

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

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NATO MILITARY POLICY

ON

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

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NATO MILITARY POLICY ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS

GENERAL

1. The post-Cold War, post-9-11 era has been marked by NATO military operations of unprecedented scale, scope and complexity in locations far from the traditional Euro-Atlantic geographic area. In 1989, the Alliance counted 16 nations as members and none as partners; less than 20 years later, the number of member/partners had quadrupled to include almost one-third of the world's nations, with further expectations of growth. In that same period, we have been witness to a burgeoning market for news in an increasingly competitive media environment combined with new information technologies including the Internet. The result of these developments is that almost any aspect of NATO operations and issues can or will be reported to global audiences in near-real time. NATO adversaries also have similar access to all these technologies and use them to impart their own information and messages to try and sway publics and influence Alliance policy.

2. National and international security issues now figure prominently on the domestic political and media scenes in most NATO countries. Developments respecting military operations or military forces undergoing transformation often feature in coverage and can even define or shape the national and international political discourse. Public expectations for more open and transparent organisations including greater financial accountability and propriety of government spending, plus competition in the labour market with the private sector for the same skilled, fit, intelligent recruits are relatively new phenomena. There is also recognition and acknowledgement that informing our own internal audiences makes for a more productive workforce and empowers our most important outreach resource. All of these various factors regularly test the depth, breadth and flexibility of the military public affairs function in NATO HQs and member nations.

3. In a few short years, the political dynamic has evolved, the operational environment has changed, and the media industry has transformed. Effective public affairs support to field and permanent HQ commanders in the face of these developments requires that the function be resourced and fully integrated into the decision-making process for military operations, policy development, program design and service delivery. As such, a capacity to manage and deliver public affairs programming is expected at all NATO military HQs.

AIM AND APPLICABILITY

4. This policy establishes direction respecting NATO military Public Affairs (PA) for all personnel working under NATO command. It also serves as guidance for all those in the NATO force structure or working in support of NATO military authorities.

MISSION

5. The mission of NATO military PA is to support commanders by communicating accurate information in a timely manner to audiences to improve public awareness and understanding of the military aspects of the Alliance's role, aims, operations, missions, activities and issues, thereby enhancing organisational credibility. Audiences can be allied, international, regional, local or internal, depending on the issue or activity.

DEFINITION, FUNCTIONS AND PRINCIPLES

6. Definition. NATO military PA is the function responsible to promote NATO's military aims and objectives to audiences in order to enhance awareness and understanding of military aspects of the Alliance. This includes planning and conducting media relations, internal communications, and community relations.

7. Functions. The three basic functions of NATO military Public Affairs are:

- a. **Media Relations** activities are designed to provide information through all mass communication means to NATO audiences. Commanders and staffs, through their PAOs, should be prepared to, for example: respond to media inquiries; issue statements; conduct briefings and interviews; arrange for access to permanent and operational units; and distribute information including imagery, all as a means to develop relations with the purveyors and the consumers of news.
- b. **Internal Communications** efforts facilitate communication with and among NATO military personnel, civilians working for those organisations, and their families. Its purpose is to inform about the command or HQ, its people and its activities, and is distinct from administrative information or direction from the chain of command that is normally found in administrative or routine orders. Effective programs to keep internal audiences informed about significant developments that affect them and the work of their HQ creates an awareness of the organisation's goals and activities, increases work quality, and makes command personnel more effective representatives of the organisation.
- c. **Community Relations** programs are associated with the interaction between NATO military installations in NATO member states and their surrounding or nearby civilian communities. These programs can take the form of addressing issues of interest to and fostering relations with the general public, business, academia, military-related associations, and other non-news media entities.

8. Principles. The principles of NATO military PA are:
- a. ***Tell and show the NATO story.*** Military PA efforts support commanders and staff in the execution of their mission and are conducted in accordance with higher NATO political and military direction. Practitioners are “Alliance” NATO military PA staff first and foremost.
 - b. ***Provide accurate information in a timely manner.*** This is critical to functional and organisational credibility with publics, internal audiences, and media, and helps deter adversary propaganda in a 24/7 media environment. The public affairs impact of the activity is often directly proportional to the timeliness of the PA effort or response: the same information delivered quickly by NATO representatives can have a qualitatively different effect than the same information delivered a day later or even an hour later. Protecting NATO against criticism or embarrassment is not a reason to classify or withhold information.
 - c. ***Ensure that information provided is consistent, complementary, and coordinated.*** One effect of the global information environment is that publics can receive information about military operations from all levels of command, including reports from theatre from multiple sources. Commanders should ensure that their PA operations put forth a consistent message through NATO’s many voices, and that military information activities are well coordinated with PA.
 - d. ***Practise appropriate operational security.*** The provisions of operational security and propriety will be considered and adhered to before releasing information.
 - e. ***Conduct work mindful of multinational sensitivities, and respectful of the local and regional cultural environment.*** NATO operations can be adversely affected by culturally inappropriate references or communications activities. Conversely, the effect and impact of communications is made stronger when it is informed by an understanding and appreciation of local custom, tradition and culture.

