

Ref A Retrans of P-For; Ref B Embed PAG

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1. Per Ref A, the SECDEF and CJCS made their intent clear that having media embedded with our combat forces is essential to our overall operations. Embedded media are crucial to countering enemy disinformation, ensuring public support at home and abroad, and building troop morale by documenting their service, sacrifice and accomplishments. Ref B provides a good set of general guidelines for both commanders and media. However, because they are general guidelines, ~~there is room for judgment and interpretation while implementing them at the unit level.~~ This guidance is intended to provide commanders the perspective necessary to guide them as they implement the ground rules established in Ref B.

and strong embeds of mission intent

2. ~~We know that what we're asking of commanders is difficult.~~ In addition to all the demands of combat command, having media present will ~~complicate your tasks and operations.~~ However, as commanders, you are crucial to the success of the media embed program. Embedded media are professionals with an important job to do. It is in the interest of the DoD, and the American people, to ensure media are able to do their jobs successfully. Key to dealing effectively with embedded media is being clear in your direction to them, as well as to those in your command who will deal with them, being willing to listen to media and understand their requirements, and being forthright, forthcoming and honest in all your dealings with them.

idea of challenging

present challenge

3. In order to accomplish their jobs successfully, media should be given the greatest access to people and operations possible consistent with the need to ensure the safety of your people and the success of your mission. The media representatives with your unit are there to tell the full story of your unit including directly reporting on combat operations. This means that, consistent with operational security, they must have access to actual combat operations even if it places them in harm's way.

IN REPLYING TO THE INFORMATION and

4. ~~For~~ media representatives ~~to~~ provide the third-party credibility ~~essential to~~ effectively counter enemy disinformation, and inform the public ~~we must be sure not to do~~ anything that compromises that credibility. To safeguard that credibility we must avoid anything that will be perceived as attempting to manipulate the media coverage. That may mean allowing coverage of subjects that make you or other members of your unit uncomfortable. For example, media may use recognizable images of casualties, although if a member of your unit is killed, per ground rules in ref. B, media may not transmit recognizable images until NOK notification or 72 hours. In addition, there should be no interference with media telling or filing stories that may seem embarrassing to a unit. Ref A specifically states that commanders will assist media in telling both the good stories and the bad. You must keep in mind that preserving the third-party credibility of media coverage of your unit's activities is of the utmost importance. You must be scrupulous in ensuring that any access denied or delay in allowing media to file their stories is strictly to protect the bona-fide safety of your people and/or the success of your mission.

5. Embedding media is for the purpose of having them tell our story. Therefore, consistent with operational security and safety concerns, you should make every effort to support and assist media in transmitting or filing their stories and transporting products.
  
6. To avoid misunderstandings or disputes over ground rules, commanders should thoroughly review them with media representatives in advance. If there are questions about ground rules that can't be answered at the local unit level, those questions should be forwarded to the unit PAO, the CPIC or OASD/PA. Any perceived or actual ground rule violations should be dealt with immediately and resolved at the lowest level possible. Expulsion from a unit for ground rule violations should be reserved for only the most serious cases. If you need guidance, have questions or concerns about any issue involving embedded reporters, contact your unit PAO, the CPIC or OASD/PA for assistance. POC s are...