyone maintaining an external online presence can be found at:
https://iatraining.us.army.mil/_html/student.htm#retype=courselist.

2.2.2. **Requirements for Operations Security.** All content must be submitted to and approved by the commander or the organization's release authority prior to posting. All content must be in accordance with organization public affairs guidance, as well as Army and Air Force regulations. ***Be vigilant. Never become complacent when it comes to OPSEC. Check social media presences within your organization for OPSEC violations. Never stop working to protect OPSEC. Once the information is out there, you can't get it back.***

2.3. **Security.**

2.3.1. **Typical types of attacks.**

- *Access Privileges* - anyone using the Internet with "administrator" privileges is inviting attackers to permanently invade their computers; and social media sites have become notorious targets for attackers looking for users that are unsuspecting and unaware of these risks.
- *Cross-Site Scripting (XSS)* - a security vulnerability that allows attackers to insert code into a target user's web page.

- *Identity Spoofing* - usually involves one person, system, or website successfully masquerading as another by falsifying identity-related information and thereby being treated as a trusted user or system by another user or program.
- *Malware Downloads* - one of the highest risks associated with social media is the ability of attackers to exploit known vulnerabilities, allowing them to covertly hide executable programs on unsuspecting users' computers, which give the attackers the ability to take over the computer and use it for any purpose they desire.
- *Social Engineering* - an attack that involves gathering and using personal information about a target in a deceitful manner in order to convince the target to provide the attacker permissions to obtain or access restricted information.
- *URL Spoofing* - an attack in which a legitimate web page is reproduced on a server under the control of the attacker and then a target is directed to this site, thinking that they are on the legitimate site.

2.3.2. Security Items to Consider. Take a close look at all privacy settings. Do not reveal sensitive information about yourself such as schedules and event locations. Ask “What could the wrong person do with this information?” and “Could it compromise the safety of myself, my family or my unit?” Consider turning off the GPS function on your Smartphone, as it can be utilized to expose specific geographical location information that can be devastating to National Guard operations.

2.3.3. Social Engineering/Individual Targeting. Since social networking encourages socialization and collaboration with not only friends but with strangers, the potential for social engineering attacks is magnified. Attackers can use social engineering techniques to lure the user to take an action that leads to an adverse action to the user. The more pieces of information an adversary can collect, the more opportunities they have to meet their objectives. An adversary may be a hacker on the other side of the world simply targeting you to obtain a good credit card or bank account number, or an adversary could be a militant, collecting data to identify members of the armed forces to either inflict harm on the member(s) or collect small pieces of data leaked by many members to consolidate a picture of our capabilities and plans. An adversary may never target you directly, rather they may use data they collect from you and others to harm other service members in the AOR.

2.3.4. Due to the relative vulnerability of social media and social networking sites to security exploits, it is important to be cautious when using these technologies. In order to prevent potential harm, users of social networking sites should minimize the amount of information an attacker is likely to gain from a successful attack.

2.4. How to protect yourself and your critical information when using social media. It is easy to collect and consolidate information made available through public social networking sites. It is possible to build a picture of an individual based solely on information made public on the internet. In addition, it is remarkably easy to obtain information ‘protected’ by the privacy controls of a social media profile.

2.4.1. User applications on social networking sites and unauthorized and/or malicious software programs. There are many third party applications in social media that users can add to their profile such as sharing music, and playing video games. These applications may have capabilities that increase the likelihood of a user unwittingly disclosing personal information. When an individual installs an application, it typically allows the developer to see private information from the installer’s profile. People can be duped into going to third party sites to

download applications. Once at these sites, the social networking site no longer controls what may be downloaded to your computer.

2.4.2. Safety precautions. Verify the identity of those who attempt to friend you on social media sites. A name and photograph do not constitute verification. Lock down your profile by making it private. Always be suspicious. Do a web search on yourself, your unit, and family members to see what information is posted to the internet. Review information and photos before posting. Be aware of any public affairs implications of your activities. Watch out for your friends and ensure they aren't posting any OPSEC disclosures. Data aggregation from different sources could reveal sensitive or even classified information. Educate your fellow unit members, family members and friends on the risks associated with social networking. Don't use the same password for each form of social media you use. Do not use information commonly associated with you (family name, pet names, etc.).