RESPONSIBILITIES

9. NATO military PA is a command responsibility at all levels. Practitioners are directly responsible to their respective commanders for the conduct of PA activities, and responsive to guidance from the PA function at higher HQs.

10. Public affairs must be well coordinated within the Alliance’s military arm vertically through all levels of command and horizontally with national armed forces and other organisations working in parallel with NATO. Effective PA support to commanders including organisational spokespersonship requires that military PA be fully integrated into the operational planning process at all NATO HQs.

11. Political Level. The North Atlantic Council provides overall guidance and direction for NATO public diplomacy efforts, as well as mission-specific strategic and political guidance for NATO military information activities. The Secretary-General, through the NATO Spokesperson, also provides further detailed day-to-day media relations guidance to NATO military PA through the chain of command, either to SHAPE for operational matters or to ACT for transformation issues.

12. NATO Military Committee. The Military Committee establishes overall policy for NATO military PA. The Chairman of the Military Committee is the principal military spokesperson for the Alliance. The International Military Staff's Public Affairs Advisor (IMS PAA) supports that organization's PA requirements, is the MC's spokesman, and facilitates interaction and coordination between the two Strategic Commands, the Military Committee and the Public Diplomacy Division on military PA matters.

13. Strategic Commands. The Strategic Commanders provide overall guidance and direction on military PA within their respective areas of responsibility. Supreme Allied Commander Europe is the principal military spokesperson for NATO operations. Supreme Allied Commander Transformation is the principal military spokesperson for NATO transformation.

14. The Chief Public Affairs Officer (CPAO) for ACO directs, plans, and executes strategic level military PA in support of NATO operations or other activities under SACEUR's direction and responsibility. The CPAO for ACT directs, plans and executes strategic level military public affairs in support of NATO transformation activities under SACT's direction and responsibility. The ACT CPAO is also responsible for NATO-related training and doctrinal aspects of NATO military PA.

15. Subordinate Commands. Chief PAOs for operational and tactical-level Commands and organisations subordinate to ACO and ACT are responsible to their respective commanders for all public affairs programming and activities of their HQ.

16. Elements of the Force Structure and Subordinate Agencies, Bodies, and Committees. The NATO Force Structure consists of forces placed at the Alliance's disposal by the member nations, temporarily or permanently, including the associated command and control elements. These can be part of NATO's multinational forces or be additional national contributions to NATO. Both NATO and elements of the Force Structure benefit from being publicly affiliated with each other. As such, when an issue or activity could become public and affect each other's reputation, liaison between PA offices should occur ahead of time.

17. Other organisations, committees and sub-committees that are the responsibility of the Military Committee (such as the NATO Defence College), SACEUR (such as the high readiness land and maritime forces) and SACT (such as the Training Centres and the NATO Undersea Research Centre) are responsible for delivering their own PA programming. They will seek functional PA guidance from the IMS PAA, ACO CPAO, or ACT CPAO respectively.

18. Nations. Member nations have primary responsibility to inform public opinion within their own country about decisions taken in the framework of their Alliance membership, including participation in Alliance operation and activities. Nations provide

trained and qualified PAOs for national requirements and to fill positions in NATO's permanent headquarters, operations and other activities.

19. NATO Military PA. NATO military PA works on behalf of all member nations to promote public awareness of the Alliance, as well as to inform internal NATO audiences. NATO also promotes joint PA education and training, and develops joint PA doctrine and lessons learned.

20. Operating successfully in today's complex operational and media environment requires that uniformed personnel be trained and skilled in all aspects of public affairs work at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. A national military public affairs function should recruit, educate, train, employ and promote within the profession in order to build experienced capability in this specialised discipline.

PLANNING AND EXECUTING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ORGANISATION

21. Reporting Relationships. All NATO military headquarters and command elements will establish a PA capability within the Command Group. Public Affairs at each level of command directly supports the commander and may therefore not be further delegated or subordinated to other staff functions. The Chief PAO, as the principal advisor on PA matters and official spokesperson for that HQ, reports directly to the commander. All supporting PA activities should be organized under the PAO.

