Department of Defense

Visual Information Style Guide

July 16, 2018

(Supersedes version of Sept. 25, 2017)

OATSD(PA)

SUBJECT: DoD Visual Information Style Guide
(*formerly the DoD Captioning Style Guide*)

References: (a) Department of Defense Instruction 5040.02 (Change 2), Visual Information (VI), April 23, 2018
(b) The Associated Press Stylebook, Current Edition
(c) Department of Defense Manual 5200.01, Volume 4, Controlled Unclassified Information
(d) Freedom of Information Act

APPLICABILITY

The DoD Visual Information Style Guide (VISG) applies to:

(1) The Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities covered within the parameters of DoD Instruction 5040.02 (Reference (a)).

(2) All DoD military, civilian and contract personnel designated to create VI products as part of their official duties. This includes, but is not limited to, Public Affairs, Combat Camera and Information Operations functions throughout the Department of Defense, 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 DoD information systems, such as the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS).

PURPOSE

VI products support multiple DoD and U.S. Government missions as strategic information resources and historic evidentiary records of the actions and activities of the Department. For this reason, VI products must comply with the attribution and metadata requirements established in Enclosures 5 through 8 of Reference (a) and the VISG. This edition of the VISG has been approved by the VI Editorial Board and contains the most current method of writing captions and recording metadata associated with VI products.

The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook (Reference (b)) 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 DoD-specific issues not addressed, 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 a host of other subjects.

DoD Instruction 5040.02, Visual Information:
http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/504002p.pdf

DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 4, Controlled Unclassified Information:
http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodm/520001-V4p.PDF?ver=2018-05-09-115318-927

Freedom of Information Act: www.foia.gov

DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms: http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/dictionary.pdf?ver=2018-07-06-092813-320

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DIMOC
DEFENSE IMAGERY MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS CENTER

Summary of updates and changes

This edition of the DoD Visual Information Style Guide (VISG) incorporates several minor changes and clarifications to Visual Information written style and procedures since the edition of Sept. 25, 2017.

Changes to this Guide are made in close coordination between the Defense Imagery Management Operations Center (DIMOC) and the Visual Information Editorial Board (VIEB), which comprises VI experts in all five branches of the armed forces.

This edition also sees the debut of a companion electronic publication, or ePub, designed to be used on mobile devices on major operating platforms. The ePub is searchable, and reflects all guidance contained in the traditional PDF version of the VISG.

The Applicability and Purpose statements on the cover of this document have been rewritten to further clarify what VI activities are subject to the guidance of the VISG.

Starting with this edition, the VISG will be published on or about July 1 annually. However, changes to the current edition may be published if circumstances dictate.

The dimoc.mil website was completely redesigned in April 2018, and all links to the new website are updated accordingly.

If you have a suggestion or input for future editions of this Guide, please submit your comments via our Customer Service form at http://www.dimoc.mil/Customer-Service/Contact-Us/.

Please see below for a summary of changes and additions to the VISG in this edition.

Front page:

- Updated Applicability and Purpose statements
- Updated references and URLs

Chapter 1, Matters of style:

- Update to **commands** entry
    - Incorporates U.S. Cyber Command
    - Updates U.S. Indo-Pacific Command
- KATUSA

Chapter 3, Captioning still and motion imagery:

- Prohibition of social media symbols (# and @) in captions

Chapter 4, Keywording:

- Prohibition of social media symbols (# and @) in keywords

Chapter 5, Still and motion imagery metadata:

- Clearly defines required metadata
- Combines and clarifies Release Instructions/ Information requirements
- Clarifies National Guard photo credits
- Rescinds Service Shown metadata field
- Updates metadata cross-references

Chapter 6, Submitting to DIMOC:

- Emphasizes requirement to archive, via DVIDS, DoD imagery used in social media.
- Clarifies procedures for handling and preserving physical VI

Chapter 8, DoD Visual Information Ethics:

- Adds example of acceptable alteration for security purposes

Defense Imagery Management Operations Center

6700 Taylor Ave., Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755

301-222-6273, DSN 312-733-4273

JCCC@mail.mil www.dimoc.mil Facebook: @DoD.Imagery

Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/39955793@N07

Chapter 1
Matters of style

Entries conforming to AP style:

