



INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Public affairs (PA) is defined as “communication activities with external and internal audiences” (Joint Publication 3-61, [Public Affairs](#)). PA is a Department of the Air Force (DAF) function and advances the priorities and mission objectives of both the US Air Force and US Space Force by means of integrated planning, execution, and assessment of communication capabilities. “Through strategic and responsive release of accurate and useful information, imagery, and musical products to Air Force, domestic, and international audiences, PA puts operational actions into context; facilitates the development of informed perceptions about Air Force operations; helps undermine adversarial propaganda efforts; and contributes to the achievement of national, strategic, and operational objectives.” (Air Force Instruction (AFI) 35-101, [Public Affairs Responsibilities and Management](#)).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GUIDANCE

It is Department of Defense (DOD) policy to make available timely and accurate information so the public, the Congress, and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. DOD Directive (DODD) 5122.05, [Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs \(ATSD\(PA\)\)](#), delineates principles of information that apply in supporting the DOD policy.

In the context of military activities and operations across the competition continuum, PA provides an essential capability to commanders. Specifically, PA provides commanders with the means to leverage an understanding of how information impacts the perceptions, attitudes, and decision-making processes of relevant actors in order to affect their behaviors in ways favorable to mission objectives.

This mainly occurs through inform activities that include the release of accurate information to put activities and operations in context; facilitate informed perceptions about those operations; and counter adversarial misinformation, disinformation, propaganda and other forms of malign influence. Ultimately, these activities aid the understanding, trust and support of the US population, allies, and partners while also acting to deter, dissuade and otherwise influence adversaries and relevant actors.
