



# CURTIS E. LEMAY CENTER

FOR DOCTRINE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



## ANNEX 3-61 PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPERATIONS

### COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Last Updated: 19 June 2014

Public affairs (PA) operations are a commander's responsibility and are associated with and create asymmetric effects. Even those PA operations conducted at the operational and tactical levels may generate strategic effects. Commanders are ultimately responsible for successful integration of PA capabilities into operations. Commanders require a clear understanding of PA's role in operations to help achieve their desired effects.

PA personnel should maintain awareness of, and advise the commander and planners regarding, public opinion and political, social, and cultural shifts affecting operations. **Public affairs operations give commanders awareness of the international public information environment and the means to use information to take offensive and preemptive defensive actions as part of Air Force operations.** Commanders face the challenge of balancing the task of informing the public with the need to maintain operational security, a traditional cornerstone of successful military planning and execution. PA operations are an important military capability of information operations, providing public information to defend against adversary propaganda and misinformation directed at domestic and international audiences. **PA operations are a force multiplier by analyzing and influencing the information environment's effect on military operations** and delivering increased battlespace awareness to the commander through analysis of the information environment. PA capabilities are most effective when planned and executed as an integral part of an overall operation.

PA operations deliver open and honest two-way communication within the Air Force and to the public. Commanders instill trust and enhance morale by personally communicating within their commands. As spokespersons for the Air Force, the Department of Defense (DOD), and the US Government, commanders and their representatives play a vital role in building public support for military operations and communicating US resolve to international audiences.

Providing the maximum disclosure of timely and accurate information as rapidly as possible enables the commander to seize the information initiative. **Involved and sustained public engagement establishes Air Force information dominance, making the Air Force a preferred source of information to internal and external audiences.**