Geographic commands:

- Arabic names
- district
- first lady
- foreign service members
- lectern, podium
- locations
- military titles
- national anthem
- NATO
- Pentagon
- podium, lectern
- post-deployment
- post-flight
- preflight
- rank, rate
- ROTC, Junior ROTC

Entries differing from AP style:

- Department of Defense
- Navy ratings
- POW/MIA

Alphabetical Listing

This chapter provides the correct style for commonly used terms within DoD captions. The list is by no means comprehensive; if a term does not appear below, refer to *The Associated Press Stylebook* or *Webster's New World College 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 aircraft, vehicles and equipment (see Chapter 9, Additional resources, on page 51).

abbreviations Only use abbreviations on second reference; the abbreviation must be in parentheses after the first reference. Note: The only exceptions to this are Navy and Marine Corps aviation squadrons (see page 19), NATO, SEAL, USO, POW/MIA and abbreviations covered in the AP Stylebook.

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 the guided-missile cruiser USS Vella Gulf (CG 72) in the Mediterranean Sea 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.

Afghan cities See "Table 5, Afghan provinces" on page 25 for the proper spelling for several major cities in Afghanistan.

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; not capitalized when referring to members of foreign air forces.

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.*

alongside One word.

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 the amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4).*

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* is acceptable on second reference.

Arabian Gulf Primary style for the body of water also known as the Persian Gulf. 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' AAV7A1 tracked vehicle. Not *amphibious assault vehicle*. Do not confuse with amphibious assault ships.

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**.

back blast Two words.

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

battalion landing team In unit names, capitalize it, followed by a comma and the unit's full name.

> *U.S. Marines with Foxtrot Company, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment storm a beach Jan. 23, 2012, as part of an exercise in Thailand.*

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 Hornet aircraft.

bounding overwatch Jargon. Use *maneuver* or another synonym.

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 **photographer's credit.**

casualty evacuation *CASEVAC* is 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.

Civil Air Patrol The civilian volunteer auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, best known for search and rescue, disaster relief and cadet programs. Although Civil Air Patrol members work closely with the Air Force and they hold rank within Civil Air Patrol, they are not Airmen. *CAP* is 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 *Dr., Sen.* or *Gov.* should be used where applicable. Do not use such titles on second reference unless necessary to differentiate two people with the same last name.

close-in weapon system Do not capitalize. CIWS is acceptable on subsequent references.

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 Coast Guard rank table on page 20.

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 Do not use the commercial term "Zodiac boat."

combined Per Joint Publication 1-02: A term identifying two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies operating together. See **joint**.

commandant A job title for the top four-star officer of the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Coast Guard; 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, left, 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; acronyms are acceptable on second reference (see list below). Do not use the acronym *COCOM* for the term *Combatant Command*; the accepted acronym is CCMD. *NOTE: In the Command Shown block of metadata, only use the geographical combatant command name, based on where the image was produced.* See Chapter 5, Command Shown, on page 36.

Style Check: Unified Combatant Commands

Geographic commands:

U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM)
U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM)
U.S. European Command (USEUCOM)
U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)
U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) {30 MAY 18}
U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM)

Functional commands:

U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM)
U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)
U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM)
U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)

contingency operating base Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *COB* is 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 No apostrophe.

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

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

Daesh/Da'esh/Daish *Daesh* is the preferred spelling for the alternate Arabic name of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). However, only use the term in context. See **ISIS**.

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

demining No hyphen.

Department of Defense On second reference, use the acronym *DoD*. *(This differs from AP style)*

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, do not capitalize district when used in a geographic name, such as *Sangin district*.

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).

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.

female engagement team Do not capitalize unless writing about a specific team.

U.S. Marines with a female engagement team assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force speak to Iraqi women during a cordon and search operation in Fallujah, Iraq, May 10, 2010.

U.S. Marines with Female Engagement Team 2, I Marine Expeditionary Force speak to Iraqi women during a cordon and search operation in Fallujah, Iraq, May 10, 2010.

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.

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

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 is acceptable on second reference as long as the distinction between debris and damage is clear.

