



UPAR Handbook

2020

This document serves as a reference and style guide for UPAR writers and photographers. It covers how to write, edit and submit news stories and photos for publication to the 10th AAMDC Public Affairs Office.

10th AAMDC PAO

Regulations and Doctrine
- AR 360-1 – The Army Public Affairs Program
- FM 3-61 – Public Affairs Operations

European Defenders!

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Unit Public Affairs Representatives

What is a UPAR and how do you become one?

UPARS work as an additional duty that may require them to write, take photographs, video B-roll or provide story information about events in their organizations. UPARS are recognized for their work by receiving a byline.

This guide will help you write stories, take photographs and video for publication in Army journals, newspapers and other publications.

UPAR Duties

- Tell the battalion / battery / company / unit story
- Meet with your commander and establish a unit public affairs plan
- Recommend items of interest for coverage (SITREP)
- Publicize unit participation in community projects or activities
- Serve as the public affairs point of contact for the 10th AAMDC Public Affairs Office
- Determine resources and ask for assistance from the chain of command
- Keep the commander advised of UPAR activities

If you have questions about using this handbook, contact the Brigade Public Affairs Office.

News Stories

What is news?

News is people and what happens to them. It is anything you learn today that you didn't know yesterday. News is information people need. It's written to inform the reader and is a timely report of an event of sufficient importance to interest a number of people and possesses a combination of elements of appeal.

News is evaluated by journalists in terms of:

Authenticity -- the genuine news value of the report. It means the event happened and is not fiction.

Good taste -- the content does not offend the readers' social, religious or cultural mores.

Mass Appeal -- the content affects or interests readers in some way, for some reason. Mass appeal is determined by certain news elements generally categorized as:

Immediacy - Events that happen today are more interesting to the reader than events of yesterday or the day before.

Proximity - Readers are generally more interested in something that has happened close to home rather than in a distant location, unless there is a local tie to that faraway place.

Consequence - News can be localized by telling readers how an event will affect them.

Conflict - Readers are drawn to stories dealing with conflict, such as stories about war, sports, domestic confrontations, elections, crime or man against nature.

Oddity - Anything unusual or comical can make a story that will draw reader attention, but it must be in good taste.

Emotion - Stories that cause readers to feel sympathy, anger, sadness or happiness make good copy. Emotions can draw readers into the story.

Prominence - People are naturally interested in the activities of well-known people. Prominent, newsworthy people on your military installation include the post commander, senior NCO, etc.

Suspense - News events or situations that have not been concluded may be read as eagerly as any mystery story or serial.

Progress - By their nature, advancements – in any field, discipline, specialty, etc. -- are news and interest readers, especially if they affect the reader.

News Gathering

The public depends on the news media to tell them what is happening locally, nationally and internationally, and how it affects them. To do that job well, you must have a sense for what news is and be alert to the obvious facts in a news story-- always double check your facts.

Military reporters write stories with the "internal audience" in mind:

- Military members
- Civilian employees
- Family members

As a UPAR writer you are writing primarily for the post newspaper, you should concentrate your newsgathering efforts on the installation's people and events.

Types of News Stories

To gather news, you must know the various story types:

News – News informs an audience about something that will or has happened.

Feature Stories — Feature stories are about people. They are entertaining and stir the reader's emotions. They normally take up about 50 percent of the paper.

Sports — Sports stories can be about any of the ongoing recreational events at any installation.

News Feature — A news feature is a "perishable story related to a current event or situation that is of interest to your readers and combines various feature writing techniques with elements of straight news writing." News features are often found in weekly newspapers such as Kaiserslautern America. This is the style of story you will write.

The news feature format combines the best elements of news and feature writing styles to present the news in its context -- with the human elements included. Feature writing involves interpretation, style, imagery, description and emotional appeal. It gives depth to facts and records human drama.

Interviewing

Interviewing is one of the most important steps in the newsgathering process. It's the basic tool for obtaining information in practically all forms of news and feature stories.

Whether you interview over the telephone or face to face, preparation is the key to planned interviews. Research the subject and the source of information by reviewing his or her bio before the interview.

Questions

This is the key to a successful interview.

- Write several questions in advance.
- Design the questions so you get the information you need to write the story.
- Prepare more questions than you think you'll need.
- Use your questions to keep the interview on the story's focus.

Recorders

The key to effective interviewing is the ability to take notes with a tape recorder and pad and pen. Always ask the interviewee for permission to use a recorder. There are limitations to both.

Advantages

- Records everything.
- Enables the reporter to capture the rhythm of colorful speakers.
- Useful for rapid speakers.
- Enables the reporter to relax and concentrate on what is being said.

Disadvantages

- Records everything -- background sounds, telephone rings, etc.
- Must be transcribed.
- Mechanical failures.
- Intimidates subject.

Effective Note taking

- Learn to abbreviate. Develop a personal shorthand method using abbreviations for common words.
- Transcribe your notes immediately following the interview.
- Learn to remember complete anecdotes and vivid phrases.
- Learn to keep writing, even if the source gets on something that doesn't interest you.
- Learn to get the high points -- facts, dates, correct names, figures, etc.
- Learn to remember what's said after the formal interview. Sometimes your subject will give you the best quotes after the interview.

Interviewing Tips

- Put subject at ease.
- Ask clear, brief questions.
- Avoid yes/no questions. Ask open-ended questions.
- Avoid leading questions.
- Ask specific questions to get specific answers.
- Don't be afraid to get away from your prepared questions.
- Don't ask dirty or embarrassing questions.
- Don't insult your source.
- Don't be afraid to stick to basic questions.

News: A step-by-step approach

The general news story provides the most basic organization of facts in order to provide information to readers in a quick, easy form. As you already learned, most news stories answer some basic questions: who, what, when, where, why and how? Now, as you move on to writing the body of the story, you will learn to answer other questions like: so what? What is the significance to readers? What information does the story contain that will make readers care?

Writers with little experience may find it helpful to follow a step-by-step approach to the news writing process. This is a guide that will help when providing coverage of a newsworthy event.

First, you should **identify the news peg** or the main idea of the story. Remember to examine the information to find the most recent aspect of the news.

Next, you should **determine your target audience**. Is this an external or an internal release? Who cares about this information? Why is it important? These are all questions you should ask yourself before you begin writing the story. Journalists need to determine who they are writing for so they can tailor the content to readers.

Once you determine your target audience, the writer should **explain how the news affects those readers**. Readers want to know how the news impacts them. If a new building is being built or a new piece of equipment is being purchased, the writer should include the significance. Not all stories can show direct impact on readers, but they should all explain the reason for the story.

Now that the news peg, target audience and impact have been determined, it's the writer's job to **gather facts in order to elaborate on the main idea** with supporting facts, quotes and other details. This is where interviewing subject matter experts, conducting research, and using your power of observation comes in.

While you are collecting information, you should remember to **consider a photograph, chart or other graphic** as part of your story. The presentation of a story with photos or graphics is crucial because it increases reader interest, according to studies done by the Poynter Institute of Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Fla. Since most people only scan the news pages, any visual elements will create entry points that may pull readers into the stories. When a news package emphasizes verbal and visual tools, it makes the information clearer to readers. It's important to identify visual elements to support the story because it will help you determine what information you can include or leave out of the story.

Writing the story

A news story should be clear and concise. It should take readers through the details of the story in logical progression, emphasizing the facts in order of descending importance.

The inverted pyramid allows for writing under deadline, and it gives editors the flexibility to cut the story from the bottom up without losing any essential facts. But, the primary advantage of the inverted pyramid structure is that it allows someone to stop reading a story after only one or two paragraphs yet still learn the newest, most newsworthy and most important facts. You've already learned the basics of writing the first two parts of the pyramid – the lead followed by the bridge. From there, paragraphs are written in the

body in descending order of importance, with progressively less important facts presented as the article continues.

The exact organization of a story will vary depending on the story's unique facts, most newsworthy points and the target audience. The paragraphs in the body should provide details that develop and support the lead. The body provides background information and answers all the questions readers might have about the facts of the story.

A news story ends when the writer has no new information to reveal.

The ABCs of journalism

All the facts contained in a story must adhere to the ABCs of journalism – accuracy, brevity and clarity.

