



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY BASIC COMBAT TRAINING CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
FORT JACKSON, SC 29207

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

ATZJ-CG

03 AUG 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR SBE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum 7-4, Use of Social Media

1. References.

- a. DOD 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation, 1 August 1993, w/changes
- b. AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, 18 March 2008
- c. AR 340-21, The Army Privacy Act, 5 July 1985
- d. Department of Defense Directive 5230.09, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release," Aug. 22, 2008
- e. Department of Defense Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release," Jan. 8, 2009
- f. ALDODACT 11/06, "Information Security/Website Alert," Aug. 9, 2006
- g. Army Regulation 25-1, Army Knowledge Management and Information Technology
- h. Army Regulation 25-2, Information Assurance
- i. Army Regulation 360-1, The Army Public Affairs Program
- j. Army Regulation 530-1, Operations Security

2. Social media, refers to dialogue-based Web platforms, including, but not limited to sites such as Face book, MySpace, Flickr, YouTube, and Twitter. Interactive internet activities (IIA) include social media and blogs (both official and unofficial).

3. While there are special challenges when using IIA, leaders within the Army need to understand the power of the Internet and leverage as many communications means as possible to facilitate information engagement.

4. Engagement in IIA should be to meet the intent of the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff, who are encouraging Soldiers to tell their stories to the American people. Leveraging IIA is an effective way to tell the Army story. IIA engagement should have a purpose, not merely for self-aggrandizement, and be of value to the general public. The

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TRADOC commander wants leaders to write official blogs and engage in other IIA to empower a variety of people through dialogue and two-way conversation to discuss issues and provide factual information on decisions that impact Soldiers, civilians, and their Families.

5. Army leaders recognize that Service Members are the Army's best spokespersons. Army leaders encourage positive efforts and Soldiers' pride in their jobs. However, all personnel must maintain professional conduct and good order and discipline in the virtual world, the same as they would in the "real" world. Personnel's public presence should present an appropriate picture of Army life.

6. Content:

a. IIA content will be 100 percent accurate in fact and intent.

b. Messages and materials protected by law such as graphics, pictures, video, and illustrations used will comply with relevant intellectual property laws, policies, and guidance. Visual information (e.g., still and video imagery) produced in a personal capacity but provided to a media outlet, organization, public Website, family, or friends, whether in hard copy or electronic form, is also subject to DoD/Army policy.

c. Commanders and directors are accountable and responsible for quality assurance of IIA conducted under their purview and for ensuring that the implications of their actions beyond the intended audience are addressed. Commanders, Directors, and leadership at all levels are responsible for educating and training their personnel on security, operations security (OPSEC), and network-assurance measures to mitigate threats. Commanders and Directors shall ensure subordinates are aware that, in accordance with DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release," and the Joint Ethics Regulation (DoD 5500.7-R), unofficial / personal blogs may not be created/maintained during normal duty hours and may not contain information on military activities that is not available to the general public. (This type of information includes comments on daily military activities and operations, unit morale, results of operations, status of equipment, and other information that may be beneficial to adversaries.)

d. Individuals are accountable and responsible for quality assurance of material they post to social media in the official capacity. Additionally, they are accountable for the misuse of official information they improperly post in their non-official capacity.

7. Policy. IIA should be accomplished with a clear understanding of the policy. IIA will adhere to the following:

a. IAW AR 25-1, all IIA must be conducted off the dot-mil domain. Blogging intended for an AKO-limited audience may be conducted on AKO. A government terms-of-service contract must be in place with the commercial provider.

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- b. All comments must be based upon personal experiences and observations unless clearly documented with verifiable information.
- c. IIA will not divulge or discuss classified information or vulnerabilities, always keeping OPSEC in mind. Information found in the open source does not necessarily make it unclassified. If you know it is classified by another source, you cannot confirm or deny the validity of the information. It is the personal responsibility of Soldiers, DA civilians, and DoD contractors to ensure that any personal Websites and blogs do not contain unreleasable information.
- d. Comments will not discuss military operations planned or being executed, nor contain Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) that have not been publically released through appropriate release channels.
- e. IIA will not contain derogatory information that could serve to embarrass TRADOC, the U.S. Army, or the U.S. Government.
- f. IIA will not operate for commercial gain and will not promote, endorse, or sponsor financial or other interests of commercial or non-government entities, or any private individual, or give the appearance of doing so. Army employees will not officially endorse, or appear to endorse, membership drives or fund-raisers for any non-federal entity.
- g. IIA will not contain political bias or be construed to advocate a political party.
- h. IIA will not violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the Hatch Act (Political Activity), or the Joint Ethics Regulation, DoD 5500.7-R, and may not have an adverse effect on duty performance or the authorized functions of DoD.
- i. IIA will under no circumstances release imagery – digital, still, or video – of deceased, wounded, hospitalized, or detained personnel. IIA will not release images of battle-damaged vehicles or equipment damaged by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), direct enemy contact, or any other damages caused by enemy action. This policy includes photo illustrations or other edited photographs. Editing must be IAW DoDD 5040.5.
- j. Personnel must add a disclaimer to unofficial personal Websites where the individual refers to him or herself as a Soldier, employee, or contractor of the U.S. Army to preclude readers from assuming unofficial sites represent an Army position. The disclaimer to be used is: "The views expressed in this [type of IIA] are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government." The writer will not use a title or other DoD identification in connection with the material if requested to refrain from doing so by the reviewing authority.

