

Department of War

Visual Information Style Guide

September 12, 2025
(Supersedes version published September 5, 2025)
Defense Media Activity

- References:**
- (a) The Associated Press Stylebook, current edition
 - (b) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 1237, “Audiovisual, Cartographic, and Related Records Management”
 - (c) DoD Instruction (DoDI) 5025.01, “DoD Issuances Program,” August 1, 2006, as amended
 - (d) DoDI 5040.02, “Visual Information,” April 23, 2018, as amended
 - (e) DoDI 5200.48, “Controlled Unclassified Information,” March 6, 2020
 - (f) DoDI 5400.19, “Public Affairs Use of Artificial Intelligence,” July 28, 2025
 - (g) DoD Manual (DoDM) 5200.01, Volumes 1-3, “DoD Information Security Program,” dates vary by volume
 - (h) DoD 5400.11-R, “Department of Defense Privacy Program,” May 14, 2007
 - (i) Freedom of Information Act
 - (j) The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, current edition

Applicability

The Department of War (DoW) Visual Information Style Guide (VISG) is prescribed by DoDI 5040.02 and applies to:

- The Offices of the Secretary of War, the military departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the combatant commands, and all other organizational entities covered within the parameters of DoDI 5040.02.
- All military, civilian, and contract personnel designated to create visual information (VI) products (still, motion media, audio, and graphics) as part of their official duties. This includes, but is not limited to, public affairs, combat camera and information operations functions, including reserve and National Guard components (in either Title 10 or Title 32 status). The VISG also applies to all U.S. Coast Guard VI products uploaded to information systems, such as the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (DVIDS).

Purpose

VI is the creation, distribution, and preservation of audio and visual records, including motion-picture films, graphics, still photographs, podcasts, live streams, and sound recordings in analog, digital, or any other form pertaining to an historical event of the U.S. Government and its activities for preparing, editing, titling, scoring, processing, duplicating, reproducing, exhibiting, and releasing to the public for non-profit educational purposes, motion-picture films, still photographs, and sound recordings. These products support multiple DoW and U.S. Government

missions as strategic information resources and historic evidentiary records of the actions and activities of the Department.

For this reason, products must comply with the attribution and metadata requirements established in Enclosures 5 through 8 of DoDI 5040.02 and this guide. Additionally, in accordance with Part 1237 of Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, agencies must manage audiovisual, cartographic, and related records. This edition contains the most current method of writing captions and recording metadata associated with VI products.

The Associated Press Stylebook, referred to as AP throughout this guide, is the primary reference for writing effective captions. The VISG adheres to the tenets of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and general style outlined by AP. This publication supplements AP and pertains to Department-specific issues not addressed in AP, such as military terms describing service members, equipment, places, and entities. The VISG also provides instruction on providing metadata, submitting imagery for archiving, imagery ethics, and other subjects.

In this guide, the word *Department* refers to DoW; do **not** use this term in place of Department of War or the acronym DOW in VI captions or metadata. The acronym DoW in the body of this guide conforms to the official guide for writing and publishing issuances as prescribed by DoDI 5025.01. The acronym DOW is the preferred style for captions and metadata. As a result, DoW and Department is used in the body of this guide and DOW is used, with some exceptions, in caption examples.

Note: Use of *Department of Defense*, *DOD*, and *Secretary of Defense* in some examples is appropriate since they refer to VI created and published to DVIDS before the Department's name change. The use of *Department of Defense* or *DoD* when referring to instructions or manuals remains in effect until they are updated.

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Summary of Changes

In this edition, Department of War replaced Department of Defense to comply with Executive Order 14347, “Restoring the United States Department of War,” dated September 5, 2025. The guide permits the use of the acronym DOW, updates the name and contact information for DMA Enterprise Customer Services, and incorporates changes and clarifications as a result of updates to AP and the publication of DoDI 5400.19.

Other changes include the removal of entries already addressed in AP. However, there are some cases where entries were extracted from AP, such as Arabic names, district, lectern and podium, national anthem, and NATO for easy reference.

Of note, AP updated its prefix rules, which resulted in changes to the words *postdeployment* and *postflight*, which are now one word. Note that post-traumatic stress disorder is still hyphenated. Like other entries, they are included in the VISG for easy reference.

An explanation on how to use unit designators for Marine Corps and Navy aviation units, the requirement to obtain permission to list hometowns, and how to attribute products created using artificial intelligence and licensed assets is also included.

Chapter names were shortened, and some were renamed to emphasize that this guide is for all VI products. With this in mind, the term *credit line* replaced *photographer’s credit line*, and the proper way to complete field one of the Visual Information Record Identification Number or VIRIN for video and graphics products, and a section on how to write captions for graphics was added.

Changes to this guide were made in close coordination with the Defense VI Steering Committee comprising VI experts from the military services. The VISG is available for download at <https://www.dma.mil/Services/Visual-Information/References/VI-Style-Guide/>. It is cleared for public release and may be distributed without limit.

To submit suggestions or input for future editions, complete the Customer Service Form at <https://www.dma.mil/Services/Enterprise-Customer-Services/>.

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Chapter 1: Matters of Style

Each bold entry is formatted correctly and should be written as shown.

Entries Conforming to AP Style

- district
- first lady
- lectern, podium
- locations
- military titles
- national anthem
- NATO
- preflight and postflight
- ROTC, Junior ROTC

Entries Differing from AP Style

- boatcrew
- DOW
- Navy ratings
- POW/MIA

Alphabetical Listing

This chapter provides the correct style for commonly used terms within captions. This list is by no means comprehensive; if a term does not appear below, refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* for the appropriate style and spelling, the *National Geographic Atlas of the World* for place names, or to the service-specific fact sheets for the correct spelling of weapons, aircraft, vehicles, and equipment (see **Additional Resources** on page 65).

3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) The proper name of the Army unit that handles ceremonial responsibilities at Arlington National Cemetery. See **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier**.

U.S. Soldiers with the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) perform a changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, Sept. 12, 2012.

21-gun salute A 21-gun (or lesser odd number) salute is an artillery salute for rendering honors to the president, senior military leaders, foreign dignitaries, and other notable persons. For the action performed at military funerals, see **rifle salute**.

aboard Use *aboard* when referring to people or cargo in or on a ship or aircraft. Do not use *aboard* to describe being on a land base. *Onboard* refers to organic parts of a vessel, such as an onboard weapons system. See **onboard**.

U.S. Sailors eat breakfast aboard Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Vella Gulf (CG 72) in the Mediterranean Sea on June 4, 2014.

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Beth Jones, a loadmaster, inspects pallets of supplies aboard a C-130 Hercules aircraft at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, April 23, 2014.

acronym Only use acronyms on second reference. Do not follow the first reference with an acronym in parentheses unless the acronym would not be clear on second reference. The only exceptions are NATO, SEAL, USO, POW/MIA and acronyms covered in AP. See **unit designators** on pages 24 and 26 for Marine Corps and Navy aviation units.

Advanced Extremely High Frequency A joint service satellite communications system that provides survivable, global, secure, protected, and jam-resistant communications. Spell out on first reference. *AEHF* acceptable on second reference.

Afghani This is the currency of Afghanistan, not the nationality of its people. See **nationality**.

aircrew, aircrew member Use as one word. Do not hyphenate or separate aircrew into two words.

Air Force One Any U.S. Air Force aircraft carrying the president. The term is a call sign that applies *only* when the president is aboard the aircraft. The main aircraft serving in this capacity is the VC-25A.

Airman, Airmen Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Air Force; do not capitalize when referring to military members assigned to an air force of another nation.

all hands/all-hands Two words as a noun: *The commanding officer called all hands to the meeting.* Hyphenate as an adjective or a compound modifier: *The Sailors attended the all-hands call.*

allision The act or an instance of a ship striking a stationary object such as another ship that is not underway. See **collision**, **collide**.

American flag, U.S. flag Note *flag* is lowercase.

amphibious assault ship Do not capitalize, even when referring to a specific ship. For example: *U.S. Sailors and Marines man the rails of Tarawa-class amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4).*

amphibious combat vehicle The amphibious vehicle replacing the AAV-P7/A1. *ACV* acceptable on second reference.

amphibious ready group Spell out on first reference.

anti-access and area-denial Spell out on first reference. *A2/AD* acceptable on second reference.

anti-satellite Spell out on first reference. Note hyphenation. *ASAT* acceptable on second reference.

Anzac Capitalize, but do not use all caps. *Anzac* stands for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps of World War I. Anzac Day is celebrated annually by both nations April 25. U.S. service members are often present at these celebrations.

aqueous film-forming foam AFFF acceptable on second reference.

Arabian Gulf U.S. Navy's primary style for the body of water primarily known as the Persian Gulf. Enter *Persian Gulf* in keywords. Do not confuse with the nearby Arabian Sea. See **Persian Gulf**.

Arabic names Follow AP style for Arabic names.

assault amphibian battalion Lowercase unless used in a unit name.

assault amphibious vehicle The Marine Corps' AAV-P7/A1 tracked vehicle. Not *amphibious assault vehicle*. Do not confuse with amphibious assault ships.

assigned to/attached to Service members are assigned to their parent command. They are attached to a command they are temporarily deployed to.

assistant secretary Capitalize before a name as part of a title; use lowercase when the title appears after the name.

at sea Do not use "at sea" in place of the name of a body of water. If the specific location is undisclosed, say so, but reference a general body of water or U.S. fleet area of responsibility. See **here**.

aviation squadron names Spell out full name of a squadron on first reference. Include the acronym whether or not the squadron name appears again in the body of the story.

back blast Two words.

Bambi bucket Do not use. See **helicopter bucket**.

battalion landing team In unit names, capitalize it, followed by the unit's numeric designator and corresponding Marine Expeditionary Unit.

U.S. Marines with Battalion Landing Team 1/4, 11th Marine Expeditionary

Unit, storm a beach Jan. 23, 2012, as part of an exercise in Thailand.

billet identification When identifying a service member in a caption, use the billet for which they are currently serving at the time of the action. The billet should reflect their formal billet. For example, a U.S. Marine sergeant major is referred to as the “command senior enlisted leader.”

Blue Angels The Navy’s flight demonstration team. Simply refer to the group as *the Blue Angels*. The team currently flies the F/A-18 Super Hornet aircraft.

boatcrew, boatcrew member Boatcrew is one word; do not hyphenate or separate into two words. *The boatcrew launched at 2 p.m. A boatcrew member spotted the man in the water.*

bounding overwatch Bounding overwatch is an official doctrinal term in both Army field manuals and Marine Corps infantry doctrine. Bounding overwatch is a tactical movement where one element of a unit provides covering fire while another advances forward when enemy contact is expected.

brand names Do not use brand names or the names of specific manufacturers. For example, while Berretta makes a 9mm pistol, the military version is simply known as the M9. The F/A-18 Super Hornet, while made by Boeing, is only identified by its military designation and without manufacturer’s name included. It is also possible that multiple companies manufacture the same item or different components of the same item.

breech, breach *Breech* refers to the part of an artillery piece where rounds are loaded. The verb *breach* means to penetrate an obstacle or defense; as a noun, *breach* is the hole in a defense.

caption credit See **credit line**.

casualty evacuation CASEVAC acceptable on second reference.

cavalry Use lowercase unless it is part of a unit name. Do not confuse with *Calvary*, which is a religious term.

change of command ceremony Do not hyphenate the compound adjective. Avoid the phrase “relieved of command.” This implies a result of disciplinary action.

Chiefs Mess Capitalize and do not include an apostrophe.

Civil Air Patrol The civilian volunteer auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, best known for search and rescue, disaster relief and cadet programs. Civil Air Patrol members work closely with the Air Force, and they hold rank within the Civil Air Patrol. *CAP* acceptable on second reference.

civilian titles Do not use courtesy titles such *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss*, or *Ms.* unless requested by the named person. Other formal titles such as *Honorable*, *Dr.*, *Sen.* or *Gov.* should be used where applicable. Do not use such titles on second reference unless it is necessary to differentiate between two people with the same last name.

close-in weapon system Do not capitalize. *CIWS* acceptable on subsequent reference.

Coast Guardsman, Coast Guardsmen Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Coast Guard; not capitalized when referring to members of a foreign coast guard.

Coast Guard Auxiliary The civilian volunteer auxiliary of the U.S. Coast Guard, best known for boating safety programs. Although auxiliarists work closely with the Coast Guard and they hold job titles within the Auxiliary, they are not Coast Guardsmen.

Coast Guard enlisted ranks Do not use ratings. See AP for military ranks.

collision, collide Collisions occur when two moving objects hit each other. For collisions,

avoid stating that one object collided with the other, since this implies fault. Use **allision** to describe events when a moving object hits a stationary object.

The ships collided while crew members were conducting training in the Gulf of America.

Correct: *The helicopter and the plane collided.*

Incorrect: *The helicopter collided with the plane.*

Colombia, Columbia The South American country is spelled *Colombia*, and the adjective is *Colombian*. *Columbia* is the proper spelling for the university, the former space shuttle and several U.S. cities and private-sector organizations.

colors When referring to the flag of the United States, *American flag* or *U.S. flag* are the preferred styles. Do not use in reference to the flags of other nations. Acceptable when referring to unit flags and guidons. For example: *The battalion colors were furled during a transfer of authority ceremony.*

combat rubber raiding craft *CRRC* acceptable on second reference. Do not use the commercial term “Zodiac boat.”

combined Per Joint Publication 1, Volume 2: A term identifying two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies operating together. See also **joint**.

commandant A job title for the top four-star officer of the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Coast Guard; the term is also used to describe the commanding personnel of academies and other military institutions. Only capitalize when used in the official job title before the person’s name.

U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. John Smith shakes hands with Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, June 5, 2012.

U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Rory Malloy, the commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, shakes hands with a recent graduate of the academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, Sept. 12, 2012.

commander in chief Do not hyphenate; use lowercase unless it appears before a name.

commanding officer A job title, not a rank. Do not capitalize unless before a name. Use the person’s service and rank along with the title and the unit he or she commands.

U.S. Air Force Col. Christopher Sage, the commanding officer of the 4th Fighter Wing ...

U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Patrick Murphy, the commanding officer of Coast Guard Base Cleveland, ...

commands Write out the full name of all U.S. combatant commands on first reference. See **Style Check** information box. Do not use the acronym COCOM for the term Combatant Command; the accepted acronym is CCMD. *In the Command Shown block of metadata, only use the geographical combatant command name, based on where the image was produced.* See **Command Shown** on page 51.

Style Check: Unified Combatant Commands

Geographic Commands

- U.S. Africa Command
- U.S. Central Command
- U.S. European Command
- U.S. Indo-Pacific Command
- U.S. Northern Command
- U.S. Southern Command
- U.S. Space Command

Functional Commands

- U.S. Cyber Command
- U.S. Special Operations Command
- U.S. Strategic Command
- U.S. Transportation Command

contingency operating base Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *COB* acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside the contingency operating base.

U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

corporals course Lowercase unless used in conjunction with a course number. No apostrophe for corporals.

U.S. Marines conduct physical training as part of a corporals course at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California.

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. John Smith runs through an obstacle course during Corporals Course 1-25 at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California.

counter improvised explosive device Do not hyphenate or capitalize. *Counter IED* acceptable on second reference.

credit line Include at the end of all captions. Only use service, type of image, rank and name. Do not use unit names or release status in caption credits. For more formatting examples, to include the National Guard, see **Credit Line** on page 38.

crew member Two words. For example: *The crew members prepare for takeoff.*

decommissioned ships Write as you would an active vessel, but make it clear the vessel is no longer in service. See **museum ships**.

The decommissioned Kitty Hawk-class aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) will remain in the Ready Reserve Fleet until 2015.

Defense Meteorological Satellite Program Managed by the U.S. Space Force, a satellite constellation that provides secure global weather and space weather data to support Department operations. Spell out on first reference. *DMSP* acceptable on second reference.

Defense Satellite Communications System

A satellite constellation providing military communications globally. Spell out on first reference. *DSCS* acceptable on second reference.

Defense Support Program A satellite constellation operated by the U.S. Space Force that uses infrared sensors to detect missile launches, space launches and nuclear detonations. Spell out on first reference. *DSP* acceptable on second reference.

demining No hyphen.

dignified transfer Never a dignified transfer ceremony. Do not capitalize. For example: "... the dignified transfer of fallen service members ..." or "... dignified transfer operations at Dover Air Force Base ..." or "... during the dignified transfer of his/her remains at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan ..."

distinguished transfer Do not use.

district Per AP, capitalize if used as part of a proper name, but lowercase when it's not: *Sangin district*. Capitalize when referring to a U.S. Coast Guard district since these are proper names: *Coast Guard Southwest District*, *Coast Guard Heartland District*, and so forth. See also **district** and **geographic names** in AP.

DOW Acceptable acronym for Department of War.

drone Use the official name of the depicted unmanned vehicle. *Drone* acceptable on second reference.

dry dock (noun), dry-dock (verb) Do not use as one word.

Electro-optical Infrared Weather System-Geostationary A satellite constellation delivering mission-critical weather data to the joint force. Spell out on first reference. *EWS-G* acceptable on second reference.

exercises Capitalize uniquely named

exercises but only capitalize the descriptive word exercise if it is part of the official title of the exercise. Do not capitalize generic descriptors for exercises (e.g., operational readiness exercise, joint task force exercise, composite training unit exercise).

expeditionary strike group Spell out on first reference.

fast-attack Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

The fast-attack submarine deployed in November.

The fast-attack craft approached the U.S. Navy destroyer.

fast-rope, fast rope Hyphenate when used as a compound verb or adjective. No hyphen when used as a noun.