Accuracy

Accuracy is of paramount importance to a story. Every mistake you make jeopardizes the newspaper's credibility with readers. Journalists should double check all names and facts throughout the story, and list the details fully and names completely, even when it may not be brief or clear.

To ensure accuracy, a journalist should report information from subject matter experts, not his own thoughts on the matter. Sometimes it may be in the writer's best interest to call the SME and read what he has written to check its accuracy. This practice works best in stories that contain very technical details, complicated practices or legal issues.

All people must be fully identified on first reference throughout the body of a news story. The individual must be identified by: Service, Rank, First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name, Job Title, Unit and Age. One or more of these elements may only be left out if they don't apply. For example: Service isn't needed if it matches the installation; age is only needed in case of death or if it is relevant to the story and is OK'd by the source; and civilian employees don't have rank.

Brevity

Brevity is important because the audience usually has very little time to spare reading a newspaper. They read news stories because they want only the most essential information as quickly as possible.

Clarity

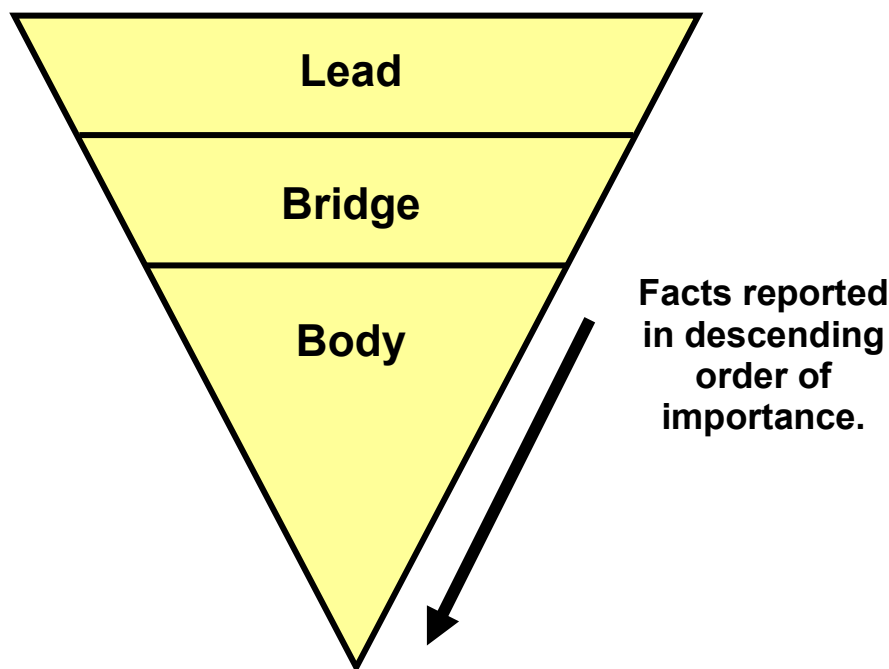
Clarity is vital for proper understanding of the material to be presented. Don't be afraid to add a clause or even an entire sentence to help explain information that is confusing, unfamiliar or unknown to your audience.

Inverted-pyramid structure

If you write clearly and concisely, your audience will get the information and will come back for more.

Some writers number facts by order of importance, and then write the body in that order. If the story is cut from the bottom, the facts left in the story should be of greater importance than those cut.

The body of the story must expand and elaborate on elements in the lead and bridge. Essentially, the body retells in detail and, in descending order of importance, the summary facts in the lead.



Of course there are many ways to structure a news story. As novice writers, it's best to stick to the basics, and one of the most basic and widely accepted ways of structuring a story is the inverted pyramid.

A story written in the inverted pyramid structure begins with the conclusion first followed by other facts in descending order of importance.

Journalism experts disagree on when or why the inverted pyramid structure was born. One popular story is that it was born during the Civil War. Before the war, reporters wrote in a literary style, where the climax of the story was found in the conclusion. During the war, reporters relied on telegraph wires to file their stories, and these wires were frequently cut. As a result of the telegraph wires being disrupted, reporters designed a new story structure so that the climax of the story would begin a story instead of conclude it. Whatever the reason, it is certain that technology and the speed at which news was conveyed played a big part in the birth of the inverted pyramid.

Today, the inverted pyramid remains popular because its structure allows for writing under deadline, and it gives editors the flexibility to cut the story from the bottom up without losing any essential facts. Readers like the inverted pyramid because they are busier now than ever before, and the inverted pyramid gives them the facts they need to know in a hurry. Even if a reader stops at the end of the first paragraph, the inverted pyramid form of writing gives the reader the essential facts.

Take a look at the inverted pyramid model. The first part is the lead followed by the bridge. From there, paragraphs are written in the body in descending order of importance, with progressively less important facts presented as the article continues. As you can see, this structure looks like an inverted pyramid.

The lead is the most critical element, usually answering the questions concerning who, what, where and when, and perhaps why and how.

Functions of a lead

A lead is the first sentence or the first few sentences of a story. It is the most critical element of a story. A lead grabs attention and starts the flow of energy. A lead also tells something about the subject of the story and shows the story's significance. It answers the question "So what?" Finally, it shows the reader what kind of story it is – hard news, feature or some other type. Your leads should contain the five W's and H.

The five W's and H

Readers can ask six general key questions about an event: who was involved, what happened, when did it happen, where did it happen, and why and how? One of the five W's or H is usually more important than the others. In general, the lead emphasis of most summary news leads is the "who" or the "what." This element should be placed at the beginning of the lead sentence.

Who

The "who" element may be a single person, a group of people or an organization. When the story is about a single person, however, it is important not to use the person's name in the lead unless the person is prominent.

For people who aren't well known to people or when there are several persons to be identified, another form of identification is more meaningful. One of the best ways to identify a person who is not well known is to use the person's job title and unit. This is called the "impersonal who." The person's full identification will be revealed in the bridge of the story, which we will talk about later in the course.

What

“What” tells briefly what happened at a planned or unplanned event. The key is to be brief and get to the point. The most common order for a summary news lead is “who did what.” This structure also helps keep the sentence in active voice. However, there may be times when you may want to begin the lead with the “what” element.

Here is an example of when the “what” element might be the lead emphasis:

A free, public concert by the U.S. Army Band is scheduled for Friday at the parade field here.

The fact that the concert is free will immediately draw the attention of your readers. Generally, when an event is free, use that as your lead emphasis.

Where

“Where” gives the location of the news event. This question need not always be answered in specific terms. “Here” often is sufficient for an event happening on post. Here’s an example:

Soldiers here and across the Army will see an increase in their basic housing allowance next month since Congress approved an increase of 3 percent today.

A lead may need more than one “where” for clarity. Here’s an example:

A maintenance technician with the 5th Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery Regiment was named the McCarthy Leadership Award winner Tuesday at the Basic Leadership Course at Rose Barracks, Germany.

When

“When” is the time or date of an event. The reader’s question of “when” need not be answered in specific terms in the lead. Often it can be as vague as “this morning” or “today.” How specific the writer must be depends on how important the time element is to the story. Here are two examples:

It’s also important to use such words as “scheduled,” “planned” or “slated” when writing about events that will take place in the future. Avoid making positive statements — the event may be canceled. You can see this in the first example.

Why

The “why” concerns the cause of an event, and it is frequently implied or unavailable. Sometimes it may be used in the bridge of the story. Here’s an example of a summary news lead that contains the “why:”

A Basic Still Photography course instructor at the Defense Information School here was named the school's Junior Service member of the Quarter today at the school for his military bearing and knowledge of current military events.

As you can see, this lead contains the four required W's and the "why." It is also 35 words long. Remember, the goal is 25 to 30 words. In this example, the few extra words don't seem to make the lead too wordy. However, you should always keep this goal in mind.

How

The "how" relates the circumstances or manner in which something in the story is accomplished. When it is present it often provides an intriguing lead. Here's an example:

A student at the Defense Information School here saved the life of one of his instructors today at the school by using cardiopulmonary resuscitation skills he learned last week.

The Bridge

After writing a news lead, the writer then looks over the facts to decide what items will be in the bridge.

