

APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MEDIA

1. Preparation results in effective discussions with the news media. Central to the process is the effort to identify what information will be released based on prevailing public affairs guidance and operations security. Commanders, briefers, and public affairs personnel should be aware of the basic facts of any operation and sensitive to the various consequences of communicating them to the public.
 - c. Approximate friendly casualty and prisoner of war figures by Service. Approximate figures of enemy personnel detained during each action or operation.
 - d. Nonsensitive, unclassified information regarding US air, ground, sea, space, and special operations, past and present.
 - e. In general terms, identification and location of military targets and objectives previously attacked and the types of ordnance expended.
 - f. Date, time, or location of previous conventional military missions and actions as well as mission results.
 - g. Number of combat air patrol or reconnaissance missions and/or sorties flown in the operational area. Generic description of origin of air operations, such as “land” or “carrier-based.”
 - h. Weather and climate conditions.
 - i. If appropriate, allied participation by type (ground units, ships, aircraft).
 - j. Conventional operations’ unclassified code names.
 - k. Names and hometowns of US military personnel.
 - l. Names of installations and assigned units.
 - m. Size of friendly force participating in an action or operation using general terms such as “multi-battalion,” or “naval task force.”
2. “Security at the source” serves as the basis for ensuring that no information is released which jeopardizes operations security or the safety and privacy of joint military forces. Under this concept, individuals meeting with journalists are responsible for ensuring that no classified or sensitive information is revealed. This guidance also applies to photographers, who should be directed not to take pictures of classified areas or equipment or in any way to compromise sensitive information.
3. Each operational situation will require a deliberate public affairs assessment in order to identify specific information to be released. The following categories of information are usually releasable, though individual situations may require modifications:
 - a. The arrival of US units in the commander’s area of responsibility once officially announced by the Department of Defense or by other commands in accordance with release authority granted by the Office of the ASD(PA). Information could include mode of travel, sea or air, date of departure and home station or port.
 - b. Approximate friendly force strength and equipment figures.

n. Types of forces involved (e.g., aircraft, ships, carrier battle groups, tank and infantry units).

4. Classified aspects of equipment, procedures, and operations must be protected from disclosure to the media. In more general terms, information in the following categories of information should not be revealed because of potential jeopardy to future operations, the risk to human life, possible violation of host nation and/or allied sensitivities, or the possible disclosure of intelligence methods and sources. While these guidelines serve to guide military personnel who talk with the media, they may also be used as ground rules for media coverage. The list is not necessarily complete and should be adapted to each operational situation.

a. For US (or allied) units, specific numerical information on troop strength, aircraft, weapons systems, on-hand equipment, or supplies available for support of combat units. General terms should be used to describe units, equipment and/or supplies.

b. Any information that reveals details of future plans, operations, or strikes, including postponed or canceled operations.

c. Information and imagery that would reveal the specific location of military forces or show the level of security at military installations or encampments. For datelines, stories will state that the report originates from general regions unless a specific country has acknowledged its participation.

d. Rules of engagement.

e. Information on intelligence activities, including sources and methods, lists of targets and battle damage assessments.

f. During an operation, specific information on friendly force troop movement or size, tactical deployments, and dispositions that would jeopardize operations security or lives. This would include unit designations and names of operations until released by the JFC.

g. Identification of mission aircraft points of origin, other than as land or carrier-based.

h. Information on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of weapon systems and tactics (to include, but not limited to enemy camouflage, cover, deception, targeting, direct and indirect fire, intelligence collection, or security measures).

i. Specific identifying information on missing or downed aircraft or ships while search and rescue operations are planned or underway.

j. Special operations forces' unique methods, equipment, or tactics which, if disclosed, would cause serious harm to the ability of these forces to accomplish their mission.

k. Information on operational or support vulnerabilities that could be used against US or allied units until that information no longer provides tactical advantage to the enemy and is therefore released by the joint commander. Damage and casualties may be described as "light," "moderate," or "heavy."

l. Specific operating methods and tactics (e.g., offensive and defensive tactics or speed and formations). General terms such as "low" or "fast" may be used.