



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
LITTLE ROCK DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
POST OFFICE BOX 867
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72203-0867

CESWL-PA (360-1)

2 November 2001

DISTRICT COMMANDER'S POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 02-02

SUBJECT: Little Rock District Speaking with One Voice Policy

1. REFERENCES:

- a. ER 360-1-1, Public Affairs, 1 Apr 91.
- b. AR 360-1, The Army Public Affairs Program, 15 Sep 00.
- c. SWLR 25-1-4, Internet Web Access, 2 Jul 98.

2. GENERAL:

As a public service agency, the Little Rock District must keep the public informed of its activities and policies. The Department of Defense policy of maximum disclosure with minimum delay will be followed, subject to existing security regulations, propriety considerations and privacy act provisions. Strategic communication is a critical part of the Corps' vision, and public information is an important component of strategic communication. Corps spokespersons must follow a policy of openness and candor. At the same time, this command recognizes that the utilization of proper mass communications techniques will make Little Rock District's public information efforts more effective. Under the "Speaking With One Voice" concept, the District taps the skills of trained Public Affairs professionals to provide timely and accurate responses and to facilitate the news gathering process. However, this does not limit access by the media to other officials where PAO feels their knowledge and expertise are needed to provide complete information. Executive staff members, project managers, operations project managers and others will be called upon by PAO as needed to serve as Corps spokespersons.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES/PROCEDURES:

- a. Coordinated Responses – PAO assumes responsibility for coordinating information to avoid conflicting reports that can arise when persons from more than one office issue uncoordinated responses to the media. To keep the command informed on controversial issues, PAO will issue appropriate Public Affairs plans or coordinated responses as needed. This will assure mutual understanding.

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b. Keeping PAO Informed – In order for the Public Affairs Office to do the best possible job, all elements of the district must keep PAO informed of activities with potential public affairs impact. To ensure consistency in public statements on Corps policy and programs, project managers and/or staff members will coordinate with PAO the content of plans, policies, programs, and operations that have or may have public affairs implications. Coordination will begin early in the development of a proposed action and is an integral part of sound Project Management Business Practices.

c. Public Notices – Since District public notices often are the basis for news articles and are considered new releases by many who read them, all offices will coordinate their public notices with the PAO before release.

d. News Releases – All news releases, articles and columns (including those produced by resident offices) will be reviewed by PAO before distribution. To give adequate review time for routine items, make submissions several working days ahead of time. Articles can be e-mailed to PAO at <mailto:ceswl-pa@usace.army.mil>. PAO will review to ensure compliance with laws and regulations governing writing style, propriety, privacy, libel, etc. PAO will print and mail the release on request. PAO also will assist in targeting articles for trade magazines and other special publications. All segments of the district are urged to submit completed articles or ideas for articles to PAO.

e. Videos and Multimedia Presentations – Any district element that wishes to produce a video or other multimedia product for public information uses will coordinate with PAO early in the planning stages. As with news releases, PAO will help ensure compliance with appropriate laws and regulations, propriety, privacy and libel, as well as help determine marketing strategies, audience suitability and similar issues. Making major revisions to videos and similar products once production is complete can be very costly in terms of time, manpower and money. By involving PAO early in the process, most of these situations can be avoided.

f. Speeches – Prior to giving a speech, PAO will be notified of the time, date and place, as well as topics to be covered and who the audience will be. Advanced PAO notification of interpretive programs is not required since these fall under the purview of the Natural Resources Management Office.

g. Media Queries – Media queries occur almost daily in the District. Because of differences in operational circumstances between Operations Project Offices and the District Office, distinct guidelines will be used so accurate, properly coordinated responses are issued and media needs are met.

(1) District Office – Those who receive media calls should refer them to PAO. If, in the judgment of the employee being called, the reporter cannot be transferred

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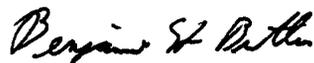
without creating ill will, the employee will place the reporter on hold and get PAO on the line (Extension 5551). This helps protect the employee by providing an "Ear Witness" to defend against misquotes. Also, it keeps PAO abreast of the issue and better enables PAO to respond to subsequent media queries. If for some reason an employee must respond to a reporter without PAO on the extension, contact the PAO as soon as possible afterward and give a synopsis of the discussion.

(2) Operations Project Offices – Operations Project Managers or their designees will respond to routine media queries related to activities affecting only their projects; examples include pool levels, daily releases, camping areas, fees, visitation, etc. Queries involving policy, other projects, security or potential controversies will be coordinated with PAO before a response is issued. Conversely, PAO is available as needed to assist field personnel in preparing responses to queries.

h. World Wide Web Home Pages – Publishing Army information onto electronic bulletin boards or World Wide Web home pages constitutes the public release of information and must comply with established policy for release of specific information to ensure the availability, confidentiality and integrity of information. While the SWL Information Management Office provides the Page Master and has ultimate responsibility for providing SWL web pages, connectivity and posting of information, clearance of specific information should be directed to the Public Affairs Office or officer in accordance with the procedures established under SWLR 25-1-4, 2 July 1998. In part this regulation states that Public Affairs will "Provide oversight, inspection, and review of all web pages to ensure that publicly releasable information posted complies with both HQUSACE and local policies.

4. POC:

The point of contact for more information about the Little Rock District Speaking with One Voice Policy is Mr. Robert G. Faletti, Chief, Public Affairs Office, at 501-324-5551.



BENJAMIN H. BUTLER
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
Commanding