A bridge paragraph is a means of transition from the summary information in the lead to the detailed information of the body — a lead-to-body link. It is the second part of a straight news story and is one sentence, 30 words or less. It also expands on the information in the lead.

The bridge can serve one or more of five major functions, depending upon the summary lead. The acronym WAITS can be used to remember the functions of the bridge. This stands for Ws or H not in the lead, Attribution, Identification, Tie-back and Secondary Facts.

Other Ws or H not in the lead

The first function is to add and of the five W's or H which were not included in the lead.

Take a look at this example of a bridge that displays this function:

(Lead)

A former post garrison commander is scheduled to become the 25th commanding general of Fort Meade, Tuesday in a change-of-command ceremony on the post parade field.

(Bridge)

Brig. Gen. James F. Holingsworth will succeed Maj. Gen. John T. Hockings, the post commanding general for the past two years, who is retiring to Virginia after a 28-year Army career.

Attribution

Another function of the bridge is to provide attribution to the statements in the lead. Attribution gives the source (who said it) or authority (directives, regulations, sources, etc.).

Identification

A third function of the bridge is to provide complete identification after a lead. Complete identification means service (if needed), rank, full name, age (if needed), job title or occupation, and unit or organization.

Tie-back

A fourth function of the bridge is to give the reader a recap or tie-back to an earlier story on the same subject. The writer must never assume his readers have read the first version of the story. Therefore, a tie-back is necessary to put the readers in a proper perspective.

(Lead)

Two soldiers were apprehended here today as suspects in Tuesday's post bank robbery.

(Bridge)

The suspects were taken into custody after allegedly trying to pass some of the \$18,000 in marked currency taken from the bank at gunpoint, said Barney N. Carl, the post provost marshal.

Secondary facts

A fifth function of the bridge is to bring out additional information that is not in the lead but further explains the lead.

(Lead)

Nine classrooms at the Defense Information School here were vandalized when the school was broken into over the weekend.

(Bridge)

More than 100 desks were piled into the middle of the second-floor west hallway, and vandals spray-painted "Long Live Fall Out Boy" on the walls of the classrooms, said Barney N. Carl, the post provost marshal.

Body

The remainder of the story is written in descending order of importance. The functions of the body in a news story are to expand on information given in the lead and bridge.

Additional facts are typically listed in diminishing order of importance. Writing in inverted pyramid style is important. When a story is too long, it may be continued on another page or cut. All people must be fully identified in the body of a news story. On first reference, identify service members by rank, abbreviated as listed at the end of this guide, before the full name. Full name is usually First, Middle Initial, Last, but if the interviewee uses another variation, such as retired Gen. H. Norman Schwartzkopf, then follow the interviewee's preference.

Also in identifying people include their occupation or job title. Note that rank is not a title/occupation. Never identify people by their pay grade.

If referencing a military unit. It should be completely listed, i.e. Company A, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment on first reference.

Do's/Don'ts

- Use subject-verb-object sentence structure.
- Use common, easy-to-understand words. Don't use jargon such as utilize.
- Keep the emphasis of the sentence to the front.

Content

The writer presents the human side of the news along with the facts. The writer does this by using feature writing techniques such as quotes, vivid verbs and descriptive writing.

Some elements particularly important in a news feature include transitions, focus and content. Transition holds a story together and moves the reader smoothly from one paragraph to the next. Focus is the reason the story is written. And content includes both the facts and details of a news peg and the interesting context surrounding it.

Stories should be organized and everything should be where the reader expects it. News features must be timely and must answer the W's as fully as possible.

Content tells the reader what the story is about in one sentence.

Ending

A news feature is the skilled telling of a complete story and needs a strong feature conclusion where the writer makes or reinforces a point. There are seven types of feature endings.

SUMMARY Ending summarizes the points made in the story. It usually keys on impact, effects or outcome.

TIE-BACK Ending plants a fact, idea or scene in the lead and completes it at the end.

WRAP-UP Ending ties up loose ends, answers questions or solves problems posed in the lead.

CLIMAX Ending provides a natural ending to a story told in chronological order.

UNENDING Ending leaves a key question unanswered. It is used to stimulate reader thinking -- to get the reader involved with the situation posed in the story.

STINGER Ending is a surprise ending designed to jolt the reader.

COMBINATION Ending combines two or more of the above.

(The information for this section was adapted from material produced by the Journalism Division, Directorate of Public Affairs and Journalism, Defense Information School, Fort George G. Meade, Md. More information can be found at www.dinfos.osd.mil/jwebsite.)

The When, Why and How of Attribution

No one objects if a reporter writes Christmas is in December, the Earth rotates eastward on its axis, or the Chicago White Sox won the 2005 World Series. Such statements are easily verifiable facts, common knowledge or historically true.

On the other hand, reporters who write men are smarter than women, the Defense Information School is the best of its kind in the world, or Marines are tougher than soldiers would have some serious argument on their hands. Those statements are opinions and require the reporter to cite an authority; otherwise, readers will perceive them as the opinions of the reporter or as the newspaper's "corporate position."

Sometimes the line between fact and opinion is clear-cut. Sometimes it's not. By using proper attribution, the journalist allows the reader to decide whether an opinion has merit or whether facts in a story come from an authoritative source.

What is attribution?

Attribution names a source for opinions or facts that are not common knowledge. It takes the writer "off the hook." Attribution lets the reader know who is responsible for a statement and, in general, keeps the reader from having to ask, "Who says?"

The best attribution identifies the source by name and title. For example: *"There will be no tax increase this year," Mayor Richard L. Longley said Friday.* But don't get the impression only direct quotations – the speaker's exact words – require attribution. Attribute even when you paraphrase the speaker's words: *Mayor Richard L. Longley pledged today that taxes would not go up this year.*

Vague or weak attribution does not clearly name the source: *"There will be no tax increase this year," a city official said Friday.* That narrows the statement down to a relatively small segment of the city's population, but forces the reader to guess who said it. A specific job title (the mayor) is better than a generic term (a city official). But, if you have the source's name, use it.

Let's say you're researching a story about your base's steam lines being replaced. You may find the original steam lines are made of a material that will not break down, the project will take six months to complete, and traffic patterns will be disrupted. Although these are all facts, your readers don't view you, the newspaper writer, as a subject-matter expert. They will expect you to tell them what the experts have to say. Therefore, you would attribute all that information to your sources.

When is attribution unnecessary?

There is no hard and fast rule as to when attribution is necessary. It's a judgment call. Although it's impossible to cover every situation where attribution is needed, there are certain rules of thumb.

No attribution is needed for facts that can be easily verified. Verifiable facts are those that are a matter of record or clearly are self-evident.

No attribution is needed for facts that are true historically. Historical facts -- even those in the very recent past -- that are generally and reasonably accepted as true need no attribution.

Be careful, though. Historical facts don't need attribution, but they do have to be accurate. Don't take sources at their word, for example, that something is happening for the first or last time. You and your source will look bad if a reader disproves the statement. **Verify all information**, even if you don't have to use attribution.

Attribution is not needed for facts that are common knowledge or are not subject to dispute. If no controversy is possible, or if the statement requires no specific expertise to make it ring true for the reader, no attribution is necessary.

“When in doubt, attribute!”

Attribution is needed for direct and indirect quotes. The exact words of a person (direct quotes) or the paraphrased words of a person (indirect quotes) always need attribution:

“Because of an increase in shoplifting, two new store detectives will begin patrolling the main Post Exchange Monday,” said Gary L. Meier, the PX manager. When using quotation marks, which identify a speaker's exact words, you must tell your readers whose words they are.

Attribution is needed for opinions or facts that are not common knowledge or cannot easily be verified. Citing sources allows readers to evaluate the credibility of the sources and the information.

Always attribute medical information.

Adding a teaspoon of salt to a pot of water will make the water come to a boil faster, said Chief Petty Officer Justin T. Wilson, a mess specialist at the Naval Training Center. This is a fact, but even many experienced cooks might not know it. Readers might doubt the information's reliability were it not attributed to a credible source.

Quotes

Direct quotes

The exact words of a speaker are placed inside quotation marks, and the sentence structure must link the words to the speaker:

The general was shocked. "I've never seen such waste," he said. The general's words are within quotation marks, and the sentence structure links the words to him.