22. Resourcing. All NATO HQs are required to have a PA function, but personnel and financial requirements will vary. The PA function needs to be sufficiently staffed with PA-trained personnel and resourced to meet the operational and policy issue tempo of the headquarters and its activities. The minimum capability requirement includes PA plans and policies, media operations, media monitoring and analysis, and production (writing, imagery, and web services).

23. PA Relationship to Information Operations. PA and Info Ops are separate, but related functions. They directly support military objectives, counter adversary disinformation and deter adversary actions. They both require planning, message development and media analysis, though the efforts differ with respect to audience, scope and intent. All military information activities must be closely coordinated with PA in order to ensure consistency in the messages to external audiences and to promote overall effectiveness and credibility of the campaign. Info Ops is a military function to provide advice and coordination of military information activities in order to create desired effects on the will, understanding and capability of adversaries, potential adversaries and other NAC approved parties in support of Alliance mission objectives. PA is not an Info Ops discipline. While coordination is essential, the lines of authority will remain separate, the PA reporting relationship being direct to the commander. This is to maintain credibility of PA and to avoid creating a media or public perception that PA activities are coordinated by, or are directed by Info Ops. Beyond coordination of efforts, messages and being informed of these activities, PA will have no role in planning or executing Info Ops, Psy Ops, or deception operations.

METHODOLOGIES

24. PA Approaches. NATO policy is to release accurate information with the minimum of delay that is consistent with operational security and propriety. The public affairs approach for each activity or situation needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, being attentive to the public and external/internal audience interest, and is informed by PA considerations of good issue management and security.

25. A PA approach provides a guide respecting the level of ambition or expectations of the desired profile for an activity, event or issue. Given that everything NATO does or does not do is subject to public scrutiny, this characterization of "intent of effort" helps prioritise work and assign resources. Remaining flexible in the face of changing circumstances is important, as the facts that informed the original assessment can change in very short order and may necessitate a different approach than first thought. The choice, therefore, will indicate initial intent but will always be subject to review and direction from higher HQ. The PA approach with respect to external and internal audiences is not necessarily identical for the same issue. Guided by its PA principles, NATO defines three military PA approaches:

- a. Very Active. Significant and deliberate effort will be invested to promote awareness, visibility and to "push out" information. This approach is called for where real public interest is anticipated or desired and may be supported by a wide range of PA products and activities.
- b. Active. Routine effort will be invested to promote public awareness; the range and scope of information products or support activities are generally limited. This approach may be used when the activity is expected to have some audience interest, or where the public affairs return on investment given the time and resources expended is expected to be modest.
- c. Reactive. Efforts are not made to promote wide awareness, but a public affairs plan and media lines may be developed in anticipation of media or public queries. As such, being reactive still means being responsive to queries: not answering the phone or saying "no comment" are not options. A reactive approach could be used when little to no public interest is anticipated; where operational security, policy, privacy, propriety, or higher guidance indicates that an active or proactive approach is not appropriate; or when full disclosure is not yet possible.

26. Spokespersons. Any uniformed member of NATO regardless of rank who responds to media or speaks publicly about an issue will be perceived as "a NATO spokesperson," regardless of whether that is technically the case or not. This reality calls for a clear understanding ahead of time as to who is authorized to speak to media or the general public on behalf of the organisation and its commander, and a basic level of media awareness training for all NATO personnel.

27. Identifying spokespersons is a command responsibility and all NATO military HQs will identify someone, be it an individual or through appointment, as the public face of the organisation. Military spokespersons will "stay in their lane", limiting their comments

to matters respecting the military operation or function within their area of responsibility. There are two categories of military spokespersons:

- a. Official. Official spokespersons are those persons who by virtue of their position or appointment are expected to speak to the media, the public, or internally about NATO military affairs. This includes the Chairman of the Military Committee, Strategic Commanders, Force and Operational Commanders, and the Chief PAOs of all those organisations.
- b. Designated. Refers to those persons who by virtue of their job description or responsibility are expected to communicate externally or internally about NATO military affairs. This includes NATO Media Information Centre spokespersons, and subject matter experts who have been tasked to communicate externally or internally about a specific issue or topic. Where possible and practical, they should be prepared ahead of time for the activity by a PAO.

28. Information provided by NATO military spokespersons should normally be directly attributable to them by name. Being "on the record" serves several purposes: it provides an identifiable source for the information and thus adds to the organisational credibility of the information, it identifies when official NATO military spokespersons have addressed an issue, and it promotes transparency both of the media and the organisation. In the circumstances where the person providing the information cannot be identified by name for operational or personal security reasons, this should be specified and agreed ahead of time between the PAO and the journalist.