U.S. Soldiers fast-rope from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

U.S. Soldiers improved their fast-roping skills during the exercise.

U.S. Soldiers prepare a fast rope before exiting a helicopter.

firefighter One word.

fireman In the Navy and Coast Guard, this term refers to a member specifically trained in an engineering or hull repair rating. While damage control is among the fireman ratings, the term fireman is not to be confused with firefighter. If the term is used as a part of a named individual's rank or rating, it is capitalized.

fire team Two words.

first lady Per AP, it's not a formal title, therefore not capitalized.

Fleet Satellite Communications System A satellite constellation used for UHF radio communications. Spell out on first reference. *FLTSAT* acceptable on second reference.

flight deck Two words.

flight line Two words.

foreign object debris, foreign object damage Items that are picked up from a flight line or flight deck before flight operations are foreign object debris. Foreign object damage results from debris that has impaired an aircraft. *FOD* acceptable on second reference as long as the distinction between debris and damage is clear.

U.S. Sailors conduct a foreign object debris walkdown on the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) in the Pacific Ocean on June 7, 2013. The Sailors collected about seven pounds of FOD.

Damage to the compressor blade of an engine on a U.S. Air Force B-52 Stratofortress is seen at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, April 6, 2014. A piece of metal was sucked into the engine, causing foreign object damage.

forward operating base Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *FOB* acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside the forward operating base.

U.S. Marines set up checkpoints outside Forward Operating Base Warrior.

from Do not use *from* to describe a service member's affiliation with a military unit. Use *with*, *assigned to*, or *attached to*. The term *from* implies hometown or native country.

U.S. Army Spc. Joe Snuffy is an infantryman assigned to the 1st Battalion, 333rd Infantry Regiment.

U.S. Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit participate in a training exercise.

gay marriage Preferred term is *same-sex marriage*. See **gender, sex and sexual orientation** in AP.

geosynchronous equatorial orbit Also referred to as geostationary orbit. *GEO* acceptable on second reference.

Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program A satellite constellation used to track and characterize man-made orbiting objects. Spell out on first reference. *GSSAP* acceptable on second reference.

Global Positioning System *GPS* acceptable on second reference.

ground-based radar Note hyphenation.

groundbreaking One word.

Guardian Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Space Force; do not capitalize when referring to military members assigned to the space forces of another nation. For example: *U.S. Space Force Guardian*.

guided-missile, guided missile compound adjective when describing types of ships (e.g., guided-missile cruiser). No hyphen when used as a noun: *a guided missile was test-fired*.

guidon Note spelling. A guidon is a pennant, or small flag, carried as the standard of a smaller (company- or platoon-sized) military unit. Do not confuse a guidon with a larger unit's flag or **colors**.

hangar Aircraft are kept in a hangar, not a hanger.

half-mast, half-staff On ships and at naval stations ashore, flags are flown at half-mast. Elsewhere ashore, flags are flown at half-staff.

hawk helicopters Note exact spelling, spacing and capitalization: UH-60M Black Hawk, HH-60G Pave Hawk, VH-60N White Hawk, MH-60R Sea Hawk, MH-60S Sea Hawk, MH-60T Jayhawk. Note: "Knighthawk" is not the proper name for the MH-60S Sea Hawk.

helicopter bucket Lowercase. Do not use

Bambi bucket when referring to the firefighting apparatus, as it is a brand name.

here Do not use "here" to describe a location. Use the actual location name, body of water or the term undisclosed location with a general region (e.g., in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia). See **at sea**.

Hesco barrier Use barrier or fortification, as Hesco is a specific brand name.

high speed vessel High speed vessel Swift (HSV-2) has been replaced by expeditionary fast transport. See **Military Sealift Command**.

home port/homeported The term home port is two words, while homeported is one word.

The ship is headed for its home port of San Diego.

The ship is homeported in San Diego.

hometown Use a comma to set off an individual's hometown (both the city and, when needed, the state) when placed in opposition to a name, whether *of* is used or not. The subject may decline to provide his or her hometown. See **Hometown** on page 38 for additional information.

hospital ship Do not capitalize. For example: The hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) was originally an oil tanker. Note: This is a Military Sealift Command ship, therefore a hyphen is acceptable in the hull number. See **hull numbers, Military Sealift Command**.

howitzer Lowercase. Not a proper noun.

hull numbers Include hull numbers in parentheses after ship names on first reference. United States Ships (USS) and U.S. Coast Guard Cutters (USCGC) are not hyphenated; U.S. Naval Ships (USNS) with a classification beginning with "T" get a hyphen between the "T" and the remaining letters, but not between the letters and the numbers. U.S. Army vessel hull numbers are hyphenated.

Style Check: Hull Numbers

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77)

USNS Alan Shepard (T-AKE 3)

USCGC Diligence (WMEC 616)

JHSV Spearhead (JHSV 1)

LCAC 8

LCU 1627

LCM 8596

Humvee When referring to a high-mobility, multipurpose wheeled vehicle, *Humvee* is acceptable on first reference; the word is capitalized. It is not necessary to spell out the entire term or use the abbreviation. However, the abbreviation can be used in keywords. *HMMWV* is also acceptable on second reference.

identification by placement Identify subjects in photo from left to right in most cases. In cases in which high-level official(s) is/are prominent, identify in order of prominence. Use commas, not parentheses. When identifying people in an image, use the rule of three; provide the full name and rank and/or title of every person when there are three or fewer people in the image. It is not necessary to identify each person when there are four or more people present, although there may be some cases (such as with high-level officials) in which that would be appropriate. Also see **Chapter 3**.

insure, ensure To insure means to take out insurance on something; to ensure means to make certain or guarantee. For example: *People should insure their vehicles to ensure they can get a replacement in case of an accident.*

jammer When describing a vehicle used to load ordnance into aircraft, use weapons loader or the actual nomenclature of the vehicle. If describing a device used in electronic warfare, use electronic countermeasure or similar wording. See **jargon**.

jargon Don't use a military term or slang expression that might require further explanation for the general public; if such a term is used, provide a short explanation of its meaning.

joint Per Joint Publication 1, Volume 2: Connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more military departments participate. See **combined**.

joint combined exchange training A multiservice and multinational exchange of skills and knowledge between U.S. forces and their host nation counterparts.

jumpmaster One word.

KATUSA Write out Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army on first reference; *KATUSA* is acceptable on subsequent references.

Cpl. Doyoon Kwon, a Korean Augmentation to the United States Army soldier, assigned to 210th Field Artillery Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division/ROK-U.S. Combined Division, performs one-legged push-ups at Camp Casey, South Korea, April 11, 2018.

landing zone Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *LZ* acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Soldiers gather their gear after parachuting onto Landing Zone Tombstone.

The landing zone was not cleared, so the mission was aborted.

LCAC The correct term is *landing craft, air cushion*. Use it for singular and plural. Use lowercase unless identifying a specific, numbered LCAC (e.g., Landing Craft, Air Cushion 8). The acronym is acceptable on second reference.

LCM The correct term is *landing craft, mechanized*. Use it for singular and plural. Use lowercase unless identifying a specific,

numbered LCM (e.g., Landing Craft, Mechanized 8596). The acronym is acceptable on second reference.

LCU The correct term is *landing craft, utility*. Use it for singular and plural. Use lowercase unless identifying a specific, numbered LCU (e.g., *Landing Craft, Utility 1627*). The acronym is acceptable on second reference.

leap frogging Jargon. Use *maneuver* or another synonym.

lectern, podium Per AP, a speaker stands *behind a lectern* or *on a podium*. A podium is the stage or raised floor the speaker stands upon.

life jacket Use *life jacket*, not *lifejacket* or *life-jacket*.

life raft Use *life raft*, not *liferaft* or *life-raft*.

line, rope Do not confuse the terms. Line is a length of cordage that is in use, such as a mooring line. Rope refers to cordage that is still on the spool and has not been used.

littoral Refers to shallow water operations or proximity to shore. Do not confuse with *literal*.

live fire, live-fire Two words as a noun: *The practice range was for shooting blanks only; it did not allow live fire*. Hyphenate as an adjective/compound modifier: *The live-fire exercise lasted all day*.

loadmaster One word.

local Use this word only when it is necessary to differentiate a local leader or organization from a foreign one. Most of the time it will be unnecessary. In the following example, the use of the word adds nothing to the meaning of the sentence, as is demonstrated by removing it.

U.S. Soldiers talk to local Iraqi citizens at a local market in Baghdad.

U.S. Soldiers talk to Iraqi citizens at a market in Baghdad.

In the following sentence, however, the word adds context: *Local leaders and charitable organizations joined the U.S. effort to provide disaster relief to affected areas.*

locations Follow AP style rules when listing geographic names, directions and regions. The names of airports, hospitals, etc., should not be listed like cities. For example: Beaumont Airport, Texas. There is no such city in Texas, so the correct way to refer to this in a caption is Beaumont Municipal Airport in Beaumont, Texas. See **here, at sea**.

loose/lose Loose means not tight, while lose means to misplace something or failing to win. *The lug nuts were loose, causing the Humvee to lose its wheels.*

low-earth orbit Note hyphenation. *LEO* acceptable on second reference.

M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System Capitalize; *HIMARS* acceptable on second reference.

man the rails Not capitalized.

Mark weapons, Mark patrol boats Do not use the abbreviations MK or Mk. Use the indefinite article “a” before the name of the weapon or boat. No hyphens. Use Roman numerals for boats.

A U.S. Soldier engages a target with a Mark 19 grenade launcher June 5, 2004, in Baghdad.

Sailors assigned to Commander, Task Force (CTF) 56 man .50-caliber machine guns aboard a Mark VI patrol boat during a joint interoperability patrol.

Marine, Marines Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Marine Corps; do not capitalize when referring to military members assigned to the marines of another nation.

Marine One Any Marine Corps helicopter carrying the President. The term is a call sign that applies only when the president is aboard

the helicopter. The main helicopters serving in this capacity are the VH-60N White Hawk and the VH-3D Sea King.

mass casualty, mass casualty exercise No hyphen.

medical civic action program *MEDCAP* acceptable on second reference.

medium-earth orbit Note hyphenation. *MEO* acceptable on second reference.

military decorations Military decorations and awards are never won. Use terms such as earned, received or presented with. A person who holds an award is a recipient, not a winner. Also see **Medal of Honor** entry in AP.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta, a recipient of the Medal of Honor, smiles as he and his family meet with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, Nov. 17, 2010. Giunta received the nation's highest military honor for rescuing two members of his squad during an ambush on his platoon in Afghanistan in October 2007.

military forces of other nations Capitalize the formal names of military forces from other nations, such as *Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force*, *Afghan National Army* and *Russian Ground Forces*. Lowercase informal or generic names, such as the Japanese navy, Afghan army, Russian army. Do not use the foreign-language name for a service (in other words, don't use *Armada de Mexico* for the Mexican navy).

military operations on urban terrain *MOUT* is an out-of-favor term; the preferred term is *urban operations*. *UO* acceptable on second reference. The term *MOUT* is still in limited use; however, it may be used when referring to a specific *MOUT city* or *MOUT site* but should not be used in the following cases: "... train for military operations on urban terrain

..." or "... conducts military operations on urban terrain training." See **urban operations**.

Military Sealift Command Most MSC ships carry the designation USNS (United States Naval Ship) while others carry SS, MT or MV designators. To ensure the layperson understands MSC ships are not combatants, include "U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command" in the description. Furthermore, if an MSC helicopter is described in the caption, make it clear it belongs to MSC. Most MSC ships carry the prefix "T-" before their hull numbers. See **hull numbers, motor vessel and vessel**.

Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) transits alongside the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) in preparation for an underway replenishment in the Pacific Ocean on Aug. 7, 2014.

A U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command SA-330J Puma helicopter delivers supplies to the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) in the Pacific Ocean on April 2, 2014.

military service members of other nations Do not capitalize the words soldier, sailor, airman, marine or coast guardsman when referring to service members of other nations. If a service member's rank corresponds to a U.S. rank, use AP style. If not, spell out the rank: *Commodore*, *Field Marshal*.

military titles Abbreviate all military titles in accordance with AP style. On second reference, drop the title and use just the last name. See AP for the appropriate abbreviations for each rank. For U.S. Space Force, see page 19.

military unit names See **military units** starting on page 20.

Milstar A satellite constellation providing survivable, global, secure, protected and jam-resistant communications.

mission-oriented protective posture Spell out on first reference. *MOPP* acceptable on second reference. Use the level number (e.g., mission-oriented protective posture level 3) if called for in the caption.

modular airborne firefighting system Do not capitalize. *MAFFS* (or *MAFFS II*, if applicable) acceptable on second reference.

Mobile User Objective System A satellite constellation operated by the U.S. Space Force to provide narrowband military communications. Capitalize on first reference. *MUOS* acceptable on second reference

motor vessel *MV* acceptable on second reference.

MRAP The correct usage is mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle on first reference, *MRAP vehicle* thereafter. Also: *mine-resistant, ambush-protected all-terrain vehicle*. Second reference *M-ATV*.

U.S. Airmen load mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles Aug. 27, 2011. The MRAP vehicles were to be transported to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

MRE The correct term is either *meal, ready to eat* (singular) or *meals, ready to eat* (plural). *MRE* or *MREs* acceptable on second reference.

museum ships If a museum ship is mentioned in a caption, use the official name of the museum or write it as you would any other decommissioned ship.

U.S. Sailors tour the Battleship Missouri Memorial at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, June 5, 2012.

U.S. Sailors tour decommissioned Iowa-class battleship USS Missouri (BB 63) at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, June 5, 2012.

names Use first and last names for all persons described in a caption. Single names are appropriate for those who only have one name. If operational security concerns call for less identification, describe the person(s) by their service and/or job description.

nation Use lowercase unless at the start of the sentence.

national anthem Not capitalized, per AP. Use “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

National Guard If service members in an image are part of a state’s National Guard, indicate the state (with specific branch, if appropriate). Identify personnel as *Soldiers* or *Airmen* (or by their parent service) as appropriate. If the image depicts members of both branches on non-Federal duty, *National Guardsmen* is acceptable. See **Style Check** below.

Style Check: National Guard

U.S. Airmen with the 140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard, prepare a C-130 Hercules aircraft for a mission at Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado, June 1, 2023.

U.S. Army Sgt. John Smith, an infantryman assigned to the 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, North Carolina National Guard, conducts marksmanship training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, Sept. 8, 2012.

Florida National Guardsmen patrol a street in Jacksonville, Florida, after a hurricane Sept. 3, 2009.

nationality Refer to the “The World Factbook,” published by the Central Intelligence Agency, to determine the proper adjective for a citizen of a specific nation. (For example, a citizen of Afghanistan is an Afghan.)

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *NATO* acceptable in all references per AP.

NFTI Use *thermal imager* rather than the formal name Naval Firefighter's Thermal Imager.

Nigerian, Nigerien The adjective *Nigerian* means a person from Nigeria, while *Nigerien* means a person from Niger.

noncommissioned officer Do not hyphenate; use lowercase unless it appears at the start of a sentence. *NCO* acceptable on second reference.

officer in charge Do not hyphenate; use lowercase unless it appears before a name.

OIF/OEF Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Spell out on first reference. Do not add rotation numbers to these titles.

on Acceptable to use in some cases. See AP.

onboard Refers to organic parts of a ship, such as engineering or weapons systems. When referring to people, cargo or activities in or on a ship or aircraft, use **aboard**.

U.S. Coast Guardsmen serve lunch in the galley onboard the maritime security cutter USCGC Bertholf (WMSL 750) at the cutter's home port in Alameda, California, June 1, 2017.

operations Capitalize uniquely named operations but capitalize the word *operation* only if it is part of the official title of the operation (e.g., Operation Enduring Freedom). Do not capitalize generic descriptors for operations.

ordinals Use widely recognized civilian ordinals such as 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. when being used with unit names, instead of militarized versions such as 2d or 3d. Refer to **numerals** in AP for additional guidance.

ordinance/ordnance An *ordinance* is a local law, while *ordnance* refers to weapons and ammunition. *Ordnance* is both singular and plural. Do not use *ordnances*.

PAO, PIO Spell out *public affairs officer* or

public information officer on first reference.

pass in review Not *pass and review*.

PAVE Phased Array Warning System
PAVE PAWS acceptable on second reference. Maintained by the U.S. Space Force, PAVE PAWS radars detect submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) attacks and conduct general space surveillance and satellite tracking. PAVE is a military program identification code; it is not an acronym.

Pentagon Use *Arlington, Virginia*, to describe the location of the Pentagon.

Persian Gulf The primary style for this body of water is *Persian Gulf*; enter *Persian Gulf* in keywords. The U.S. Navy's primary style for this entry is *Arabian Gulf*. Note: The Arabian Sea is a separate body of water and should not be confused with references to the Arabian Gulf/Persian Gulf. See **Arabian Gulf**.

pierside One word.

photographer's credit See **credit line**.

plankowner One word. A member of the crew of a new ship at the time of commissioning.

podium, lectern Per AP, a *podium* is the stage or raised floor a public speaker stands upon; a *lectern* is a small desk the speaker stands behind.

positioning, navigation and timing (PNT)
Spell out on first reference.

postdeployment. See **prefixes** in AP.

postflight See **prefixes** in AP.

post-traumatic stress disorder *PTSD* is acceptable on first reference but spell out on second reference per AP.