For complete details on the mechanics of handling direct quotations, refer to your stylebook for the **quotations in the news entry** in the main section and the **quotation marks** entry in the punctuation section.

Indirect quotations

Attribution isn't reserved only for those times when reporters use the source's exact words. It's also needed when reporters choose their own words to express information obtained from a source. As a writer, you might paraphrase to get around spoken grammatical errors on the speaker's part, or when a speaker's words make a statement more complex than it should be:

"A student must do their homework every night," the instructor said. This quote contains a grammatical error. By paraphrasing, you can correct the speaker's grammar; however, the statement still needs attribution: *Students must do their homework every night, the instructor said.* Note removal of the quotation marks.

There's no special rule governing the placement of attribution in indirect quotes. Let your ear be your guide; sometimes it just sounds better at the beginning, middle or end. The important thing to remember is to include the attribution and tie it to the speaker's statement, just as you would with a direct quote.

Said, said, said

The most effective attributive verb is "said." It does not pretend to interpret a person's thoughts, feelings, attitude or intent. It's neutral – just as a reporter should be. Some reporters may fear using "said" repeatedly would bore the reader. In reality, most readers pay little attention to attributive verbs except to note mentally that such words link the statement to someone. If someone said something, it's never wrong to write he or she said it.

Attribution Checklist

Attribution is needed for direct and indirect quotes. The exact words of a person (direct quotes) or the paraphrased words of a person (indirect quotes) always need attribution:

Indirect quote -- Grammar is great, Sgt. Jones said.

Direct quote -- "Grammar is great," Sgt. Jones said.

Wrong – Sgt. Jones thinks grammar is great. (How do you know? Can you read her mind?)

Right – Sgt. Jones said she thinks grammar is great.

Complete identification of source on initial attribution – "Grammar is great," said Faye B. Jones, the Journalism Preparatory Course instructor at the Defense Information School here.

Subsequent attribution – Sgt. Jones said ...
..., she said.
..., Sgt. Jones said.

Attributive verb for people – said is best

Attributive verb for inanimate sources (Web sites, pamphlets, etc.) – according to

There is no hard and fast rule as to when attribution is necessary. It's a judgment call. Although it's impossible to cover every situation where attribution is needed, there are certain rules of thumb.

Attribution is needed when using:

- Opinions
- Direct and indirect quotes
- Professional opinions
- Facts that cannot be easily checked or can be disputed
- Policy change statements

Attribution is not needed when using:

- Facts that can be easily verified
- Facts that are true historically
- Facts that are commonplace and clear; not disputable

Bottom line: When in doubt, attribute

Photojournalism

Photographs enhance the effectiveness of newspaper stories, often hooking the reader so that he or she reads the companion story. If you know how to use a 35mm camera, there are just a few tips to taking photographs for publications.

Newspaper photographs need to show action unless it is a mug-shot. When possible and appropriate, the picture should include identifiable people. The action should follow the Rule of Thirds. If you divide the image in the viewfinder into thirds horizontally and vertically, the action should happen near one of the intersections of the lines. The shots should be taken from a variety of angles and both horizontally and vertically.

Types of Photos

Photographers should take a variety of shots when covering an event in order to allow for the editor to choose the best photo to go with the story.

Long shots: Long shots establish the scene and show the reader the big picture. There does not need to be identifiable people in these shots.

Medium shots: Medium shots show one or two clearly identifiable people doing something. Try to get at least a three-quarters view of the person and make sure you can see the eyes. Most of your shots should be medium shots.

Close-ups: Close-ups focus on the center of the action and include only one person. When fitting the person and action into the frame, called cropping, make sure you do not cut them off at the joints. Examples: If showing the face, cut above the eyes and below the mouth. If showing the hands at work, cut in the middle of the hand or include the wrists.

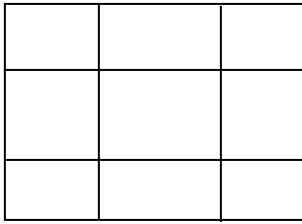
Photo Guidelines:

To maximize the story's potential for distribution; insert a photo into the word document with an appropriate caption. An appropriate caption includes the 5 "W's" (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and describes the action in the photo. If possible, request the subject's hometown information.

The photo should also include a "cutline" telling the reader who took the picture. See **Appendix A** for some examples of photos with appropriate captions and cutlines.

Consider what makes for a good news photo. Photos showing strong, obvious action are the best, i.e. Soldiers performing a task; parked HMMWVs do not. Also ensure Soldiers in the photo are in appropriate uniform (eye-pro, gloves, etc.) and the photo is in good taste.

When composing a photo, fill the frame as much as you can with the subject matter. Try to get faces as possible (ideal, a minimum of 2 eyes and an ear). Try not to center your subject in the frame either. Think of a grid across the frame of your photo:



Where the grid intersects, is generally where you want to put the subject or focus of your photo. This is known as the rule of thirds. Avoid cutting people off at the knees, elbows, or other joints. Mid –thigh is usually a good place to put the edge of the frame on a person.

See examples of good and bad composed photos in **Appendix A**.

Photo captions, or ‘cutlines,’ should consist of 2 – 3 sentences describing the action captured in the photo, as well as the identities of the personnel in the photo. People in photos should be identified according the standard described above.

Photo Standards

Good vs Bad Photo Composition:



This photo was composed using the rule of thirds. Notice, if you place an imaginary grid over the photo, the subjects' heads fall onto the intersecting lines. Also, the photo shows a strong, obvious action, and we can clearly see the faces of the people in the photo.



This photo was not composed using the rule of thirds. Notice the subject falls directly in the center of the frame, leaving a whole lot of what's known as 'negative space' around the subject, in which there is nothing happening. Had the photographer zoomed in closer to the Soldiers, and gotten clearer photos of their faces and what they were doing, this photo would be more successful. For example:

Photography Cutlines (Captions)



Photo size is 1X3 at 100 dpi,

Original photo 5x7 at 250 dpi (Around 1MB – 4MB) Photos need to be clear for printing.

GRIP AND GRIN (PHOTO SLUG) - (one or two words for the focus of the photo all caps) Arial Bold 12 Point.

LEAVE ONE SPACE BETWEEN SLUG AND CAPTION

DATELINE (i.e., BAUMHOLDER, Germany - Arial 12 point photo. For cutlines with a story explain what is happening in the photo – use ACTIVE voice verbs - with proper identification and hometown. Use left, right, center, or from left, etc., separated with commas after name and before title and unit when needed to know who is who — left to right common practice is not understood by readers. All cutlines will be written to use as stand-alone photos. Stand-alone photos must include what the purpose behind the photo is/reason mission took place. Don't recycle the same wording in every cutline. Please do not crop photos EXTREMELY tight, only crop out unnecessary/sensitive information. Photo credit to be placed at the end of caption information on a separate line. (U.S. Army photo by Rank First Name, Last, Bravo Battery, 5-7 ADA)

Photo stories

Consider submitting a photo story package when you have 3-5 quality photos that together tell a complete story. Provide the five W's and how the training, etc., fits into big picture, and possibly a good quote. Cutlines should provide what is going on in each photo.



GILLESPIE AWARD

WEISBADEN, Germany - Lt. Gen. Christopher Cavoli, commanding general for U.S. Army Europe, recognized Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kristopher Gillespie, an electronic missile system maintenance warrant officer assigned to 5th Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery, 10th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, for winning the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award in Europe Jan. 18 during an award ceremony in Wiesbaden, Germany. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Silly Willie, Bravo Battery, 5-7 ADA)

Cutlines

Along with the photograph, a cutline (called a caption by non-journalists) explains who and what is in the photograph. The cutline should be detailed enough that if a reader were to only read the cutline they would know the essential details of the event.

