



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS  
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT  
OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Policy for Combatant Command (COCOM) Regional Websites Tailored to Foreign Audiences

**Purpose.** The production and maintenance of Combatant Command regionally oriented websites tailored to foreign audiences are an essential part of the responsibility of all Geographic Combatant Commanders to shape the security environment in their respective areas of responsibility (AORs) in support of their assigned missions. This policy provides authority for and guidance regarding these websites.

**Scope.** This policy applies only to non-interactive content on Combatant Command regionally oriented websites tailored to foreign audiences. This policy does not apply to public affairs websites. Policy for interactive web-based activities (i.e., the use of a system accessible via the internet that allows for two-way communications, e.g., email, blogs, chat rooms, and internet bulletin boards, in a timely, if not real time basis) was promulgated in the Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum "Policy for Department of Defense (DoD) Interactive Internet Activities," dated June 8, 2007.

**Authority.** Geographic Combatant Commanders are hereby delegated authority to produce and maintain regionally oriented websites tailored to foreign audiences, including the authority to gather and post comments and feedback regarding information posted on these websites. This approval authority may not be delegated. Websites sponsored by non-Geographic Combatant Commanders must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

**Content.** Combatant Command websites within the scope of this policy will be accurate and true in fact and intent, and will comply with all DoD webmaster policies and guidance.

**Transparency.** All websites within the scope of this policy will display a disclaimer link that clearly identifies the sponsoring Combatant Command on the



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homepage of the website in a manner consistent with other information on the homepage. When required or requested, permission to link to other websites will be obtained from those website owners and will be documented.

Domains. All websites within the scope of this policy will use .com, .net, or .gov domains unless specifically authorized by the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Intellectual Property. Messages and materials protected by law such as graphics, pictures, video, and illustrations used in these websites will comply with relevant intellectual property laws, policies, and guidance.

Contractor involvement. Contracts or task orders that provide support for creating or maintaining websites within the scope of this policy will fully detail the scope of the work, will not include other communication functions or activities within that contract or task order, and will be fully releasable to the public. If a writer was paid, the article will fully and clearly disclose that such a payment was made.

Commercial Gain or Endorsement. Websites within the scope of this policy will not operate for commercial gain, and will not promote or endorse financial or other interests of commercial or non-governmental entities.

Quality Assurance. Combatant Commanders are accountable and responsible for quality assurance of the websites conducted under their purview and for ensuring that the implications of their actions beyond the intended audience are addressed. Special attention must be given to culturally appropriate messages and materials. Foreign language websites will be reviewed by a specialist with native speaker-level language and cultural skills.

Coordination. Combatant Commanders will collaborate, as appropriate, with the Department of State, other USG agencies, and country teams of affected countries to coordinate themes and messages, orient to and emphasize specific issues, and recruit regional contributors and key communicators. Combatant Commanders will synchronize all website material designed to support Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) objectives or to counter ideological support for terrorism with the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). In order to synchronize efforts and ensure global effectiveness, Combatant Commanders will coordinate cross-regional issues with appropriate Geographic Combatant Commands and with USSOCOM to integrate and de-conflict all GWOT-related websites.

Periodic Review. All Combatant Command websites tailored to foreign audiences will be reviewed at least semi-annually by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, advised by an editorial board consisting of designated representatives of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the DoD General Counsel, the Assistant Secretaries of Defense for

Public Affairs and Legislative Affairs, the Joint Staff, the Department of State, and an outside expert in the field of communication/public diplomacy, who will function in a non-voting consultant role. The Deputy Secretary will designate a chair for this committee, and the chair will initiate the review. Combatant Commands are responsible for providing measures of effectiveness as part of the review. Similar type editorial boards will be created at Combatant Commands hosting these websites. Proposed and ongoing contracts to create or maintain these websites should be included in the review.

Exceptions. Exceptions, requests for additional authorities, and recommended changes to this policy will be directed to the Deputy Secretary of Defense, supported by the Strategic Communication Integration Group Executive Committee (SCIG EXCOM), for review and approval.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew England". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A".