2.4.3. Risk Reduction. To reduce some of the risks, the following actions are recommended:

- Do not allow users to have "administrative privileges" on government/state owned computers that access the Internet.
- Each unit information security officer/NCO must review selected technologies and associated plug-ins to identify potential security vulnerabilities prior to their use.
- Use a username/password that is different from other network login IDs and passwords.
- ***Transferring sensitive information over these technologies is prohibited.***
- These technologies make a user's computer vulnerable to attacks. It is suggested to configure social media outlets in a way that does not receive messages from unauthorized users. Do not ban messages altogether, as this is an important way for servicemembers and the community to connect with the unit.

2.5. Checklist for OPSEC for official pages.

- Designate members of your team responsible for posting content to the official online presence and make sure those individuals are current on all OPSEC training.
- Make sure all content is submitted to and approved by the commander or the organization's release authority.
- Make sure all content is posted in accordance with organization Public Affairs Guidance and Army and Air Force regulations.
- Monitor your social media presence and make sure external social media users are not posting sensitive information on your official pages. Monitor your Facebook wall and comments posted to your YouTube, Flickr and Blog presences.
- Produce training Materials and conduct regular social media OPSEC training within your team and with other units in your organization.
- Distribute social media OPSEC training to the families of your Soldiers and Airmen. It's important to keep them just as informed and up-to-date as the Soldiers and Airmen in your unit.
- Be vigilant. Never become complacent when it comes to OPSEC. Check social media presences within your organization for OPSEC violations. Never stop working to protect

2.5.1. Making dangerous social media posts safer.

Dangerous	Safer
<p data-bbox="204 247 781 317">My Soldier is in XYZ at ABC Camp in ABC City, Afghanistan.</p> <p data-bbox="240 359 745 428">My Airman will be leaving Kuwait and heading to Iraq in three days.</p> <p data-bbox="215 470 773 539">My Soldier is coming back at XYZ time on XYZ day.</p> <p data-bbox="245 581 743 609">My family is back in Edwardsville, IL.</p>	<p data-bbox="875 247 1380 281">My Soldier is deployed to Afghanistan.</p> <p data-bbox="920 359 1334 392">My Airman deployed this week.</p> <p data-bbox="880 470 1375 504">My Soldier will be home this summer.</p> <p data-bbox="982 581 1273 609">I'm from the Midwest.</p>

3 - Establishing and Maintaining a Social Media Presence

3.1. Social Media Guidance.

3.1.1. Social Media Policy and Guidelines. Some key elements of building trust to be considered when posting content or maintaining a social network site: be open with the public when declaring what the Tennessee National Guard values and principles are, provide a means for direct invitation or key publics to engage in dialogue, develop methods of engagement to maintain dialogue with key publics, deliberate mirror imaging of actions and the information we communicate, take certain risks with negative public statements and allow for a public forum to defend your position, manage the Tennessee National Guard's reputation and relationships built on social networks (by ensuring there are adequate methods to maintain decorum, rules of engagement and site/content moderation), and provide full disclosure of who you are when engaging in the social media network. Post only approved content and have a method in place to ensure thorough content review before posting, (OPSEC, FOUO, FOIA, SAPP, etc.)

3.1.2. Regulations.

- OPSEC courses, see section 2.2.1.
- Register the social media site with the Department of Defense, <http://www.defense.gov/RegisteredSites/SubmitLink.aspx>; and National Guard Bureau - send an email to socialmedia@ng.army.mil. You can check for your posting with NGB here: http://www.ng.mil/features/Social_media/default.aspx. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD(PA)) maintains an external official presences list on www.Defense.gov. (The Office of the Chief of Public Affairs has the right to deny any page during the approval process if one or more of these guidelines are not followed.
- Must have JFHQ Public Affairs Office approval in writing. The Tennessee National Guard PAO Social Media Presence Request Form, attachment 2, will meet this requirement. If not in compliance, an unofficial statement must be present.

3.1.3. Requirements for Social Media Sites. All social media platforms designed to promote any part of the Tennessee National Guard must adhere to the following standards:

- Must be categorized as a government page.
- Include the Commander approved names and logos, not nicknames or mascots.
- Branding (official names and logos) across all social media platforms are uniform.
- Include a statement acknowledging this is the “official” page of your unit or organization, as well as a terms of use statement. See section 3.2, below.
- Change Facebook setting to only show posts made by the page itself, and not from fans of the page.
- Facebook pages must include “Posting Guidelines” under the “Info. Tab”.
- Be recent and up-to-date. Post must be no older than one month.
- Adhere to OPSEC guidelines.
- Should not be used as a place for personal advertisement nor endorsement.
- In addition to DoD and NGB, all Army pages must be registered through the U.S. Army at www.army.mil/socialmedia.