The cutline should include:

- Who -- rank, full name and unit. If more than one person identify them from left to right.
- What -- what is happening and what equipment is in the shot.
- Where -- where is the action taking place.
- When -- the day.
- Why -- why are they doing what they are doing

Quick Writing Tips

- Use short, familiar words
- Use short sentences and short paragraphs

- Eliminate unnecessary words
- Avoid statements of opinion
- Avoid overloading sentences with unrelated ideas
- Use relatively simple sentences that follow normal word order: subject-verb-object
- Write concisely
- Use action verbs
- Keep modifiers near the things they modify
- Use specifics rather than generalities
- Use concrete words rather than abstractions
- Avoid clichés
- Limit sentences to 25-30 words each.
- Write short, simple sentences.
- Use strong verbs.
- Use words familiar to your audience. Remember your audience includes people not in your MOS and family members.
- Don't bury important information in the body.
- Keep paragraphs short.
- Vary beginnings of each paragraph.
- Alternate sentence length for variety
- Don't add your opinion.
- Produce in the body what you promise in the lead.

Submitting a Story

This section standardizes the format for 10th Army Air and Missile Defense Command (AAMDC) stories. It has been implemented to act as a tool to keep accountability and uniformity of written products produced by the 10th AAMDC Public Affairs office and subordinate “UPARS”. It also serves as tool to preserve a historical record of the 10th AAMDC. The 10th AAMDC PAO maintains copies of all products in both digital and hard-copy formats.

Submission timeliness

After collecting story subject information, staff writers will have 48 hours to complete and edit story.

“UPARS”, will submit stories in a timely manner, usually within one week of event. Stories and digital photos can be e-mailed to the unit’s public affairs representative, the public affairs office or burned onto a CD and brought to the PAO office. **DO NOT** embed photos into a word document, submit as original file in either a .JPEG or .JPG file. Be sure to include author’s name and a headline. If there are any photos to go along with the story fill out the cutline information at the bottom of the story.

Photo Submission

When available, photos will be submitted with each story and will have accompanying cutline and photo credit.

Photo Size

- No smaller than 5 inches x 7 inches at a resolution of 150 pixels/inch.
- **Photos will not be embedded in document or Power Point slide.**

Cutline Information

- Cutline will have photo name at beginning. Name should brief describe photo using the format from Appendix A of this SOP. Font - Arial, size 11, bold
- Cutline will contain pertinent information regarding subject photo along with photo credit to include Photographers name, rank and unit. Font - Arial, size 11.

Cutline Information:

OPSEC Procedures

When producing articles and photos, always keep OPSEC in mind. Provide as much information as possible to keep the readers interested. However, remember all information released is accessible by the enemy. All postings need to adhere to UCMJ as well.

Topics that may be of concern to OPSEC:

- Current or future operational activities
- Scope of specific operations (movement of forces, force capabilities/ limitations, tactics/techniques/procedures).
- Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) asset support (collection techniques, capabilities/ limitations, associated mission nicknames or code words).
- Detailed diagrams of camps/bases, photos showing layouts of bases, maps, and geospatial data.
- Specific peripheral operational data (special duty rosters, itineraries/time tables, meetings, conferences, working groups, drivers/aides/personal security details' schedules).
- Communications involved with or in support of the operation (capabilities/limitations, call signs, frequencies, information network vulnerabilities, computer passwords, special equipment).
- Administrative support to the operation (call up rosters, travel plans, planning rosters, joint manning documents, shortfalls, unit organizational charts, personal data on voter registration forms).
- Personal information (names, social security numbers, birth dates, contact information etc.) Lists of names and accompanying sensitive information of personnel assigned to a unit, organization, or office in the Department of the Army (DA) are prohibited on the World Wide Web.
- Logistical support to the operation or special activity (deployment of special equipment status of weapons, equipment, spare parts, convoy routes/times, supply delivery, POL delivery, contracting data, and funding data).
- Critical infrastructure in the area of operation or other locations that support operations; including telecommunications, power generation and distribution, banking and finance, transportation, emergency services, continuity of government and water (locations, control systems, back-up systems, operating personnel/workers).

- New tactics/techniques/procedures being considered, exercised, or evaluated.
- General officer or VIP movements/itineraries.
- Battle damage assessments/casualty information (details of attacks,
- WIA, KIA, catastrophic incidents such as helicopter crashes).

Story Tracker

Upon receipt by brigade PAO, stories will be logged in an internal story tracker. The internal story tracker will be up dated with story status.

Strategic Communication Plan

A STRATCOM Plan has been developed to aid in directing story intent. Ensure that all story/photo submissions fulfill a specific priority or focus area. The Strategic Communication Plan is developed and published by the BCT PAO.

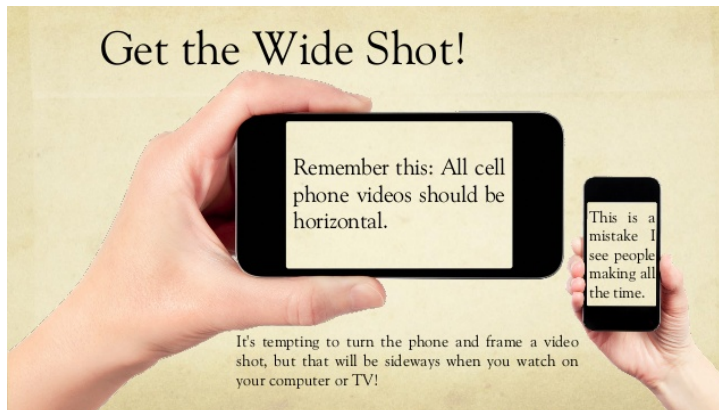
Include strategic communication intent on story tracker.

B-Roll Fundamentals

B-Roll Guidelines

Want to make a cool “Hooah” video for your unit? You can start today by collecting video clips of unit events. B-roll is the extra footage captured to enrich the story you’re telling and to have greater flexibility when editing. Instead of featuring only talking heads on video, you want to have other images you can cut away to that will add dimension to your story. B-roll can include additional video footage, still photographs, animation or other graphic elements. These 10-20 second clips can be stored to use for current or future projects.

When shooting B-Roll with a smart phone, GoPro or digital camera ensure you are shooting in landscape mode.



Fill the frame as much as you can with the subject matter. Good clips to get are footage of Patriots / Avengers firing, Best Warrior Competition footage, 12-mile road marches, etc.

Within a few months, you will accumulate a healthy video library that can be shared or used to produce products for the unit.

Static shots are when you set the camera or phone on a small tripod and let the subject move across the screen without actually moving the camera itself.

Here is a good example of a cheap tripod for a smart phone:



Social Media

Social media is a powerful tool we use to share the Army's story. It helps us to create meaningful connections with our audiences, which maintains their trust and confidence in America's Army.

The Army acknowledges the importance of social media, and encourages our commands, Soldiers, Families, and Army Civilians to safely and accurately use social media to share their experiences and provide information.

Advances in technology and accessibility to connected mobile devices, combined with society's acceptance of social media, have changed how information is delivered and how people, organizations, and government entities communicate.

Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 8550.01, released Sept. 11, 2012, provides guidelines for military use of social media. The instruction acknowledges that Internet-based capabilities are integral to operations across the Department of Defense.

The All Army Activities message, published February 2017, also reemphasizes that Soldiers are held to the standards of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and Army Values when using social media, even when off duty. Commenting, posting and linking to material that violates the UCMJ or basic rules of Soldier conduct are prohibited, along with talking negatively about supervisors or releasing sensitive information.

Online Conduct—Think, Type, Post

The U.S. Army is a values-based organization where everyone is expected to treat all persons as they should be treated – with dignity and respect, as outlined in AR 600-20.

The U.S. Army defines online conduct as the use of electronic communications in an official or personal capacity in a manner that is consistent with Army values and standards of conduct.

It is important that all Soldiers know that when they are logged on to a social media platform, they still represent the U.S. Army. Soldiers using social media must abide by the UCMJ at all times, even when off duty.

Commenting, posting and linking to material that violates the UCMJ or basic rules of Soldier's conduct are prohibited, along with talking negatively about supervisors or releasing sensitive information.

Online misconduct is a term that describes unacceptable or improper behavior through the use of technology.

According to ALARACT 075/2017, it is "the use of electronic communication to inflict harm. Examples include, but are not limited to: harassment, bullying, hazing, stalking, discrimination, retaliation, or any other types of misconduct that undermine dignity and respect."