29. "Not for attribution" or "on background" is supporting information given to media representatives to facilitate greater understanding of an issue. It will be stated at the time whether that information may be used, and if it is, it should appear to come from the journalist's own knowledge, and not directly attributed to the NATO military spokesperson(s).

30. Organisations that belong to the NATO Force Structure are not in the NATO Command Structure. Unless involved in a NATO operation, personnel belonging to the NATO Force Structure should not be identified as NATO spokespersons. Rather, they speak only for their own organisation, although they are welcome to explain the nature of the affiliation with NATO.

PROCESS AND MECHANICS

31. PA Guidance. CPAOs may develop and promulgate Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) to address issues not described or forecast in existing operational plans or strategies. Usually, PAGs will summarize the issue, identify the lead organisation(s), identify spokespersons, list messages and provide coordinating instructions.

32. PA Strategies and Plans. Before elaborating a strategy, the PAO should conduct a serious analysis of the PA environment, from the perspective of both internal and external communication. Master messages developed by higher NATO political and military authorities will be included and used in subordinate PA strategies and plans. Furthermore, public affairs activities should be regularly evaluated, reported to the

higher echelon, and taken into account for future actions or possibly to adapt future plans and strategies.

33. Public Speaking and Writing. Explaining NATO to interested audiences by members of the organisation is to be encouraged. Any person working for or on behalf of NATO military forces who speaks in an organised setting or fora to external audiences or intends on publishing his/her writing about a NATO-related topic in the public domain needs to seek advice from that organisation's PA staff, who will advise on whether prior approval from the member's chain of command should be sought. Academic works are exempted: these need to include a disclaimer on the cover page stating that, "the views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official views of NATO."

34. Public and Media Queries. Any and all media queries will be directed to a PAO within that HQ or unit so that interest in the activity or issue can be tracked, assessed and dealt with in an appropriate fashion. Queries from non-media members should be handled with common sense and discretion: a simple request received by telephone for general, generic information that is a matter of public record and/or within that person's specific knowledge, should normally be provided on a background/not-for-attribution basis. Personnel should not speculate or inadvertently participate in an interview – any call received from the news media or the public, including interest groups, may be recorded by the caller. A good rule of thumb is, "if you aren't prepared to see it on the front page with your name attached to it, then don't say/write it".

35. Media Interviews. All interviews between external media outlets and personnel assigned to permanent and deployed NATO HQs requires that the organization's PAO be made aware beforehand, and may require approval of the chain of command including the Commander if the subject is of a sensitive nature.

36. Media requests for interviews with personnel deployed in NATO-led operations and under NATO command should be coordinated with the responsible national or NATO PAO, as appropriate, who will evaluate the request and recommend a course of action.

37. Ground rules for all media interviews regardless of the setting will be agreed and explained in advance to the news media by the PAO, and unless otherwise agreed by a CPAO, all interviews will be on the record. Persons should speak only about those matters within their professional knowledge and responsibilities. They should avoid speculation about events, incidents, issues or future policy decisions; should not comment on political matters; and must "stay in their lane", avoiding comments on issues and activities that they or their unit are not involved in. Where, for good reason prior approval for an interview was not possible (for instance, a member is involved in an incident and a journalist comes on scene and obtains a quote from the member), the organization's PAO must be informed as soon as possible.

38. PA Products. There are many and varied PA products in different forms and formats to tell and show the NATO story, whether they be in anticipation or in reaction to an issue, or to promote a NATO event or activity. Appended to this policy is a lexicon of terms for products that form the core of NATO military PA efforts. NATO military PA

products will adhere to the NATO Visual Identity Guidelines, as determined and issued by the Public Diplomacy Division.

39. Imagery. The increasing dominance of visual media, particularly in light of new technologies, means that NATO cannot effectively tell its story without making imagery available to external and internal audiences. This can take the form of NATO providing imagery itself, or by facilitating media access to NATO people and activities. All PA activities should therefore consider ways and means to collect, properly identify and distribute imagery (still and video, plus sound). Nations that do not already have a deployable military imagery gathering capability are encouraged to develop one. In addition to supporting national PA objectives, proactively sharing imagery with higher NATO headquarters will help leverage its overall impact with regional and international audiences, an effect that may be difficult for any one nation to obtain. The NATO Military Audiovisual Working Group offers an expert forum in which to discuss imagery collection and sharing.

40. Internet. The Internet is arguably the most powerful public affairs and information tool available to NATO military PA, and all HQs shall budget accordingly to remain competitive as quality information providers. Internet sites inform a wide range of audiences and therefore need to be current, easily navigable, visually appealing, interactive, and in accordance with NATO visual guidelines. PAOs are responsible for content management and the appearance of their respective NATO Internet websites. Local directives respecting PA involvement in Command/HQ Intranet sites may be issued.