U.S. Sailors conduct a foreign object debris (FOD) walkdown on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) in the Pacific Ocean 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.

foreign services Capitalize formal names of foreign services (e.g., Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Afghan National Army, Russian Ground Forces). Informal or generic names (e.g., Japanese navy, Afghan army, Russian army) are lowercase. Do not use the foreign-language name for a service (in other words, don't use *Armada de Mexico* for the Mexican navy).

foreign service members Do not capitalize the words *soldier*, *sailor*, *airman*, *marine* or *coast guardsman* when referring to foreign service members. If a foreign service member's rank corresponds to a U.S. rank, use AP style. If not, spell out the rank (e.g., *Commodore, Field Marshal*.)

forward operating base Use lowercase unless it accompanies the name of a specific location. *FOB* is 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 See **same-sex marriage**.

groundbreaking One word.

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

-hawk helicopters Note exact spelling, spacing and capitalization: UH-60 Black Hawk, HH-60 Pave Hawk, VH-60 White Hawk, SH-60 Sea Hawk, MH-60 Sea Hawk, HH-60 Jayhawk. Note: "Knighthawk" is not the proper name for the MH-60 Sea Hawk. See Table 4, Selected aircraft and vehicles, on page 24.

helicopter bucket Lowercase. Do not use *Bambi bucket* when referring to the firefighting apparatus, as it is a specific 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 Mobility Artillery Rocket System Capitalize; *HIMARS* is acceptable on second reference.

high speed vessel The correct way to identify a high speed vessel in a caption is as follows: *high speed vessel Swift (HSV-2)*. In subsequent references, HSV-2 is acceptable. Note: This is the only Navy-operated vessel type for which a hyphen is acceptable in the designator. See the entry for **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.

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

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

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 (USAV) hull numbers are hyphenated.

Humvee When referring to a high-mobility, multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV), *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.

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.*

ISIL See **ISIS**.

ISIS, Islamic State Spell out *Islamic State of Iraq and Syria* on first reference. ISIS is acceptable on subsequent references. Only use the alternate term Daesh with an explanation, such as "Daesh, the common Arabic term for ISIS." See **Daesh**.

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 1-02: 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 (KATUSA)* on first reference; KATUSA is acceptable on subsequent references.

> *Cpl. Doyoon Kwon, a Korean Augmentation To the United States Army (KATUSA) 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* is 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.

lectern, podium Per AP, a *lectern* is a small desk a public speaker stands behind; 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 the word *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 have*

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.

man the rails Not capitalized.

marine vessel *MV* is acceptable on second reference.

Mark weapons Do not use the abbreviations *MK* or *Mk*. Use the indefinite article *a* before the name of the weapon. No hyphens.

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

Marine, Marines Capitalize when referring to members of the U.S. Marine Corps; not capitalized when referring to members of a foreign marine corps.

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* is 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*.

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 operations on urban terrain *MOUT* is an out-of-favor term; the preferred term is *urban operations (UO)*. The term *MOUT* is still in limited use, however, and may be used when referring to a specific *MOUT city* or *MOUT site*, but should not be used in the following senses: "... 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) and do not require *Military Sealift Command* in the description, as USNS implies Military Sealift Command.

However, some ships carry SS, MT or MV designators and do require clarification they belong to MSC. 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, marine vessel and vessel**.

The dry cargo ship USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) transits alongside the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) in preparation for an underway replenishment in the Pacific Ocean Aug. 7, 2014.

The Military Sealift Command aviation logistics support ship SS Wright (T-AVB 3) transits the Atlantic Ocean June 7, 2013.

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

military titles Abbreviate all military titles in accordance with AP style. On second reference, drop the title and use just the last name. See "Table 1, Military rank abbreviations (per AP)" on page 2020-21, for the appropriate abbreviations for each rank.

military unit names See the section on **military units**, pages 15-18.

mission-oriented protective posture Spell out on first reference. The acronym MOPP is 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) is acceptable on second reference.

MRAP The correct term is *mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle*. The appropriate use, with acronym, is *MRAP vehicle*. On first use, spell it out, and do not capitalize. Also: *mine-resistant, ambush-protected all-terrain vehicle*, second reference *M-ATV*.