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k. All information placed on or sent over DoD computer systems is subject to monitoring, inspection, and audit by command or agency management or their representatives at any time with or without notice or user consent. This includes personal information, email, personal user files and directories, and any products created on DoD computer systems.

8. CLEARANCE PROCEDURES.

a. There is a difference in the clearance process between unofficial IIA and official IIA. In general, unofficial IIA must be cleared IAW DoDI 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release," only when any information proposed for posting in the IIA meets the requirements of paragraph 6.1 of that instruction. Army personnel are free to express personal opinions unless limited by law or regulation, and should candidly discuss matters with the American public about which they have personal knowledge if the information is not classified or otherwise non-releasable. If questioned by a member of the public on a classified matter, Army personnel will state frankly that the information cannot be discussed. No clearance is required for personnel posting in a private capacity (i.e., not identifying themselves as connected to an Army component) on subjects not involving Army issues; examples of non-application include maintenance of private Website content on matters unconnected to the Army such as hobbies, sports, or religion, or posting to a blog as a private citizen.

b. When individuals post official information, these IIA must be reviewed and cleared by appropriate security experts and PAOs prior to release. The differentiation in the clearance policy is because official IIA is "publishing" – in other words, the public release of information is in an official capacity – and therefore is subject to the laws, rules, and regulations that govern the public release of information.

c. In addition, these guidelines also apply to official

(1) Official IIA must not contradict U.S. government policy or law. They must adhere to DoD 5500.7-R.

(2) Situations where an event's real or apparent purpose is to stage controversy and/or confrontation must be avoided.

d. For both unofficial and official IIA, questions concerning the sensitivity of information should be submitted for OPSEC and Public Affairs review prior to release or posting. Once information is released, it is irretrievable. Personnel cannot release information on the Internet to target only certain audiences without making it available to all audiences; IIA content providers should remember to only post what they don't mind everyone viewing. Additionally, both types of IIA must insure the all provision of the Privacy Act (5 USC 55a) which protects individuals' privacy from unwarranted intrusion are followed.

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e. Any official site will include a disclaimer; an example is listed at enclosure 1.

9. Family Readiness Groups:

a. Family Readiness Groups (FRG) may use social media to share information with members of the FRG, unit and the general public. FRGs and their members must not post individual's personal information or personally identifiable information without the specific written consent of the individual. For example no individual's address, phone number (personal or official) or birthday should be posted on a Face Book page without their consent. In addition, individual's photos may not be posted without their permission.

b. If a FRG establishes a social media site or other IIA, they must notify and provide to the Fort Jackson Public Affairs Office (PAO) identify information such as web address, so the PAO may monitor for compliance with this policy.

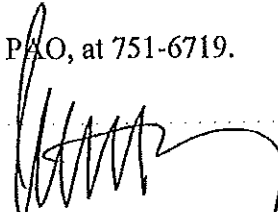
c. Under no circumstance will an FRG social media site be the official means for disseminating official information.

d. Any FRG member who violates the rules set out in this policy may be removed from any official position in the FRG and may have their access to use a social media site or other similar IIA by the controller of such access denied or removed.

e. The FRG should include a disclaimer; an example is listed at enclosure 2. Enclosure 3 provides simple guidelines for an FRG social media page.

10. PROPONENT: Ms. Karen Soule, Director, PAO, at 751-6719.

Encls



BRADLEY W. MAY
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Commanding

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C&S

Disclaimer for Official Sites

While this is an open forum, it's also a family friendly one, so please keep your comments and wall posts clean. In addition to keeping it family friendly, we ask that you follow our posting guidelines here. If you don't comply, your message will be removed:

-We do not 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 non-governmental 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.

Also, the appearance of external links on this site does not constitute official endorsement on behalf of Fort Jackson, the U.S. Army or Department of Defense.

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-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.

-This is not an official site of Fort Jackson, the U.S. Army or the Department of Defense. The views expressed in this [type of IIA] are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government

Simple Guidelines

Public Affairs Office
Simple Guidelines for Website Posting for Family Readiness Groups
25 July 2009

Written material

Written information should never include personal information such as full names, home telephone numbers, personal email addresses or home addresses.

Always spell check writing and read closely for errors and grammar mistakes.

Written material should be concise and brief.

Do not post rosters with personal information.

Do not post maps with directions to individual's home.

Always remember information posted is in the public domain.

Written material should always be in good taste and positive in nature. No profanity.

Photographs:

People in photographs should not be identified by full name or with spouse-Soldier's name. They should know that photos may appear on the Web.

Parents of children pictured in photos should be made aware that it will be posted on the Web.

Photos should be sharp and well-focused.

Ensure photo captions, when used, identify the activity and first name only.

Photos should always be in good taste.