41. Blogs and other Internet Communications. Those who post information, news, views or opinions to the Internet using a personal site (a "blog") can be as competitive and influential as the most established and recognized media organisations, or even more so. Often, media organisations encourage their own staff to create and maintain blogs as a means to enhance and connect with their readership. "Citizen journalists" may not be accredited media, but they are engaged in the security debate, be they well informed or otherwise. They can exert influence over public perception and understanding of NATO operations and activities and should be considered and factored into PA plans.

42. The widespread availability and access to Internet even by personnel deployed in the most austere of locations results in considerable information describing experiences included on personal websites, blogs, e-mails, and uploaded still and video imagery. This material is posted by NATO members deployed on operations or in garrison, by families and acquaintances of NATO members, embedded journalists or other media, and the general public. Such information or imagery may, either individually or in conjunction with other information, provide adversary analysts with insights into NATO current operations, equipment, capabilities, tactics and intentions, or may provide information that puts personnel in specialist roles or their families at risk.

43. The authorities and guidelines respecting public electronic communications are no different than those for other forms of external communication. Just as a letter to the editor by a NATO military representative is subject to an approval process, the mere fact that the technology exists to allow virtually anyone to broadcast to the world, does not give blanket authority for NATO personnel to do so. That said, the Internet provides the

NATO soldier, sailor or airman/airwoman with excellent opportunities to distribute useful and compelling information about NATO activities to audiences.

44. NATO members are entitled to communicate with friends, family and colleagues, and may share experiences with the broader public, provided they adhere to the provisions of security and propriety. NATO personnel are to consult with their chain of command before publishing NATO-related information and imagery to the Internet. The chain of command has expert advisors, such as public affairs and intelligence staffs, who will ensure that such published information is not ultimately prejudicial to NATO operations and personnel.

45. Exercises and Training. More than a hundred NATO exercises and training events both small and large are conducted every year, and are listed annually in an MC-approved program. This is in addition to nationally sponsored exercises to which NATO and partner nations are invited to participate, and these are the sole responsibility of the sponsor nation.

46. Both the NATO military HQ that is scheduling the NATO exercise and the office conducting the exercise need to give early consideration to the public affairs value and/or the necessity of informing publics about it. Often, media will be aware of the fact that an exercise is being planned well before any formal acknowledgement of it by NATO. Given the long lead time to prepare logistics support and in some cases a need to conduct community relations activities to sensitize populations to the fact that NATO forces will be exercising in the area, PA engagement and support from the outset is required.

47. The scope of PA support and whether an Initial Exercise News Release (IENR) is needed to publicly and formally announce the exercise needs to be assessed by a PA practitioner. Major exercises in particular are an important element of the organisation's overall information effort. In contrast, a small CPX or a training event on a highly technical subject is not usually likely to warrant a very active PA strategy.

48. The office conducting the exercise will recommend whether an IENR is advisable based on the exercise intent, size, scale, scope, and potential for becoming a news item. The exercise approach and IENR (if one is required) is subject to approval and issue by the office scheduling the exercise. Where there is a question about whether there are political considerations or implications with the exercise (geographic location, type of exercise, nations participating, etc.), the office scheduling the exercise will seek guidance from higher authority, up to and including the MC through the IMS PAA if need be. The PA chain through to the IMS is to be informed and copied on the release ahead of its public distribution.

49. The Military Committee through the IMS PAA can direct the responsible Strategic Command Chief PAO to provide an IENR for MC approval or guidance/approval by the NAC. In this case, the draft material should be staffed through the chain of command at least four weeks before the intended publishing date.

50. Classification of Information. Almost all NATO documents and information are by nature classified and thus PAOs face daily decisions and dilemmas respecting what can or cannot be released to the public. Obtaining formal authority from the originator to

release classified information can be an unwieldy and lengthy process, even though all or part of the information may already be publicly available. The unduly restrictive classification of information can also limit the institution's ability to quickly but accurately respond to queries or to proactively engage audiences in the interests of managing issues and thus the organization's reputation. As such, NATO military PAOs need to be thoroughly familiar with NATO policies respecting the classification and management of information so as to make informed and considered judgements respecting releasability. If in doubt, Command and higher functional PA guidance should be sought.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS ON OPERATIONS

51. Accreditation and Registration of Media. Accreditation of journalists and other media representatives is a national responsibility. The NATO Public Diplomacy Division is responsible to verify journalists accredited to NATO HQ. To manage access to NATO media information centres, facilities, properties and people, NATO military PA staff will register media and may issue a NATO photo-registration card. This card does not guarantee access and does not serve as a substitute for official identification documents, such as passports or national identification cards. Media representatives must also meet other requirements imposed by host nations, such as visas.

