



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

1636 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20301-1636

NGB-PA

MEMORANDUM FOR NGB-PA Division Chiefs

SUBJECT: NGB-PA Social Media Community Management Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

1. References:

- a. Deputy Secretary of Defense Instruction 8170.01, 02 January 2019, "Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging."
- b. Air Force Instruction 35-101, 20 November 2020, "Public Affairs Operations."
- c. Army Regulation 360-1, 08 October 2020, "The Army Public Affairs Program."
- d. AF Manual 35-101, 07 December 2020, "Public Affairs Procedures."
- e. ALARACT 058/2018, 25 July 2018, "Professionalization of Online Conduct."
- f. Army Social Media Handbook: Policies and Procedures, <https://www.army.mil/socialmedia>.
- g. National Guard Pamphlet 360-5, 06 JUN 08.
- h. Department of Defense Office of Inspector General, Social Media User Agreement, <http://www.dodig.mil/Disclaimers/Social-Media-User-Agreement/>.
- i. NGB DTM 0600.00, 15 July 2021, "National Guard Bureau Official External Presence Social Media Policy."
- j. NGB-PA Memorandum: Social Media Guidance for National Guard Members, dated 3 June 14.
- k. Secretary of Defense Memorandum, 06 January 2017, "Guidance on Transition and Archiving of Official Social Media Accounts," https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/socialmedia/guidance_on_transition_and_archiving_of_official_social_media_accounts_010617.pdf.
- l. U.S. General Services Administration Negotiated Terms of Service Agreements, <https://digital.gov/resources/negotiated-terms-of-service-agreements/>, (updated 14 July 2020).

NGB-ZC

SUBJECT: NGB-ZC Administrative Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

2. **Purpose:** To provide detailed social media guidance in support of the Office of Public Affairs. (NGB-ZC)

3. **Scope:** This SOP directs social media community management procedures required in support of NGB-ZC.

4. **Social Media Posts:**

a. **Facebook:**

1. At least one post a day, two, as a minimum, on weekdays.
2. On weekdays, the first post of the day should be between 11 a.m.-12 p.m. EST, with 12 p.m. being preferable for content featuring NG states/units/wings based on the west coast, Hawaii or Guam. The second post should go out between 5-7 p.m. EST (again with concern given to the time zone of the featured NG. Posts should always be a minimum of 2-3 hours apart.
3. The first post is usually a photo, photo series or video, unless there's a breaking news event or a direct share from the CNGB's account. Photo series are generally reserved for an emergency response operation, or 3-4 particularly strong photos that highlight readiness or the warfight
4. The second post is generally a news article or a status update about a current operation (ex: Today, approximately XX Colorado National Guard members are on duty supporting flood relief efforts in Boulder County).
5. Every photo must have a cutline of some kind, but we simplify the cutline for a broad audience and remove the photo credit information on our page. Whenever possible, tag the state/wing/unit Facebook page associated with the subjects in the photo, and provide a shortened URL (using ngpa.us/admin) back to either more photos from the set, a news story about the event, or even our own Flickr link to the complete cutline.
6. Additional posts should be reserved for breaking news (ex: New furlough guidance/information this past summer), or shares from our leadership pages.
7. Weekend posts should go out no earlier than 10:30 a.m. and can be any type of content/post, but lighter content or particularly interesting feature stories are generally best. On Sundays, evening posts are preferred for news stories.

b. **Twitter:**

1. You may post as often as you can on Twitter, but in general, posts should be spaced at least 30 minutes apart.
2. On weekdays, during normal ops, the first post of the day goes out around 10 a.m. EST, and a post goes out every two hours until about 4 or 6 p.m. EST.
3. The photo/video of the day should be posted between 12- 2 p.m. on weekdays.
4. On weekends, one or two posts a day, no earlier than 10:30 a.m. both days and one evening post on Sundays, particularly if there's a new response or something shareable from the 54.
5. During emergency ops, posts can be spaced between 15-30 minutes apart if there is enough content to support it, and posts should be manned from 6 a.m. EST until 1-2 a.m. EST whenever possible.

c. Instagram:

1. At least one post a day on weekdays, except during featured spotlight months. During those months, at least one post a day should feature non-spotlight content.
2. During a spotlight month, the initial post should go up between 9-10 a.m. and be followed by the non-spotlight post anytime between 12-5 p.m. considering the time zone of the state/territory/DC featured in the post. During a non-spotlight month, the post of the day should go up between 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
3. Links do not work in Instagram feed posts. If you have a link for more information on the NGB website, change the profile link to the appropriate link and point to that link in the text of the post. The other option is the share the photo/video post from the feed to the account's "Story" and post the link for further information in the story post.

d. Flickr:

1. All "Photos of the Day" to be used on other platforms must be uploaded to Flickr first with the full DOD-approved outline.