Reporting Misconduct

There are mechanisms for reporting online misconduct. While there is no federal criminal statute called "online bullying," misuse of online communications, sending harassing or intimidating communications and images, or other online misconduct may violate existing federal laws under the U.S. Code and may also be a violation of the UCMJ.

Army Regulation 600-20 authorizes commanders to punish Soldiers who are in violation of its direction, making failure to adhere to the Army's rules for online behavior a punishable offense under the UCMJ.

Members of the U.S. Army community should report incidents through their chain of command or family support services for resolution. Additional avenues for reporting and information include the Equal Opportunity for military and civilians, SHARP, the Inspector General and law Enforcement offices. More information can be found at the Online Conduct - Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G1.

Guidance on Political Activity and DOD Support

Soldiers are encouraged to express their opinions of the political process online and offline, as long as they are consistent with the Army values and are not expressed as part of an organized communication campaign and as a representative of the U.S. Army or as a Soldier. Such opinions must be expressed as an individual apart from the military.

Soldiers should be aware of the limitations that exist when it comes to participation in political activity as well as DOD support to political campaigns. You must adhere to the policy in Department of Defense Directive 1344.10 when posting any political content, which includes:

Cannot participate in any interview or discussion as an advocate for or against a party, candidate or cause.

Can generally express their personal views on public issues or political candidates via social media platforms much the same as they would be permitted to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper.

Cannot participate in partisan political activity.

Can “follow,” “friend,” or “like” a political party or candidate running for partisan office.

Cannot post links to, “share” or “retweet” comments or tweets from a Facebook page or Twitter account of a political party or candidate running for partisan office. Such activity is deemed to constitute participation in political activities.

Cannot communicate contemptuous words against the president, vice president, secretary of defense, deputy secretary of defense, secretary of the navy, or governor and legislature of any state in which he or she is located or performing duty in. It's against federal law for commissioned officers to communicate in this manner.

Service members must also be careful not to comment, post, or link to material that violates the UCMJ or service regulations. Examples include showing contempt for public officials, releasing sensitive information, or posting unprofessional material that is prejudicial to good order and discipline under the UCMJ.

OPSEC

Operations Security is the process by which we protect unclassified information that can be used against us. Its purpose is to prevent potential adversaries from discovering critical DOD information. OPSEC protects U.S. operations - planned, in progress and completed. Success depends on secrecy and surprise, so the military can accomplish the mission more quickly and with less risk. Enemies of freedom want this information, and they are not just after the military member to get it.

“What could a person do with this information? Could it compromise my safety or the safety of my Family or my unit?”

Geotagging

Geotagging is the process of adding geographical identification to photographs, videos, websites and SMS messages. It is the equivalent of adding a 10-digit grid coordinate to everything posted on the Internet. Some smartphones and digital cameras automatically embed geotags into pictures and many people unknowingly upload photos to the Internet that contain location information.

One Soldier exposing his or her location can affect the entire mission. Deployed Soldiers, or Soldiers conducting operations in classified areas, should not use location-based social networking services.

Death of a Soldier or Service Member

Interactions over social media make up a major part of our daily online communication, so when Soldiers are killed or go missing in action, it can be hard to turn off the flow of information distributed through social media platforms. While it is difficult to prepare for tragedy, it is important to keep in mind that social media can play a role (good or bad) in the handling of a serious illness, injury or death.

It is imperative that you not become part of the problem by adding to the rumors and speculation when there is a report of an injury or death. If approached by another member of your organization about a report or rumor, explain that you do not know and they should not speculate. Should you be approached by a member of the media, refer him or her to the first public affairs professional in your organization.

In accordance with DOD Instruction 1300.18, Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies, and Procedures; details about Soldiers killed or missing in action cannot be released until 24 hours after the next of kin has been notified and after the information has been released by the [DOD](#). Always follow unit and Army protocol when it comes to these situations.

Tips for an effective social media presence

Have a strategy. What do you want to do with this page?

Use your authentic voice.

Answer questions and respond to comments.

Interact on a daily basis.

Connect with other Army leaders and commands and support their content.

Leverage existing discussions as an entry point for your messages.
Conduct scheduled analysis of efforts.

Post relevant content regularly, using a mix of your own and shared content, photos and videos.

U.S. Army social media managers are Soldiers or civilians who are in charge of managing their organization's or leader's official social media presences, such as accounts on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram. These accounts are considered official because they are created and managed using federal government resources (including time, manpower, and funds) to communicate the work of the Army. Social media managers are authorized by their commanders to release official information on behalf of their unit and organization, and play a powerful role in maintaining the public's trust and telling the Army's story.

If you are assigned the duties of a social media manager, you will be required to complete specific training requirements, and you will be expected to serve as the subject matter expert on social media policies, techniques and best practices. As part of your duties, you will actively engage the public, ensuring that you consider and promote unity of voice, freedom of information, timeliness, and accuracy while maintaining security, and privacy.

Establishing an Official Social Media Account

1. Get Command Approval

See the Secretary of the U.S. Army Memorandum, Delegation of Authority - Approval of External Presences.

2. Review Official Social Media Policies, Guidelines, Resources and Required Training.

Before you get started with social media, it is important to understand DOD and U.S. Army social media policies, which can be found at the next section, Official U.S. Army Social Media Account Requirements and at the U.S. Army's Slideshare account.

3. Determine your strategy and goals.

What do you want to achieve/communicate?

Your communication goals could include distributing command information, connecting to a community, building esprit de corps, etc.

Define your tactics that support those goals and how to measure success.

4. Determine your audience.

Identify your intended audience.

Research their social media habits.

This includes Soldiers, Families, veterans, Army civilians and the general public.

Your stakeholders, politicians, community leaders, as well as criminals, impostors, adversaries or enemies are also watching

5. Determine Staffing.

Ensure you have appropriate staffing and resources (personnel, equipment, connectivity, SOPs) to meet the requirements needed to maintain the platform.

Identify primary and alternate social media managers and establish a process for how alternate managers will take over established duties

6. Research and select social media platforms.

Determine whether you can efficiently and effectively maintain and manage a social media account.

Your audience's demographics will determine what platforms are most effective for reaching them in a meaningful manner. A person's age group, occupation, military affiliation, nationality and education influences what platforms he or she will be active on.

7. Select your name and branding.

Consider using a name that is easily remembered and logical.

Avoid nicknames, call signs, acronyms or mottos the public may not know.

Use the official U.S. Army logo and other branded graphics to develop a cohesive identity that supports Department of the Army efforts. For more information on branding visit the U.S. Army Branding Portal.

8. Draft content strategy.

First, identify your target audiences.

Select the platforms and approved branding.

Begin drafting a posting strategy based on your audience's engagement patterns.

9. Develop policies, SOPs and training.

The organization's social media team must develop organization-specific social media policies, procedures and training materials.

Ensure the material is readily available and provide training to individuals at all levels of your organization, including Family Readiness Groups.

10. Register your account to the U.S. Army Social Media Directory.

The U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs' policy mandates all organizations, brigade level and above, to register their social media accounts.

DMD will only register organizations authorized a PAO with release authority and an understanding of OPSEC/SAPP/PII/HIPAA/Hatch Act review.

See the requirements to register official U.S. Army social media accounts in the next section.

11. Verify your account.

Depending on the platform, a badge shows users that your account is authentic.

- Facebook

Submit your verification through the profile settings.

- Twitter

Must log in with the username to verify organization.

<https://verification.twitter.com/request>

REQUIREMENTS

Social Media Managers must complete two OPSEC training courses:

1. OPSEC for EOP Operators:

https://federation.eams.army.mil/sso/authenticate/?u=https%3a%2f%2fiatraining.us.army.mil%2f_splashlogin%2flogin.fcc&m=GET&r=t

2. DISA Social Networking Class:

https://iatraining.disa.mil/eta/disa_sn_v21_fy17/launchPage.htm

3. Additional Training:

It is also highly encouraged that social media managers also complete OPSEC Level II certification. This training is coordinated through your S2 shop or equivalent.

ALARACT 289/2013, Army OPSEC Training for External Official Presence Operators states that all commanders will ensure that personnel who publish information on external online presences receive mandatory annual OPSEC training.