U.S. Airmen load mine-resistant, ambush-protected (MRAP) 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* is 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 the decommissioned 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. If operational security concerns call for less identification, describe the person(s) by their service and/or job description. (Note: Single names are appropriate for persons who only have one name).

nation Use lowercase unless at the start of the sentence.

national anthem Not capitalized, per AP.

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 branch) as appropriate. If the image depicts members of both branches on non-Federal duty, *National Guardsmen* is acceptable.

Style Check: National Guard

U.S. Airmen with the Colorado Air National Guard prepare a C-130 Hercules aircraft for a mission at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, June 1, 2012.

U.S. Army Sgt. John Smith, an infantryman assigned to the 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry Regiment, North Carolina Army 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 CIA World Factbook 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* is acceptable on first reference, 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* is 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.

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 homeport 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.

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 In captions, spell out *public affairs officer* or *public information officer* on first reference.

pass in review Not *pass and review*.

Pentagon Use *Arlington, Va.,* to describe the location of the Pentagon, per AP.

Persian Gulf *Arabian Gulf* is the style used for this body of water; enter *Persian Gulf* in keywords. 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 Must be included 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.

> (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. James Jones)
>
> (U.S. Navy photo illustration by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Megan Smith)
>
> (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Mike Williams)

For more formatting examples, see the section on

photographer's credit under Chapter 3, Captioning Basics, page 29.

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.

post-deployment Hyphenated per AP style.

post-flight Hyphenated per AP style.

POW/MIA Prisoner of war/missing in action. *POW/MIA* is acceptable on first reference. This differs from the Associated Press Stylebook.

pre-commissioning unit (PCU) Capitalize when used before the name of a ship before it is commissioned. For example: *Pre-Commissioning Unit Mississippi (SSN 782). PCU* is acceptable on second reference.

predeployment No hyphen.

preflight Per AP.

president Capitalize before the name of the president. Do not use the acronym *POTUS* at any time in captions. On second reference, use the last name only. When listed without a name, use lowercase.

The preferred style for the current president is *Donald J. Trump*.

> *President Donald J. Trump delivers his inaugural address at the U.S. Capitol in Washington Jan. 20, 2017.*

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

provincial reconstruction team Spell out on first reference; *PRT* is appropriate on second reference. This term is lowercase unless it is a specific, named PRT, such as *Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team*.

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 When used with a person's name, uppercase the rank and use AP rank style (see Table 1, Military rank abbreviations, on pages 20-21).

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.*

(Note: When describing Navy personnel, use the rating before the name. For example: U.S. Navy Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Pete Rodriguez instead of U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Pete Rodriguez, a boatswain's mate. This differs from the Associated Press Stylebook. However, the Coast Guard uses AP-style rates without ratings.)

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.

Style Check: rappel vs. repel

U.S. Army Sgt. John Jones rappels down a rock face during training.

U.S. Marines successfully repelled the insurgent attack on their compound.

redeployment No hyphen.

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

> *U.S. Airmen with the 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE) 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, left, 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* is 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*.

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 in the image (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; not capitalized when referring to members of foreign navies.

same-sex marriage When referring to state-sanctioned same-sex marriages in which one or both partners are in the U.S. armed forces, use the term *spouse* rather than *husband* or *wife*, unless the subjects of the photo indicate otherwise. Use the term *partner* for unmarried couples.

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 Sea, Air, Land. *SEAL* is acceptable on first reference. If plural, use *SEALs*.

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

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 When referring to the terrorist attacks of 2001, use *Sept. 11 attack* or *Sept. 11 terrorist attack*. Use *2001* only if needed for clarity. *9/11* is 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 (USMA), West Point, New York

U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), Annapolis, Maryland

U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA), Colorado Springs, Colorado

U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA), New London, Connecticut

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA), 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 no longer capitalized.

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

ship names Use the definite article *the* before a ship name, 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*.

U.S. Sailors wash down the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) in the Atlantic Ocean May 15, 2012. The 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; not capitalized when referring to members of foreign armies.

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.

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.

President Donald J. Trump discusses special operations forces with Secretary of Defense James Mattis at the White House in Washington, Feb. 1, 2017.

state names Spell out, per AP.

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.