POW/MIA Prisoner of war/missing in action. *POW/MIA* acceptable in all references. This differs from AP.

pre-commissioning unit Capitalize when used before the name of a ship before it is

commissioned. For example: *Pre-Commissioning Unit Mississippi (SSN 782)*. PCU acceptable on second reference.

predeployment No hyphen.

preflight See **prefixes** in AP.

president Capitalize *president* as a formal title before the first and family name on first reference. See AP. Do not use the acronym *POTUS* at any time in captions. On second reference, use only the last name. When listed without a name, use lowercase.

Prime BEEF Spell out the full name of the unit (e.g., 577th Expeditionary Prime Base Emergency Engineer Force). *Expeditionary Prime BEEF* acceptable on second reference.

professional titles When identifying a service member with a professional title, such as chaplain or physician, add the professional title in lowercase after the rank and name of the subject.

U.S. Army Maj. Bill Smith, a chaplain, conducts a religious service.

U.S. Navy Cmdr. Jane Jones, a physician, examines a patient.

RAF bases No need to spell out RAF.

U.S. Airmen stationed at RAF Mildenhall, England, conduct physical training June 2, 2012.

Ranger Capitalize when referring to Army Ranger units, or Soldiers who are Rangers.

rank, rate, rating Rank and rate refer to paygrade; rating refers to occupational specialties within the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard. When used with a person's name, uppercase the rank and use the style listed in the **military titles** entry in AP. See **Military Ranks** on page 19 for U.S. Space Force.

When not used with a name or names, ranks appearing in captions are lowercase and are not abbreviated. For example: *U.S. Marine*

Corps staff sergeants participate in a training exercise.

Navy content creators are authorized to use ratings as outlined in Navy Enlisted Manpower and Personnel Classifications and Occupational Standards (NAVPERS 18068F) instead of ranks. Use of Navy ratings is optional for content creators from the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Space Force when identifying U.S. Navy personnel.

Content creators use ranks, not ratings, when identifying Coast Guard personnel.

rappel, rappelling/repel, repelling To *rappel* is to use ropes to lower oneself from a high place, such as a cliff, building or helicopter. To *repel* is to fend something off.

redeployment No hyphen.

RED HORSE Spell it out on first reference: Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers. *RED HORSE* acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Airmen with the 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers maintain equipment at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, July 10, 2012. The 820th RED HORSE was preparing for an exercise.

replenishment-at-sea Hyphenate as shown.

reserve, reserves Capitalize *Reserve* when referring to specific military organizations. For example: *U.S. Army Reserve*, not *Reserves*. In the Navy, the correct term is *Navy Reserve*, not *naval reserve*. When referring to a reserve Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine or Coast Guardsman, or any other circumstance in which “reserve” is used as an adjective, do not capitalize *reserve*. Only use the term *reserves* when referring collectively to the reserve components.

retired Do not use (*Ret.*) when describing a retired service member. Use the word *retired*

before his or her service, rank and name.

Retired U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Smith, left, delivers a speech.

U.S. Navy Cmdr. John Jones shakes hands with retired Chief Petty Officer Jane Williams.

rifle salute A salute to the deceased at military funerals, usually by seven riflemen each firing three shots in unison. Do not confuse this with a **21-gun salute**.

rigid-hull inflatable boat Do not capitalize. *RHIB* acceptable on second reference.

Roman numerals U.S. Army corps and U.S. Marine Corps expeditionary forces are designated with Roman numerals. For example: *XVIII Airborne Corps, I Marine Expeditionary Force*. Sentences may begin with roman numerals for U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army units.

rope See **line, rope**.

ROTC, Junior ROTC Per AP, the acronym *ROTC* is acceptable in all references. However, spell out *Junior* when referring to the high school-level program.

Indicate the branch associated with the ROTC organization (e.g. *Army ROTC, Air Force Junior ROTC, Naval ROTC, Navy Junior ROTC*).

Sailor, Sailors Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Navy; do not capitalize when referring to military members assigned to the navies of another nation.

satellite(s) Capitalize when accompanied with the proper name of satellite(s).

satellite communications Spell out on first reference. *SATCOM* acceptable on second reference.

Seabee When identifying an individual Sailor as a Seabee, list the Sailor's rank or rating as usual and add the designation as you would a job description.

U.S. Navy Builder 1st Class Jane Smith, a Seabee with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 2, paints a door at a school in Kabul, Afghanistan, June 12, 2013.

SEAL A special operations force of the U.S. Navy. The acronym for Sea, Air, Land. *SEAL* acceptable in all references. If plural, use *SEALs*.

search and rescue Spell out on first reference. *SAR* acceptable on second reference. Do not hyphenate. Only capitalize if part of an official title, such as the name of a manual.

secretary Capitalize before the name of a department secretary per AP. *POTUS*, the acronym *for the president of the United States*, is not to be used in VI content. See **titles** in AP.

select, selectee Identify a service member by the rank they hold at the time the image was taken, not the rank they are selected for. However, it is permissible to indicate the service member is on the verge of promotion.

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Joe Smith, selected for promotion to chief petty officer, salutes an officer at Naval Station Great Lakes, Illinois, June 12, 2012.

U.S. Navy petty officers first class, selected for promotion to chief petty officer, clean a park as part of a community service project in Pensacola, Florida, July 14, 2012.

Sept. 11 The term for describing the attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. Use *2001* if needed for clarity. *9/11* also acceptable in all references.

service academies On first reference, use the formal name of the service academy, followed by its location. The abbreviation is acceptable on second reference. See **service academy ranks**.

U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York

*U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis,
Maryland*

*U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado
Springs, Colorado*

*U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London,
Connecticut*

*U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings
Point, New York*

service academy ranks When identifying a service academy student, use his/her proper cadet or midshipman rank if available, or just use the lowercase term *cadet* or *midshipman* as applicable (see below). Do not use informal terms such as “plebe” or “cow.”

*Cadets: U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Air
Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard
Academy*

*Midshipmen: U.S. Naval Academy, U.S.
Merchant Marine Academy*

service member The term is two words; *service* is not capitalized.

*U.S. service members help clean up in
New York City after Hurricane Sandy.*

service schools For Navy and Coast Guard entry level training (“A” school), use quotation marks around “A” in all instances within a story or caption. Similarly, for advanced level military training, use quotation marks around “C” school.

ship names Do not use the definite article *the* before a ship name, ship class, or ship type preceding a ship name. Also use the full name of the ship (without the *USS*) on second reference. Do not use the personal pronouns *she* or *her*. Ship names are not capitalized. *USS George H.W. Bush*, not *USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH*.

*U.S. Sailors wash down the flight deck of
Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George
H.W. Bush (CVN 77) in the Atlantic
Ocean on May 15, 2012. George H.W.*

*Bush was underway on its first
deployment.*

sideboys One word.

sight, site A *sight* is something that is seen or is worth seeing, or a device that helps the eye to aim or find something. A *site* is a location.

Style Check: Sight vs. Site

U.S. Soldiers clear weapons cache sites.

*A U.S. Marine sets her sights on a target
during an exercise.*

*While in port, U.S. Sailors took in the
sights.*

simulation, simulated Indicate when injuries, explosions and other events are simulated for training purposes.

*U.S. Army Pfc. Jim Smith is treated for
simulated injuries during a mass casualty
drill at Fort Bragg, North Carolina,
March 25, 2014.*

Soldier, Soldiers Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Army; do not capitalize when referring to military members assigned to the armies of another nation.

South Korea Use this style when referring to the country, its people and military personnel in captions.

*U.S. Soldiers and South Korean marines
conduct marksmanship training at Camp
Casey, South Korea, June 10, 2012.*

Southwest Asia Both words are capitalized.

Space Based Infrared System A satellite constellation that supports early warning missile detection and missile defense, expands intelligence gathering and improves situational awareness for warfighters. Spell out on first reference. *SBIRS* acceptable on second reference.

space forces Two words. Refers to missions

and personnel supporting the Space Force.

Space Security and Defense Program A joint effort between the U.S. Space Force and the National Reconnaissance office focusing on enhancing the resilience and security of national security space systems. Spell out on first reference. *SSDP* acceptable on second reference.

space warfighting domain The recognition and operationalization of space as a critical area for military operations, similar to air, land, and sea that addresses the need to defend U.S. space capabilities and protect forces from space-enabled attack. *SWD* acceptable on second reference.

special operations forces Use this term to describe U.S. special warfare units or members of those units when their exact service or unit affiliation is not clear, or when special warfare units of multiple services are conducting joint operations. Do not use *special operator* or *commando*.

A U.S. special operations forces service member patrols in a field near Kandahar, Afghanistan, April 5, 2012.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz discusses special operations forces during the National Defense Industrial Association's 22nd Annual Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict Symposium on Feb. 9, 2011, in Washington.

spouse, partner See **husband, wife** entry in AP.

state names Spell out in captions per AP guidance for spelling out in the body of a story. Use a comma between the city and state name.

strike group Use specific terms ‘carrier strike group,’ ‘expeditionary strike group,’ or ‘amphibious ready group.’ Spell out on first reference.

strongpoint One word. Use lowercase unless

it accompanies the name of a specific location.

U.S. Soldiers stationed at Strongpoint Tarnak clean their weapons following a patrol.

U.S. Marines search for a position to use as a strongpoint in a planned ambush of Taliban forces.

submarine Spell it out, do not abbreviate as sub.

submarine launched ballistic missile *SLBM* acceptable on second reference.

task force Use lowercase unless referring to a specific named or numbered task force.

taxi, taxis, taxiing, taxied Used to describe the movement of aircraft on the ground other than taking off or landing. Don’t use the phrase *taxis* or *taxiing on a runway* if the aircraft is not actually on the runway.

A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft taxis before takeoff at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, July 12, 2012.

Thunderbirds The Air Force’s flight demonstration team. Simply refer to the group as the Thunderbirds. The team currently flies the F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft.

titles In accordance with AP, formal job titles after a person’s name are not capitalized.

U.S. Navy Adm. Jonathan Greenert, the chief of naval operations, talks to Sailors aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) in the Pacific Ocean on Nov. 11, 2013.

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Per Arlington National Cemetery. “Tomb of the Unknowns” is obsolete.

UCMJ Spell out Uniform Code of Military Justice on first reference.

Ultra High Frequency Follow-On A satellite constellation operated by the U.S. Space Force to provide communications for

airborne, ship, submarine and ground forces. Spell out on first reference. *UFO* acceptable on second reference.

undersecretary One word.

underway One word.

unit designator List the unit designator for Marine Corps and Navy aviation units in parenthesis after the unit's formal name and before the unit number on first reference. A hyphen is used on subsequent references between the unit designator and unit number.

The Marines are assigned to Marine Transport Squadron (VMR) 1. VMR-1 assisted in the search for a downed aircraft near Jacksonville, North Carolina.

U.S. Navy Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 97 was deployed aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). During the deployment, VFA-97 maintained a perfect safety record.

Upgraded Early Warning Radars

Maintained by the U.S. Space Force, these radars detect ballistic missile attacks and conduct general space surveillance and satellite tracking. They are located across both the United States and United States European Command. UEWR acceptable on second reference.

urban operations Replaces military operations on urban terrain in most uses. See entry for **military operations on urban terrain**.

USCGC Use before the name of a Coast Guard cutter. See **hull numbers**.

The medium endurance cutter USCGC Diligence (WMEC 616) sailed into the port of Wilmington, North Carolina, Aug. 7, 2012.

USO United Service Organizations. *USO* acceptable on first reference.

vehicle-borne The correct term is vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. *VBIED* acceptable on second reference.

vessel When referring to a specific type of vessel, spell it out: fishing vessel, motor vessel. Do not use abbreviations such as F/V, M/V, MV and so forth on first reference. See **hull number, marine vessel**.

war on terrorism This is the acceptable term to use; it is all lowercase. Do not use global war on terrorism, GWOT or war on terror.

warfare qualifications (Navy) Do not use Navy warfare qualifications (SW, AW, etc.) when writing a Sailor's rating in captions or keywords.

warfighter One word; use lowercase.

weapons Use the following formats for weapons and weapon systems; note the appropriate hyphenation, spacing and capitalization. Use AP style for caliber and metric measurements.

- .50-caliber, 9 mm
- M119 105 mm howitzer
- M4 carbine, M16 rifle, M9 pistol
- GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided bomb
- AIM-9 Sidewinder missile

For weapons systems, functional descriptions should not be capitalized, i.e. M27 infantry automatic rifle, M249 squad automatic weapon, etc. Only unique names such as Sidewinder, Paveway, Claymore or Bangalore are capitalized.

weapons cache The term, correctly used, is either *weapons cache* (singular) or *weapons caches* (plural). Do not use *hidden weapons cache*. *Cache* implies hidden.

West Point Use the proper name and location of the Army's academic institution: *the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York*.

White House Use *Washington* to describe the location of the White House.

Wideband Global Satellite Communications A satellite constellation

that provides wideband global communications services to combatant commanders, allowing them to exert command and control of their tactical forces. Spell out on first reference. *WGS* acceptable on second reference

World War I, World War II Use Roman numerals. Spell it out on first reference, then use WWI or WWII as needed.

wounded warrior Only capitalize when used in the name of a specific event or organization (e.g., *Wounded Warrior Project*).

Chapter 2: Military Ranks, Units and Force Structure

Military Ranks

For a complete list and standardized style of military ranks and abbreviations, refer to the **military titles** entry in AP. The U.S. Space Force ranks and abbreviations are below and will be removed once officially added to AP.

Navy content creators are authorized to use Navy rates (e.g., Gunner's Mate 1st Class; Chief Culinary Specialist) as outlined in Navy Enlisted Manpower and Personnel Classifications and Occupational Standards (NAVPERS 18068F). A quick reference guide to Navy ratings can be found here: <https://allhands.navy.mil/Media/Owners-and-Operators/>. Additionally, Navy content creators should use the appropriate descriptor for non-petty officers: Seaman, Airman, Fireman, Constructionman, and Hospitalman with the apprentice or recruit rate, if necessary.

Coast Guard content creators shall adhere to AP style for rank only when identifying Coast Guard members.

Space Force Commissioned Officers		
Grade	Rank	Usage Before Name
O-10	general	Gen.
O-9	lieutenant general	Lt. Gen.
O-8	major general	Maj. Gen.
O-7	brigadier general	Brig. Gen.
O-6	colonel	Col.
O-5	lieutenant colonel	Lt. Col.
O-4	major	Maj.
O-3	captain	Capt.
O-2	first lieutenant	1st Lt.
O-1	second lieutenant	2nd Lt.
Warrant Officers		
<i>Warrant officer ranks are not used in the Space Force.</i>		

Space Force Enlisted personnel		
Grade	Rank	Usage Before Name
E-9	chief master sergeant of the Space Force	Chief Master Sgt. of the Space Force or CMSSF
	chief master sergeant	Chief Master Sgt.
E-8	senior master sergeant	Senior Master Sgt.
E-7	master sergeant	Master Sgt.
E-6	technical sergeant	Tech. Sgt.
E-5	sergeant	Sgt.
E-4	specialist 4	Spc. 4
E-3	specialist 3	Spc. 3
E-2	specialist 2	Spc. 2
E-1	specialist 1	Spc. 1

Military Units

Use uppercase only when referring to the name of a specific unit. Use the full name of the unit on first reference, and the acronym on all subsequent references. Refer to the tables starting on page 30 for the force structure of the services.

It is the responsibility of the person capturing the imagery to confirm the correct name of a military unit depicted in imagery and the caption.

When placing service members, ships, aircraft, or units in a specific place, use the following terminology:

- A service member is *stationed on* or *stationed at* a base; *with* or *assigned to* a unit or ship. (Do not use *from* as it implies hometown or place of birth.) The preferred term for a person physically located on a ship is *aboard*.
- A ship is *based* or *homeported* at a specific place.
- An aircraft *belongs to* or is *assigned to* a particular unit and is *deployed with* that unit to a certain location. It is *stationed at* a base or is *stationed at* or *stationed aboard* a ship; it is *deployed with* or *operating from* a ship.
- A unit is *stationed at* a particular base and is *deployed to* a certain location or *deployed with* a larger unit. Squadrons are *stationed at* Air Force bases, air bases, or air stations.

Navy and Marine Corps air wings and other units may be *deployed with* ships.

Style Check: Military Units

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joe Smith, with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, prepares for a convoy training mission at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, Jan. 15, 2010.

U.S. Sailors aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) prepare for a uniform inspection July 6, 2012, at their home port of Naval Station Everett, Washington.

A U.S. Air Force B-2 Spirit aircraft assigned to the 509th Bomb Wing takes off from Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, Sept. 7, 2011.

U.S. Air Force

Abbreviate Air Force units using standard acronym rules; note if it is a National Guard unit. List units from smallest to largest. In most cases, simply naming the squadron or wing will suffice. Numbered Air Forces are spelled out. For example: *Ninth Air Force*.

U.S. Airmen with the 375th Security Forces Squadron man a checkpoint in Anbar province, Iraq, Oct. 24, 2010. The 375th SFS was operating in support of Operation New Dawn.

U.S. Airmen with the 142nd Fighter Wing, Oregon National Guard participate in an exercise at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, Nov. 14, 2011.

U.S. Army

Abbreviate Army units using standard acronym rules; note if it is a National Guard unit. List units from smallest to largest. Refer to Table 1, Force Structure.

Army units can be tricky. It does not suffice to say that a Soldier simply belongs to *Alpha Company, 1st Battalion*, as there are a multitude of Alpha Companies and 1st Battalions throughout the Army. Be sure to get the unit's regimental, brigade, or division affiliation; in other words, make sure a **precise, unique** unit name is listed.