3.2. Terms of participation to be posted on sites. These should be posted in a visible location on the social media page.

- Welcome, this is the official Tennessee National Guard (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr) for (Unit) where you will find the most recent information and news about (Unit). It is our goal to provide the public with information and news about (Unit) and allow for an open forum of discussion about (Unit) topics.
- If you are looking for our official web page, please visit (official page).
- Please feel free to express your opinion about the Tennessee National Guard in an objective and respectful way that allows for a continued information relationship.
- While this is an open forum, it's also intended to maintain respect for those who participate (i.e. family-friendly). Please keep your comments clean.
- Participants are asked to follow our posting guidelines below. Violation of the guidelines below may result in your post being removed.

3.3. Posting Guidelines.

- We do not, under any circumstance, allow graphic, obscene, explicit or racial comments or submissions, nor do we allow comments that are abusive, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
- We do not allow solicitations or advertisements. This includes promotion or endorsement of any financial, commercial or non-governmental agency. Similarly, we do not allow attempts to defame or defraud any financial, commercial or nongovernmental agency.
- We do not allow comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity.
- You participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information provided.
- Lastly, the appearance of external links on this site does not constitute official endorsement on behalf of the Tennessee National Guard or Department of Defense.

3.4. Copyright/Trademark. Do not use logos that you do not have permission to use. Soldiers and Airmen cannot include copyrighted or trademarked material on their social media platforms. This includes embedding a song, or linking to unattributed artwork. Social media platforms exist to help individuals connect and express their personalities, but this should be done without using a copyrighted material unless they are authorized to do so by the copyright or trademark owner.

4- Tips for Social Media

4.1. **Tennessee National Guard guide to dealing with the news media.** Within established guidelines, it is our responsibility to talk to the media (and subsequently, the public). Leaders, Soldiers and Airmen who refuse to talk to the media give the impression that they are withholding information.

4.1.1. **There is no such thing as off the record with social media.** If it's posted online, the media can quote you.

4.1.2. **Stay in your lane.** Talk about your job, your responsibilities, and other matters within your expertise of control. Avoid speculating and answering "what if" questions—you can't predict the future.

4.1.3. **Local support.** Do talk about the support from family/friends you have received since your deployment.

4.1.4. **Audience.** Always remember who the audience will be. If you have complaints, consult your chain of command first.

4.1.5. **Discussions with reporters.** All discussions with reporters are "on the record" – if you do not want to read it in the paper or hear it on TV, don't say it.

4.1.6. **Protect classified information.** Protect classified information and preserve operational security. Exact numbers and locations of troops and equipment, ongoing or future operations, and rules of engagement are not releasable. If classified or sensitive information is inadvertently released through words or photography, service members are not authorized to confiscate film, audio/video tapes or reporters notes. Report the incident by the quickest means possible to the unit commander or the public affairs officer.

4.1.7. **Honesty.** Be honest, open and forthright. If you do not know the answer to a question, simply say, "I don't know." Don't be evasive—If a question is classified, simply tell the reporter so. Think about your answer before opening your mouth—you do not have to answer immediately.

4.1.8. **Communicate clearly to your audience.** This is your opportunity to communicate to a large audience. Make your answer clear and relevant, and use examples that are easily understood (avoid using jargon and acronyms).

4.1.9. **Professionalism.** Be professional even if the reporter is aggressive or the questions seem silly. If the reporter interrupts you, pause, let the reporter finish, then continue your response.

4.1.10. **Speak for you, not the reporter.** Don't let the reporter put words in your mouth. Don't repeat their "buzz words." You don't have to accept their facts or figures as the truth. Don't be afraid to ask a reporter to repeat a question.

4.1.11. **Relax.** You're telling a great story about what the Tennessee National Guard does—this is your chance to educate. If you feel uncomfortable, or have any questions or concerns about dealing with the media, contact the Joint Public Affairs Office at DSN 683-0633 or 0662.

4.2. Freedom of information and transparency. Freedom of information and transparency or releasable, unclassified and non-sensitive information will be made readily available to the public, provided upon request. Our organization’s activities are legitimate and the assumption is, an informed public will agree with this principle. This guidance is formalized in law by the Freedom of Information Act that emphasizes the importance of transparency in military activities. The Tennessee National Guard does not condone manipulating the social media flow by creating posts designed to mislead followers and control a conversation. Every website, “fan page”, or other online destination that is ultimately controlled by the Tennessee National Guard must make that fact known to users and must be authorized according to applicable internal protocols in order to track and monitor the state’s National Guard collective online presence. All Soldiers and Airmen engaging in social media must disclose this to their readers, when they’re associating with them, whether it is done in an official or un-official capacity. Tennessee National Guard PAOs or the OIC must monitor whether Guard members are complying with this principle.

