

Regional Command – East  
15 October 2009  
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan

## **Regional Command East Media Ground Rules**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ understand that I am bound to the  
(print first, middle initial, last name) (media organization/affiliation)  
following RC-East Media Ground Rules. Any violation of these rules will result in the immediate termination of  
coverage/access to RC-East units/installations and confiscation of my RC-East Media Badge.  
(Please initial) \_\_\_\_\_.

RC-East Media Ground Rules:

- 1. Media on Bagram Air Field will not take photographs, video or conduct interviews unless escorted by Public Affairs personnel.**
2. All interviews will be on the record.
3. During interviews, no questions will be asked about the politics of the military. (e.g. Iraq war, equipment, readiness, funding, etc.)
4. When embedded with a unit, media must remain with that unit at all times.
5. The media is responsible for loading and carrying its own equipment at all times.
6. Media will not carry or possess personal weapons, knives, firearms, pornography or alcohol.
7. Visible light sources and infra-red devices, including flash or television lights, will not be used when operating with troops at night unless specifically approved in advance by the on-scene commander. Likewise, media will follow tactical movement and noise discipline while covering operations.
8. If, in the opinion of the unit commander, a media representative is unable to withstand the conditions required to operate with the forward deployed forces, the commander or his/her representative may limit the representative's participation to ensure both the reporter's and the unit's safety. Disputes should be raised through PAO channels. The PAO community will work as the honest broker but the ultimate decision to accommodate media is held by the commander.
9. Embargoes may be imposed to protect operational security. Embargoes will be lifted as soon as the operational security issue has passed.
10. Under no circumstances will media take photographs or video of detainees or persons in custody, detainee or custody facilities; or detainee operations in Afghanistan. No interviews with detainees or persons in custody will be granted.
11. Information and images of special operations units, U.S. or coalition will not be released unless otherwise directed by the RC-East public affairs or granted prior approval by Combined Joint Special Operation Task Force (CJSOTF).
12. The following categories of information are not releasable since their publication or broadcast jeopardize operations and endanger lives:

Regional Command – East  
15 October 2009  
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan

- a. Specific numerical information on troop strength, equipment or critical supplies (e.g. artillery, tanks, landing craft, radars, trucks, water, etc.) for U.S. or coalition units.
- b. Information regarding future operations, current operations or strikes including postponed or cancelled operations.
- c. Information regarding security precautions or force protection measures at military installations or encampments, to include video or still footage. RC-East PAO may allow photography/video on a case-by-case basis if footage is reviewed prior to release.
- d. Photography that shows level of security at military installations or encampments, especially aerial and satellite photography which reveals the name or specific location of military units or installations.
- e. Information on intelligence collection activities/operations compromising tactics, techniques and procedures to include targets, methods, analyses and/or results.
- f. Rules of engagement details.
- g. During an operation, specific information on friendly forces, troop movements, tactical deployments, and dispositions that would jeopardize operational security or lives. Information on ongoing engagements will not be released unless authorized for release by the on-scene commander.
- h. Information on missing personnel or sensitive equipment or downed aircraft while search and rescue and recovery operations are being planned and executed unless expressly authorized by PA staff.
- i. Information on friendly forces electronic warfare equipment or procedures or friendly forces counter-IED activities which would result in a tactical advantage to the enemy.
- j. Information on effectiveness of enemy electronic warfare.
- k. Photographs or video of damaged MRAPs and armored support vehicles to include their components.
- l. Any additional guidelines the RC-East PAO or Task Force PAO's determines necessary to protect tactical security.

13. Photos of local nationals employed by the coalition may not be published without written consent of the individual photographed or the Commander of the unit the individual is supporting.

14. Media will not be prohibited from viewing or filming casualties; however, casualty photographs showing recognizable face, nametag or other identifying feature or item will not be published. In respect to our family members, names, video, identifiable written/oral descriptions or identifiable photographs of wounded service members will not be released without the service member's prior written consent. If the service member dies of his wounds, next-of-kin reporting rules then apply. Media should contact the PAO for release advice.

15. Media visits to medical facilities are authorized and will be conducted in accordance with standard operating procedures, operations orders and instructions by attending physicians. If approved, service or medical facility personnel must escort media at all times.

16. Patient welfare, privacy, and next of kin/family considerations are the governing concerns about news media coverage of wounded, injured, and ill personnel in medical treatment facilities or other casualty collection and treatment locations.

- a. Permission to interview or photograph a patient will be granted only with the consent of the attending physician or facility commander and with the patient's expressed, informed consent, witnessed by the escort.

Regional Command – East  
15 October 2009  
Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan

b. "Informed consent" means the patient understands his or her picture and comments are being collected for news media purposes and they may appear in news media reports.

17. Written coverage of all killed and wounded is also prohibited unless the following conditions are adhered to:

a. Names or identifiable written/oral descriptions of wounded service members will not be released without the service member's prior written consent. If the service member later becomes a KIA, next of kin reporting rules apply.

b. DOD will release names of KIAs. In respect for family members, names or identifying oral/written reporting of individuals "killed in action" will not be released prior to notification of next of kin and in accordance with current legislation. Names of KIAs may be released after the DOD announcement has been made – journalists may check the DefenseLink.mil Web site for those announcements.

18. If media decides to terminate coverage and/or embed opportunity before planned, they must coordinate with appropriate authority (unit commander, unit public affairs representative, PAO) to properly end embed experience and make arrangements to exit the area of operation.

19. Embedded journalists are required to maintain a copy of these ground rules on their person at all times during the embed.

20. As embedded media you will be treated with respect and dignity while with Coalition Forces, the same is expected in return. Failure to do so may result in an immediate termination of your embed. If you feel the same courtesies are not being offered to you, it is imperative that the problem or issue is raised through that unit's Chain-of-Command. If an honest attempt to resolve the problem has failed, please inform the Media Support Center NCOIC or the Media Support Center Director of all facts surrounding the issue.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Witness initials \_\_\_\_\_  
(MSC Personnel)

**MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE'S PERSONAL COPY**