

Fact Sheet

Army Operations Security: Soldier Blogging Unchanged

Summary:

- America's Army respects every Soldier's First Amendment rights while also adhering to Operations Security (OPSEC) considerations to ensure their safety on the battlefield.
- Soldiers and Army family members agree that safety of our Soldiers are of utmost importance.
- Soldiers, Civilians, contractors and Family Members all play an integral role in maintaining Operations Security, just as in previous wars.

Details:

- In no way will *every* blog post/update a Soldier makes on his or her blog need to be monitored or first approved by an immediate supervisor and Operations Security (OPSEC) officer. After receiving guidance and awareness training from the appointed OPSEC officer, that Soldier blogger is entrusted to practice OPSEC when posting in a public forum.
- Army Regulation 350-1, "Operations Security," was updated April 17, 2007 – but the wording and policies on blogging remain the same from the July 2005 guidance first put out by the U.S. Army in Iraq for battlefield blogging. Since not every post/update in a public forum can be monitored, this regulation places trust in the Soldier, Civilian Employee, Family Member and contractor that they will use proper judgment to ensure OPSEC.
 - Much of the information contained in the 2007 version of AR 530-1 already was included in the 2005 version of AR 530-1. For example, Soldiers have been required since 2005 to report to their immediate supervisor and OPSEC officer about their wishes to publish military-related content in public forums.
 - Army Regulation 530-1 simply lays out measures to help ensure operations security issues are not published in public forums (i.e., blogs) by Army personnel.
- Soldiers do not have to seek permission from a supervisor to send personal E-mails. Personal E-mails are considered private communication. However, AR 530-1 does mention if someone later posts an E-mail in a public forum containing information sensitive to OPSEC considerations, an issue may then arise.
- Soldiers may also have a blog *without* needing to consult with their immediate supervisor and OPSEC officer if the following conditions are met:
 1. The blog's topic is not military-related (i.e., Sgt. Doe publishes a blog about his favorite basketball team).
 2. The Soldier doesn't represent or act on behalf of the Army in any way.
 3. The Soldier doesn't use government equipment when on his or her personal blog.
- Army Family Members are not mandated by commanders to practice OPSEC. Commanders cannot order military Family Members to adhere to OPSEC. AR 530-1 simply says Family Members need to be aware of OPSEC to help safeguard potentially critical and sensitive information. This helps to ensure Soldiers' safety, technologies and present and future operations will not be compromised.
- Just as in 2005 and 2006, a Soldier should inform his or her OPSEC officer and immediate supervisor when establishing a blog for two primary reasons:
 1. To provide the command situational awareness.
 2. To allow the OPSEC officer an opportunity to explain to the Soldier matters to be aware of when posting military-related content in a public, global forum.
- A Soldier who already has a military-related blog that has not yet consulted with his or her immediate supervisor and OPSEC officer should do so.

- Commands have the authority to enact local regulations in addition to what AR 530-1 stipulates on this topic.