4.3. Privacy. The privacy of individual servicemembers must be protected. The Privacy Act of 1974 set this principle into law. Soldiers and Airmen must remain conscientious with regard to any personally identifiable information that we collect, including how we collect, store, use, or share that information; all which should be done pursuant to applicable privacy policy, laws and information technology rules.

4.4. Security. Security to operations, personnel, equipment and facilities must be anticipated and evaluated before information is communicated to the public. Examples include preventing the premature disclosure of dates, time and locations of deployments and homecoming to and from the continental United States.

4.5. Online social media activities. The Tennessee National Guard respects the rights of its Soldiers and Airmen to use blogs and other social media tools not only as a form of self-expression, but also as a means to further explain the National Guard story. It is important that all Guardsmen are mindful of the implications through social media and online conversations that make reference to the Tennessee National Guard. These Guardsmen are potentially viewed as spokespersons and should be made aware that the Tennessee National Guard may be held responsible or accountable for their behavior, statements and opinions in that capacity.

4.5.1. Expectations for personal behavior in social media. There is a big difference between speaking “on behalf of the Tennessee National Guard” and speaking “about” the Tennessee National Guard. This following set of principles refers to personal or unofficial online activities where Soldiers and Airmen might refer to the Tennessee National Guard:

4.5.1.a. Adhere to the UCMJ and other applicable policies. All Soldiers and Airmen, from officers to enlisted, must adhere to Department of Defense policy, Secretaries of the Army and Air Force Instructions and National Guard orders and directives related to online media in every public setting.

4.5.1.b. Soldiers and Airmen are responsible for their actions. Anything a National Guard member posts that can potentially tarnish the Tennessee National Guard image will ultimately be their responsibility. The Tennessee National Guard encourages Soldiers and Airmen to participate in the online social media space, but urge them to do so properly, exercising sound judgment and common sense.

4.5.1.c. Be a ‘scout’ for compliments and criticism. Even if a Guard member is not an official spokesperson, they are one of the most vital assets for monitoring the social

media landscape. If a Guard member comes across positive or negative remarks about the Tennessee National Guard online, they should consider sharing it with their local or command Public Affairs Office.

4.5.1.d. **Let subject matter experts respond to negative posts.** You may come across negative or disparaging posts about the Tennessee National Guard, or see third parties trying to spark negative conversations. Unless you are a trained Tennessee National Guard online spokesperson, avoid the temptation to react yourself. Pass the post(s) along to official spokespersons who are authorized to address such comments at the units or command Public Affairs Office.

4.5.1.e. **Be conscious when mixing business and personal lives.** Online, a Guard member's personal and business personas are likely to intersect. The Tennessee National Guard respects the free speech rights of all Soldiers and Airmen, but they must remember that civilians, fellow Guardsmen and supervisors often have access to the online content that is posted. Soldiers and Airmen must keep this in mind when publishing information online that can be seen by more than friends and family, and know that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on. Online content can, and will, be shared with thousands or more people and is nearly impossible to retract once it has entered the public arena.

4.6. **Expectations for online spokespeople.** Just as with traditional media, Soldiers and Airmen have an opportunity to provide an inside perspective to the Tennessee National Guard's reputation online and to engage and participate in potentially thousands of online conversations that mention the Tennessee National Guard every day. Remember that you are representing the Tennessee National Guard, as well as the Army/Air Force. As a Guard member, it is important that your posts convey the same journalistic excellence the National Guard instills in all of its communicators and public affairs professionals. How you conduct yourself in the online social media space not only reflects on you—it is a direct reflection on the Tennessee National Guard.

Fully disclose your affiliation with the Tennessee National Guard. It is never acceptable to use aliases or mislead. Keep records of your online interactions and monitor the corresponding conversations with whom you engage. The internet is permanent. Once something is posted, it cannot be removed or changed to anonymous. Provide meaningful content. If your complete thought cannot be squeezed into a character-restricted space, provide a link to an online space where the message can be expressed completely and accurately. Collaborate and ask for guidance when needed. There is never a topic so important or urgent that it requires an immediate post. Always gather the facts, know the rules, and understand the audience. If you need assistance, contact the Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Office.

4.7. **Frequently Asked Questions.**

Q: Who can manage my units Facebook page?