Company/troop/battery: Companies starting with a letter always belong to a numbered battalion and regiment, which will be listed in the caption as well. Spell out such company names using the phonetic alphabet. (e.g., *Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, North Carolina Army National Guard*.) NOTE: Some company-level units use non-standard nicknames (e.g., "Killer Company"). Be sure to get the full, proper name of the unit.

Battalion/squadron: Most combat arms (i.e., infantry, artillery, cavalry, and armor) battalions and squadrons belong to a numbered regiment, which must be listed in the caption. (e.g., *the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division*.) Many combat support and combat service support battalions do not have a specific regimental affiliation, but it's best to list the brigade and/or division to which they belong (e.g., *the 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division*).

Regiment: Do not use the shorthand for these units. For example, instead of writing *1/120 Infantry*, write out the full name: *1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment*. Always list the subordinate unit (e.g., *1st Battalion, 2nd Squadron*) before the name of the regiment. While the Army generally does not use the regimental command structure like it used to, the regimental heritage is kept to maintain the history and heraldry of many units.

Brigade/brigade combat team: Most brigades/brigade combat teams numbered lower than 5 are part of a larger division. For example, each active-duty division has a 1st brigade combat team, so be sure to list the division affiliation (e.g., *1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division*). There are a number of active-duty and National Guard standalone brigade combat teams, and they generally can be listed without a division. However, if it's a National Guard unit, be sure to list the state it's affiliated with (e.g., *30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, North Carolina Army National Guard*).

U.S. Soldiers with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division provide security during a humanitarian mission outside of Kabul, Afghanistan, March 4, 2010. The 1st BCT was supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

A U.S. Soldier with the 197th Special Troops Company, Utah Army National Guard gathers his parachute after a static line jump in Fairfield, Utah, March 15, 2012.

U.S. Army Sgt. John Smith, an infantryman with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division shouts an order to fellow Soldiers during a training exercise at Fort Riley, Kansas, April 7, 2013.

Division: Divisions (e.g., *1st Cavalry Division*) can generally stand alone if the Soldiers depicted are assigned to various units within the division or it's a wide shot of a division event.

Corps: Corps (e.g., *XVIII Airborne Corps*) can generally stand alone if the Soldiers depicted are assigned to various units within the corps or it's a wide shot of a corps event.

Army: Numbered armies (e.g., *First Army*) can generally stand alone if the Soldiers depicted are assigned to various units within the numbered army or it's a wide shot of a numbered army event.

U.S. Coast Guard

Most Coast Guard units are named geographically. If the location is not a major city, such as Boston or Los Angeles, use the state as well (refer to AP's "datelines" entry). If the unit is named for something other than the location, then include the location, such as *Station Cape Disappointment in Ilwaco, Washington*, or *Air Station Atlantic City in Egg Harbor, New Jersey*.

Boats: Coast Guard vessels under 65 feet in length are considered boats. Boats are not given individual names. Identify the type of boat pictured whenever possible. Do not capitalize the boat type.

A U.S. Coast Guard response boat-medium approaches a dock at Coast Guard Station St. Petersburg, Florida, March 5, 2017.

Cutters: Coast Guard vessels longer than 65 feet are called cutters and are given individual names and hull numbers. Identify cutters by their type, name, and hull number on first reference. On subsequent reference, drop the type, USCGC, and hull number. Do not use cutter lengths. Do not italicize or capitalize all letters of the cutter name.

The medium endurance cutter USCGC Diligence (WMEC 616) steams northward in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of South Carolina May 23, 2017. The Diligence left its home port March 15, 2017.

Cutters, boats, and aircraft: A list and proper names for Coast Guard cutters, boats, and aircraft is available here: <https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Acquisitions-CG-9/Resources/>. Coast Guard content creators shall adhere to the custom Coast Guard entries in the online AP Style Book for proper formatting when referencing Coast Guard cutters, boats, and aircraft.

Unit names: Specialized units are given geographical names as well, such as *Aids to Navigation Team New York* or *Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur*. Only capitalize when used with a geographical name. Abbreviate only on second and subsequent reference, such as *MSU Port Arthur* or *the MSU*.

Station, air station: Stations and air stations are identified by a geographical location, such as *Coast Guard Station Monterey* or *Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod*. Only capitalize station or air station when used with a geographical name. Never use the abbreviations STA or AIRSTA.

Sector: Sectors oversee multiple Coast Guard units within their geographic areas of responsibility. Sectors are named for a region or city, such as Sector Hampton Roads or Sector Honolulu. Capitalize *sector* only when used as part of the full sector name.

District: Districts comprise multiple geographical sectors. There are nine districts in the Coast Guard. In the summer of 2025, the Coast Guard renamed all nine districts to eliminate the legacy numbered district naming system in favor of district names that more clearly identify the U.S. geographic regions making up the districts' areas of responsibility. The new geographic district names shall be used for all new VI products created since the renaming. See the table on page 23.

Coast Guard District Names	
Old District Name (No longer in use)	New District Name (In use since July 15, 2025)
First Coast Guard District District 1 1st District	Coast Guard Northeast District
Fifth Coast Guard District District 5 5th District	Coast Guard East District
Seventh Coast Guard District District 7 7th District	Coast Guard Southeast District
Eighth Coast Guard District District 8 8th District	Coast Guard Heartland District
Ninth Coast Guard District District 9 9th District	Coast Guard Great Lakes District
Eleventh Coast Guard District District 11 11th District	Coast Guard Southwest District
Thirteenth Coast Guard District District 13 13th District	Coast Guard Northwest District
Fourteenth Coast Guard District District 14 14th District	Coast Guard Oceania District
Seventeenth Coast Guard District District 17 17th District	Coast Guard Arctic District

Only capitalize district when used as part of the full district name.

Response crews throughout the Coast Guard East District prepare for the potential impact of Hurricane Erin. The district commander urges mariners in the region to remain vigilant and take necessary precautions ahead of the storm.

Area: The Coast Guard is divided into two areas:

- The Atlantic Area includes the Coast Guard Northeast, East, Southeast, Heartland, and Great Lakes districts.
- The Pacific Area includes the Coast Guard Southwest, Northwest, Oceania, and Arctic districts.

Spell out Atlantic Area or Pacific Area in all references. Do not use LANTAREA or PACAREA.

Joint/combined

The following list shows the correct format of some common joint and/or combined organizations and how to abbreviate them. According to the *Dictionary of Military and*

Associated Terms, the term **joint** “connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more military departments participate;” **combined** is defined as, “A term identifying two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies operating together.”

- Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
- Combined Task Force 150
- International Security Assistance Force
- Civil-Military Cooperation

U.S. Marine Corps

Formats for Marine Corps units and their acronyms appear below. List units from smallest to largest. Acronyms are never placed in parentheses after the unit. Use the acronym on second reference.

Aircraft wing: *The Marines are assigned to the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. 2nd MAW deployed from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, in support of Operation New Dawn.*

Aircraft group: *U.S. Marines with Marine Aircraft Group 11 listen to a weekend safety briefing at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, California, June 6, 2014. MAG-11 is preparing for a deployment to Australia*

Combat logistics battalion: *The Marines are deployed with Combat Logistics Battalion 6 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. CLB-6 is based at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.*

Littoral combat team: *The Marines are assigned to 3rd Littoral Combat Team. 3rd LCT is headquartered in Hawaii.*

Marine division: *The Marines are assigned to 2nd Marine Division. 2nd MARDIV participated as the ground combat element.*

Marine expeditionary force: *The Marines are assigned to II Marine Expeditionary Force. II MEF deployed from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in support of Operation New Dawn.*

Marine expeditionary force information group: *The Marines are assigned to II Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group. II MIG deployed from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in support of U.S. European Command.*

Marine expeditionary unit: *The Marines are assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. The 31st MEU was participating in bilateral exercises while aboard Essex-class amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2).*

Marine littoral regiment: *The Marines are assigned to 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment. 3rd MLR conducted the exercise to experiment with new capabilities.*

Marine logistics group: *The Marines are assigned to 2nd Marine Logistics Group. 2nd MLG deployed in support of U.S. Northern Command.*

Marine rotational force: *The Marines are assigned to Marine Rotational Force - Darwin. MRF-D is a six-month rotational force in support of regional stability. Always use a hyphen.*

Regiment: Do not use the shorthand for these units. Instead of writing *1/7 Marines*, write the full name: *1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment*.

Squadron: Spell out the full name of the squadron on first reference. Since the full names and abbreviations of squadrons do not follow normal acronym rules of assignment, include squadron abbreviations **even if used only once**. *The Marines are assigned to Marine Transport Squadron (VMR) 1. VMR-1 assisted in the search for a downed aircraft near Jacksonville, North Carolina.* See the table below for a list of unit designators.

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force: Note hyphenation. *SPMAGTF* acceptable on second reference.

Marine Corps Aviation Unit Designators*			
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron	HMH	Marine Attack Squadron	VMA
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron	HMLA	Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron	VMAQ
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron	HMM	Marine Fighter Attack Squadron	VMFA
Marine Heavy Helicopter Training Squadron	HMMT	Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron	VMFA (AW)
Marine Helicopter Squadron	HMX	Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron	VMM
Marine Air Control Squadron	MACS	Marine Transport Squadron	VMR
Marine Aircraft Group	MAG	Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron	VMU
Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron	MALS	Marine Attack Training Squadron	VMAT
Marine Wing Communications Squadron	MWCS	Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron	VMFAT
Marine Wing Support Group	MWSG	Marine Fighter Training Squadron	VMFT
Marine Wing Support Squadron	MWSS	Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron	VMGR
Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron	VMMT	Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron	MAWTS
Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron	VMX		
* Capitalize the long form only when used as part of an actual unit name. Do not use unit nicknames. An example of a properly formatted squadron name: <i>U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Bill Jones, an MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft pilot assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 165, listens to a preflight briefing at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, California, May 6, 2012.</i>			

U.S. Navy

Formats for Navy units and their acronyms appear below. List units from smallest to largest, where applicable.

construction battalion center: CBC	naval air facility: NAF
naval air station: NAS	naval amphibious base: NAB
naval facility: NAVFAC	naval station: NAVSTA
naval weapons station: NWS	commander fleet activities: CFA

Activities: Spell out the full name of the naval activity on first reference and capitalize only when part of a proper name. For example: *Naval Station Rota, Spain*. On second reference, abbreviate as follows: *NAVSTA Rota*.

Detachment: Do not abbreviate. *The Sailors are assigned to Detachment 5, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 2.*

Fleet: When referring to a numbered fleet, always use numerals and precede with *U.S.* For example: *U.S. 7th Fleet*.

Naval mobile construction battalion: On first reference, spell out and use a numeral. Use the acronym on second reference. *U.S. Sailors with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1 construct a school in Honduras. NMCB-1 is participating in exercise New Horizons.*

Ship: List the ship class, type of ship (e.g., destroyer, aircraft carrier), full name of the ship, and hull number (in parentheses) for each ship on first reference. On second reference, drop the ship class, type, *USS*, and the hull number. Do not use the definite article *the* before a ship name or ship class and ship type preceding a ship name. Do not use the personal pronouns *she* or *her*. All ship names appear in regular type, not in all caps. See **hull numbers** and **ship names** in Chapter 1.

U.S. Sailors man the rails as Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) departs Yokosuka, Japan, June 27, 2011. The George Washington was embarking on a six-month deployment.

Current ship types: Aircraft carrier, guided-missile destroyer, guided-missile cruiser, littoral combat ship, mine countermeasures ship, submarine, amphibious assault ship, amphibious transport dock ship, dock landing ship, guided missile frigate (Constellation Class), amphibious command ship, afloat forward staging base, mobile landing platform.

Type command (TYCOM): U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa (NAVEUR/AF), U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFF), Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (AIRPAC), Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (SURFPAC), Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (SUBLANT), Naval Special Warfare Command (SPECWARCOM), etc.

Group: Usually fall between TYCOM and squadron. Naval Special Warfare Group 1; Commander, Submarine Group 9; and Expeditionary Strike Group 3.

Squadrons: Below the Group level. *Aviation is not the only entity with squadrons. There are destroyer squadrons, amphibious squadrons, and submarine squadrons; Commander, Submarine Squadron 15 (CSS 15); Commander, Destroyer Squadron 9 (COMDESRON 9); and Commander, Amphibious Squadron 1 (COMPHIBRON 1).

Spell out the full name of a squadron on first reference. Include the unit designator whether or not the squadron appears again in the caption. See the table below for aviation unit designators.

U.S. Navy Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 97 was deployed aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). During the deployment, VFA-97 maintained a perfect safety record.

Team: Subset of Naval Special Warfare Groups - SEAL Team 1, SEAL Team 3.

Developmental groups/squadrons: DEVGRU (Naval Special Warfare), Submarine Development Squadron 5.

Flotilla: Rare, but usually a subset or breakoff of an afloat squadron.

Task force: A regionalized subset of a Command or Group: Commander, Task Force 76, CTF-69 etc.

Navy Aviation Unit Designators*			
Helicopter Combat Support Squadron	HC	Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron	VAW
Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron	HM	Fighter Squadron	VF
Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron	HS	Strike Fighter Squadron	VFA
Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron	HSC	Fighter Squadron Composite	VFC
Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron	HSM	Patrol Squadron	VP
Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light	HSL	Carrier Fleet Logistics Support Squadron	VRC
Helicopter Training Squadron	HT	Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron	VQ
Attack Squadron	VA	Fleet Logistics Support Squadron	VR
Electronic Attack Squadron	VAQ	Sea Control Squadron	VS
Training Squadron	VT	Unmanned Reconnaissance Helicopter Squadron	HUQ
Air Test and Evaluation Squadrons The squadron designators are VX for fixed-wing and unmanned aircraft, and HX for rotary aircraft.	VX, HX	Carrier Air Wing	CVW
<i>* Capitalize the long form only when used as part of an actual unit name.</i> Do not use unit nicknames. An example of a properly formatted squadron name: <i>U.S. Navy F/A-18F Super Hornet aircraft assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 11 fly in formation over Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, July 5, 2013.</i>			

U.S. Space Force

Abbreviate Space Force units using standard acronym rules. List units from smallest to largest. In most cases, simply naming the squadron or delta will suffice.

Space Force Unit Names		
Unit	Unit Abbreviation	Location (Current Base Name)
Space Operations Command	SpOC	Peterson Space Force Base (PSFB)
Space Systems Command (previously SMC)	SSC	Los Angeles Air Force Base (LAAFB)
Space Training and Readiness Command	STARCOM	Peterson Space Force Base (PSFB)
Space Base Delta 1	SBD 1	Peterson Space Force Base (PSFB) (Formerly Peterson-Schriever Garrison)
Space Base Delta 2	SBD 2	Buckley Space Force Base (BSFB) (Formerly Buckley Garrison)
Space Base Delta 3	SBD 3	Los Angeles Air Force Base (LAAFB)
Space Base Delta 41	SBD 41	Schriever Space Force Base (SSFB) (Formerly Peterson-Schriever Garrison)
Space Launch Delta 30	SLD 30	Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB)
Space Launch Delta 45	SLD 45	Patrick Space Force Base (PSFB) Cape Canaveral Space Force Station (CCSFS)
		Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station (CMSFS)
		Maui Space Surveillance Complex (MSSC)
		Kaena Point Space Force Station (KPSFS)
		New Boston Space Force Station (NBSFS)
		Clear Space Force Station (CSFS)
		Cape Cod Space Force Station (CCSFS)
		Pituffik Space Base (PSB) (Formerly Thule Air Base)

Squadron: Spell out the full name of the squadron on first reference.

Delta: Spell out the full name including the mission area on first reference. The acronym *DEL* is acceptable on second reference. Example: Space Delta 2 - Space Domain Awareness (note the dash), DEL 2.

Mission delta: Spell out the full name on first reference. Example: *Mission Delta 31*. The acronym *MD* following the mission area is acceptable on second reference. Example: *MD 31*.

Systems delta: Spell out the full name on first reference following the mission area. Example: *Position Navigation and Timing Systems Delta*. The acronym *SYD* following the mission area is acceptable on second reference. Example: *PNT SYD*.

Space force station: Identified by a geographical location, such as *Cheyenne Mountain Space Force Station* or *Clear Space Force Station*. Capitalize station only when used with a geographical name.

Space launch delta: Spell out the full name on first reference followed by the mission number. Example: *Space Launch Delta 45*. The acronym *SLD* followed by the mission number is acceptable on second reference. Example: *SLD 45*.

Space base delta: Spell out the full name on first reference followed by the unit number. Example: *Space Base Delta 1*. The acronym *SBD* followed by the unit number is acceptable on second reference. Example: *SBD 1*.

Field command: A general term only. Not used as part of the command name. Spell out on first reference. *FLDCOM* is acceptable on second reference. Example: Space Operations Command is one of the three field commands of the U.S. Space Force. The other FLDCOMs are Space Systems Command and Space Training Readiness Command.

Space Operations Command: Primary provider of space forces and capabilities for the joint force and coalition partners. *SpOC* acceptable on second reference.

Space Systems Command: Responsible for developing, acquiring, and fielding resilient space capabilities. *SSC* acceptable on second reference.

Space Training and Readiness Command: Responsible for training and educating space professionals and developing combat-ready space forces. *STARCOM* acceptable on second reference.

NOTE: USSF will continue to stand up additional FLDCOMs as required by mission. Refer to Chapter 9, U.S. Space Force Fact Sheets, see page 66.