52. Registration of media provides an important opportunity for deployed NATO military PAOs to meet with journalists preparing to cover activities, including the chance to explain rules and regulations respecting safety, operational security, logistics, and to provide background and operational context. In addition to learning which media are active in their area, it provides the PAO with an occasion to begin developing a relationship with the journalist.

53. Media Information Centres. All NATO-led military operations or other activities involving a major deployment of forces will establish a facility in theatre, which will normally take the form of a NATO Media Information Centre (NMIC) in a location and facility as accessible to the news media as security conditions allow. Media have a right to be in theatre and to cover NATO activities. NMICs should also be established for major training events. Media Information Centres (MICs) subordinate to the NMIC may be established.

54. The demand for news about a particular NATO activity is not necessarily directly related to the size of the deployed force. A small deployment can generate sustained international attention, whereas a large force that has been operating without incident may attract very little interest. As such, the number of PA staff and other resources assigned must be regularly assessed and task-tailored.

55. Media Integration. NATO Allies should encourage access of the media to Alliance operations and other NATO activities, including hosting accredited media representatives at field headquarters or units. Media can be represented by accredited journalists (Art. 79, Protocol I, 1977), war correspondents (Art. 4, Geneva Protocol III, 1949) or freelance journalists. Only the journalists with the statute of war correspondents can benefit from all the rights given by the Geneva Convention. As PA is a Command responsibility, the decision to host media in NATO HQs or units on operations is at the discretion of the affected HQ commander, in accordance with direction from theatre HQ

and/or the policies established by the ACO HQ. Nations that individually establish media embedding programs are encouraged to see that media are offered opportunity to meet with and be briefed by senior NATO officers or officials prior to being embedded. Ground rules respecting operational security and privacy are operation- or activity-specific and are the responsibility of ACO. Media representatives hosted by NATO will sign a waiver of liability exempting the nation and organisation from any claims that might arise as a result of any injuries, harm or damage.

56. Media Travel and Life Support. Media representatives at all levels need to understand the challenges the military faces in working in fluid environments, and accept that blanket protection of media personnel will not be possible. Accordingly, journalists who expect to work in these types of environment should be trained in risk evaluation and the fundamentals of working alongside the military. The responsibility rests with the individual or the individual's employer to ensure that they are appropriately prepared and trained for the assignment.

57. Journalists will be expected to equip themselves with their own personal protective equipment (body armour, helmet). However, accredited correspondents may be issued with appropriate specialist protective clothing as well as being provided any required training in its use. Media who are hosted by NATO should be afforded life support (including accommodation and food), and may have access to communications and transport as the local situation and conditions permit.

58. Significant Incidents. Significant incidents including casualties, accidents and damage to property or equipment involving NATO forces will quickly generate media and public interest and will be publicly acknowledged at the lowest appropriate level in the NATO chain of command. Such announcements will be made in close coordination with the nations and organisations involved. Nations, as well as organisations working closely with Alliance forces, retain the prerogative to release specific details about incidents involving their personnel, property or equipment, including the names of those killed or injured, the details of damaged property or equipment, and the status of investigations or medical treatment.

59. Casualties. NATO PA offices in theatre will acknowledge deaths or serious injuries to personnel under NATO command in accordance with the PA principles. A number of considerations will inform when this is, and each case or incident will be dealt with individually. Ideally, NATO military PA will inform media first, and thus be ahead of adversary efforts to shape and frame media coverage of the situation for their own purposes. This holds true in the case of single or multiple casualties from one or more nations.

60. Release of the name, nationality and personal details of a service member or service members who die/dies or is seriously injured is a national responsibility.

61. Where casualties are incurred during an ongoing operation, relevant and verified information will be disseminated by NATO PA to the media in a timely fashion, while respecting the prerogative of troop contributing nations to confirm the nationality and detailed nature of casualties and the detailed circumstances of the event. This requires speedy and proactive coordination to ensure message consistency amongst NATO and national PA communications.

62. The NATO CPAO in theatre will ensure close coordination with respective senior in-theatre national military representatives. The Public Diplomacy Division at NATO HQ has the means and mechanisms to communicate with troop contributing nations' delegations and PA authorities in national capitals.