A: Currently, social media manager is not an MOS or AFSC, so it is often viewed as an additional duty. Often, Public Affairs Specialists take the role of social media managers since much of the content loaded to social media sites is news and command information. But it doesn't necessarily have to work that way. If a Soldier or Airman is motivated and the commander approves him managing the site, anyone can run a social media site as long as they work closely with their unit's public affairs office in accordance with DTM 09-026, *Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities*.

Q: What happens if someone is impersonating me or someone in my unit?

A: Report the impersonation to the social media platform by clicking on the report button or emailing the platform directly. If the platform is unresponsive and the impersonation becomes a threat to reputation or personal safety, contact the Online and Social Media Division and we will assist in getting the page or profile removed.

Q: A family member has posted something to one of the social media presences that violates OPSEC. What do I do now?

A: The first thing you should do is engage that person in as discreet a manner as possible and ask them to remove the post immediately. Explain that information isn't appropriate for conversation online. If the person refuses or persists you have the option to block or report them. This should be used as a last resort because it is difficult to undo and only shifts the problem to out of view—the person will more than likely continue to post inappropriate content somewhere else. In either case, you should notify your command so that they are informed of the OPSEC breach.

Q: I did some searching and found that this command already has a non-official Family Group on Facebook (Twitter, YouTube, etc.). What should I do?

A: Many commands have unofficial social media presences established by former Soldiers and Airmen, Veterans, or just fans excited about that command. We do not have the right to remove these presences nor would we want to unless they portrayed themselves as an official presence. In the meantime, work with the command leadership to determine if you want to approach the page and/or simply monitor it and chime in when you have information to add. You may also want to contact the administrator and touch base. They may be eager to have your participation. Regardless, this should not stop you or the command from creating an official presence for the command and its families.

Attachment 1 – Professional Checklist

The Professional Checklist represents those items that a Public Affairs professional will need to succeed in most emergency operation cells. This list is not absolute and must be adjusted depending on mission, space, and availability. Some of the documents may not be necessary if Internet access is available. The list should be used as a check and balance to ensure that at a minimum each of these items are considered.

A Smart Phone/Tablet with appropriate applications can be substituted for some of the items listed below.

- **Laptop w/ Printer (w/email capability, Internet, Card Reader)**
- **Digital Camera**
- **Cell Phone (pre-program key numbers, you may need)**
- **Hand-Held Recorder**
- **AM / FM Radio**
- **Peripherals (batteries, chargers, memory cards, extension cables)**
- **Template Releases**
- **News Media Directory**
- **References** (AP Style Book, pocket dictionary and thesaurus, FM 46-1, fact sheets, state info, World and National Guard Almanacs, etc)
- **Business Cards**
- **TN JPAO BattleBook**
- **Notebooks / Pens / Highlighters**
- **FAX Cover Sheets / Printer Paper / Post-Its**

Personal Checklist

The Personal Checklist is a suggested packing list that every Public Affairs professional should have ready if called. Again, many specific items are dependent on mission, space, availability, and in this case, location. However, this list should serve as a convenient reminder of items to consider. If these items are packed and ready to go, then any deployment will be less stressful and more successful.

- **Two Sets of ACUs/ABUs (with soft cap)**
- **Wet Weather Gear**
- **Five T-shirts / Five pairs of Socks**
- **Toiletry Items (enough for one week)**
- **Sleeping Bag and/or ground pad**
- **Three MREs / Three Bottles of Water**
- **Two Flashlights (with extra Batteries)**
- **Leatherman Tool (multi-purpose)**
- **Plastic Ziplock Bags**
- **First Aid Kit (Bug Spray as needed)**
- **Government Travel Credit Card**
- **Orders (w/ variations and excess baggage authorized)**
- **Cash (\$200 to \$300)**
- **Positive Mental Attitude**

Attachment 2 - Personal Telephone Roster

(Enter your critical and essential telephone numbers here) Organization Name	Phone	DSN	FAX	E-Mail
Tennessee National Guard Joint Public Affairs	615-313-0633	683	615-313-3129	_____
Tennessee Army EOC	615-313-0744	683	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
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Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____

Attachment 3 - Field Location Media Contacts

Newspapers, Magazines, Wire Services

Name of Publication _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Contact's Name/Title _____

Phone _____

Deadline Day and Time _____

FAX number _____

Name of Publication _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Contact's Name/Title _____

Phone _____

Deadline Day and Time _____

FAX number _____

Name of Publication _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Contact's Name/Title _____

Phone _____

Deadline Day and Time _____

FAX number _____

Name of Publication _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Contact's Name/Title _____