Space Force Mission Areas *	
Cyberspace Warfare (CW)	Orbital Warfare(OW)
Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Targeting (ISRT)	Satellite Communications (SATCOM)
Missile Warning and Tracking (MWT)	Space Domain Awareness (SDA)
Navigational Warfare (NAVWAR)	Space Electromagnetic Warfare (SEW)

Force Structure

The following tables provide the basic force structure of the services, listing units from smallest to largest groupings of service members. Other organizational groupings do occur within each service. The tables are designed only to act as a guide to help the writer list unit designations within a caption. Only capitalize elements (e.g., brigade, platoon, wing, etc.) when used as part of a unit name.

U.S. Air Force

Element	Consists of
Airman	individual
Section	several Airmen
Flight	2 or more sections or a dozen or more Airmen
Squadron	3-4 flights
Group	2 or more squadrons
Wing	2 or more groups
Numbered Air Force (NAF)	2 or more wings
Major Command	1 or more NAFs
Air Force	MAJCOMs report to Headquarters, Air Force

U.S. Army

Element	Consists of
Soldier	individual
Squad/section	9 to 10 Soldiers
Platoon	16 to 44 Soldiers; 2 to 4 squads
Company (or Battery/Troop)	62 to 190 Soldiers; 3 to 5 platoons
Battalion (or Squadron)	300 to 1,000 Soldiers; 4 to 6 companies
Brigade (or Group/Regiment)	3,000 to 5,000 Soldiers; 2 to 5 battalions
Division	10,000 to 15,000 Soldiers; 3 brigades
Corps	20,000 to 45,000 Soldiers; 2 to 5 divisions
Army	50,000+ Soldiers

U.S. Coast Guard

It's rarely necessary to identify a Coast Guard unit's higher echelons when listing a specific unit in a caption. Only identify larger or superior units if it's relevant to the caption being written.

U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Joe Morgan, a pursuit coxswain assigned to Coast Guard Station Monterey, California, operates a response boat-small in Monterey Bay, June 7, 2017.

U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. Sam Smith assumes command of Coast Guard Great Lakes District from Rear Adm. John Jones during a ceremony in Cleveland, July 1, 2017. Vice Adm. Sally Simpson, commander of Coast Guard Atlantic Area, under which Great Lakes District falls, presided over the ceremony.

U.S. Marine Corps

Element	Consists of
Marine	individual
Team	4 Marines
Squad	3 teams
Platoon	3 squads
Company/Battery	3 platoons
Battalion	3 companies/batteries
Regiment/Brigade	3 battalions
Division	3 regiments/brigades
Marine Air-Ground Task Forces	
Marine Expeditionary Unit	Infantry battalion, aviation squadron, combat logistics battalion
Marine Expeditionary Brigade	Infantry regiment, Marine air group, combat logistics regiment
Marine Expeditionary Force	Marine division, Marine aircraft wing, Marine logistics group, MEF information group
Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force	Elements of MARDIV, MAW, MLG
USMC Aviation	
Squadron	4-24 aircraft
Aircraft Group	3 or more squadrons
Aircraft Wing	3 or more groups

U.S. Navy

The Navy does not list unit designations in the same way as the other services. While a Sailor may be assigned to a ship, which belongs to a squadron, task force, or carrier strike group, and in turn falls under a fleet, not all of those levels need to be listed within a caption. If a Sailor is part of a ship-based aviation unit, be sure to list it.

Identify the ship or onshore unit to which a Sailor is assigned. Also identify lower-level unit demarcations, such as squadrons or detachments.

Identify the strike group to which a ship is assigned only if it is currently deployed with the group.

Lt. Andrew Smith, from Massachusetts, assigned to the Saberhawks of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 77, attached to Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, prepares to board an MH-60R Seahawk on the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) while underway in the Pacific Ocean, Oct. 6, 2024.

Aviation Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Tiesha Glover, left, from Maryland, and Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Diandra Johnson, from Connecticut, both assigned to the Tridents of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9, conduct routine maintenance on an MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter in the hangar bay aboard first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), May 6, 2023.

U.S. Space Force

Element	Consists of
Guardian	Individual
Section	10 or more personnel
Squadron	2 or more sections
Delta	2 or more squadrons
Field Command	consists of 2 or more Deltas
Service Component Field Command	U.S. Space Force component to a combatant command
Space Force	FLDCOMs report to Headquarters, U.S. Space Force

Chapter 3: Captions

The ABCs

Well-written, informative, and useful captions begin with the submitter and his/her unit.

All VI must have a caption. Captions are contained in the metadata of every VI asset. Accurate and complete metadata increases the value and discoverability of VI as strategic information assets.

NOTE: While most of this chapter deals with still captions, the basic rules of style and content apply to motion captions as well. The descriptive information in motion captions will necessarily be broader and less specific, since the caption must describe more than a single image. Provide a general description of the units and specific subjects, equipment used, the event taking place, location, and date(s).

To write an effective caption, remember the ABCs of captioning: *accuracy*, *brevity*, and *clarity*.

Accuracy. Ensure every piece of information within the caption is accurate and complete. This also includes ensuring the captions are grammatically and stylistically accurate and that they adhere to the guidance contained in this guide and the *Associated Press Stylebook*. An accurate caption helps ensure an image is newsworthy, is of historical value, and can be more easily retrieved from databases.

Brevity. When writing a caption, be certain every word is necessary to tell the story of the image. The caption should describe precisely what is seen in the image. Captions must convey a great deal of information in a few short sentences, so they must be written concisely to maximize their effectiveness. Do not use 15 words where five will do.

Clarity. To be understood by the end user, a caption must be clear in both intent and expression. Select language to make certain the reader will understand what is happening in the image. Remember that the audience for DoW imagery is global. Construct captions that can be understood by a nonmilitary reader.

Do not use social media symbols, such as hashtags (#) or @-signs, in captions or keywords. Those should be relegated to social media postings; in most cases, hashtags lose relevance over time and add nothing to the archival record.

The 5 Ws

When gathering information for a caption, keep the following questions in mind: ***who***, ***what***, ***when***, ***where***, and ***why***. All questions must be answered to accurately communicate the story of a still image or video clip. See **Captions for Graphics** on page 37.

Who Who or what is the subject of the image?

- If the subject of a sentence is a person or persons, provide the rank, first and last name, title, and military unit for each person. Identify subjects in photos from left to right in most cases. In cases in which high-level official(s) is/are prominent, identify in order of prominence.
- List units from smallest to largest. (e.g., *U.S. Marines assigned to Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, clean weapons at Camp Pendleton, California, June 7, 2012.*)

- When identifying named service members, include the name of the service to which he or she belongs. (e.g., *U.S. Army*, *U.S. Navy*, *U.S. Air Force*, *U.S. Marine Corps*, *U.S. Coast Guard*, *U.S. Space Force*). If it's a group of four or more service members or an unidentified person, use the appropriate singular or collective noun associating them with their particular branch of service (e.g., *Soldier/Soldiers*, *Sailor/Sailors*, *Airman/Airmen*, *Marine/Marines*, *Coast Guardsman/ Guardsmen*, *Guardian/Guardians*). NOTE: Do not use the name of the service in conjunction with the associated noun, such as "U.S. Army Soldier" or "U.S. Marine Corps Marine."

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Brown inspects an F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft.

U.S. Navy Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Joe Smith cleans a .50-caliber machine gun.

U.S. Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment prepare for a live-fire range.

A U.S. Marine with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit conducts physical training.

- Every effort should be made to identify the subject of a photo. People appearing in the background need not be identified unless they are essential to the story of the image.

If the subject of the image is an object, provide the equipment name and model, name and ship hull number, or name and model of the aircraft or vehicle. Include both the name of the object (e.g., *C-17 Globemaster III*) as well as what kind of object it is (e.g., *aircraft*).

To find the proper way to list a particular vehicle, weapon system, or aircraft, refer to fact sheets available on service-specific websites (see Chapter 9).

What Describe the action captured by the imagery.

Use active voice when describing the action. When writing in active voice, the subject is doing something, while in passive voice, something is being done to the subject. To change from active to passive voice, make the object of the sentence (person or thing acting on the subject) the subject and vice versa.

Active vs. Passive Voice

Active: U.S. Soldiers destroy confiscated ordnance.

Passive: Confiscated ordnance is destroyed by U.S. Soldiers.

When describing the *what*, do not over-describe the action; let the image speak as well. For example, look at the following image and read the two sample captions.

In the first example, the *what* is “checks the status of an entry control point using radio communications.” In the second example, it is simply “checks the status of an entry control point.” Nothing is lost by using the shorter description of the second caption. The information given in the first caption is apparent in the image itself.

Incorrect: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. James Foster, right, with the 736th Security Forces Squadron, checks the status of an entry control point **using radio communications** at Williamson Airfield, Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia, July 22, 2013.

Correct: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. James Foster, right, with the 736th Security Forces Squadron, checks the status of an entry control point at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia, July 22, 2013.



When Provide the date and, if pertinent, the time of day when the image was captured. Include the date within the caption. Do *not* use datelines, which are headers placed before the start of the caption, often containing the date and location of the image.

Follow AP guidance and use the following format: Aug. 21, 2024. Spell out months March through July and abbreviate months August through February.

When writing just a month and year with no day, do not abbreviate the month: Feb. 27, 2024, but February 2024.

Style Check: Dates

- Use month, day, year format.
- Do not include on before the date **unless** preceded by a proper noun.
- Do not use the day of the week.
- Do not use datelines.

Where Provide the geographic location as well as the name of the base, facility, or organization, if applicable. Consult the *Associated Press Stylebook* entry on *datelines* to determine if a city stands alone in captions.

If there is no city, give a region or general area (e.g., *near the Syrian border* or *off the coast of Southern California*).

- If the image was captured on a ship, provide the ship name as well as where it is moored or underway. For example: *off the coast of ...* or *underway in the Pacific Ocean*.
- If it is an undisclosed location, state that within the caption and metadata. Try to add an identifiable geographic region, such as *in Southwest Asia* or *in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility*.
- Do not use the words “here” or “at sea” in place of a location or a geographical region in a caption. Spell out all state names, per Associated Press guidance.

Why Explain the purpose of the event, exercise, or operation depicted in the image. This gives context to the image and answers the question as to why the image matters. The explanation should be brief, in most cases no longer than one sentence. See **Style Check: Sample Captions** starting on page 40.

Constructing a Caption

The first sentence contains the who, what, when, and where and it is always written in the present tense using active voice. A caption describes the moment the image is captured, not what came before or after, so the first sentence is written as if from that moment.

Subsequent sentences include the background information (the *why?*) and almost always written in past tense. It explains why the image is significant and provides context. This is where the significance of the *action in the image* is provided. While observing brevity and clarity, consider the impact of the image on overall strategic messaging objectives when constructing the caption.

Example: *U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Smith demonstrates proper CPR techniques during his unit's safety day at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, July 5, 2011. Smith's unit was training in advanced first aid techniques in preparation for deployment.*

Examine the following image and sample caption:

U.S. Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board Landing Craft Utility 1627 in the well deck of forward-deployed Whidbey Island-class amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) on Feb. 10, 2012, off the coast of Thailand. Germantown was underway in support of Cobra Gold 2012. Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled exercise designed to ensure regional peace and strengthen the ability of the Royal Thai armed forces to defend Thailand or respond to regional contingencies. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Johnie Hickmon)



In the caption, the background sentences describe why the Germantown and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit were off the coast of Thailand (for exercise Cobra Gold). While this is important information, it does not give background information on the action in the image, which is Marines boarding a landing craft utility. A more appropriate second sentence would explain why the Marines were boarding the craft. Presuming we know why, the caption could read:

U.S. Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board Landing Craft Utility 1627 in the welldeck of forward-deployed Whidbey Island-class amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) on Feb. 10, 2012, off the coast of Thailand. **The Marines were preparing to go ashore in Thailand as part of exercise Cobra Gold 2012.** (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Johnie Hickmon)

While it is acceptable to use pronouns when referring to the subject or subjects of a photo, avoid using personal or impersonal pronouns in reference to the reader, the units, or

organizations depicted in the image. Rewrite the caption as needed to avoid using the pronouns us, our, we, and you.

Incorrect: The exercise allows us to build rapport with our partners and strengthen international relationships.

Correct: Balikatan is a longstanding annual exercise between the U.S. and Philippine armed forces designed to strengthen the alliance, showcase the capable combined force, and demonstrate the commitment to regional security and stability.

Incorrect: The new organization allows you to properly plan your trip.

Correct: The new organization allows service members to properly plan for a trip.

Captions for Graphics

Captions for graphics products must explain *when* the product was created, *what* the product represents, and *why* it was created. Unlike traditional photo and video captions that focus on an observed action taking place, providing the *when*, *what*, and *why* allows the reader to understand the importance of the product and its alignment to DoW mission and goals. See **Style Check: Sample Captions** starting on page 40

Additional Rules of Construction

Define all acronyms on first use within the caption. Spell out all terms on first reference. Use only abbreviations or acronyms on subsequent reference.

- **Do not use acronyms for terms used only once within the caption.**
- Do not use apostrophes when using a plural acronym. For example: *MREs*, not *MRE's*; *F-15s*, not *F-15's*.
- Refer to the *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* for official definitions of abbreviations and acronyms. See **Additional Resources** on page 65. Acronyms need not appear in the dictionary to be used in a caption.

Avoid the use of jargon. Explain terms and practices that are not commonly known outside of military circles. Remember to write for a nonmilitary audience. For example, do not use shorthand references to identify military units unless they have been previously defined within the caption.

Incorrect: 2-8 IN

Correct: 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment

Do not editorialize. Stick to the facts as presented by the image and gathered at the scene. In the following example, the first caption contains editorializing.

Incorrect: *An Iraqi family enjoys a picnic in a park near the Baghdad Zoo in the Karkh district of Baghdad on March 30, 2007. Scenes like this one are becoming more prevalent in the city as life slowly returns to normal.*

Correct: *An Iraqi family shares a picnic in a park near the Baghdad Zoo in the Karkh district of Baghdad on March 30, 2007.*

ID by placement. Identify subjects in a photo from left to right in most cases. In cases in which high-level official(s) is/are prominent, identify in order of prominence. Use commas, not parentheses. When identifying people in an image, use the rule of three; provide the full name and rank and/or title of every person when there are three or fewer people in the image. It is not necessary to identify everyone if there are four or more people present, although there may be some cases (such as with high-level officials) in which that would be appropriate.

No quotes. Do not quote people within the body of a caption. Only use quotations in a press release, feature story, or news article.

Do not include the names of minor dependents of military members without obtaining written permission from the parents to release this information. Do not include the names of U.S. citizens, including service members, receiving medical treatment without the express written consent of the patient. Retain this information in the unit's files.

Example 1: *U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Brown, left, and Spc. Carl Anderson, both assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, participate in a training exercise at Fort Pickett, Virginia, Jan. 5, 2013.*

Example 2: *From left, U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis, British Defense Secretary Sir Michael Fallon and their aides meet at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, May 6, 2017.*

Hometown

Hometowns are often a service member's home of record, the location from which they entered military service. Do not include the service member's hometown without obtaining written permission from the service member. Retain the document in accordance with service level records management requirements. Home state alone is permissible without the service member's written permission.

Releasing information products listing the service members home of record (city and state) without signed permission is a Privacy Act violation per DoD 5400.11-R.

See **Release Information** on page 52 for release authority guidance.

Credit Line

The credit line identifies the person or persons who created the VI product; it is placed in parenthesis at the end of the caption. If the product was a team effort, list all contributors. See examples on the right. Product type is also indicated here. See Visual Information Ethics for more information.

If the individual is a member of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard, indicate it in the credit line, but do not use the state or territory name. *National Guard civilians, including*

Credit Line Examples

(U.S. Air Force video by Staff Sgt. Jane Doe, and Senior Airmen John Smith and Jack Jones)

(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Bob Smith)

(U.S. Air Force graphic by Airman 1st Class Jane Johnson)

(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Betty Jones)

(U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Lance Cpl. Juan Silva)

Title 5 technicians, and National Guard Soldiers and Airmen on Title 32 or Title 10, also use the same format.

If the photographer is from a non-U.S. military service, use the term “Courtesy photo by” followed by the photographer’s rank, name, and service affiliation. Local nationals assigned to a U.S. military unit will use the appropriate service affiliation. For example, U.S. Air Force photo by Yasuo Osakabe. See **Field Two** on page 49 for more details.

Products created on behalf of the Secretary of War will use “DOW photo (or video) by. . .” followed by the person’s service, rank, and full name since DoW is the releasing activity. For example, *DOW photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jack Jones*.

Team products created by members from different services will list the producing activity’s service in credit line. For example, a VI product created by a Marine and an Airman attached to a Marine unit could use *U.S. Marine Corps video by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jack James and U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Jane Doe*.

Required Notices

A sentence is required after the credit line to provide notice of alterations and the use of artificial intelligence and licensed material. Do not place this information in parentheses.

1. Alterations. See **Chapter 8: VI Ethics** for required statements.

2. Artificial intelligence (AI). Per DoDI 5400.19, VI created by, or edited with, the help of generative AI will cite its use and include a statement indicating it was reviewed and edited by relevant DoW personnel to verify appropriateness and compliance with Department policies and guidance. Photo realistic depictions will be labeled as photo illustrations. The caption will also note specific non-corrective modifications or enhancements in order to not mislead or deceive in accordance with DoDI 5040.02. See **Style Check: Sample Captions** starting on page 40.

