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SAF/PA Quarterly Newsletter
May 2021

Training and Development

Military Communication Competency Model Published

The DoD Military Communicator Competency Model (MCCM) was recently validated by senior PA leaders in each of the services. The MCCM is a comprehensive list of the foundational knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for public affairs professionals to successfully operate in the Information Environment at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels and at every stage of their development.

35P Public Affairs Occupational Analysis Survey

All Public Affairs Officers and recent PALACE Acquire civilians recently received an email from the AETC Occupational Analysis Survey Manager, with a unique link, asking them to complete the 35PX Public Affairs Occupational Survey. Please take the time to complete this survey as responses will help guide an update to our Public Affairs Officer/Civilian Career Field Education and Training Plan (CFETP) as well as influence other professional development, including the feedback we provide DINFOS for initial skills training.

Post-DT & Winter Assignment Cycle Webinar Available

Did you apply for squadron command, IDE/SDE or special programs? Do you have questions about the active duty officer Development Team process or assignment cycle? If so, please watch the Post DT & Winter Assignment Cycle webinar.

Vectoring DT Slated for June

The developmental vectoring DT is scheduled for June 21-25. Active duty officers in the 2016 year group and older who PCS June 2022-May 2023 will be vectored. Officers should review PRDA, AMS, and vMPF to check performance reports, SURFs, decorations and other important documents to verify they are on file and accurate. If you have items on your SURF that need to be corrected but are unsure of how to fix them, review the SURF Correction "Cheat Sheet".

How to Request Bachelor's+ and Master's+ Updates

For bachelor's plus and master's updates to officers' records, all credits must be on a single university transcript. The AFIT Coding Branch does not have the authority to combine hours from multiple schools. They will accept transfer hours as annotated. At least 15 semester or 22 quarter hours of graduate-level work are required for a BAC+ and 30 semester or 45 quarter hours of Ph.D.-level work are required for MAS+.

Professional Development Webinars Available Online

There are a host of webinars on subjects relevant to PA Professionals, with more posted regularly.

Details for Developing Team Leader Course Coming

Although the Developing Team Leader Course was not offered in this year's Civilian Developmental Education portfolio, it did not go away! Course dates, registration details, and prerequisites will be announced on the Air University website this summer.

This on-line course helps pre-supervisory civilians develop the competencies to succeed as team leaders. Topics include strategic direction, problem solving, leadership communication, and conflict management.

Virtual Library for PA Research Papers

Every year we send a number of PA professionals to the Air Force Institute of Technology, Education with Industry, and intermediate and senior developmental education, where they explore a wide variety of subjects relevant to our profession. Their papers are posted on the PA SharePoint.

PA Civilian Development Resources Available Online

Civilians, there is an entire section of the SAF/PA SharePoint dedicated to you!

Management and Resources

MICT Self-Assessment Checklist Updated

The Public Affairs Self-Assessment Checklist was updated on April 1. Six questions were deleted and three new ones added. Units have until June 30 to assess and provide proof of compliance on the new items (16, 17, and 18). Nearly item received an update to the question or clearer examples of supporting documentation. Of special note, SAC Item #14 deals with VI reporting requirements and requires all three items: monthly production reports, equipment inventory, and the Visual Information Equipment Plan.

Experience-based Joint Duty Assignment credit offered for joint deployments, other experiences

Officers who complete joint deployments or otherwise gain qualifying joint experience while not assigned to a billet on the Joint Duty Assignments List may be eligible for Experience-based Joint Duty Assignment credit. Qualifying experience must meet the Joint Matters definition in 10 USC 668 and be for a minimum length of 30 days. Applications with substantiating documentation must be submitted within 12 months of experience completion. E-JDA credit is not reflected on promotion briefs or SURFs but can apply toward a Joint Qualified Officer designation.

Ensure short tour credit for extended deployments

Members who completed a 365-day extended deployment must take action to update their records with a short tour credit and the correct Short Tour Return Date and Overseas Duty Selection Date. These elements do not automatically update like they do for a short tour (PCS) and are a member responsibility to get updated upon return. See AFI 36-2110, Total Force Assignments, para 7.10; then contact your MPF with your deployment travel voucher.

Visual Information Equipment tracking and inspection requirements

The Automated Information Multimedia Manager (AIM2) is the current career field-approved management tool (database) used to input information regarding equipment requirements and inventory status at each unit, and production reporting information for each DVIAN-authorized VI activity. All accountable equipment (VIEP items) must be listed in AIM2 and inspected annually to ensure accuracy. VIEP requests must be updated and reported to AFPAA in March and September.

AIM2 Reports Due

The base VI manager (BVIM) is the OPR for all AIM2 requirements. The BVIM is to log and track all resources, man-hours, and activities and populate the production report monthly for their activity. They should also make data available highlighting PA support to the wing's or garrison's mission, if requested.

TSP spillover method allows catch-up contributions

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board implemented the spillover method for catch-up contributions January 1, 2021 to streamline the catch-up process for eligible participants turning 50 years or older. With this change, individuals will no longer need to make separate catch-up contributions. Once participants reach the annual Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 402(g) elective deferral limit, their regular contributions will automatically start counting toward the IRC 414(v) catch-up contribution limit. For more information, go to the TSP Website at <https://www.tsp.gov/bulletins/20-1/>.

Licensing and Usage Requirements for New Air Force Song

The new version of the Air Force service song, "The U.S. Air Force," with the updated lyrics is scheduled for use NLT May 15. For those interested in the changes, and to listen to a recorded version, visit <https://www.music.af.mil> and click on the splash page. There are 2,500 licenses available for use by organizations for official functions as well as for audiovisual production purposes.

Overdue MDRB-QA Checklists

Multidisciplinary Review Board Quality Assurance checklists for public-facing websites were due Dec. 31. The MDRB-QA checklist is an annual requirement (AFI 35-101). If you haven't completed and submitted a checklist for your website for 2020, please contact the Air Force Public Web team as soon as possible. MDRB-QA checklists are the primary tool used to ensure Air Force websites meet Section 508 accessibility, OPSEC, legal, contracting, Privacy Act and other requirements. The checklist is available on the Air Force Public Web SharePoint site.

Email Distribution List

Website administrators and anyone who wants to stay up to date on AFPIMS should sign up to be added to the Air Force Public Web email distribution list. Messages are usually sent monthly and contain important information about managing your public website, the Air Force Connect mobile app, digital publishing training opportunities and more. Opting-out is easy if you feel the information isn't relevant to you or your position (due to PCS, etc.).

Strategy and Assessments

Vector and Waypoints Updates

We've made some major improvements to Vector and Waypoints, our engagement planning and message sites. Both tools are always available through the Tell Our Story page on the Air Force Portal.

Vector users can now:

- Manage the PA engagements assigned to them through customized views that show Vector entries each user has entered and those for which they've been assigned as a POC
- Search a database of media queries, or log the queries they handle
- Search a database of senior leader quotes, or enter quotes they want to archive
- Open any single entry in Vector to see how it relates to other entries.

Waypoints now supplements high-level talking points on department and service priorities with an updated collection of talking points on 50+ issues and counting. The site also allows you to access an interactive dashboard of senior leader quotes that have been entered in Vector.

Media Operations

Virtual Engagements Memo

On April 23, HAF sent a letter to all Air Force and Space Force commanders reminding them of the requirement to ensure that Airmen and Guardians ensure a full understanding of virtual event participants, audience members, and ground rules just like one would for in-person events. The letter from Brig Gen Ryder emphasized that individuals should consult their local Public Affairs Office in advance for assistance with questions about any public event, whether the format is in-person or virtual, particularly if it's known media will be present.