Commanding officer or qualified public affairs officer approval to establish platform

Must have release authority to post content

Content that is released to the public on social media platforms requires review by a Public Affairs Officer that has release authority from the commander.

Social media managers are not authorized to speak on behalf of the unit, the commander or the Army without delegated release authority

It is highly recommended that social media managers are OPSEC Level II certified to avoid content on their unit's critical information list (CIL).

Content released to the public on social media platforms requires an OPSEC review. OPSEC Level II certification and delegated release authority meets the requirements outlined in AR 530-1 - Operations Security (OPSEC).

Point of contact: Must list a valid .mil or .gov email address

Official URL

The account must have a URL to an official U.S. Army website. Use your command's website or www.army.mil if your organization does not have a website.

User Terms of Agreement

An account must have a user terms of agreement statement listed on the social media platform that informs visitors of what is authorized when interacting on the platform. It must include:

- General disclaimer;
- Privacy and security disclaimers;
- Copyright and trademark disclaimers;
- Moderated account disclaimer;
- Freedom of Information Act notice;

Resources:

Specific wording can be found at GSA's Negotiated Terms of Service

DOD Social Media user agreements

U.S. Army Facebook's terms of use statement

Labeled as an official account

In order for an organization to maintain an official social media account, the organization must clearly signal that the account is "official" somewhere on the page in accordance with DOD and U.S. Army policy. An example of the specific wording can be found in the left-hand column of the U.S. Army Facebook page or at the top of the U.S. Army Twitter account.

Open to the public

All official accounts must be open to the public. Private groups, accounts or feeds will not be registered on the U.S. Army's social media directory.

Classified as a Government Organization

In order for a Facebook account to operate in an official capacity, the account must be registered and labeled as a “government organization” account. The use of a Facebook profile, community or group page for official purposes would violate the government’s terms of service agreement with Facebook.

Approval

Submit the social media account for registration and approval on the U.S. Army Social Media Directory.

Security

Ensure your security settings are maximized and include two-step verification if available by the platform. For additional information about security, review these Social Networking Safety Tips.

Registering your Official Account

Social media managers are required to ensure their organization’s official social media accounts are included in the Army’s Social Media Directory. This includes all accounts created and managed using federal government resources (including time, manpower, and funds) to communicate the work of the Army. Therefore, after departure from the government or the government position associated with the account, official accounts must either be transferred to the next administration or closed.

According to DOD Instruction 8550.01 – Internet Services and Internet-based Capabilities, official online presences must be registered on the external official presences list, maintained by the assistant secretary of defense for public affairs. The U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs’ policy mandates all organizations, brigade level and above, to register their social media accounts. Brigade/Garrison and higher are the only organizations authorized a PAO with release authority and understanding of OPSEC/SAPP/PII/HIPAA/Hatch Act review.

1. Ensure you and your account meet the requirements for registering an official account.
2. Once the account is submitted, the Digital Media Division at OCPA will review the submission to ensure it has all the elements required of an official social media account.
3. Once the account is approved for inclusion, your official social media account will be added to the directory.

DMD conducts periodic audits of the Social Media Directory to ensure units are complying with applicable guidelines, SOPs, policies and regulations. Units are notified

of violations found during the audits and may be removed from the directory if the violations are not corrected. Posts on an account should be no older than one month, and the account should be updated on a weekly basis at minimum.

OPERATIONS SECURITY

Social media has become a big part of our Army lives. It helps organizations share information and keep audiences connected. OPSEC and personal privacy concerns should be paramount when Soldiers use social media, both personally and professionally. Sharing seemingly trivial information online can be dangerous to loved ones and fellow Soldiers. America's enemies scour blogs, forums, chat rooms and personal websites to piece together information that can harm the U.S. and its Soldiers.

How can I ensure my account adheres to OPSEC guidelines?

- Designate managers
- Assign staff responsible for posting content to the official online account and ensure those individuals are current on all OPSEC training.
- Submit content for approval prior to posting
- Ensure all content is submitted to and approved by the commander or the organization's release authority prior to posting.
- Review U.S. Army policies, regulations and guidance
- Ensure all content is posted in accordance with the organization's public affairs guidance, and U.S. Army and DOD policies, instructions and regulations.
- Monitor your account regularly
- Ensure external social media users are not posting sensitive information on your official account.
- Conduct OPSEC training regularly
- 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 Family members. It is important to keep them just as informed and up to date as the Soldiers in your unit.
- Be vigilant
- Never become complacent when it comes to OPSEC. Check social media accounts within your organization for OPSEC violations. Never stop working to protect OPSEC. Once the information is out there, you cannot get it back.

10th AAMDC Associated Press Style Guide

Rank Abbreviations

This style military rank abbreviation is from the Associated Press Stylebook, which is the standard for Army publications. These abbreviations are used only before full names. Second and subsequent references use only the person's last name, unless there is more than one person with the same last name included in the story. In those instances, use the rank abbreviation with the last name.

The biggest ideological hurdle you are bound to encounter is with names and ranks. The following is the only standard that matters when writing anything intended for the public:

Enlisted Ranks

PVT – Pvt.
 PV2 – Pvt.
 PFC – Pfc.
 SPC – Spc.
 CPL – Cpl.
 SGT – Sgt.
 SSG – Staff Sgt.
 SFC – Sgt. 1st Class
 MSG – Master Sgt.
 1SG – 1st Sgt.
 SGM – Sgt. Maj.
 CSM – Command Sgt. Maj.
 SMA – Sgt. Maj. of the Army

Commissioned Ranks

2LT – 2nd Lt.
 1LT – 1st Lt.
 CPT – Capt.
 MAJ – Maj.
 LTC – Lt. Col.
 COL – Col.
 BG – Brig. Gen.
 MG – Maj. Gen.
 LTG – Lt. Gen.
 GEN – Gen.

Warrant Officers

WO1 – Warrant Officer 1
 CW2-5 - Chief Warrant Officer 2-5

In regards to individuals names, always give rank and full name on first reference. Afterward, it is last name only.

Unit Names

First Reference

10th Army Air and Missile Defense
 Command
 5th Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery
 5th Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery
 A Battery, 5th Battalion, 4th Air Defense
 Artillery

Subsequent References

10th AAMDC
 5-7 ADA
 5-4 ADA
 A Btry. 5-4 ADA

States

There are eight states that are never abbreviated in datelines or text. Those states are Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah.

Ala. Ariz. Ark. Calif. Colo. Conn. Del. Fla. Ga. Ill. Ind. Kan. Ky. La. Md. Mass. Mich. Minn. Miss. Mo. Mont. Neb. Nev. N.H. N.J. N.M. N.Y. N.C. N.D. Okla. Ore. Pa. R.I. S.C. S.D. Tenn. Vt. Va. Wash. W.Va. Wis. Wyo.

Common Military Acronyms

active duty Lowercase on all references. Hyphenate before Soldier, etc.

ACAP Army Career and Alumni Program

ACS Army Community Service (not services)

ACU Army combat uniform

AEC Army Environmental Command

AFAK Afghan First Aid Kit

AFAP Army Family Action Plan

AFTB Army Family Team Building

AIT advanced individual training

ALARACT All Army Activities message

ALP Afghan Local Police force is a program that was initiated by GIRoA as a means for the local populace to improve the defense of their communities.

AMEDD Army Medical Department

ANBP Afghan National Border Police

ANA Afghan National Army

ANSF Afghan National Security Forces

annual training Lowercase and spelled out on first reference. May be abbreviated as AT on subsequent reference.

APFT Army Physical Fitness Test

APRP Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program is a broad and comprehensive program nested within a strategy of long-term justice, government, and development initiatives. Through APRP, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) extends an open hand to combatant groups, offering them full rights as Afghan citizens and a dignified respectful way to renounce violence, peacefully reintegrate into communities, and separate them from the insurgent past.

Arbekai Afghan local militia that is independently operated by the local populace and not funded through any government agency

ARFORGEN Army Force Generation

Armed forces, armed services, military services, uniformed services – *Military services refers* to the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps.

Armed forces and *armed services* are synonymous and refer to the military services and the U.S. Coast Guard

Uniformed services refers to the armed services, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the officer corps of the U.S. Public Health Service.