3. Licensed material. The DoW must avoid violating intellectual property rights. Copyrighted materials can include, but are not limited to, music, programs recorded off broadcast (e.g., air, cable, Internet), textures, sound effects, look-up tables, stock footage, and images. Commands must obtain a license or express written permission from the copyright holder to use this material. Do not use music or videos from social media sites before first consulting with the command’s general counsel prior to downloading. Even though some sites state “creative common license,” or “royalty free license,” some have very strict use criteria for organizational use. Additionally, although materials might state “copyright free,” do not assume that the material is now in the public domain and can be reproduced without permission from the copyright holder. Always consult the command’s general counsel BEFORE using any copyrighted material. Once approved, list the use of licensed material in the caption after the credit line. Do not include the name of the software used to create the product.

Style Check: Sample Captions

Example 1: Licensed material notice

U.S. Marines assigned to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Sailors assigned to San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock USS Somerset (LPD 25), and Malaysian soldiers assigned to 9th Battalion, Royal Malay Regiment, 10th Brigade (Para), conduct Tiger Strike 24 at Sri Pantai Camp, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia, May 29 to June 5, 2024. Tiger Strike is a bilateral exercise between U.S. and Malaysia armed forces designed to enhance communication and build combat readiness through combined amphibious operations and subject matter expert exchanges in support of a shared vision for security and stability in the region. (U.S. Marine Corps video by Sgt. Patrick Katz)

The video contains music from a USMC licensed asset from Transition Music.

Note the extra line between the caption and the licensed asset notice.

Example 2: Licensed material notice

This infographic was created to inform Marines, Sailors, and their families about common questions concerning the COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is optional to all I Marine Expeditionary Force Marines and Sailors and is not required to be taken. The health of every service member plays a vital role in staying mission ready and maintaining the bar of excellence. (U.S. Marine Corps graphic by Lance Cpl. Timothy Fowler)

This graphic uses USMC licensed asset from Adobe Stock.

Note the extra line between the caption and the licensed asset notice.

Example 3: AI notice

(U.S. Army video by ...)

This product includes elements generated by artificial intelligence from Army Enterprise Large Language Model Workspace, powered by Ask Sage, to enhance [specific functionality/purpose]. These AI-generated elements were reviewed and edited by relevant DOW personnel to verify appropriateness and compliance with DOW policies and guidance.

Note the extra line between the caption and the use of artificial intelligence notice.

Example 4: AI notice

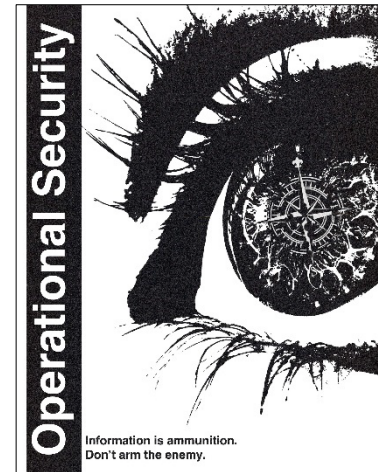
(U.S. Navy graphic by ...)

Artificial intelligence algorithms from NIPRGPT were used in this product's development to [specific task AI assisted with, e.g., optimize performance, improve accuracy, accelerate processing]. These AI-generated elements were reviewed and edited by relevant DOW personnel to verify appropriateness and compliance with DOW policies and guidance.

Note the extra line between the caption and the use of artificial intelligence notice.

Example 5: Graphic

This US Navy graphic illustration was created using Adobe Photoshop to promote awareness about operational security, July 6, 2025. USS Gerald R. Ford, a first-in-class aircraft carrier and deployed flagship of Carrier Strike Group Twelve, incorporates modern technology, innovative shipbuilding designs and best practices from legacy aircraft carriers to increase the U.S. Navy's capacity to underpin American security and economic prosperity, deter adversaries and project power on a global scale through sustained operations at sea. (U.S. Navy graphic by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Mariano Lopez)



Example 6: Graphic



This photo illustration was created using Adobe Photoshop 2021 to showcase the 1st Marine Division's motto at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California, July 23, 2024. The motto of the 1st Marine Division, "No better friend, no worse enemy," was popularized by retired U.S. Marine Corps Gen. James N. Mattis. (U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Cpl. Adeola Adetimehin)

This photo illustration was created by combining multiple images overlaid with text and a unit logo.

Example 7: Photo



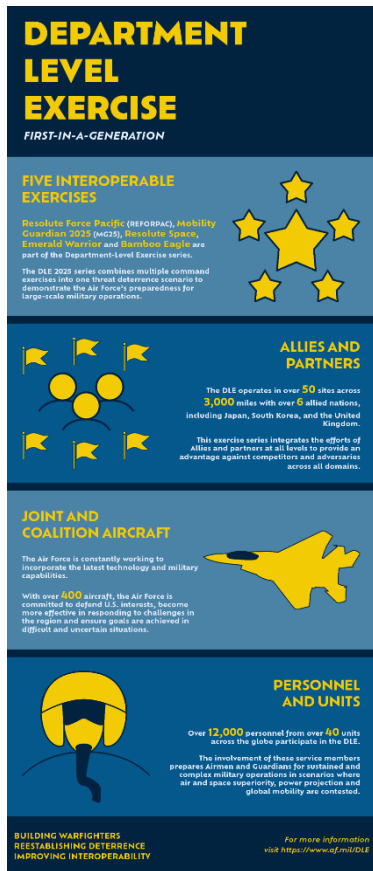
U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Juan Martinez, left, assigned to the 50th Aerial Port Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Oscar Cortes, with the 56th APS, secure a truck aboard a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft Nov. 1, 2012, at March Air Reserve Base, California. The aircraft flew vehicles and repair crews to Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York, to support recovery efforts after Hurricane Sandy struck New Jersey and New York City on Oct. 29, 2012. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacquelyn Estrada)

Example 8: Photo

A U.S. Army pilot flies a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter assigned to the Colorado National Guard during a water drop while fighting the Black Forest Fire near Colorado Springs, Colorado, June 12, 2013. Both the CONG and the U.S. Air Force Reserve assisted in firefighting efforts against the fire, which started June 11, 2013, burning multiple homes and forcing large-scale evacuations. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Capt. Darin Overstreet)



Example 9: Graphic



Department-Level Exercise Series 2025 infographic created at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Aug. 8, 2025. The infographic shows the Air Force's first-in-a-generation Department-Level Exercise series in an easily digestible format. The DLE series encompasses all branches of the Department of Defense, along with allies and partners, employing more than 400 Joint and coalition aircraft and more than 12,000 members at more than 50 locations across 3,000 miles. (U.S. Air Force graphic by Airman Xavier Romero)

Example 10: Graphic



This layout and design graphic was created for U.S. Space Command, Nov. 20, 2019. The graphic represents the multi-faceted components tied to USSPACECOM while engaging and educating viewers on the different functions in a visual compelling way during the stand-up of the Department of Defense's newest combatant command. Space related elements such as Global Positioning System satellites, radomes, launch vehicles, ground-based radars, Polaris stars and other assorted space asset representations were used in the design. The bottom paragraph briefly explains the conception of the command and the commander's four Ds by which the command works to ensure. (U.S. Air Force graphic by Staff Sgt. Dennis Hoffman)

Example 11: Photo



U.S. Navy Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) Airman Justin Bryan ducks as an F/A-18E Super Hornet aircraft assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 14 launches from the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) on Oct. 21, 2012, in the Arabian Sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kenneth Abbate)

Example 12: Photo

U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Brandon Mann scans an area through the scope of an M27 infantry automatic rifle while providing security with his military working dog, Ty, around the villages of Sre Kala and Paygel in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 17, 2012. Mann, a military working dog handler, and Ty, an improvised explosive device detection dog, were assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Alfred V. Lopez)



Example 13: Photo



From left to right, Col. Brian Capps, 821st Space Base Group commander; Gen. Chance Saltzman, Chief of Space Operations, U.S. Space Force; Vivian Motzfeldt, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Business and Trade for Greenland; Alan Leventhal, U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark; and Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Clark, 821st Space Group command chief, unveil the new base sign during the base renaming ceremony at Pituffik Space Base, Greenland, April 6, 2023. The ceremony took place in the fitness center where distinguished guests and Greenlandic community members attended the historic event. (U.S. Space Force photo by Senior Airman Kaitlin Castillo)

Example 14: Photo

U.S. Coast Guardsmen assigned to medium endurance cutter USCGC Northland (WMEC 904) maneuver during the interdiction of 3,532 pounds of cocaine from a 35-foot go-fast vessel in the Caribbean Sea, March 3, 2012, as part of Operation Martillo. The cocaine's wholesale value was estimated at more than \$43 million. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Joe Coastie)



Chapter 4: Keywords

A repository of Controlled Vocabulary keywords is integrated into the DVIDS360 content management system. Public affairs, combat camera, and visual information members enter keywords at the point of submission and at the asset level in the DVIDS “Unit Media Control” interface. The purpose of controlled vocabulary is to standardize keywords and certain sets of metadata making the VI more easily accessible. The repository is available to be updated and maintained by designated personnel.

Definition

- Keywords are used to define an online search. Keywords can be used in metadata. Only use six Keywords.
- Tags provide a useful way to group related events together and to quickly tell readers what an event is about. Only use six Tags.

Considerations

Use the 5 Ws to determine the most prominent elements within the image or video. Often, the who, what and where will be appropriate choices.

When selecting keywords for imagery, ask the following questions and choose keywords based on the answers:

- What is the message of the image or video?
- What person or object has the biggest impact?
- Why would someone want the image or video?
- What other major elements or concepts appear in the image or video but not in the caption?

Choose several keywords that best describe the visual content of the image or video. Using appropriate keywords will ensure that imagery is more searchable, making it more readily available to the end user. Do not use photographer’s names or units, locations, or anything irrelevant to what is shown in the image itself.

Separate keywords with commas.

Do not use social media symbols, such as hashtags (# sign) or @ symbols, in keywords or captions. Those should only be used in the text of a social media post.

Keyword Examples

Example 1

A search looks for each individual word in a keyword for a match. Therefore, the keyword for an image of an F/A-18E Super Hornet aircraft needs to be its full technical name: F/A-18E Super Hornet. This ensures that no matter what the user enters into a search (i.e., 18E, Hornet), the search will return results with those words or phrases in the keywords. It is important to also include *aircraft*, otherwise a user searching simply for *aircraft* will not return all the appropriate images.



Keywords for Example 1: *F/A-18E Super Hornet, F-22 Raptor, Aircraft*



A U.S. Marine with the 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion patrols an improvised explosive device training trail during jungle warfare training in Colombia, Aug. 10, 2010. The unit was deployed in support of Partnership of the Americas/Southern Exchange, a combined amphibious exercise with maritime forces from 10 nations. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Ammon W. Carter)

Example 2

In this example, patrol is the primary action of the image. Therefore, Patrol is a keyword. However, the concept of the image is training. Training is also a keyword. Inserting Patrol as a keyword may appear redundant, since the word appears in the caption, but inclusion allows for broader search capability and image accessibility if it is included.

Keywords for Example 2: *USMC, Marine, 3rd AABn, M4 carbine, Training*

Standard Format for Keywords

1. Treat the keyword field similarly to the caption field, proper spelling and capitalization are important. For example: *M1A1 Abrams tank, USAID, Secretary of War*
2. Write all technical names as directed by the U.S. Military Services' fact files and yearbooks.
3. Keywords are separated by **commas** (the final keyword does not require a comma). For example: *M1A1 Abrams tank, F/A-18E Super Hornet, Aircraft*

Correct	Incorrect
F/A-18E Super Hornet, Aircraft	F/A-18E, Super, Hornet, Aircraft
M1A1 Abrams tank	M1A1, Abrams, Tank
M14 Enhanced Battle Rifle	M14, Enhanced, Battle, Rifle

4. Keywords may be phrases or full names and, in these instances, should not be separated.
5. The service of the person who created the product is a keyword, but only in its acronym/abbreviated form. For example: *USMC, USA, USN, USAF, USCG, RAF, USSF*
6. Words that are NEVER keywords:
 - The name of the person who created the product (in any variation), unit, or VISION ID
 - Release status
 - Classification status
 - Use of the image (i.e., publication)

Guidelines for Selecting Keywords

1. Consider and select from the broad categories list first. See the sample categories in **Sample Keywords** on page 47.
2. What is the concept of the image? Don't forget to add the theme/message of the image.
3. What is in the image?
 - Vehicles? Weapons?
 - Technical names for all types of vehicles (e.g., aircraft, ships, tanks, etc.) and all weaponry are keywords.
 - Ship names (including the hull number), classes and types are keywords. For example: *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), Nimitz-class, Aircraft carrier*
4. Who is in the image?
 - Titles and occupation fields (not ranks) are keywords. This applies only to U.S. personnel. For example: *Human intelligence collector, Drill instructor, Logistics Specialist, Ship's Boatswain, Platoon leader, Designated marksman, Infantryman, Rifleman*
 - There are four individuals whose title and name will always be keywords. These four people are the President, Vice President, Secretary of War and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
5. Does the image represent an event?
 - Is the event an operation or an exercise?
 - If so, the name of the Operation/Exercise is not a keyword. These names are to be entered in the Operation/Exercise metadata field.
 - If not, then the event's full name is a keyword. For example: *11th Annual Air Force Marathon*
6. Are there phrases, units, etc., that have acronyms/abbreviations that are not written in the caption? If so, the acronyms/abbreviations are keywords.
 - For example: *International Security Assistance Force* is written in the caption, but the acronym is not. *ISAF* is then a keyword.
 - For example: The image is from Operation Enduring Freedom. *OEF* is then a keyword.
 - For example: *6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division* is used in the caption once. Therefore, *6-1 CAV, 1st AD* are keywords.

Sample Keywords

The following list contains numerous examples of keywords used in imagery metadata. By no means is this a comprehensive list, but many common concepts, activities, events, people, weapons, ships, vehicles, and other equipment are listed here. If an item has words in parentheses next to it, those words are meant to describe what the keyword means and are not part of the keyword itself.

Concepts Security, Safety, Education, Communication, COMREL (community relations), Training, Exercise, HADR (humanitarian assistance and disaster relief), Humanitarian assistance, Disaster Relief, Logistics, Maintenance, Navigation, Aviation, Agriculture, Religion, Health and well-ness, MEDCAP (medical civic action project), ENCAP (engineering civic action project)	People (by service, certain positions and occupational specialties) Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, Coast Guardsman, National Guardsman, Guardian, POTUS (President of the United States), VPOTUS (Vice President of the United States), CJCS (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), SEAL, Seabee, Culinary Specialist, Infantryman, Rifleman, Intelligence Analyst, Cadet, Drill instructor, Student
Activities Recreation, Replenishment at sea, RAS (replenishment at sea), Vertical replenishment, VERTREP (vertical replenishment), Change of command, MWR (morale, welfare and recreation)	Weapons, aircraft and vehicles B-52H Stratofortress, Aircraft UH-60 Black Hawk, Helicopter MV-22 Osprey, Tiltrotor aircraft M16 rifle, M4 carbine, M27 IAR (infantry automatic rifle), M110 SASS, HMMWV, MRAP, M-ATV, M1 Abrams, Tank, M2 Bradley, IFV, AAV7A1, MAFFS (Modular airborne firefighting system), M9 pistol, M45 pistol
Events Change of command, Retirement, Basic training, Recruit training, AIT, "A" school, Commissioning, Decommissioning, Award, Funeral, Ceremony, Changing of the guard	Units and other organizations 1-4 CAV, 82nd ABN DIV, 30th HBCT, NCARNG, USO, 3rd U.S. INF RGT, The Old Guard, 3/2 Marines, 509th BW, 135th FW, NMCB-2, RIVRON-1, 10th MTN DIV, XVIII ABN CORPS, 8th Army, III MEF, 3rd MARDIV
Places USNA, USAFA, USMA, FOB, COB, Bridge, Barracks: Galley, DFAC	Ships — <i>Include the type, class and hull number in parentheses with the ship name:</i> Aircraft carrier, USS Nimitz (CVN 68), Nimitz-class Guided missile cruiser, USS Vicksburg (CG 69), Ticonderoga-class Attack submarine, USS Mississippi (SSN 782), Virginia-class Medium endurance cutter, USCGC Alert (WMEC 630), Reliance-class Coastal tug, USAV MG Winfield Scott (LT-805), MG Nathaniel Greene-class

Chapter 5: Metadata

Complete and accurate metadata increases the value and discoverability of VI as strategic information assets. Descriptive metadata fields provide a textual summary and operational context of each unique VI product that often cannot be understood by simply viewing the product.

Excepting abbreviations, all entries should be in regular text, not in all capital letters. The **Metadata Cross References** table on page 54 lists the fields and their corresponding names and placement in common imagery management software programs. These guidelines apply if you are using a video editing program that allows for the modification of video metadata. In general, attribution applies to the person or unit that created the product. Metadata must also identify visually depicted people, locations, units, and equipment or facilities, and include a uniquely assigned record identification number.

Visual Information Record Identification Number

Assign each image, video product, or graphic a unique VIRIN. A VIRIN consists of 16 alphanumeric characters separated by hyphens into four fields organized in the alpha (A) numeric (N) format **YYMMDD-A-XXXXX-NNNN**. A fifth field of two characters can be added for imagery generated by photographers working for a foreign government.

Field One	Field Two	Field Three	Field Four
YYMMDD	A	XXXXX VISION ID or DVIAN	NNNN

Field one, the first six characters, is the date the imagery was taken or the date the editing process began in YYMMDD format. (*It is not the date it was submitted to DVIDS or DMA.*) The date must match what is reflected in the caption. **Note: Ensure all cameras are set to the correct local date and time before conducting a shoot.**

If a video uses imagery captured over a time period, such as a video covering a multi-day event, use the date the video package was started in editing software. Whether the video was started on day one and worked on as the exercise went on or if the video was started after the imagery was captured. Refer to the decision matrix below.

