



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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NOV 4 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Policy Guidance for Visits to Installations by Candidates for Political Office

The just-completed political campaign season provided a number of unique issues for the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Military Services. Several candidates holding political office, who had varying degrees of official responsibilities with respect to DoD, requested access to some military installations. Distinguishing between the candidates' official business and their political activities, and then determining the appropriate response, was often the challenge.

The attached guidance reflects DoD policy as applied to such requests. It slightly expands upon and clarifies long-standing policy incorporated into DoD Public Affairs message, 281449Z Jan 08, subject: DoD Public Affairs Policy Guidance Concerning Political Campaigns and Elections. As this campaign season ends and those challenges are substituted for others, this guidance should be disseminated and memorialized in anticipation of the next campaign season.

Accordingly, the attachment will be incorporated into a revised public affairs message and into the next revision of DoD Directive 1344.10.

David S. C. Chu

Attachments:
As stated

cc: COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS



Access to Installations by Candidates
November 4, 2008

The Department of Defense (DoD) does not engage in partisan political activities. Therefore, its interaction with candidates for political office must not imply or appear to imply official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of any such candidates or political views. This guidance implements DoD Directive 1344.10 and DoD Public Affairs message, 281449Z Jan 08, subject: DoD Public Affairs Policy Guidance Concerning Political Campaigns and Elections.

A candidate for civil office as defined by Department of Defense Directive 1344.10, Political Activities of Members of the Armed Forces, may not be permitted to engage in campaign or election-related activities (e.g., public assemblies, town hall meetings, speeches, fund-raisers, press conferences, post-election celebrations, and concession addresses) while on a United States military installation, which includes overseas installations and areas under the operational control of combat or peacekeeping forces of the United States military.

This prohibition does not limit access to a United States military installation by a candidate who holds a civil office with responsibilities that affect that installation or those who live or work there, in the following situations:

When the candidate seeks to conduct official business on the installation; or

When the candidate seeks to take advantage of activities, services, or resources that are available to him or her by virtue of law or policy (such as recreational activities open to the public or entitlements or benefits such as medical facilities, commissaries, or post/base exchanges).

Installation commanders should ensure that candidates who enter an installation for one of the two purposes noted above do not engage in any campaign or election activity during the visit.

Candidates who are not current office holders or serving governmental officials should have the same access to installations as any unofficial visitor.

An installation commander should coordinate with his or her legal office and forward notice of contact from a Presidential or Vice Presidential campaign to his or her local public affairs office for coordination with the Office of the Secretary concerned.

When analyzing a candidate's request for access to an installation, the commander should first determine whether the request is to conduct official, personal, or campaign

business. The following types of requests are presumed to be for political purposes and shall generally be denied:

Requests for access to military installations or facilities from campaign organizations—as opposed to the official staff of the office that the candidate currently holds;

Requests for access to military installations or facilities by spouses or family members of candidates when such spouses or family members are not otherwise entitled to access by law or policy or who otherwise do not have an independent official purpose; and

Requests for access to military installations or facilities that include accompaniment by campaign staff and/or press.

Before an installation commander invites a candidate onto an installation to participate in official business or otherwise grants a candidate access for such purposes, the commander should coordinate with his or her legal advisor and public affairs officer. The media may be granted access to cover the candidate's official business.

The candidate may appear on camera and in photographs as an official participant.

The candidate may make a statement or answer question about the official business being conducted.

The installation commander will not request that the candidate's remarks be reviewed to ensure compliance with this policy.

No footage, photographs, or statements taken or recorded during that business may be used by the candidate's campaign for any campaign or election-related purpose.

When a candidate for civil office arrives or departs a military installation via military transportation, the installation commander may not authorize media coverage of the arrival or departure if the candidate's itinerary includes campaign or election activity in the local community.

The prohibitions of this document apply with equal force to non-candidates who seek to conduct campaign or election activity on behalf of a candidate.

To avoid the appearance that the Department of Defense is involved in partisan political activity and in recognition of the extraordinary media interest surrounding presidential and vice presidential campaign activities, an installation commander may

further limit media coverage of official activities on a military installation involving presidential and vice presidential candidates.