Phone _____

Deadline Day and Time _____

FAX number _____

Television, Radio Stations

Call Letters _____

Network Affiliation (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, etc.) _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

News Director (Weekday) _____ Phone _____

News Director (Weekend) _____ Phone _____

Public Service Director _____ Phone _____

Weekday Deadline _____

Weekend Deadline _____

Call Letters _____

Network Affiliation (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, etc.) _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

News Director (Weekday) _____ Phone _____

News Director (Weekend) _____ Phone _____

Public Service Director _____ Phone _____

Weekday Deadline _____

Weekend Deadline _____

Call Letters _____

Network Affiliation (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, etc.) _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

News Director (Weekday) _____ Phone _____

News Director (Weekend) _____ Phone _____

Public Service Director _____ Phone _____

Weekday Deadline _____

Weekend Deadline _____

Call Letters _____

Network Affiliation (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, etc.) _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

News Director (Weekday) _____ Phone _____

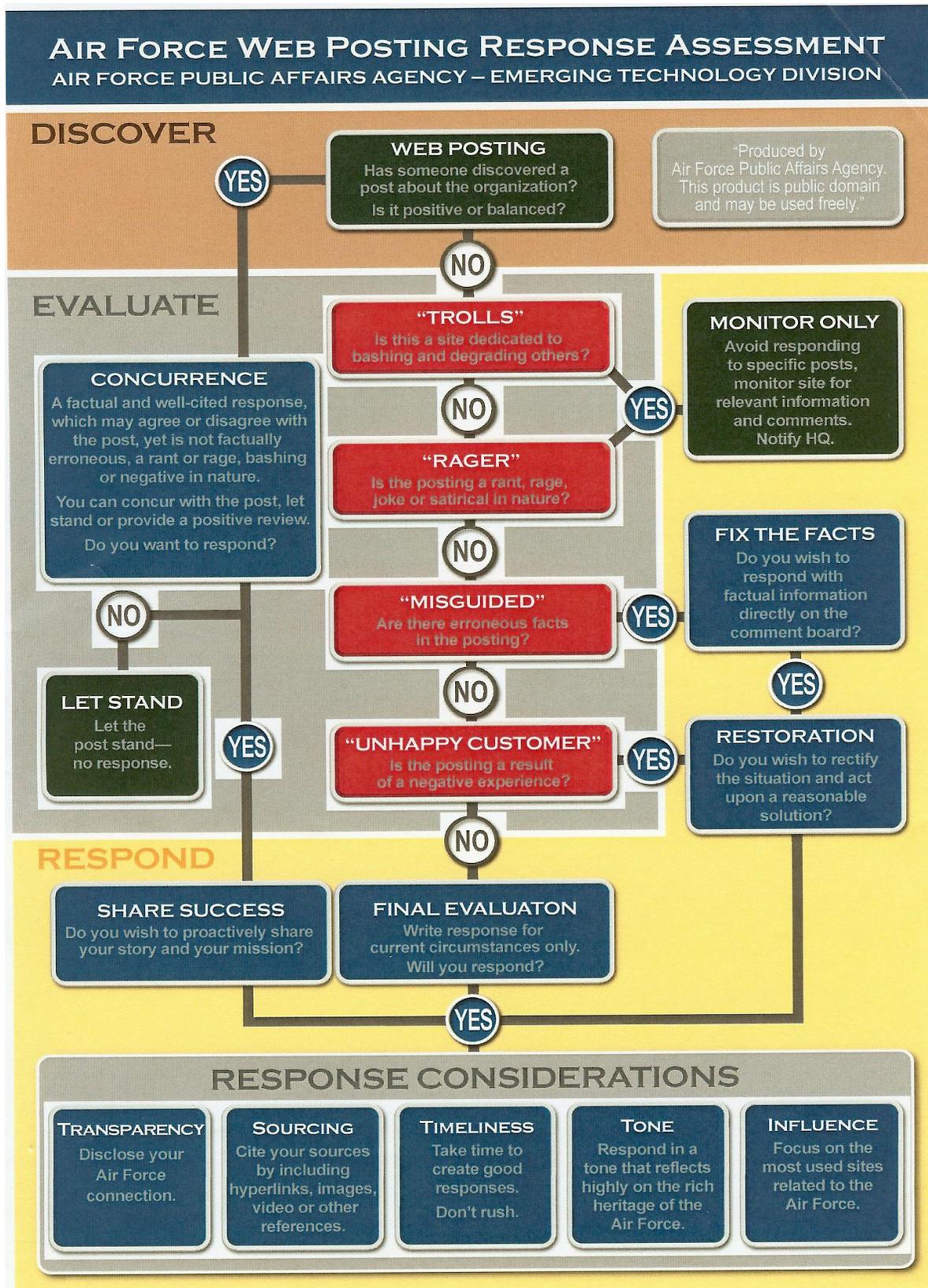
News Director (Weekend) _____ Phone _____