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/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.

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.

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 the aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) in the Pacific Ocean Nov. 11, 2013.

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

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.**

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

undersecretary One word, per AP.

underway One word, per AP.

urban operations (UO) Replaces military operations on urban terrain (MOUT) 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 is acceptable on first reference.

vehicle-borne The correct term is vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. VBIED is 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. See Table 3, Selected weapons, on page 23 for a more comprehensive list of weapons. 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

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.

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*).

Military unit names

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. Include the acronym only if the term is used more than once within the caption. In that case, spell out the name and then include the acronym in parentheses. (See "Table 2, Force structure" on page 22es 22 and 23 for the force structure of the services.)

It is the responsibility of the photographer in the field to confirm the correct name of a military unit depicted in imagery and 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 that 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 the 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.

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: Ninth Air Force*.

U.S. Airmen with the 375th Security Forces Squadron (SFS) 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 Air National Guard participate in an exercise at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, Nov. 14, 2011.

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 2, Force structure, on pages 22 and 23.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.*)

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.

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*).

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.

U.S. Soldiers with the 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 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.

Joint/combined

The following list shows the correct format of some common joint and/or combined organizations and how to abbreviate them. According to Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, **joint** is defined as, "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 (CJTF-HOA)
- Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150)
- International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)
- Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

Marine Corps

Formats for Marine Corps units and their acronyms appear below. List units from smallest to largest.

Aircraft wing: *The Marines are assigned to the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW). The 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.*

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

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

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

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

Regimental combat team: *The Marines are assigned to Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 1. RCT-1 deployed from Camp Pendleton, California, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

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 assignation, 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 page 16 for aviation squadron abbreviations**

Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Note hyphenation.

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 (NMCB) 1 construct a school in Honduras. NMCB-1 is participating in exercise New Horizons.*

Ship: List the 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 type, *USS* and the hull number. Use the definite article *the* before the ship's 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 the 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, submarine, amphibious assault ship, amphibious transport dock, dock landing ship, coastal patrol, amphibious command, afloat forward staging base, mobile landing platform.

Squadron: Spell out the full name of a squadron on first reference. Include the abbreviation whether or not the squadron appears again in the caption. **See page 19 for aviation squadron abbreviations.**

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

Coast Guard

Other than Coast Guard districts, most 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 Disappointmeent in Ilwaco, Washington*, or *Air Station Atlantic City in Egg Harbor, New Jersey*.

Area: The Coast Guard is divided into two areas:

The Atlantic Area includes the First, Fifth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Coast Guard Districts.

The Pacific Area includes the Eleventh, Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Seventeenth Coast Guard Districts.

District: There are nine numbered districts in the Coast Guard. Spell out the district number when referring to a specific district, such as *the Fifth Coast Guard District*.

Sector: A district is comprised of several geographical sectors, which are named for a region or city, such as *Sector Hampton Roads* or *Sector Guam*.

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 when used with a geographical name.

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*.

Boats: Coast Guard vessels under 65 feet in length are considered boats. Boats are not given individual names or hull numbers. Identify 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.

Current boat types: *motor life boat, response boat-medium, response boat-small, law enforcement special purpose craft, long range interceptor, aids to navigation boat, transportable port security boat, special purpose craft airboat.*

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. Do not use cutter lengths.

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

Current cutter types: *national security cutter, high endurance cutter, medium endurance cutter, fast response cutter, icebreaker, icebreaking tug, seagoing buoy tender, coastal buoy tender, inland buoy tender, river buoy tender, inland construction tender, patrol boat, coastal patrol boat, small harbor tug.*

