



DoD INSTRUCTION 5122.08

USE OF DoD TRANSPORTATION ASSETS FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS PURPOSES

Originating Component:	Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs
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Approved by:	Chris Meagher, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5122.05, this issuance establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for the use of DoD transportation assets for public affairs (PA) transportation.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

This issuance:

a. Applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands (CCMDs), the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

b. Applies to use of DoD transportation assets for PA purposes with other Federal departments or agencies and with foreign governments.

c. Does not apply to:

(1) Use of DoD transportation assets for events or activities designed primarily to meet Service recruiting or accession goals.

(2) Defense support of civil authorities and qualifying entities pursuant to DoDD 3025.18 and related issuances, including DoD Instruction (DoDI) 3025.20.

1.2. POLICY.

a. PA transportation, as defined in DoDI 4515.13, may be provided when such transportation is determined to be primarily in the interest of the DoD to enable public understanding of DoD activities, including:

(1) PA travel in connection with public and media coverage of military operations and exercises, military sponsored events, military installation visits, or other PA objectives that add to the public understanding of DoD activities.

(2) Transportation of non-Federal entity (NFE) passengers, a category that includes media members, involved strictly in approved PA activities that are of primary interest to the DoD in accordance with DoDD 5122.05. Activities may include community outreach programs, tours, or other events in which a DoD Component is either a sponsor or a participant that maintains lead for development (e.g., participant lists, agenda) and execution of any activity using DoD transportation assets in accordance with Volumes 1 and 2 of DoDI 5410.19.

(3) Transportation filmed as part of a DoD-sponsored entertainment media production in accordance with DoDI 5410.16.

(4) Transportation of individuals in support of approved PA activities arranged by any DoD Component jointly with or at the request of another Federal agency or foreign government.

b. PA air transportation must be in accordance with the air transportation guidelines in DoDI 4515.13. PA planners must confirm that commercial transportation is not available or is inadequate to fulfill mission objectives. When NFE passengers travel on military aircraft, these aircraft must be designed or configured for passenger transport. Exceptions are orientation flights and flights in non-passenger aircraft that serve a direct PA purpose, such as NFE ride-alongs, or tandem jumps with DoD jet demonstration or parachute teams in accordance with DoDI 5410.19.

c. PA transportation likely to garner national or international media interest must be forwarded through command channels to the Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD(PA)) for awareness before the travel occurs.

d. DoD may not contract commercial air transportation for media member travel.

e. Records created or received pertaining to this issuance must be managed in accordance with the applicable DoD Component Records Disposition Schedule.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. ATSD(PA).

The ATSD(PA):

- a. Establishes policy and provides guidance regarding PA transportation.
- b. Reviews and approves PA transportation requests in accordance with DoDIs 4515.13 and 5410.16 and Volume 2 of DoDI 5410.19, for:
 - (1) PA transportation arranged by any DoD Component with, or at the request of, another Federal agency or foreign government.
 - (2) Non-local PA transportation, unless delegated in accordance with Paragraphs 2.2, 2.3., 3.1.b.(1), and 3.1.b.(3)(b).
 - (3) Intertheater PA transportation.

2.2. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS AND CJCS.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the CJCS approve non-local PA transportation that is pertinent to the mission and scope of their respective DoD Components in accordance with Section 3.

2.3. COMBATANT COMMANDERS (CCDRS).

The CCDRs approve requests for PA transportation within their areas of responsibility (AORs) in accordance with Section 3.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. AUTHORITY.

a. Local Travel.

(1) Except when otherwise specified in this issuance or prohibited by applicable Military Department policies, commanders at all levels are authorized to grant transportation approval for local travel for PA purposes on DoD transportation assets under their operational control if that travel is within the scope of the mission and responsibilities of their command, and all of the following conditions apply:

- (a) The PA activity is not the responsibility of a higher authority.
- (b) The public interest in the PA activity is confined primarily to the mission or vicinity of that command.
- (c) Transportation is provided for NFE passengers who are a part of an approved component PA activity that is in the primary interest of the DoD.

(2) Visits to ships at sea by NFE passengers for PA activities are considered local travel for the purposes of this issuance if the visit is only to and from shore and ship. Commanders and PA staffs must also adhere to any Service-specific guidance about embark and visit programs.

(3) National Guard-sponsored NFE passenger travel to locations within a geographically neighboring State that return to the point-of-origin or nearby location are considered local travel for the purposes of this issuance if all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) The purpose of the travel is to demonstrate to NFE passengers the personnel, aviation, facility, and other capabilities of the sponsoring and neighboring State National Guard units.

- (b) The PA objective cannot be met without interstate travel.

- (c) Both States' Adjutants General concur in the travel and the National Guard Bureau PA office approves the travel.

(4) Not all orientation flights for NFE passengers are considered PA activities. DoDI 4515.13 must also be reviewed, as needed, for further guidance.

b. Non-local Travel.

