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NGWV-TAG

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MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Joint Policy Memorandum NGWV-TAG #18-001, West Virginia National Guard (WVNG), Social Media Use

1. This policy is effective immediately and remains effective until rescinded or superseded.
2. Applicability: This policy applies to all military and civilian personnel working at all WVNG facilities, armories, training areas, and any other WVNG location or duty station, whether on- or off-duty.
3. References:
 - a. [Department of Defense Instruction \(DoDI\) Number 8550.01, DoD Internet Services and Internet-Based Capabilities, effective 11 September 2012](#)
 - b. [Army Social Media Website \(lists multiple current references\)](#)
 - c. [Online Conduct of Members of the Army Team, effective 17 March 2017](#)
 - d. [Air Force Instruction 35-107, Public Web and Social Communication, effective 15 March 2017](#)
4. Background: Social media (social networks and blogs) are an integral component of how the WVNG provides information and communicates to the public, Service Members, and Family Members. As a global form of communication, DoD has developed strict guidelines for the official use of social media and good practice guidelines for WVNG personnel on unofficial or personal sites.
5. Purpose: This policy defines social media activities, provides guidance for the proper implementation of official government sites at the unit level, and provides guidance for unofficial usage by WVNG personnel.
6. Guidance:
 - a. Social networking sites and blogs are popular means of communicating. They open doors for Service Members and their Families to communicate during training exercises and deployments. They also increase the risk for sensitive information release that puts Service Members and Families in danger. Below is a basic outline of key considerations in the use of social media, networks and computing.

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b. The only official WVNG social networking sites are Facebook: www.facebook.com/wv.nationalguard; Twitter: www.twitter.com/guard_wv and Instagram: www.instagram.com/wv_nationalguard. These sites are managed and monitored by the Public Affairs Office (PAO).

c. If O-5/O-6 level commands elect to use social media sites they must adhere to the following guidelines:

(1) Official pages must be primarily administered by a Soldier in the rank of SGT and above who has been trained by the PAO for site administration. Soldiers or civilians not in the rank of SGT or above are at the discretion of the O-5/O-6 level command, but must have a SGT or above admin assigned for page oversight.

(2) Pages must be reported to the PAOs and registered on the "external official presences list" in accordance with Reference 3a.

(3) Official pages will be monitored by the PAO. The O-6 level command PAOs will maintain admin rights to O-5 level command pages to assist with OPSEC, for emergency page lock down purposes (Soldier fatality, KIA/WIA, etc.), and to ensure compliance.

(4) Social media pages (other than Facebook) at the O-5 level are subject to unit commander discretion and approval, but must follow the same guidelines and stipulations as the unit Facebook page.

(5) Unit social media pages below O-5 level commands are NOT authorized. Pages below the O-5 level command will be deleted upon receipt of this policy letter. Family Readiness Group pages (FRG) are not considered official unit pages and therefore should only use their official unit Facebook site.

d. The guidelines for WVNG personnel operating on personal social media sites or on official government sites in an unofficial or personal capacity are as follows:

(1) Social media has become a way for many to express beliefs on a variety of topics. Whether or not to participate in social media activities is an individual decision. All Service Members are allowed to express personal beliefs on issues, including religion and social commentary, as long as they are not contrary to DoD policy in a way that would create disruption to the command or mission.

(2) Service Members using social media must abide by the Uniform State Code of Military Justice (USCMJ) at all times. Commenting, posting, or linking to material that violates the USCMJ or basic standards of conduct is prohibited. Service Members are subject to USCMJ even when off-duty, so talking negatively about supervisors or releasing sensitive information may be punishable under the USCMJ. The posting of defamatory, libelous, obscene, abusive, threatening, or otherwise offensive or illegal information or material may also be included as a punishable offense under the USCMJ. It is important that Service Members know that once they log on to a social media platform, they represent the WVNG. Failure to abide by this guidance and references herein may result in punishment.

(3) Civilian personnel may be subject to adverse action, up to and including removal, for violations of this policy.

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(4) Any WVNG personnel making statements on a public forum that identifies him or herself as affiliated with the Army, Air Force, or WVNG must make it clear that his/her statements are their own and do not represent an official DoD or WVNG stance.

(5) Operational Security (OPSEC) is paramount. Any information that compromises OPSEC will not be discussed. If you are in doubt as to whether information may violate OPSEC, you should consult with your immediate supervisor, S-2, commander, or the O-5/O-6 level command PAO.

(6) Be responsible. Information posted to social media is instantly available worldwide. Posting of images, video or content to personal social media pages is prohibited when it violates OPSEC, privacy of others, or does not represent the values of the organization.

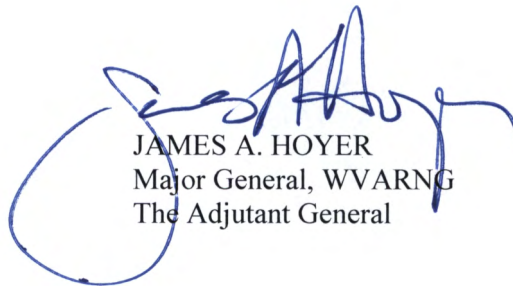
(7) Posting photos of dead bodies, casualties, or detainees is prohibited. Posting notification of a casualty prior to next of kin notification is prohibited (combat or non-combat related) and must be vetted through the PAO office.

(8) If you encounter a site or post from another Service Member that brings discredit upon your unit, our leaders or the WVNG, you have an obligation to report it to your chain of command.

(9) All communication with the media must be coordinated through the O-5/O-6 level command PAOs; this includes communicating with the media via Facebook, Twitter, or other forms of social media.

(10) Excessive use of Facebook or other social media sites can degrade network capabilities and degrade military operations. Use of social media on government computers is reserved for Official or Authorized Use only. Personnel may briefly check a social media site for news, weather, or similar information, but should not spend more than the necessary time to do so. For instance, personnel should not login to Facebook at the beginning of the duty day and continue to stay logged in throughout the duty day.

7. The point of contact for this policy is NGWV-PAO, Public Affairs Officer, at Commercial 304-561-6762 or DSN 623-6762.



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