2. We generally post about 5 photos a week during normal operations, and many more during emergency/domestic response ops.

e. YouTube:

1. Videos should be posted at least once a week during normal operations, and more frequently during emergency and domestic response operations.
2. Posts should have a search-friendly headline (no acronyms) and a complete, DOD-cutline style description.

5. Social Media Content:

a. For all platforms:

1. **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** If there's any question at all in your mind about whether the content is appropriate, seek two other opinions from within our office to sign off on it.
2. Posts should be able to tie back directly to the CNGB's priorities and strategic messages. When in doubt, check with a supervisor to see if the content and the message are appropriate from a national-level account.
3. Monitor all platforms for trending topics, especially those of a controversial or political nature and make sure the proposed content/message are appropriate from an NGB account.
4. In the event of a crisis, follow the Social Media Crisis Communication Response Guide.
5. Do not post major potential policy changes until they are actually passed, and DOD announces them officially. (ex: Not posting stories about CNGB becoming a member of the JCS before it was official).

b. Facebook:

1. Whenever possible, tag the state, wing, senior leader account in a tweet related to them. Do not tag non-profits, commercial or other non-governmental accounts without reviewing the Social Media Endorsement Do's and Don'ts handout. When in doubt, do not tag non-governmental accounts.

c. Twitter:

1. During normal ops, a mix of internal and external news stories as well as photos, videos and different Guard facts or quotes are typical tweets. Quote tweet or retweet at least one other government account per week day. (Typically, this would be from the 54, DOD, Army Air Force, relevant federal agencies or from a senior leader within DOD. Do not retweet political leaders, with rare exceptions for @POTUS and @VP accounts with supervisor approval.)
2. Whenever possible, tag the state, wing, senior leader account in a tweet related to them.
3. If you begin a tweet with an @ user name, make sure you put a "." or some other character in front of the account name if you would like all of your followers to be able to see it (ex: ". @USArmy released..."). If you start a tweet with just the @username, only you, the user you mentioned and people that follow both of you will see that tweet in their feed.

d. Instagram:

1. Whenever possible, tag the state, wing, senior leader account in a tweet related to them. Do not tag non-profits, commercial or other non-governmental accounts without reviewing the Social Media Endorsement Do's and Don'ts handout. When in doubt, do not tag non-governmental accounts.
2. Try to post a variety of styles of content to Instagram. Feed posts should be visually strong photos and videos with full cutlines, but "Stories" and "Reels" are a great option to share shorter pieces of video and content directly from the states.
3. Every post should include #nationalguard.
4. Whenever possible, add the city/state or similarly broad location under "Location" for the post. This helps surface the content to a wider, local audience, as well as your own followers.
5. During a spotlight month, standardize the posts to include the introduction to the featured content, include the name and state/unit of the Guardsman featured and whenever possible, a quote from them taken from the questionnaire. Make sure

to include "Submitted photo" as the photo credit and any relevant hashtags for the spotlighted month along with #nationalguard and #knowyourmil.

e. **Flickr:**

1. Photos need to show a variety to missions, Air and Army, domestic, overseas, training and real world based on what is happening.
2. Photos need to be timely and must have a full outline.
3. Make sure every photo added has appropriate tags and is organized within the appropriate albums.

f. **YouTube:**

1. Videos should not have a black slate/logo intro of any kind. All slates, logos and credits belong at the end of the video.
2. Action shots, b-roll and active, raw footage do the best on YouTube. Nat Sound packages work, but traditional packages should be posted sparingly, and only when the voiceover serves to further the natural sound and video elements instead of replacing them.
3. Photo slideshows should be sparingly, if ever.
4. Senior leader videos behind a desk or in front of a backdrop tend to be ignored.

6. **Social Media Moderation:**

a. **Facebook:**

1. You have three options when moderating a page: allowing a comment/post, hiding the comment/ post, or deleting the comment/post.
 - i. Allowing the comment/post means that anyone who comes to the page or sees the post has the ability to see that content.
 - ii. Hiding the comment/post means that only administrators on the page, the original poster/commenter and their friends can see the comment/post.
 - iii. Deleting the comment/post means that the content no longer exists on Facebook, and no one can see it. This option should only be used in

extreme cases where the posted User Agreement terms (under “About”) are clearly violated. Before the comment can be deleted, you must take a screenshot and save the date and time of deletion in the file name. That screenshot must be held as a record for 90 days.