Public Service Director _____ Phone _____

Weekday Deadline _____

Weekend Deadline _____

Attachment 4 –Web Posting Response Assessment



Attachment 5 – Tennessee National Guard PAO Social Media Presence Request Form

Tennessee National Guard Joint Public Affairs Office
Social Media Presence Request Form

Date: _____
Requestor Name (and rank): _____
Unit: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____
Fax: _____

Social Media Presence Being Requested:
(Check all that apply and provide link.)

- Facebook _____
- Twitter _____
- YouTube _____
- Blog _____
- Other (Specify) _____

Does social media presence use official logo:

- Yes
- No

Does social media presence have official statement:

- Yes
- No

Has social media presence been registered with:

- Department of Defense
- National Guard Bureau
- No (Reason) _____

Required OPSEC Training Completed:
(Submit certificates with request form.)

- Social Media and Operations Security Training Course (ia.signal.army.mil/sms.asp) and
- DISA Social Networking Class (iase.disa.mil/eta/sns_v1/sn/launchPage.htm)
- or
- I, _____, agree to complete the required OPSEC training courses to maintain the above social media presence(s). I will ensure all administrators of above presence(s) complete the same training and all certificates will be forwarded to the TNNG JPAO within 15 days of this request.

Unit Commander Approval
Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

TNNG JPAO Approval
Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

TNNGJPAO Form 1

Attachment 6 - SAMPLE NEWS RELEASES

The following sample news releases are provided to assist you in preparing unit-level releases. All releases should be typewritten and doubled-spaced on your unit's letterhead. Never send a fill-in-the-blanks news release that has been hand-written. Include your name and unit phone number on the release, or the name and phone number of a knowledgeable person who can assist a journalist with any follow-up questions. Keep a copy of every release in your unit files. If the news has impact at higher command levels or is especially unique, send a copy to your state Public Affairs Officer.

To be sure you've gotten everything correct, have the person you're writing the story about complete and sign a News Release Questionnaire (example included with this Handbook) or use DD Form 2266 (available on Forms Flow software) and retain it in your file with a copy of the story. Be very careful and sensitive when including information about a person's family members, especially when dealing with people who might be divorced, separated, widowed or single parents. To be safe, don't do a news story on someone who refuses to complete the Questionnaire or DD Form 2266.

NEWS RELEASE QUESTIONNAIRE

To be completed by everyone who agrees to the use of their name in a news release prepared by your unit. Retain this signed form with your file copy of the news release.

Name	
Unit	
MOS or AFSC Described in words, not letters and numbers	
Hometown	
Civilian Occupation/ Employer (If appropriate)	
Spouse/family (If appropriate)	
Parents and their hometown (If appropriate)	
High School and Colleges attended, including year graduated and field of study	
Remarks	
STATEMENT I authorize this information to be used and published in an Army/Air National Guard news release. _____ Signature and Date	

NEW ENLISTMENT

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

_____ (name) of _____ (hometown) was sworn in

_____ (day/date) as the newest member of the _____ Tennessee

_____ (Army/Air) National Guard's _____ (unit).

_____ (last name) enlisted under a program which pays _____ (describe benefits, such as

G.I. Bill). He/she is enrolled at/works at _____ (college or civilian employment, and is studying

_____ (college major or career field).

The oath of enlistment was administered by _____ (name of officer). Attending the ceremony

were _____ (list any significant guests, such as family members and their relationship to the new soldier/airman).

_____ (last name) will begin _____ (describe training) active-duty training at _____

(duty station) and will be assigned to _____ (describe person's National Guard duties) when

he/she returns.

PROMOTION

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

_____ (name) of _____ (hometown) has been promoted to the rank of _____

(describe new rank in words such as staff sergeant, not E-6) in _____ (Guard unit).

_____ (last name) has been a member of the _____ Tennessee _____ (Army/Air)

National Guard for _____ years. The promotion brings a new position, that of _____ (job title),

with responsibilities for _____ (explain new duties).

In civilian life, _____ (last name) works at _____ (employer) as a _____ (job title).

