



PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES

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Public Affairs (PA) operations begin at home, before the first Service member deploys, and continue long after the last service member is redeployed. PA operations focus on ten synergistic activities to achieve the desired effects of its [core competencies](#):

ACTIVITIES

- ✦ Public Affairs Functional Management.
- ✦ Communication Planning.
- ✦ Security and Policy Review.
- ✦ Media Operations.
- ✦ Community Engagement.
- ✦ Environmental.
- ✦ Visual Information.
- ✦ Band Operations.
- ✦ Contingency Operations and Wartime Readiness.
- ✦ Command Information.

PA functional management

PA functional management ensures the PA office and assigned personnel are resourced, trained, equipped, and ready to accomplish the mission in garrison or deployed.

Communication planning

Communication planning is important to the creation of strategic, operational, and tactical effects in PA operations. PA operators should gain awareness of the aspects of the total [information environment](#) (IE) affecting their location or operation. They should have the means to evaluate and analyze aspects of the IE. PA operators rely on portions of operation plans, lessons learned, and an understanding of the IE to build plans that help to create a commander's desired effects. It is essential to overall mission success that PA is a part of the strategy design and planning phases of an operation to ensure its capabilities are employed to its full effectiveness.

Security and policy review

While adhering to the policy of “maximum disclosure, minimum delay,” PA ensures information intended for public release neither adversely affects national security nor threatens the safety, security, or privacy of Service personnel. Per Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of the Air Force (DAF) policies, information is not withheld from release merely to protect the Service from criticism or embarrassment.

Media operations

Working proactively with the media increases trust and two-way communication. It is often one of the most rapid and credible means of delivering the commander’s message. Remaining open, honest, and accessible to the maximum extent possible usually results in greater accuracy, context, and timeliness in communicating with internal and external audiences.

Commanders who use PA operations to gain predictive awareness of the IE can often successfully shape adverse issues and set the tone for subsequent discussion of the issues in the IE. Conversely, failure to employ effective media operations can place commanders in a reactive stance, responding to the public debate established by an adversary or questions driving the news media agenda. A reactive posture allows others to establish the context for an issue. It can potentially degrade operations by eroding member morale and public and international support.

Community engagement

Community engagement encompasses activities of interest to the general public, businesses, academia, veterans, service organizations, military-related associations, think tanks, and other community entities. Working collaboratively with and through these various groups enhances mutual understanding, cooperation, and support necessary for effective operations.

Forward-area community engagement and key leader engagement in a contingency will usually fall within the scope of a civil affairs plan. PA operators should be aware of civil affairs efforts and, when possible, complement them with PA products and activities. In peacetime, active community engagement programs help to build greater acceptance for operations with US and international audiences.

Environmental

PA supports environmental program objectives and requirements by facilitating public notification and involvement and communicating the military’s commitment to environmental excellence.

Visual information

Visual products, such as photo, video, and graphics, are essential to effective communication and document the Service's visual history, through the accessioning process, for future generations. Visual products communicate strategic, operational, and tactical mission requirements, goals, and objectives.

Commanders at all levels may use visual information (VI) capabilities for their communication needs as well as a tool for operational planning and decision making. Other mission-related imagery uses include support to training, battle damage assessment, and public information. The DAF is required to transfer VI products to the National Archives and Records Administration as described in [DAA-0330-2013-0014, DoD Visual Information Records Schedule](#); for this reason, commanders should prioritize the use of VI assets to support mission-related activities.

Combat camera (COMCAM) is a specialized VI capability that provides "the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the military Departments, the combatant commands, and joint task forces with a directed imagery capability in support of operational and planning requirements during wartime operations, worldwide crises, contingencies, humanitarian operations, and joint exercises." Air Force COMCAM teams are trained, equipped, and organized for rapid global deployment to provide documentation of operations. They are equipped for day and night operations and also possess fully qualified and certified aircrew members for missions requiring aerial documentation.

Band operations

Air Force bands provide a broad spectrum of musical support for events that enhance the morale, motivation, and esprit de corps of personnel, foster public trust and support, aid recruiting initiatives, and promote national interests at home and abroad.

Band missions will be tied directly to combined force air component commander (CFACC) focus areas and integrated into major exercises in order to enhance troop morale and partner relationship building. The band is a strategic asset for the CFACC and US Central Command. Air expeditionary wing leadership should leverage the Air Forces Central band to build partnerships and enhance relationships. Additionally, the band will seek to support Embassy mission and relationship building objectives while in a particular country.

**Air Forces Central Command
Public Affairs Strategy, 2016**

Musical operations provide unique delivery methods to inform and entertain audiences worldwide. These operations can influence foreign decision-makers and public audiences as they provide information that demonstrates readiness, operational capabilities, and resolve to use air and space power to achieve operational objectives.

Contingency operations and wartime readiness

PA forces are foremost a deployable combat capability, fully trained and prepared to meet the needs of the joint warfighter inside and outside the wire. The mission of PA is to plan, coordinate, and integrate US military public information activities and resources in support of the commander's intent and concept of operations. PA enhances morale and readiness to accomplish the mission; gains and maintains public trust and support for military operations; provides trusted counsel to leaders; communicates US resolve in a manner that directly affects the operational environment through global influence and deterrence, and ensures visual documentation of joint and Service operations.

Command information

PA provides communication tools to link personnel with their leaders. Command information helps Service personnel and their families understand their purpose, role, and value to their Service. A free flow of command information creates awareness of and support for the mission, increases individuals' effectiveness as Service ambassadors, enhances morale, reduces the spread of rumors and disinformation, and provides avenues for feedback.

Command information operations may have higher-order effects beyond personnel and their families. For example, command information operations that demonstrate readiness, operational capabilities, or resolve may influence foreign decision-makers, including potential adversaries, and other public audiences.
