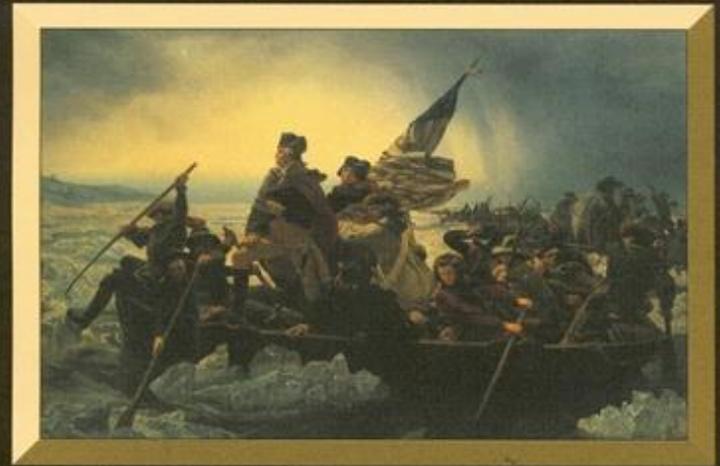




Social Media and Operations Security

...weighing the balance between
security and open communication



OPSEC

*“Even minutiae should have a place in our collection,
for things of a seemingly trifling nature
when enjoyed with others of a more serious cast
may lead to valuable conclusions.”*

George Washington, ca 1776



Overview

- What is OPSEC
- Balancing OPSEC with public affairs
- Operations Security and what it means to your organization (military or not)
- How social media and open communication can make our Army (and your organization) stronger
- Rules of Engagement



What is OPSEC?

OPSEC = Operations Security

- Protection of classified, sensitive, or need-to-know information
- Proprietary information, insider information, trade secrets, etc.

All organizations have their own form of Operations Security – information that should be protected.



Butch Kaufman my son mark is going to iraq, for the second time the 19th of this month i am proud of him, he is 26years old i will be on pins and neetles all the time, his job is dog handler k-9 , i wish all our men and women well, i wish they had a father and son program, i would like to be with him. i am 61years old, and ready to stand by my son and our country . hooah!

Sat at 11:46am · [Report](#)

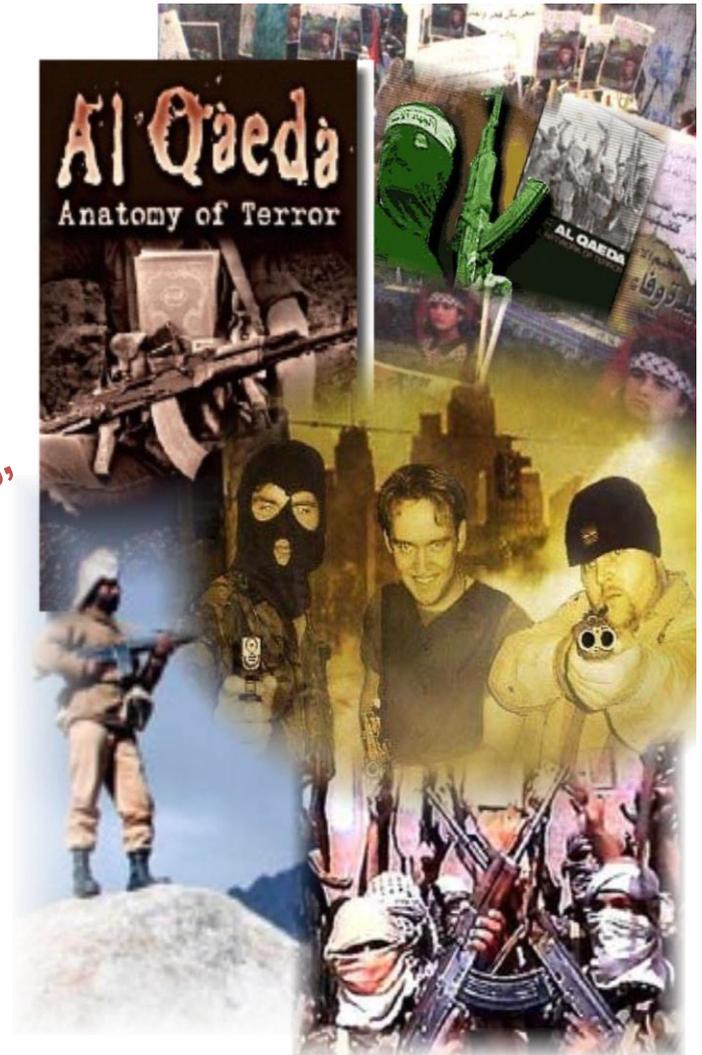


What are they are looking for:

- Names/photographs of important people
- Present and future U.S. capabilities
- Meetings of top officials
- News about U.S. diplomacy
- Important government places
- Information about military facilities:
 - Location
 - Units
 - Weapons used
 - Fortifications & tunnels
 - Amount of lighting
 - Exterior size and shape of buildings
 - Number of Soldiers / officers
 - Ammunition depot locations
- Leave policies
- Brigade and company names
- Degree & speed of mobilization

*80% of the intel
Al Qaeda collects
is from "open source"*

What is OPSEC?



* Source: Al Qaeda Training Manual



Balancing OPSEC w/ Public Affairs

The U.S. Army, and all government organizations, have communications concerns other organizations do not.

- Release of inappropriate information can result in lost lives.
 - Policies and ROE that govern the use of weapons and electronic or acoustic warfare systems
 - Vulnerabilities of defensive dispositions
 - Vulnerabilities to attack
 - Vulnerabilities / capabilities of units, weapons systems
 - Doctrine for using various weapons
 - New weapons that are available or are being employed
 - Overall bed/treatment capacity
 - Shortages in medical specialties / personnel



OPSEC and what it means to your organization

The objective of OPSEC is to make oneself or organization a “Hard Target”

- Make it more difficult for an adversary to identify and exploit vulnerabilities.
- Don't post or publish personal or organizational critical information in public venues, including social media sites.



Teresa Dale I am a Soldier and so is my husband. I give props to all the families here because if it wasn't for u we would not be able to do what we do. I have done my tour in Iraq and now he is serving his and being on the other end of the tour as a family member is so difficult. I can honestly say I look up to all of u have done this before me and are doing it with me. Thank u. to my Soldier all of those with u be safe and come home soon.

May 31 at 9:24pm · Report



Rita at 9:33pm May 31

And as the mother of the son who is serving in Iraq right now and a daughter-in-law who is patiently waiting for her husband, I to salute the Army, and pray for you to keep both of my kids safe in the coming years.



Laura Prybell Packwood My son is currently at FLW 21B...I couldn't be more proud to be his Mom. I'm not Army Strong...I'm Army Family Strong! Thank you to all those who serve and the families that stand behind them! Happy 234 yrs! HOOAH!

4:22pm · Report



Julee, Deb and 2 others like this.



Julee at 5:31pm June 11

My Son is there also he will finish B-fit this wk. come home next wk. I can't wait to hold my Son!!!



Social media can make your organization stronger

Social media is another tool to get your info out, except this one lets your audience dialogue with you and others.



Teresa S Hill Wood I am an Army Mom and proud to be. Without Facebook and my Army and Army Mom support groups I don't know where I would be. We are a family if you need anything, to talk, advice, anything, we are here check us out. We are here for each other. ARMY STRONG! ARMY MOM STRONG!

5:33pm · Comment · Like · Report

👍 2 people like this.



Mystie McGee at 5:34pm June 2

Report ×

I second that!



Tami Recher glad I found this site, my son Tony is currently serving with the 710th BSB, 3rd BCT, 10th Mountain Div. (FT. Drum NY) in Afghanistan. I pray every day for his safe return along with his fellow soldiers.

June 5 at 6:56pm · Report

👍 Nancy likes this.



Lizeth at 6:45pm June 7

God Bless you and your loves....I know how hard deployments are on Families....Stay strong....



Tina at 7:23pm June 8

God Bless you and your family..and thank you.



Tim McLaughlin For all those serving, thank you and God Bless America

June 5 at 4:04pm · Report



Candyce Kissam I'm a New Army Mom! My son, PFC Kissam, started White Phase at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, today. We are so proud of his choice to Serve.

June 5 at 3:57pm · Report

Show 2 more comments...



Candyce at 4:29pm June 5

Oh, Lori. I am so sorry. Hang in there.



Candyce at 4:36pm June 5

Is the last time you talked to Bryant was in Maine? Is he in Iraq yet?



Kaitlyn Gallardo Webb Does anyone know how to find an old Army friend? I have no idea where he could be now. When I knew him he was stationed at Ft. Bliss in the mid 90's. If so can you message me. Thanks!