(1) Delegated Approval Authority.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments, the CJCS, and the CCDRs have the authority to approve non-local PA transportation in accordance with Paragraphs 2.2. and 2.3.

(a) Unless ATSD(PA) approval is required, the PA offices for each Military Department may control and approve PA transportation by their respective units in accordance with DoDI 4515.13. Military Departments that delegate approval authority for non-local PA transportation, in accordance with Paragraphs 2.2. and 2.3., cannot delegate approval authority lower than the major command level of the Military Service concerned.

(b) The CJCS may delegate approval authority to the Director, Joint Staff.

(c) The CCDRs cannot delegate approval authority below their Service component heads.

(2) Intratheater Travel.

CCDRs or their designees are authorized to approve intratheater PA transportation in accordance with Paragraph 2.3. and provide dedicated airlift or seats for NFE passengers. Both of the following conditions must be met:

(a) PA transportation is only provided aboard assets contracted or organic to U.S. forces in the approving commander's AOR. If a request involves transportation assets not organic to the CCMD that are currently in the requesting CCMD's AOR, the use of the asset must be coordinated through and approved by the owning command even though the CCDR approves the PA purpose. In accordance with Paragraph 1.2.d., the DoD may not contract commercial air transportation assets for media member travel.

(b) Dedicated DoD transportation assets are only provided when the CCDR determines, on a case-by-case basis, that other means of transportation are not reasonably available or adequate to allow timely media coverage of an operation or PA activity.

(3) Retained Approval Authority for Intertheater Travel.

(a) The ATSD(PA) approves intertheater PA transportation, except as noted in Paragraph 3.1.b.(3)(b). The DoD Component sponsoring the intertheater travel coordinates transportation with the United States Transportation Command, provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. The supported CCDR agrees.

2. Media members have a PA escort.

3. Documentation requirements prescribed by the DoD and, as applicable, the countries involved, including valid identification and country clearances, are met. For more information about DoD documentation requirements, see Paragraphs 3.7. and 4.8. of DoDI 4515.13.

(b) Travel involving more than one CCMD with a physical AOR will be approved by the ATSD(PA). CCDRs may authorize PA transportation from the nation where their headquarters is located to their AOR if their headquarters is located outside their AOR. For example:

1. United States Africa Command may authorize travel from Germany to Africa.

2. United States Southern Command and United States Central Command may authorize travel from the United States to their respective AORs.

3.2. REIMBURSEMENT.

a. The approving authority may authorize PA transportation in accordance with Paragraphs 1.2.a.(1) through (4) on a non-reimbursable basis when:

(1) Both of these conditions are met:

(a) Commercial transportation is not available or is otherwise inadequate to fulfill mission objectives, or the individual is in immediate danger of loss of life, limb, or sight.

(b) Travel on DoD transportation assets is on a space-available, non-interference basis on previously scheduled flights, to the maximum extent possible.

(2) Use of DoD transportation assets is an integral part of media coverage or required to accomplish a PA objective; or

(3) The safety and security of DoD-accredited media member movement is unduly compromised by not using DoD transportation assets.

b. If the approving authority does not authorize PA transportation on a non-reimbursable basis, then NFE passengers involved in approved PA activities are required to reimburse the DoD for travel at the prevailing commercial rate (e.g., full coach fare) available to the public between the day the travel was planned and the day the travel occurred.

(1) The DoD Components must receive written agreement for reimbursement from passengers before providing PA transportation.

(2) Procedures for reimbursement are included in DoDD 4500.09 and Volumes 11A and 11B of DoD 7000.14-R.

3.3. AUTHORIZATION.

a. DoD Components will not commit DoD transportation assets for PA transportation until the request is coordinated and approved by the appropriate authority, in accordance with Paragraphs 2.1.b.(1) through (3), 2.2., 2.3., 3.1.a., and 3.1.b., as applicable.

b. All requests for PA transportation must be submitted to the appropriate approval authority through the appropriate command channels. All Army and Air National Guard requests for non-local PA transportation will be coordinated through National Guard Bureau PA before approval by the applicable approval authority. In instances requiring ATSD(PA) approval, justification is required to establish both the PA purpose to be served and the necessity for use of DoD transportation assets in accordance with this issuance.

c. Travel authorization (including invitational travel authorization, if applicable) is issued by the sponsoring organization in accordance with Chapter 3 of the Joint Travel Regulations.

d. When the approval authority determines passengers must provide reimbursement for travel, the approval authority will also confirm passengers have required authorization and make timely payment in accordance with the Joint Travel Regulations.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
AOR	area of responsibility
ATSD(PA)	Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs
CCDR	Combatant Commander
CCMD	Combatant Command
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
DoDD	DoD directive
DoDI	DoD instruction
NFE	non-Federal entity
PA	public affairs

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

TERM	DEFINITION
AOR	Defined in the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.
DoD transportation assets	Any form or type of transportation (i.e., land, sea, or air) that a DoD Component provides.
Federal agency	Defined in Section 551 of Title 5, United States Code. This includes departments and agencies such as the Departments of Homeland Security, State, and Transportation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Central Intelligence Agency.
geographically neighboring State	Typically, one of the 50 States of the United States that shares a border with another State. In some cases, two States that are near to one another but do not share a border may be considered geographically neighboring States for purposes of this issuance (e.g., Maine with Massachusetts or Vermont, and Virginia with Pennsylvania).
intertheater	Involving the AOR of more than one CCMD.