Product Type	Topic	VIRIN	In the caption . . .
Video Product	Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023 Event dates: July 22, 2023, to Aug. 4, 2023	Work started in the editing software on July 22, 2023. Field one VIRIN: 20230722	List the full date range of the event, July 22, 2023, to Aug. 4, 2023.
B-Roll, Prime Cut, and Photo	Jungle warfare training Event dates: Aug. 9, 2010, to Aug. 30, 2010	Photo taken Aug. 10, 2010. Field one VIRIN: 20100810 B-roll captured Aug. 11, 2010. Field One VIRIN: 20100811	List the date the photo, prime cut, or b-roll was taken. In this case, Aug. 10, 2010

Graphic	Marine Corps Recruit Training: Week Eight Event dates: Feb. 26, 2024, to March 1, 2024.	Work started in the editing software on Feb. 27, 2024, the second day of training, and ended on March 7, 2024. Field One VIRIN: 20240227	List the full date range of the event, Feb. 26, 2024, to March 1, 2024, if appropriate.
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Field two, the seventh character, represents the service of the individual who created the product. Foreign or local nationals assigned to a U.S. military unit will use the identifier associated with the unit. For example, a local national assigned to an Air Force unit located in Japan would use “F” in field two while a local national assigned to a Marine unit in Okinawa would use M. Foreign nationals not assigned to a U.S. military unit will use “O” in field two, including imagery provided as a courtesy. Personnel assigned to non-DoW organizations, except for Department of State, also use “O” in field two.

A: Army uniformed member or civilian/contract employee

D: Civilian/contract employee of the DoW (including the Office of the Secretary of War and the Joint Chiefs of Staff)

F: Air Force uniformed member, civilian/contract employee, or Civil Air Patrol member

G: Coast Guard uniformed member, civilian/contract employee, or auxiliarist

H: Department of Homeland Security, not including Coast Guard

M: Marine Corps uniformed member or civilian/contract employee

N: Navy uniformed member or civilian/contract employee

O: Any person not falling into another category, including foreign nationals

S: Department of State

X: Airmen, Guardian, or civilian/contract employee assigned to a U.S. Space Force unit

Z: National Guard (either branch) uniformed member or civilian/contract employee, in Title 5, Title 10 or Title 32 status

Field three is either the individual photographer’s VISION ID, which provides official attribution to the individual who created the unique VI or a unit’s DVIAN (see table on page 50). Do not use a generic VISION ID such as ZZ999. Each VI creator must have their own VISION ID.

Non-DoW civilian employees and foreign military members use the unique DVIAN for the releasing DoW activity in field three per DoDI 5040.02, Enclosure 6, paragraph 3.c.

Use the producing activity’s DVIAN in field three for products created as a team effort by more than one individual. Products created as a team effort must not be credited to only one member of the team. List all contributors on the credit line. For example, a VI product created by an Airman and a Soldier attached to an Army unit, would use the producing activity’s DVIAN. In this example, it would be the Army unit’s DVIAN and the credit line would be *U.S. Army video by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John James and U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jane Doe.*

Contact DMA Enterprise Customer Services on how to obtain a VISION ID or DVIAN.

Field Three	
VISION ID	DVIAN
A two-letter, three-digit number identifying the person who created the VI. If the VI specialist is a member of a foreign government, use an assigned DVIAN. U.S. service members, civilians, or contract personnel shall NOT use ZZ999 or other false VISION IDs.	A one-letter, four-digit unit-level identifier for products produced by a group of people, or images taken by U.S. personnel without a VISION ID. Derivative imagery, such as various integrated sensors, remotely piloted platforms, geospatial platforms, RDT&E, seized or captured imagery, and imagery acquired through a contract, donation or transfer, will use the unique DVIAN for the releasing activity. DVIANS are assigned by the Service VI manager and by DMA.

Field four, the final four digits, are used to create a unique VIRIN for each photo or video file uploaded.

The first digit indicates separate projects or assignments on a single day, starting with 1 and continuing as necessary to 9. The second through fourth digits are used to organize specific shots or scenes resulting from the separate projects in their approximate order. No two shots or scenes from the same day will have the same final four digits. The number indicates the sequence number for each image thus all images must be numbered in order of shooting. If fewer than 1,000 images were photographed during a day, it is also permitted to use the first digit to denote the scene or location. Thus, if multiple locations were documented by the same photographer on the same day, the sequence numbers may be entered as 1001-1999, then 2001-2999, and so on, without explanation. No VIRINS will be duplicated.

Field five, used by creators working for a foreign government, will use the two-letter ISO 3166-1 Alpha-2 code used to identify their respective government. For example, a Belgian government photographer who submits an image to a DoW organization will use a VIRIN such as **160323-O-(DVIAN)-1001-BE**.

The ISO 3166-1 Alpha-2 codes can be found at <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#search>

Reference: DoDI 5040.02, Enclosure 6

Operation/Exercise

This **metadata** field should only be filled out with the name of a formal operation or exercise. Operations, for example, include *Inherent Resolve* and *Freedom's Sentinel*; examples of exercises include *Balikatan*, *Cobra Gold* or *Anakonda*. Do not include the words *Operation* or *Exercise* in this field. Similarly, do not list the year in the name of the exercise. If the image(s) are not part of a named exercise or operation, leave this field blank.

Headline

This mandatory field is found in the DVIDS submission portal and is intended to briefly describe a specific event associated with a larger news story or series of images, for example, "82nd Airborne Division change of command," "USS America (LHA 6) commissioning," or "35th Fighter Wing Airmen train in survival skills."

Caption

Ensure the caption is complete and adheres to the standards in **Chapter 3**. The date in the caption must match the Date Shot and VIRIN fields. Include the credit line and any required notices.

Keywords

A keyword is a word or phrase that signifies the meaning or main ideas of an image. The primary function of keywords is to improve accessibility of the imagery. **Limit keywords to no more than six.** Do not include the photographer's name, locations, or anything irrelevant to what is in the image.

DMA has established a controlled vocabulary for keywords that covers such topics as equipment, career fields, activities, events, ships, etc. The list, which will grow and evolve with new *terminology*, is managed at DMA and integrated into the DVIDS360 content management system.” See **Chapter 4** for more information on keywords.

Command Shown

Enter the geographic combatant command where the photo was taken: *USAFRICOM, USCENTCOM, USEUCOM, USINDOPACOM, USNORTHCOM, USSOUTHCOM, or USSPACECOM*. For imagery from Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve or relating to anti-Islamic State group operations, use *CJTF-OIR*; for imagery under Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, use *CJTF-HOA*.

City/Base/Location/Ship

Enter the city, base, ship, installation, or other specific location *at which the image was captured*, not the location to which the photographer is assigned and/or deployed. For example, if the photographer is assigned to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, but the image was taken in nearby Fayetteville, enter *Fayetteville* in this field. If there is no specific-named location, filling out the Country/Area field will suffice.

State/Province

Enter the U.S. state or foreign province (or other subdivision) in which the image was captured, if applicable.

Country/Area

Enter the country, area, or major body of water in which the image was captured. Areas will usually be bodies of water such as the Persian Gulf or regions such as the Arctic Circle. Should it be an undisclosed location, enter that information here as well. Search the Controlled Vocabulary keywords integrated into the DVIDS360 content management system at the point of submission in DVIDS for acceptable list of countries and bodies of water. If the location of the image is withheld, enter *undisclosed location* here.

Release Information

Release status is either **Released** or **Not for Release**. Only released imagery may be submitted to DVIDS.

Not for Release. VI marked as classified or CUI is *not for release*. See examples on the right. Use the word **CUI** for controlled unclassified information as required by DoDI 5200.48 or **use the appropriate classification marking** as required by DoDM 5200.01, Volume 2.

If you cannot access or transmit VI for release to DVIDS, contact DMA Enterprise Customer Services at <https://www.dma.mil/Services/Enterprise-Customer-Services/>. If required, customer services will issue specific instructions for transmitting the images via regular email or other secure means.

CUI: If an image is CUI, with no established public release clearance, do not send to DVIDS. Imagery not for release or CUI, with no established public release clearance, shall be handled by the originating command in accordance with DoDI 5200.48 in coordination with the service records manager.

Classified: Classified VI products will not be sent to DVIDS and shall be managed by the originating command in accordance with DoDM 5200.01 Volume 1 and 2 in coordination with the service records manager.

Release Authority: Enter the name, duty position, phone number, and email address of a person authorized **in writing** by his or her command to release VI. The release authority is responsible for ensuring the security and policy review process is followed, including operations security, artificial intelligence, intellectual property, and privacy concerns. See **hometown** on pages 7 and 38 and **Required Notices** on page 39 for additional details.

Photographer (VI Professional) Rank/Name

List the rank/rate and name of the person who created the product.

Photographer (VI Professional) Home Unit

List the home unit of the person who created the product: *3rd Marine Division* or *1st Combat Camera Squadron*. Do not enter the service of the person who created the product, such as *U.S. Marine Corps*.

Examples of Proper Release Instructions

Do not send CUI or classified VI to DVIDS. Classified or CUI shall be handled by the originating command.

Release Status: Released

Release Authority: MAJ John Jones, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office. jjones@emailaddress.mil DSN 315-123-4567

Release Status: CUI

Release Authority: CDR Jane Smith, JTF-Guantanamo Public Affairs Office. jsmith@emailaddress.mil DSN 312-987-6543; Exemption 7 - Identifiable host-nation detainees.

Release Status: CUI

Release Authority: Capt Bill Murray, 199th Fighter Wing. bmurray@emailaddress.mil DSN 312-999-8888; Exemption 3 - Another federal law prevents disclosure of this information.

Release Status: SECRET

Release Authority: Capt Bill Johnson, 1st Combat Camera Squadron. bjohnson@emailaddress.mil DSN 313-555-1212; Exemption 1 - Shows classified equipment.

See **FOIA Exemptions for CUI and Classified Imagery** on page 53 for examples.

Photographer (VI Professional) Contact Information

List the email address (preferably an official .mil or .gov account) and a phone number for the person who created the product.

FOIA Exemptions for CUI and Classified Imagery

- **Exemption 1 (Only for imagery labeled SECRET):** Information that is classified to protect national security.
- **Exemption 2:** Information related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency.
- **Exemption 3:** Information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law.
- **Exemption 4:** Trade secrets or commercial or financial information that is confidential or privileged.
- **Exemption 5:** Privileged communications within or between agencies, including:
 - Deliberative Process Privilege
 - Attorney-Work Product Privilege
 - Attorney-Client Privilege
- **Exemption 6:** Information that, if disclosed, would invade another individual's personal privacy. (NOTE: This includes HIPAA considerations)
- **Exemption 7:** Information compiled for law enforcement purposes that:
 - 7(A). Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings
 - 7(B). Would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication
 - 7(C). Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
 - 7(D). Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source
 - 7(E). Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions
 - 7(F). Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual
- **Exemption 8:** Information that concerns the supervision of financial institutions.
- **Exemption 9:** Geological information on wells.

Sources: www.foia.gov; DoDI 5200.48, "Controlled Unclassified Information"

Caption Editor

Include the rank and name of the person who wrote the caption. This can be the photographer or another person who reviewed the caption and metadata before it was submitted.

Metadata Cross References

The following provides a cross reference for the field names in four commonly used captioning software programs. Captioning for video, which provides instructions on what to include in each field, uses the MediaGrid field names as subchapter titles. If you have no captioning software, include this information in a Word file.

Metadata Fields for "IPTC" Panel in Photoshop's "File Info"			
Photoshop's "File Info" Field	Equivalent DVIDS Direct Field	Input Data	Notes
"Creator"	"Credit"	Product creator's rank & full name.	DVIDS does attempt to auto-populate Credit from the Vision ID segment of the VIRIN, if provided.
"Creator's Job Title"		The home unit for the person who created the product.	
"Date Created"	"Date Taken"	Date the image was taken.	If the date and time were set correctly in the camera, this field should auto-populate with the correct date and time. See Date Shot for details.
"City"	"City"	Base locale or city of the shoot.	
"State/Province"	"State"	State or province of the shoot.	
"Country"	"Country"	Country or area of the shoot.	For aerials, use either the country or the ocean area being flown over.
"ISO Country Code"	"Country"	Input "USA" if the shoot was within the United States.	DVIDS reads from any combination of name, ISO-3166-Alpha 2, or Alpha 3. For a list of ISO 3166 country codes, access this link. https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#search
"Headline"	"Headline"	Title of the photo album or headline of the print story the photos are associated with.	
"Description"	"Caption"	Caption and credit line.	
"Keywords"	"Tags"	Appropriate keywords.	Use websites & pamphlets associated with the event to generate keywords.
"Description Writer"	"Caption Writer"	Name of the individual editing the caption, if different than the person who created the product.	
"Title"	"VIRIN"	Input the VIRIN.	
"Job Identifier"	"Command Shown"	Combatant command where the image was taken.	For the United States, "USNORTHCOM" would be the combatant command.
"Credit Line"		The unit to which the person who created the product was temporarily assigned during the shoot (must be on official orders). If not assigned, then leave blank.	
"Source"		The medium used to capture the image; either "Digital" or "Film" is entered here.	Do not enter the film type or camera model.
"Instructions"	"Release Information"	Release Status and name, duty position, phone number and email address of a person authorized in writing by his or her command to release imagery.	

Chapter 6: VI Archive

DMA is the official records manager for the Department's visual information program, ensuring visual history is preserved through regular transfers of VI to the National Archives and Records Administration.

Before submission, **photographers, videographers, and their respective units are responsible** for ensuring each item submitted meets the captioning and metadata standards described in this guide.

Per DoDI 5040.02, unclassified imagery, with associated captions and metadata, must be submitted to DVIDS. **Submit only high-resolution images using the methods below.**

VI Used in Social Media

VI used in social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, Flickr, etc.) is considered a permanent, released record. The original high-resolution version used on social media must also be sent to DVIDS for archiving. This includes VI posted to DoW and non-DoW web pages. Posting VI on social media is not a substitute for sending it to DVIDS.

Unclassified, Released VI

Submitting to DVIDS is by far the most common and most expedient way of submitting unclassified, released VI. DVIDS forwards a copy of all received VI directly to the Defense VI Archive 180 days after receiving it; the original version remains in DVIDS.

DVIDS accepts only officially released, public domain imagery. Do not send unreleased, copyrighted, or CUI files.

DVIDS Website

<https://www.dvidshub.net>

(Registration required for submission)

To submit VI, you must have a DVIDS account. This can be accomplished by visiting

<https://www.dvidshub.net> and clicking on Register. Be sure to choose your organization or unit and choose a Priority of Effort, which can be tailored for your organization's marketing needs. Once registered, find the DVIDS Direct tab at the top of the DVIDS page to begin the submission process.

Up to 2GB can be submitted through the web interface in a single session.

- Ensure each file is populated with a caption and the appropriate metadata.
- Also complete the DVIDS metadata screen for each asset.
- DVIDS also offers FileZilla to facilitate FTP/SFTP submissions. Information can be found on the DVIDS Direct page.
- DMA Enterprise Customer Services can be reached at (888) 743-4662 or <https://www.dma.mil/Services/Enterprise-Customer-Services/>

Customer Services

<https://www.dma.mil/Services/Enterprise-Customer-Services/>

Toll-free: (888) 743-4662

For issues accessing or uploading VI to DVIDS, contact DMA Enterprise Customer Services for

help. If required, the staff will issue specific instructions for transmitting the images via regular email or other secure methods.

CUI VI

Do not send VI products designated as CUI with no established public release clearance to DVIDS.

VI marked as CUI shall be handled by the originating command in accordance with DoDI 5200.48 in coordination with the service records manager.

Classified VI

Classified VI products will not be sent to DVIDS and shall be handled by the originating command in accordance with DoDM 5200.01 Volume 1 and 2 in coordination with the service records manager.

Physical and Non-current VI

The Defense VI Records Center no longer accepts analog media. Units or commands must digitize analog holdings and submit them through DVIDS.

The Defense VI Records Center can assist in identifying digitization options.

Chapter 7: Grammar Review

Good captions are difficult to write without a solid foundation in the principles that govern sentence construction. The following review of basic grammar rules will help writers and editors produce clear, effective captions.

Sentence Structure

A *sentence* is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. It is a complete thought that can stand alone. The *subject* is a noun or noun phrase and is what the sentence is about. In captioning parlance, it is the “who.” The *predicate* is what is being written about the subject. This includes the verb, or action, of the sentence as well as other people or objects that the subject acts upon. When writing any sentence, begin with these building blocks: subject-verb-object. Place all supplementary information around this fundamental structure.

U.S. Soldiers patrol a neighborhood.

Subject: *U.S. Soldiers*

Predicate: *patrol a neighborhood*

In the sentence, “U.S. Soldiers patrol a neighborhood,” the subject of the sentence is “U.S. Soldiers” and the predicate contains both the action of the sentence, “patrol,” and the object of the action, “a neighborhood.”

Avoid sentence fragments. A *sentence fragment* is an incomplete sentence; it is usually either missing a subject or a verb or is not a complete thought. Fragments usually occur when captioning images that, at first glance, show no action (e.g., images of equipment, geographic locations, or local color). Assign an action, the “what” to the image to ensure a complete sentence.

Fragment: Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) during a training exercise in the Pacific Ocean on June 22, 2011.

Sentence: Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) participates in a training exercise in the Pacific Ocean on June 22, 2011.

Avoid run-on sentences. A *run-on sentence* contains two or more independent clauses (word groups that can stand alone as a sentence) that are joined without either a semicolon or a comma and a linking word.