Army Reserve Can stand alone on second reference, either as a noun or adjective, as

“Reserve.” Lowercase in the case of “reserve components.” Reservist is uppercase, like Soldier.

ARTEP Army Training and Evaluation Program

ASAP Army Substance Abuse Program

AUP Afghan Uniform Police

AWE Advance Warfighting Experiment

AWOL absent without leave

BAQ basic allowance for quarters

BAS basic allowance for subsistence

BMC Baumholder Military Community

BNCOC Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

CBRNE chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosives

CENTCOM U.S. Central Command

CERP Commander's Emergency Response Program is a program that allows commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements by carrying out programs that will immediately assist in the indigenous population.

CFC Combined Federal Campaign

CFMB Combat Field Medical Badge

CHAMPUS Civilian Health and Medical Program for the Uniformed Services

Chaplain Identify as Chaplain (Maj.) John Doe. Rank always goes in parentheses.

CIB Combat Infantryman Badge

COHORT Cohesive operational readiness training

CONUS Continental United States In most military uses, CONUS refers to the 48 contiguous states

Courtesy titles Do not use Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., or military rank on second reference. Exception: When two family members (husband and wife, two siblings, or a parent and child) are mentioned in the same story (and it is impossible to distinguish by context who is who) or in direct quotes.

CMS Customer Management Services

CPAC Civilian Personnel Advisory Center

CPOC Civilian Personnel Operations Center (Fort Drum employees fall under the Northeast CPOC.)

CSRS Civil Service Retirement System

CTMC Conner Troop Medical Clinic

DeCA Defense Commissary Agency Note the lowercase e.

DENTAC U.S. Army Dental Activity

Dependent “Family Member” is preferred. (Note capitalization when referring to Army Families.)

DES Directorate of Emergency Services

DFAS Defense Finance and Accounting Service

DOC Directorate of Contracting

Doctor Identify as Dr. (Col.) John Doe. Rank always goes in parentheses.

DoD Department of Defense. Note the lowercase o.

DOL Directorate of Logistics

DPDD Directed Police District Development is a program in the Baghlan Province that addresses a training short fall that will provide AUP with the basic police skills

necessary to protect the population and enforce the rule of law.

DPTMS Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security

DRM Directorate of Resource Management

DSN Acceptable before a telephone number when referring to Defense Switched Network

ECWCS Extended Cold Weather Clothing System

EEO Equal Employment Opportunity

EFMB Expert Field Medical Badge

EFMP Exceptional Family Member Program

EIB Expert Infantryman Badge

EMT emergency medical treatment (EMT) lanes

EO Equal Opportunity

ERB Enlisted Records Brief

ETS expiration of term of service (ETS) date

EXEVAL external evaluation

Families, Family Members Capitalize when referring to military Family Members.

FEDVIP Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program

FEHB Federal Employees Health Benefits

FERS Federal Employees Retirement System

FMWR Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation

FOB forward operating base (Note: lowercase, unless referring to a specific one.)

FORSCOM U.S. Army Forces Command

Fort Always spell it out; never use “Ft.” Always Fort Drum; never write Drum alone.

FRSA family readiness support assistant

GIRoA Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Guthrie Ambulatory Health Care Clinic

Hall of Champions United States Army Garrison Baumholder gym and assembly area.

HEMTT heavy expanded mobility tactical truck

HUMMWV High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle

IEC Independent Election Commission

IFAK Improved First Aid Kit

IMCOM Installation Management Command

IOTV Improved Outer Tactical Vest

ISAF International Security Assistance Force

JRTC Joint Readiness Training Center

LAWs light anti-tank weapons

LES leave and earnings statement

LIC low-intensity conflict

LMTV Light Medium Tactical Vehicle

MAST Military Assistance for Safety and Traffic program

MEDDAC U.S. Medical Department Activity

MEB medical evaluation board	NYARNG New York Army National Guard
MEPS Military Entrance Processing Station	OIC officer in charge
METL mission essential tasks list	OMPF Official Military Personnel File
MILES Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System equipment	OPSEC operational security
Military Mountaineers Monument not 10 th Mountain Division Monument. It is located in Memorial Park.	ORB Officer Records Brief
MLCCCC (or MLC4) Mountain Leaders Close Combat Certification Course	PCS permanent change of station Permanent-change-of-station move
MOPP Mission Oriented Protective Posture	PMCS preventive maintenance checks and services
MOUT Military Operations on Urban Terrain	POV privately owned vehicle
MRAP Mine Resistant Ambush Protected	Prior to Use “before” Exception: when it appears in a direct quote, and there is no way to avoid it.
MATV Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicle MaxxPro Maximum Protection MRAP RG-33	PRT Provincial Reconstruction Teams
MREs Meals, Ready-to-Eat	PW Public Works, or Directorate of Public Works. (Not Department of Public Works)
MTOE modification table of organization and equipment	REMBASS Remotely Monitored Battlefield Operation Sensor System
National Guard Can stand alone in uppercase as “Guard” on second reference.	reserve component(s) Lowercase as a noun (the reserve components).
National Guardsman, National Guardsmen Always uppercase.	RIF reduction in force
NCO noncommissioned officer	ROTC Reserve Officers’ Training Corps
NCOIC noncommissioned officer in charge, spell out on first reference	SAEDA subversion and espionage directed against the Army
NEC Network Enterprise Center (formerly Directorate of Information Management, or DOIM). The full name is U.S. Army Signal Network Enterprise Center - Fort Drum.	SAW squad automatic weapon
NIPR nonsecure network Spell out on first reference	servicemen, servicewomen but service members
NTC National Training Center	SFRG Soldier and family readiness group (Note: lowercase, unless referring to a specific one.)
	SGLI Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance. (Note servicemembers as one word, an exception to the rule.)

SINGARS Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System

SIPR secure network

Soldier Capitalize when referring to U.S. Army members

SJA Staff Judge Advocate

State abbreviations Follow AP-approved abbreviations, not postal abbreviations

STX situational training exercise

TAC tactical command post

TDY temporary duty

TLPs troop leading procedures

TOC tactical operations center

TOE Table of Organization and Equipment

TOW tube-launched, optical-sighted, wire-guided (TOW) missile.

TRICARE Name of the DoD-managed health care system. Not an acronym. Note capitalization.

TSFO Training set firing observation

TTPs tactics, techniques and procedures

UCMJ Uniform Code of Military Justice

USAG United States Army Garrison

USACIDC U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID

USAREC U.S. Army Recruiting Command

USAREUR U.S. Army Europe

Utilize Write “use.” Exception: when it appears in a direct quote, and there is no way to avoid it.

Common or Recurring Mistakes:

- Headlines must include a verb and be in present tense -- “Dwell time decreases for deployed Soldiers” instead of “Dwell time to decrease for deployed Soldiers”.
- Unit nicknames — Use double quotes when introducing a unit nickname, “European Defenders” Command(no quotes on subsequent references); use single quotes if in a headline, ‘European Defender’ Command ...
- Competitions — if an event is used to determine who is the best (Best Sapper, Best Warrior, etc.) include who won the competition and not at the end of the story.
- Its/their. A battery cased its colors (singular noun). Two batteries cased their colors (plural noun). People are never its – use “his” for one Soldier and “their” for multiple Soldiers.
- Retired military – per Army Style Guide, capitalize the word Retired and place it before the rank and name: The guest speaker will be Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Smith.
- Ensure names are not spelled differently in story and cutlines.
- NEED to identify KEY leaders in photos.
- How many Soldiers? Not just “A platoon of Soldiers...” or “Soldiers of the 10th AAMDC...”
- Ensure dates in story and cutlines are matching.
- The first five words are the most important.

Resources and Sites

- https://www.army.mil/e2/rv5_downloads/armydotmil_style_guide.pdf
- <https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/OCPA/PAPortal/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/OCPA/PAPortal/SiteAssets/Lists/CustNavigation/EditForm/Army.mil%20Headline-Photos%20Reference%20Guide_v1.pdf
- <https://intranet.eur.army.mil/10aamdc/hq/specialstaff/PAO/SitePages/Home.aspx>

For questions or concerns please email the 10th AAMDC PAO office at usarmy.rheinland-pfalz.10-aamdc.list.pao@mail.mil.