LEXICON OF TERMS

This lexicon groups together the most frequently used terms pertaining to public affairs work in NATO. Public affairs products are listed separately for ease of use. The terms used here are in the process of being submitted to the MC Terminology Committee to be considered for inclusion in AAP-6 NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions.

ACCREDITATION

The formal recognition of a journalist or other media representative by an official national entity or international organisation; can also refer to the accreditation card or other document issued to the media representative.

AUDIENCE

A specified group or persons to whom NATO public affairs efforts are directed.

BLOG

First-person Internet-based journal of personal views and opinions. Some achieve mass appeal or commercial status and compete with established and recognised news organisations.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Used to inform media that a speech text released prior to it being given (usually provided under embargo) must be compared to the actual speech, which takes precedence and should be used when quoting therefrom.

CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER (CPAO)

The senior PAO in a NATO permanent or field headquarters. The CPAO is the Commander's public affairs advisor and official spokesperson, reporting directly to the Commander. Responsible to plan and implement the PA campaign.

CITIZEN JOURNALIST

A person who independently gathers and reports news, views or opinions using means other than through a media organisation.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS (COMREL)

One of the three pillars of NATO military PA. Refers to the relationship between military and civilian communities in proximity to NATO installations in the Alliance's member nations, including the general public, business, service organisations, and other non-media entities.

EMBARGO

An agreement with one or more media representatives or organisations not to publish defined information before a specified date and time. This is usually applied to protect time-sensitive information.

FACILITIES

Transport, briefings, shelter, communications, power, etc., which enable media to gather (witness, hear) information, record (type, visual, audio) it, and transmit it via commercial or military means.

FREELANCE(R)

An independent journalist not employed continuously on a full-time basis with any one media organisation. They usually sell their work to one or more media organisation(s) on a piece by piece basis during temporary assignments.

GROUND RULES

Conditions mutually agreed in advance with a media representative that govern the terms of an interview or other activity and the use of that information.

INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Actions designed to affect information and/or information systems, performed by any actor.

INFORMATION OPERATIONS (INFO OPS)

A military function to provide advice and coordination of military information activities in order to create desired effects on the will, understanding and capability of adversaries, potential adversaries and other NAC approved parties in support of Alliance mission objectives. See MC 422.

INITIAL EXERCISE NEWS RELEASE (IENR)

The initial news release formally announcing a NATO military exercise. The responsibility and authority for this rests with the officer scheduling the exercise and is produced in consultation with higher HQ where there are public and/or political sensitivities.

INTERNAL INFORMATION

One of the three pillars of NATO PA. Organisational communication with NATO members, civilian employees and family members of those serving with or affiliated to NATO. It does not include activities of officers or managers for the purpose of informing their staffs of unit or section developments or communications that provide administrative direction. Also referred to as Command Information.

JOURNALIST

A person employed by a media organisation to gather and report news.

JOURNALISTS IN AREAS OF ARMED CONFLICT

Contrary to war correspondents, the Geneva Convention recognises "journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict" (Article 79, Protocol I, 1977). These are journalists not accompanying the armed forces of one of the belligerents. Such journalists are guaranteed the same protections accorded civilians under the Geneva Convention.

MEDIA

Those organisations or persons who gather and disseminate news; also refers to the mediums by which news is transmitted (newspapers, TV, radio, Internet, etc).

MEDIA ESCORT

A person assigned to accompany journalists and other media representatives.

MEDIA INFORMATION CENTRE (MIC)

One or more centres subordinate to an NMIC that are operating in forward locations.

MEDIA OPERATIONS

All activities pertaining to managing the interaction with the news media; can refer to the function responsible for such activities, such as the "media operations section."

MEDIA POOL

News media who mutually agree to gather and share material with a larger group when access to an activity or event is limited, typically when news media support resources cannot accommodate a large number. Some ground rules may be agreed in advance to ensure that different types of media are granted access. In general, the PAO should indicate the availability of the breakdown of seats available and leave selection of who is in the pool to the media representatives.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE

All persons accredited as journalists, including those who directly support the gathering and reporting of news, such as producers, researchers and photographers, excluding drivers, interpreters, or others not directly involved in the news process.

NATO MEDIA INFORMATION CENTRE (NMIC)

A public affairs facility established to host and inform journalists and other media representatives in a NATO operations mission or exercise area. A NMIC will normally contain a briefing area, offices for public affairs staff, and should offer telephone, internet and other services to media representatives.

NATO MILITARY PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PA)

The function responsible to promote NATO's military aims and objectives to audiences in order to enhance awareness and understanding of military aspects of the Alliance. This includes planning and conducting media relations, internal communications, and community relations.