Run-on sentence: *The Sailors returned home from a six-month deployment they celebrated when their ship moored pierside.*

Fix the sentence with a comma followed by the conjunction “and”.

Correct: The Sailors returned home from a six-month deployment, **and** they celebrated when their ship moored pierside.

Do not start a sentence with a numeral. One exception to this rule is when starting a sentence with a year; however, avoid this when possible. Usually, it can be fixed by adding a word at the start of the sentence. See the **Roman Numerals** entry in Chapter 1 for another exception.

Punctuation

Apostrophes Use apostrophes to indicate possession or in contractions; do not use to indicate a noun is plural.

With acronyms, use an apostrophe only to indicate a possessive. Add a lowercase *s* to make an acronym plural. Remember that *its* indicates possession, while *it's* is a contraction of *it is*.

Plural: *The COs met to discuss the mission.*

Possessive: *At the CO's request, they discussed the mission.*

Commas in a series The appropriate use of commas makes it easier to read a sentence. Comma placement is determined partially by grammar rules and partially through judgment.

Use commas to separate each element in a series. For example: *The flag is red, white and blue.* Use a comma before the conjunction (known as the serial comma) only when necessary to avoid confusion, such as in the following example: *The vessel performs utility boat functions such as submarine support, moving barges and floats, and personnel transfers.*

If any of the elements in a series contain commas, use semicolons instead. For example: *Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel; U.S. Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Secretary of State John Kerry met to discuss defense policy.*

Commas and clauses When joining two-word groups that can stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before a coordinating conjunction or use a semicolon with no conjunction. Do not use a comma if one of the clauses is dependent (does not stand alone as a complete sentence).

The building is finished, but it has no furniture.

The building is finished; it has no furniture.

The building is finished but has no furniture.

Use a comma after introductory clauses or phrases. Such clauses usually tell when, where, why, or how the main action of the sentence occurs. For example: *After sharing a meal, the Airmen will resume training.*

Not every clause that appears to be independent requires a comma. For example: *Jake does not realize that his injury is serious and that he will have to undergo therapy to get better.*

Note that a ship's name is not a clause; do not separate it from the sentence with commas.

Commas and adjectives Separate coordinate adjectives with commas (coordinate adjectives modify the noun in the same way). For example: *She was a strong, loyal, well-trained Marine.* Each adjective describes the Marine.

Do not separate cumulative adjectives (cumulative adjectives must stay in order to make sense). For example: *Three large brown camels moved toward the convoy.*

How to tell the difference? Put the word "and" between each adjective and reverse the order of the adjectives. If the sentence still makes sense, use commas.

That and which Use *that* for essential information; do not separate with a comma. Use *which* for nonessential elements; use commas to set off the clause.

How to tell the difference? If you were to remove a restrictive element from a sentence, it would significantly change its meaning. Use this rule to know which to use.

In the first sentence, the fact that the uniform must be *wash and wear* is essential to understanding the sentence. In the second sentence, the fact that the

The Airmen needed a uniform that was wash and wear.

The Airmen needed new boots, which are expensive.

boots are expensive is additional information; the essence of the sentence is that the Airmen need new boots.

Commas and titles Titles and other identifying adjectives listed after a name should be separated with commas; those listed before the name are adjectives and do not require commas.

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno visits with troops.
Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the chief of staff of the Army, visits with troops.

Commas and dates Do not automatically separate the date from the rest of the sentence. Comma usage is determined by what precedes the date (e.g., a state or a country). Remember to put a comma after the year in a complete date unless it ends the sentence.

U.S. Marines with Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment conduct a security halt July 9, 2010, in Zaidon, Iraq.
Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel holds a press conference at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, Dec. 5, 2010.
Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) conducts flight operations in the Pacific Ocean on June 7, 2014.

Commas and quantity Use a comma in numbers showing quantity. Use 1,200 boxes, not 1200 boxes.

Hyphens Use a hyphen to connect compound adjectives. A compound adjective is two terms that together act as one descriptor for a noun.

The examples to the right are hyphenated only when used as compound adjectives. Examples: *They are moving to a forward-deployed location. The troops were forward deployed.*

Examples of Compound Adjectives

- Forward-deployed location
- Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier
- Fixed-wing aircraft

Use a hyphen to join some prefixes/suffixes and root words, such as anti- terrorism, anti-aircraft, or DoW-wide.

If a unit number follows its unabbreviated name, then the name of that unit will generally be hyphenated in its abbreviated form. Some examples of unit types that are hyphenated in their abbreviated forms:

- Navy and Marine Corps squadrons (VAW-77, HMH-464, etc.)
- Marine Corps combat logistics battalions (CLB-6, etc.)
- Naval mobile construction battalions (NMCB-1, etc.)
- Navy explosive ordnance mobile units (EODMU-1, etc.)

Periods Use a period when abbreviating military titles. For example: *Tech. Sgt. James Cooper.* When typing copy, use only one space after the period at the end of the sentence.

Mechanics

Prefixes Refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Webster's New World College Dictionary* for guidance on whether or not to hyphenate a word with a prefix. This section provides guidance for terms that commonly appear in captions.

In most cases, prefixes join with the root word without a hyphen (see box to the right).

Common Words with Prefixes That Do Not Take Hyphens

- counterterrorism
- multinational
- preflight
- deworming
- noncommissioned
- resupply

Hyphenate words with the prefix *self-*. For example: *self-controlled*, *self-taught*, *self-defense*.

In most cases, hyphenate if the prefix ends in a vowel and the root word begins with a vowel (*de-ice*, *pre-existing*, *re-enlist*).

There are a few exceptions to these rules, such as: *cooperate*, *coordinate*, *pre-dawn*, *pre-position* (meaning to position personnel and equipment before acting), *pre-deployment*, *counter improvised explosive device*, and *multi-Service*.

Suffixes Refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Webster's New World College Dictionary* for guidance on whether or not to hyphenate a word with a suffix.

In general, adjectives with the suffix *-wide* are one word. For example: *basewide*, not *base-wide* or *base wide*. When attaching the suffix to an acronym, use a hyphen, as in *DoW-wide*.

Compound words Several terms can be either one or two words, depending on the use. In most cases, when used as a verb, they are two words, and when used as a noun or an adjective, they are one word. These rules apply to several other common terms, such as stand down/standdown; line up/lineup; take out/takeout.

Compound Words

U.S. personnel go over check-in and checkout procedures.

U.S. personnel check in to their new units after completing check out of their equipment.

The terms *onload* and *offload* are one word in all cases. However, the words are jargon, so use *load* or *unload* instead whenever possible.

The terms *check-in* and *checkout* are treated differently. Use *check-in* as a noun and adjective, *check in* as a verb. Use *checkout* as a noun and adjective but *check out* as a verb.

Capitalization

U.S. and non-U.S. forces Capitalize service names when referring to U.S. forces; do not capitalize when referring to military forces of another nation. For instance, it is *U.S. Army*, but *British army*; *Iraqi police*, not *Iraqi Police*.

Capitalize the proper names of another nation's military: *British Royal Air Force*, not *British Royal air force*. However, in accordance with the rule above, the common noun would be *British air force*. In the same vein, it is *Afghan National Army* or *Afghan army*.

Capitalize *Soldier*, *Sailor*, *Airman*, *Marine*, *Guardian*, and *Coast Guardsman* when referring to U.S. forces (*U.S. Soldiers*, but *Dutch soldiers*). However, *cadet* and *midshipman* are ranks, so capitalize them only when they're used before a name.

Do not capitalize *fireman*, *firemen*, *airman*, or *airmen* when referring to unnamed Navy personnel; in that case, the term is part of a generic rank/rate. (e.g., *U.S. Navy airmen stand in formation*.) However, when it's used as part of a Sailor's rating, it is capitalized. (e.g., *U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman Airman John Smith salutes an officer*.)

Capitalize a rank or title (such as *commanding officer*) when it precedes a name; use lowercase when it follows a name, is set off by commas or stands alone.

U.S. Marine Corps Gen. John R. Allen, the commander of the International Security Assistance Force, arrives at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, March 22, 2012.

U.S. Army Capt. James T. Kirk, the commander of Alpha Company, visited an outpost every Tuesday.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey speaks with service members.

Proper nouns A proper noun names a particular person, place, or thing. Capitalize all proper nouns, to include names of people, organizations, operations, and exercises: *Sgt. Sharon Anderson, Department of War, New Dawn, Cobra Gold*.

Common nouns A common noun names categories of persons, places, or things.

Capitalize common nouns only if they are part of a proper noun, such as a title or an organization: *U.S. Embassy, Operation New Dawn*.

Incorrect: *They were overrun by Security Forces during an Operational Readiness Exercise.*

Correct: *They were overrun by security forces during an operational readiness exercise.*

Incorrect: *The Female Engagement Team leaders met with the new members of the Provincial Reconstruction Team.*

Correct: *The female engagement team leaders met with the new members of the provincial reconstruction team.*

A general rule is if there is more than one of something, do not capitalize.

All caps Do not use all capital letters for anything but acronyms. Ship names, release status, and other terms should all be regular text. For example:

The hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) moors off the coast of El Salvador on Nov. 5, 2011. The ship was on a four-month humanitarian mission. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class John Smith)

Acronyms Acronyms are capitalized, but the terms to which they refer are only capitalized if they are proper nouns. Do not capitalize a term solely because it is assigned an acronym.

Incorrect: *Forward Operating Base (FOB)*

Correct: *forward operating base (FOB)*

Correct: *Forward Operating Base (FOB) Walton*

Chapter 8: VI Ethics

Military, civilian, and contractor personnel who produce, edit, or release VI, must maintain complete credibility when presenting it as fact. All personnel involved in the creation of VI shall ensure it meets or exceeds the highest ethical standards followed by the DoW and the news industry.

As VI technology continues to advance, it is imperative to accurately depict a scene and subject as originally recorded by the camera. Acknowledge any manipulations beyond standard preparation of VI for publication (e.g., other than basic correction of color, brightness and contrast, and judicious cropping that does not alter the context or meaning of the camera original). The use of in-camera techniques (shutter drag, off camera lighting, motion blur to illustrate movement and action) whether intended or incidental does not require disclosure. These images are considered photos. Changing camera settings to capture an original black-and-white photograph, or to isolate one color, before submission to DVIDS or DMA, requires disclosure as a photo illustration.

As stated in DoDI 5040.02, undisclosed modifications or enhancements of official DoW imagery by people acting for or on behalf of the Department is prohibited. Any and all image modification of enhancement for any purpose must be disclosed in the caption data so that the image does not mislead or deceive. The use of artificial intelligence to create the product must also be provided. See **Required Notices** on page 39.

In this chapter, the differences between photos, photo illustrations, and prohibited alterations will be outlined. Note the only two permissible categories for still photography in caption credits are “photo” and “photo illustration.” See **Credit Line** on page 38.

Photos

VI documentation is defined in DoDI 5040.02 as “Imagery depicting actual events, activities, phenomena, places, or people, recorded primarily to create a record of the subject matter.”

In most cases, this refers to visual documentation of uncontrolled action, such as military training and operations in progress, in which the photographer has no bearing on the events around him/her.

However, it can also refer to certain instances of controlled action, such as official portraits or personnel posing for a photograph during a formal event, such as a change of command or military ball. In those instances, the photographer may offer basic directions to the subjects of the image, such as where to stand.

For a given image to be labeled as a photo, only the most minimal and basic corrections as described above are permitted. Standard color and contrast adjustments for publication purposes do not need to be disclosed.

EXCEPTION: Occasionally, a photo or video will show personally identifiable information, or



Security Example

(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Gitte Schirrmacher)

This photo was altered for security purposes by blurring out identification badges. Photo cropped to show detail.

PII, such as identification tags or access badges, or other sensitive items. It is permissible to obscure such information using digital means, as long as it is made clear within the photo or video caption that portions of the image were blurred for security or privacy concerns. See the example on the previous page.

Photo Illustrations

Photo illustrations are images that have been manipulated beyond minimal corrections as described above or were entirely staged by a photographer. Such visual information can be used with proper notice – for aesthetic, creative, artistic or other purposes such as highlighting a theme or illustrating a feature story.

Photo illustrations also include images that have been retouched, filtered, or are manipulated in any other way. Images that are stitched together or contain cutouts, collages, panoramas, vignetting, multiple exposures (including High Dynamic Range techniques), or any added text or graphics are considered photo illustrations. The digital movement, addition, or subtraction of any content or elements within an image used for illustrative purposes must be fully disclosed. Computer-generated artwork is always considered a photo illustration.

The conversion of an original color photograph or video to black-and-white, or to isolate one color, before submission to DVIDS or DMA, requires disclosure as an illustration. Similarly, cropping a photo in such a way as to alter the original context of what was captured should be disclosed. Standard, judicious cropping to remove irrelevant background space is permitted without disclosure.

Using a filter in any type of electronic editing application to make an image appear blurred, solarized, embossed, or resemble, for example, sepia-tone, a painting, or having been taken on film likewise makes it a photo illustration requiring disclosure.

The responsibility lies with the VI professional – and anyone else involved in its processing– to reveal manipulations above and beyond standard color adjustments.

Rule of thumb: If you think you need to disclose manipulation techniques, do so. In short, if VI has been manipulated above and beyond basic color corrections, it must be labeled as such in the caption, after the credit line, using plain language, as shown in the examples above.

Photo Illustration Examples

Example 1

(U.S. Army photo illustration by Sgt. Terry Cummings)

This image was created using high dynamic range techniques.

Example 2

(U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Donny Morales)

This image was created in color and changed to black-and-white

Example 3

(U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Gunnery Sgt. Chris Tryon)

This image used multiple filters and dodging and burning techniques.

Example 4

(U.S. Coast Guard photo illustration by Petty Officer 1st Class Megan O'Brien)

Example 5

A unit logo and text were added to the upper left hand of the frame

Example 6

(DOW photo illustration by William F. Morgan)

This image was cropped to emphasize the subject.

The original photo must also be sent to DVIDS for archiving.

NOTE: The notice also should appear in the **Release Information** and **Caption** fields of the metadata. This demonstrates that the releasing authority is aware of the modifications to the image.

Prohibited Alterations

Any photo or video that is altered to deliberately mislead or deceive the U.S. Government, DoW personnel, the media, or the American people is strictly prohibited.

DoDI 5040.02, Enclosure 10, Section 1 states that the alteration of official imagery by persons acting for or on behalf of the Department is prohibited. Prohibited alterations include the addition, removal, or changing of photographic details. Examples of prohibited alteration include the addition, changing, or removing of individuals, equipment, scenery, or the unrealistic changing of color or light.

This includes the addition, changing, or removal of uniform or background items to official photos or command photos, such as those posted in public spaces or displayed on a Department website or social media platform.

There have been several notable cases of altered photos being submitted to public-facing websites and media outlets and presented as fact, resulting in one major news outlet temporarily banning all VI produced by the Department from their wire services. Such prohibited alterations included changes to the background behind the subject, rank insignia, and uniform name tapes, as well as copying and pasting one person's head on another person's body and removing people from an image.

In short, alterations intended to present or portray something different than the reality and context of the original image constitute a visual lie and are a serious threat to the credibility and trustworthiness of the Department, the military services, and the DoW VI community.

Further reading: National Press Photographers Association (<https://nppa.org/resources/code-ethics>)

Chapter 9: Additional Resources

References to non-DoW websites are provided as a service and do not constitute or imply endorsement of these organizations or their programs by the Department. DoW is not responsible for the content of pages found at these sites. URLs are current as of the date of publication.

The Associated Press Stylebook, Associated Press, New York. URL: <http://www.apstylebook.com/> (login required)

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 1237, *Audiovisual, Cartographic, and Related Records Management*. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/chapter-XII/subchapter-B/part-1237>

DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, June 2025.
https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new_pubs/dictionary.pdf

DoD Instruction 5040.02, *Visual Information*, April 23, 2018, as amended.
<http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/DoDi/504002p.pdf>

DoD Instruction 5200.48, *Controlled Unclassified Information*, March 6, 2020.
<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/520048p.PDF?ver=2020-03-06-100640-800>

DoD Issuances, Washington Headquarters Service. <https://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/DoD-Issuances/>

DoD Manual 5200.01, Volumes 1-3, *DoD Information Security Program*, January 24, 2012, as amended

DoW Visual Information Style Guide, Defense Media Activity.
<https://www.dma.mil/Services/Visual-Information/References/VI-Style-Guide/>

Freedom of Information Act. <https://www.foia.gov/>

Jane's All the World's Aircraft; Jane's Yearbooks, London, and Franklin Watts Inc., New York

Jane's Fighting Ships; Jane's Yearbooks, London, and Franklin Watts Inc., New York

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, current edition. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

National Geographic Atlas of the World, current edition

Public Use Notice of Limitations, Defense Media Activity.
<https://www.dma.mil/Services/Visual-Information/References/Limitations/>

State Websites, National Guard. <https://www.nationalguard.mil/Resources/State-Websites/>

U.S. Air Force Aircraft Fact Sheets, <https://www.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/>

U.S. Army Acquisition Program Portfolio 2023-2024 [Equipment],
<https://api.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/2024/03/08/b33ff3e4/2023-u-s-army-acquisition-portfolio.pdf>

U.S. Coast Guard Resources, <https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Acquisitions-CG-9/Resources/>

U.S. Navy Fact Files, <https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/>

U.S. Space Force Fact Sheets, <https://www.spaceforce.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/>

The World Factbook, Central Intelligence Agency. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>

National Geographic Atlas of the World