TERM	DEFINITION
intertheater travel	Transportation linking theaters to the continental United States, as well as the airlift between CCMDs. Such travel often involves long-range assets assigned by United States Transportation Command.
intratheater	Within the AOR of a CCMD.
intratheater travel	Transportation within the AOR of a CCMD.
local travel	<p>Transportation that occurs in the vicinity of the DoD Component or installation concerned and/or is proximate to the scope of its mission, and public interest in the PA activity involved is primarily confined to the vicinity and/or mission of the DoD Component concerned. May include PA orientation flights or point-to-point travel.</p> <p>PA transportation may be considered local if travel involves visiting installations overseen by the sponsoring military command or if a unit conducts PA transportation while performing its mission as part of a military operation or exercise away from its home installation. However, local travel does not include the following, regardless of the scope of the sponsoring command’s mission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Intertheater travel;Travel from one country to another; orTravel to or from the continental United States, Alaska, or Hawaii to or from U.S. territories.
major command	Military command that reports directly to the Service Headquarters and is usually commanded by a U.S. military officer in the grade of O-9 or above.
media member	<p>An individual employed or contracted by a civilian radio or television station, newspaper, newsmagazine, periodical, or news agency to gather and report on a newsworthy event.</p> <p>Also includes internal and U.S. or foreign PA-credentialed journalists, broadcasters, producers, screenwriters, playwrights, authors, photographers, videographers, and documentarians, as well as PA-credentialed freelancers, bloggers, and social media influencers. Their support staff (e.g., lighting technician, audio technician, grip, researcher) may be considered “media” for the purpose of support in accordance with this issuance.</p>

TERM	DEFINITION
NFE	A self-sustaining non-Federal person or organization, established, operated, and controlled by any individual(s) acting outside the scope of any official capacity as officers, employees, or agents of the Federal Government. It is an incorporated or unincorporated person or organization that is not an agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government. NFEs also include elements of State, interstate, Indian tribal, or local government, as well as private organizations. Other subsets of NFEs include for-profit businesses, business industry organizations, veteran service organizations, nonprofit NFEs, foundations, community-based or other non-governmental organizations that are not affiliated with a local, State, or Federal Government agency.
non-local travel	All transportation that cannot be considered local, including travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Covering large geographic distances within the United States;From one country to another;To or from the continental United States, Alaska, or Hawaii to or from U.S. territories;Conducted in support of a PA activity that affects more than one DoD Component; orOutside the geographic AOR of the command originating the travel request.
PA	Defined in DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.
PA orientation flights	Continuous flights in DoD aircraft performed within the local flying area and terminating at the point of origin or within proximity to the point of origin as part of an approved component PA activity that is developed, managed, and led through PA channels.
PA transportation	Defined in DoDI 4515.13.
Service component head of a CCMD	The head of a Service component command of a CCMD that reports directly to a CDR.

REFERENCES

- DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 11A, “Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation Volume 11A: Reimbursable Operations Policy,” May 2021, current edition
- DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 11B, “Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation Volume 11B: Reimbursable Operations Policy – Working Capital Funds (WCF),” current edition
- DoD Directive 3025.18, “Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA),” December 29, 2010, as amended
- DoD Directive 4500.09, “Transportation and Traffic Management,” December 27, 2019, as amended
- DoD Directive 5122.05, “Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ATSD(PA)),” August 7, 2017
- DoD Instruction 3025.20, “Defense Support of Special Events,” April 6, 2012, as amended
- DoD Instruction 4515.13, “Air Transportation Eligibility,” January 22, 2016, as amended
- DoD Instruction 5410.16, “DoD Assistance to Non-Government, Entertainment-Oriented Media Productions,” July 31, 2015, as amended
- DoD Instruction 5410.19, “Community Outreach Activities,” date varies by volume
- DoD Instruction 5410.19, Volume 1, “Community Outreach Activities: Policy Overview and Evaluation Procedures,” September 29, 2021
- DoD Instruction 5410.19, Volume 2, “Community Outreach Activities: OSD Outreach Programs, Speaking Engagements, and Support to Non-DoD Organizations,” September 29, 2021
- Joint Travel Regulations, “Uniformed Service Members and DoD Civilian Employees,” April 2024, current edition
- Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition
- United States Code, Title 5, Section 551