June 2 at 10:28am · Report



Michael at 10:36am June 2

well if you have AKO access you can look him up in the white pages on there.



Rules of Engagement

If you aren't comfortable placing this information on a sign in your front yard, don't put it on a Web site.



My husband is deployed!
We are on vacation this week



Rules of Engagement

Educate vs. Regulate

- Mitigate the risk of using social media by educating the Soldiers, not by stopping the dialogue.
- Think about what you post and what people can figure out about you.



Deana Correa I love and miss my soldier. I appreciate all you do and what you give up for your country. Heres a big thanks to all serving right now!

Tue at 6:31pm · [Report](#)



Lauren Thompson I love and miss my soldier who is serving in Afghanistan right now!! I have survived 2 weeks of this deployment. Just want to say thanks to all the soldiers for their service and to the families as well for their love and support!!

11:23am · [Report](#)



Rules of Engagement

Treat social media sites like the newspaper. If you don't want to see it in print, don't say it!

WWW.ARMY.MIL
THE OFFICIAL HOMEPAGE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

Home News Media Info Leaders Army Life Join Blog

News Front Page
ARNews
Americas
Middle East
Europe
Africa
Asia & Pacific
Sections
Inside the Army
Human Interest
Community Relations
Health
Science & Technology
News Releases
Archive
RSS
Podcasts

Homepage > News Front Page > Article

U.S. Army Africa honors military spouses

May 8, 2009
By Rick Scavetta (U.S. Army Africa)

Photo credit: Maj. Ryan Dillon, U.S. Army Africa PAO

Maj. Gen. William B. Garrett III, commander of U.S. Army Africa, chats with two military spouses, Mindy Butler and Tiffany Ingledue - whose husbands serve in the 2nd Battalion 503rd Infantry Regiment, recently at a volunteer recognition ceremony.

Related Articles

- Army Spouse wins Food Network's Ultimate Recipe Showdown
- Accessions Command introduces new Army spouse

Stories are written daily about our Soldiers and their families. We are always careful.



Rules of Engagement

Know the rules on what's releasable. Different agencies across the Army interpret rules differently.

- Personally Identifiable Information - any information about an individual which can be used to distinguish or track their identity, or any information linked to an individual, such as employment history.

The screenshot shows the official homepage of the United States Army. The main navigation bar includes links for Home, News, Media, Info, Leaders, Army Life, Join, and Blog. The article featured is dated June 11, 2009, and is written by C. Todd Lopez. The article title is "Wounded warrior makes history as first-ever amputee to complete Army warrant officer school". The image in the article shows a man in a military uniform being pinned with a rank insignia by two other men. The photo credit is "Photo credit: Carlton Wallace".

WWW.ARMY.MIL
THE OFFICIAL HOMEPAGE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

Home News Media Info Leaders Army Life Join Blog

News Front Page

ARNews
Americas
Middle East
Europe
Africa
Asia & Pacific
Sections
Inside the Army
Human Interest
Community Relations
Health
Science & Technology
News Releases
Archive
RSS
Podcasts

Related Articles

- Oprah Show to feature wounded warriors
- Amputee makes history
- Aeromedical Heroes Get DUSTOFF Honors
- Community Waves Red, White, Blue
- The end of an era: Hohenfels trains last Huey pilots

Warrant Officer Johnathan Holley, the first Army amputee to attend warrant officer school, has his new rank pinned by his sons at his graduation ceremony. Holley, an Army human resources technician, made Army history as the first Army amputee to attend Warrant Officer School and to pin on warrant officer bars. He was injured in Iraq in 2004 by an improvised explosive device, and had his left leg amputated below the knee.



Rules of Engagement

Trust your people

- No one is going to intentionally divulge information that will harm their fellow Soldiers.
- Soldiers are taught from day 1 not to divulge information that will harm them or their buddies.



Parting thoughts...

Risks and benefits

- The risks outweigh the benefits – we can't afford NOT to communicate.
- If we're not in the social media space to tell our story, someone else will do it for us.



* Over 500 U.S. Army fan pages in existence



And in the end ?

- Be ready to assume some risk, and mitigate that risk as best you can
- Ensure you have senior leader support and understanding
- Moderate and monitor
- Have a plan for crises



LTC Kevin V. Arata
Director, Online and Social Media Division
U.S. Army
kevin.arata@us.army.mil
703.697.1849