AWARD PRESENTATION

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

_____ (rank and name) of _____ (hometown), a member of _____ (National Guard

unit), received the _____ (certificate or medal) _____ (day/date). The honor was presented

to _____ (last name) for _____ (reason for presentation).

In civilian life, _____ (last name) is employed by _____ (employer) _____ as a

_____ (give title/duties). He/she has been a member of the Tennessee _____ (Army/Air) National

Guard for _____ (years), and currently is assigned to _____ (unit) as a _____ (describe

military duties).

HONOR GRADUATE

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

_____ (rank and name) was honored recently as an honor graduate of _____ (name of course) at the _____ (name of military school), _____ (location).

_____ (last name), a member of _____ (unit), _____ (unit location), attended the course for _____ (time length). Following his/her return to the unit, he/she will be assigned to the _____ (section) as a _____ (job title).

In civilian life, _____ (last name) is employed by _____ (employer) as a _____ (describe duties). He/she has been a member of the Tennessee _____ (Army/Air) National Guard for _____ (years).

CHANGE OF COMMAND

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

_____ (rank and name) is the new commander of _____ (Guard unit), _____

(location).

_____ (name) received command of the unit _____ (day/date) from _____ (rank and name), who had commanded the unit since _____ (month/year).

_____ (last name) commented after accepting command of the _____ (size of the unit) member National Guard unit that, " _____ (insert quote or appropriate comment from commander).

In civilian life, _____ (last name) is employed by _____ (employer) as a _____ (title/duties). He/she has been a member of the Tennessee _____ (Army/Air) National Guard for _____ (years).

_____ (last name of departing commander), the departing commander, is being assigned to _____ (describe new assignment, retirement or separation from service).

RETIREMENT

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

_____ (rank and name) of _____ (hometown) retired _____ (date) from the Tennessee _____ Army/Air) National Guard with _____ (years) years military service.

His/her last assignment, which he/she held since _____ (month/year), was with _____ (unit) located in _____ (city), where he/she was _____ (unit assignment).

Previous assignments included _____ (highlight just the primary assignments and dates held).

_____ (last name) began his/her military career in _____ (year), when he/she _____ (enlisted/was commissioned) _____ in the _____ (branch of service). He/she served _____ (list wartime assignments, if any) and was awarded _____ (list top awards).

_____ (last name) future plans include _____ (briefly describe plans). (If appropriate, briefly describe the service member's spouse and family and their connections to the National Guard, if any).

OPEN HOUSE

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

The Tennessee _____ (Army/Air) National Guard's Armory/Base at _____ (street address and city) will conduct a free public open house _____ (date) from _____ (hours of open house).

_____ (rank and name), commander of the _____ (unit), invites everyone to attend.

Displays and demonstrations of equipment used by the National Guard, and information about a wide variety of programs sponsored by the _____ Tennessee National Guard, will be available.

(In the next paragraphs, include a quote or comment from the command or other appropriate person and explain highlights of what will be on display, guest speakers, demonstrations, refreshments, etc. Include information about parking and access to the installation).

ANNUAL TRAINING

UNIT LETTERHEAD

Date

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Additional Information, Contact:

Telephone:

Annual training for the _____ (unit), _____ (unit's location), will be conducted at _____ (site of training) from _____ (start date) until _____ (end date).

This year, unit members will concentrate on _____ (describe highlights of training), according to _____ (unit commander).

(Use additional paragraphs to describe other interesting facets of the training. If appropriate, include safety information about convoy movements or other events that could have an impact on the public. Example, a tactical exercise in the training area that might make unusual noise. A similar news release can be written at the conclusion of training to describe the unit's experiences, awards received, etc.).

Attachment 7

References

Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces, DoD Directive 1325.06. <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/132506p.pdf>

Joint Ethics Regulation DoD 5500.7-R.
http://www.dod.mil/dodgc/defense_ethics/ethics_regulation/jer1-6/doc

National Guard Recruiting and Retention Social Media Guidebook.
<http://www.slideshare.net/thenatlguard/army-national-guard-recruiting-and-retention-social-media-guidebook>

Navigating the Social Network: Air Force Guidance to effective Social Media use.
<http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-120327-048.pdf>

Online Social Media Guidance. <http://www.usmc.mil/usmc/Pages/SocialMediaGuidance.aspx>

Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces, DoDD 1344.10.
<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/134410p.pdf>

Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities, DTM 09-026.
<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-09-026/pdf>

Social Media and the Air Force, Version 2.
<http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-091210-043.pdf>

U.S. Army Social Media Handbook, Version 3. <http://www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia/army-social-media-handbook-2012>