2. In general, any link to a commercial page or product, and anyone trying to sell anything, even if it’s for a non-profit, should be deleted following the appropriate guidance.
3. Any post that makes a direct threat, contains PII, any post that accuses another person by name with any type of crime should be hidden from the page or deleted following the appropriate guidance.
4. If you have no question that it should be removed, go ahead and take a screenshot and delete. If you need further guidance, take a screenshot and hide the post until you receive further guidance.
5. If someone posts something off-topic that is questionable in nature, you may hide the post, but seek approval from a supervisor before deleting if there’s any question about whether it violates the posted User Agreement.
6. If questionable content involves actions or words from a National Guard unit, wing, state, individual or national-level, elevate it immediately to your supervisor and the rest of the NGB-PA chain of command. Within 12 hours, reply that you are now aware of the action/word/accusation and that you will look into it further. Avoid the word “investigation” unless you are 100% sure there is an actual investigation happening. Within 24 hours, have a more comprehensive statement ready to share. If the incident reaches national news level interest, cancel all scheduled posts not about the incident until the full statement is ready.

b. Twitter:

1. Twitter’s moderation tools are meant to protect the manager of the account from seeing harmful content, they are not designed to moderate comments and mentions from being seen by others. Do not “mute” or “block” users on Twitter. Those tweets will still be publicly viewable to everyone but the manager of the NGB account that muted/blocked it.
2. If questionable content involves actions or words from a National Guard unit, wing, state, individual or national-level, elevate it immediately to your supervisor and the rest of the NGB-PA chain of command. Within 12 hours, reply that you are now aware of the action/word/ and that you will look into it

further. Avoid the word “investigation” unless you are 100% sure there is an actual investigation happening. Within 24 hours, have a more comprehensive statement ready to share. If the incident reaches national news level interest, cancel all scheduled posts not about the incident until the full statement is ready.

c. Instagram:

1. You have six options when moderating a comment on a post: allowing a comment/post, pinning a comment/post, reporting the comment/post to Instagram if it violates their terms of service, deleting the comment/post, restricting the user or blocking the user.
 - i. Allowing the comment/post means that everyone can see that comment/post.
 - ii. “Pinning” a comment/post moves that comment/post to the top and makes sure other users see their comment above others. This is a great way to spotlight particularly interesting/supportive comments, especially during featured spotlight months (i.e. NGB post spotlights an MDNG Guardsman for Women’s History Month, and we “pin” one or two comments from colleagues posting supportive comments about working with her.)
 - iii. Reporting the comment/post to Instagram moves moderation to the customer support team at Instagram and does not necessarily mean that the comment is hidden or in any way removed from the post. This is a helpful tool when users post comments about things like self-harm, since Instagram has its own program to assist in these instances. When in doubt, consult the Social Media Crisis Communication Guide.
 - iv. Deleting the comment/post means that the content no longer exists on Instagram, and no one can see it. This option should only be used in extreme cases where the posted User Agreement terms are clearly violated. Before the comment can be deleted, you must take a screenshot and save the date and time of deletion in the file name. That screenshot must be held as a record for 90 days.
 - v. Restricting a user puts them into a status where all their future comments must be approved by you before they appear, but it does not affect the original comment/post. This is particularly helpful for accounts that look like they may be spam bots or are otherwise posting the same message repeatedly across multiple posts. When in doubt, ask another team

member or a supervisor if a particular user should be placed in this category.

- vi. Blocking a user means that they cannot interact with your account at all and you won't see their comments or posts. This option should only be used in extreme cases with accounts that are clearly spam bots. When in doubt, ask a supervisor for permission to block an account.
2. In general, any link to a commercial page or product, and anyone trying to sell anything, even if it's for a non-profit, should be deleted following the appropriate guidance.
3. Any post that makes a direct threat, contains PII, any post that accuses another person by name with any type of crime should be hidden from the page or deleted following the appropriate guidance.
4. If you have no question that it should be removed, go ahead and take a screenshot and delete. If you need further guidance, take a screenshot and hide the post until you receive further guidance.
5. If someone posts something off-topic that is questionable in nature, you may hide the post, but seek approval from a supervisor before deleting if there's any question about whether it violates the posted User Agreement.
6. If questionable content involves actions or words from a National Guard unit, wing, state, individual or national-level, elevate it immediately to your supervisor and the rest of the NGB-PA chain of command. Within 12 hours, reply that you are now aware of the action/word/accusation and that you will look into it further. Avoid the word "investigation" unless you are 100% sure there is an actual investigation happening. Within 24 hours, have a more comprehensive statement ready to share. If the incident reaches national news level interest, cancel all scheduled posts not about the incident until the full statement is ready.

d. Flickr:

1. Moderation on Flickr is pretty minimal, but the inbox must be checked regularly for media/educational/documentary requests.

e. YouTube:

1. All comments must be approved before they appear on the video/channel.

NGB-ZC

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2. In general, any link to a commercial page or product, and anyone trying to sell anything, even if it's for a non-profit, should be deleted.
3. Any post that makes a direct threat, contains PII, any post that accuses another person by name with any type of crime should be captured in a screenshot and then deleted.

7. Social Media Analytics: Follow the NGBPA social media analytics SOP.

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DISTRIBUTION:

NGB-PA Division Chiefs