PROPAGANDA

Information, ideas, doctrines, or special appeals disseminated to influence the opinion, emotions, attitudes, or behaviour of any specified group in order to benefit the sponsor either directly or indirectly:

- Black: purports to originate from a source other than the true one.
- Grey: does not specifically identify any source.
- White: disseminated and acknowledged by the sponsor or by an accredited agency thereof.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS (PSYOPS)

Planned psychological activities using methods of communication and other means directed to approved audiences in order to influence perceptions, attitudes and behaviour, affecting the achievement of political and military objectives. See MC 402.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS APPROACH

The level of public profile to be adopted. It may change in time, space and phase of any operation. An approach can be very active, active or reactive, and be different for external and internal audiences.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER (PAO)

A person trained and qualified to practice public affairs. In NATO, a person posted or hired into a position established as a PAO.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The totality of measures and means to inform, communicate and cooperate with a broad range of target audiences world-wide, with the aim to raise the level of awareness and understanding about NATO, promoting its policies and activities, thereby fostering support for the Alliance and developing trust and confidence in it. See SG(2003)0876(INV).

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DIVISION

The Division located at NATO HQ Brussels, and headed by an Assistant Secretary-General, responsible to explain the NATO organisation's policies and objectives to the public. See NATO Handbook, 2006.

REGISTRATION

The process of confirming the credentials of a journalist or other media representative. The media representative may be required to fill out a registration form and provide proof of identity and affiliation with a news organisation. NATO may issue a photo-registration card to facilitate access.

SECURITY AT THE SOURCE

The practice of protecting sensitive or classified information where it originates. In PA, this means ensuring that media representatives are not unintentionally exposed to sensitive or classified information and cannot intentionally or unintentionally report it.

WAR CORRESPONDENT

A journalist who reports, or has reported, firsthand on war or armed conflict. Under the Geneva Convention, (Article 4, Protocol III 1949) a war correspondent is a journalist or other media representative accompanying the armed forces of a belligerent; if captured while accompanying armed forces, a war correspondent is to be accorded the status of a prisoner of war.

PA PRODUCTS:

BACKGROUNDERS

An explanation of an issue, activity or program, usually to provide context and perspective for the use of journalists. Can refer to a product, generally a written piece, or to a verbal briefing and/or presentation by a spokesperson.

FACT SHEET

An overview of data and information on a specific topic. Generally is a collection of factual information as reference material, and short on the effort to impart explanations.

IMAGERY

All materials that identify NATO personnel, equipment or activities through the use of visual images.

INTERNET POSTING

The process of loading a presentation or product onto a publicly accessible server, and creating the links required to make the item publicly "live."

MEDIA ADVISORY

An alert to inform media agencies of an upcoming newsworthy event or activity.

MEDIA LINES

Also called Talking Points and/or Messages. Organizationally approved responses to an issue for use by spokespersons when dealing with media.

MASTER MEDIA MESSAGES

Overarching, key 3-5 points developed by a higher political or military authority and incorporated into the products and activities of subordinate organisations. Ultimately, reduces even the most complex of issues into a manageable number of remarks of soundbite-length.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Also called Press Point, Newser, Presser, Media Availability. A chance for media to meet with an organisational spokesperson, usually on camera and often before or after a notable meeting or activity. Is distinguished from a *news conference* in that the setting in a media opportunity is regarded as more impromptu and less formal, with quite limited time with the spokesperson and not necessarily with a view to imparting "new news."

NEWS RELEASE

Information designed to notify audiences, particularly media, of an event, issue or activity that is newsworthy, and generally, something that has just happened or is just about to happen. Usually provides an organizational position, view and/or statement.

NEWS CONFERENCE

A group of two or more media purposefully gathered to obtain information from an organisational spokesperson. Implies there is something new or newsworthy to impart; otherwise, use a *media opportunity*.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE (PAG)

Addresses emerging public affairs issues or issues likely not covered by existing plans or guidance, and issued as required by CPAOs. At a minimum, PAG will summarize the issue, identify lead organisation(s), name spokespersons, list messages, and provide coordinating instructions.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PLAN

Details relating to the planning and conduct of a PA-related activity; in effect the “execution” paragraph detailing what will be done, where, when, how and by whom. Can be an annex to an operations or contingency plan, or stand on its own.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS STRATEGY

A document that provides a broader public affairs approach that sets overall themes and goals for an organisation or initiative. Should include master messages. Action-oriented PA plans derive their guidance from PA strategies approved by higher authorities.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A document that provides spokespersons with organizationally approved lines to a series of questions expected from media.

STATEMENT

Remarks by the speaker at the event, usually to public audiences.