Marine Corps aviation units *	
HMH—Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron	VMA—Marine Attack Squadron
HMLA—Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron	VMAQ—Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron
HMM—Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron	VMFA—Marine Fighter Attack Squadron
HMMT—Marine Heavy Helicopter Training Squadron	VMFA (AW)—Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron
HMX—Marine Helicopter Squadron	VMM—Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron
MACS—Marine Air Control Squadron	VMR—Marine Transport Squadron
MALS—Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron	VMU—Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron
MWCS—Marine Wing Communications Squadron	VMAT—Marine Attack Training Squadron
MWSG—Marine Wing Support Group	VMFAT—Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron
MWSS—Marine Wing Support Squadron	VMFT—Marine Fighter Training Squadron
VMMT—Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron	VMGR—Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron
VMX—Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron	MAWTS—Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron
Navy aviation units *	
HC—Helicopter Combat Support Squadron	VAW—Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
HM—Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron	VF—Fighter Squadron
HS—Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron	VFA—Strike Fighter Squadron
HSC—Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron	VFC—Fighter Squadron Composite
HSM—Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron	VP—Patrol Squadron
HSL—Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light	VRC—Carrier Fleet Logistics Support Squadron
HT—Helicopter Training Squadron	VQ—Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron
VA—Attack Squadron	VR—Fleet Logistics Support Squadron
VAQ—Electronic Attack Squadron	VS—Sea Control Squadron
VT—Training Squadron	HUQ—Unmanned Reconnaissance Helicopter Squadron
VX, HX—Air Test and Evaluation Squadron	CVW—Carrier Air Wing

** Capitalize the long form only when used as part of an actual unit name.*
Do not use unit nicknames. Examples of properly formatted squadron names:
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.

U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Bill Jones, an MV-22 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.*

Chapter 2
References

Table 1, Military rank abbreviations (per AP)

Army commissioned officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
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		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
W-5	chief warrant officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer 5
W-4	chief warrant officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer 4
W-3	chief warrant officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer 3
W-2	chief warrant officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer 2
W-1	warrant officer	Warrant Officer
Enlisted personnel		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
E-9	sergeant major of the Army	Sgt. Maj. of the Army
	command sergeant major	Command Sgt. Maj.
	sergeant major	Sgt. Maj.
E-8	first sergeant	1st Sgt.
	master sergeant	Master Sgt.
E-7	sergeant first class	Sgt. 1st Class
E-6	staff sergeant	Staff Sgt.
E-5	sergeant	Sgt.
E-4	corporal	Cpl.
	specialist	Spc.
E-3	private first class	Pfc.
E-2	private	Pvt.
E-1	private	Pvt.

Air Force commissioned officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
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		
Warrant officer ranks are not used in the Air Force.		
Enlisted personnel		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
E-9	chief master sergeant of the Air Force	Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force
	command chief master sergeant	Command Chief Master Sgt.
	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	staff sergeant	Staff Sgt.
E-4	senior airman	Senior Airman
E-3	airman first class	Airman 1st Class
E-2	airman	Airman
E-1	airman basic	Airman

Table 1 (Cont.), Military rank abbreviations

Marine Corps commissioned officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
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		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
W-5	chief warrant officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer 5
W-4	chief warrant officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer 4
W-3	chief warrant officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer 3
W-2	chief warrant officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer 2
W-1	warrant officer	Warrant Officer
Enlisted personnel		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
E-9	sergeant major of the Marine Corps	Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps
	sergeant major	Sgt. Maj.
	master gunnery sergeant	Master Gunnery Sgt.
E-8	first sergeant	1st Sgt.
	master sergeant	Master Sgt.
E-7	gunnery sergeant	Gunnery Sgt.
E-6	staff sergeant	Staff Sgt.
E-5	sergeant	Sgt.
E-4	corporal	Cpl.
E-3	lance corporal	Lance Cpl.
E-2	private first class	Pfc.
E-1	private	Pvt.

***Note on <u>Navy</u> enlisted personnel:**
Use the person's rating (e.g., *Gunner's Mate 1st Class; Chief Culinary Specialist*) whenever possible.
(**Coast Guard**: Adhere to AP style of rate only)

Navy and Coast Guard commissioned officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
O-10	admiral	Adm.
O-9	vice admiral	Vice Adm.
O-8	rear admiral	Rear Adm.
O-7	rear admiral	Rear Adm.
O-6	captain	Capt.
O-5	commander	Cmdr.
O-4	lieutenant commander	Lt. Cmdr.
O-3	lieutenant	Lt.
O-2	lieutenant junior grade	Lt. j.g.
O-1	ensign	Ensign
Warrant officers		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
W-5	chief warrant officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer 5
W-4	chief warrant officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer 4
W-3	chief warrant officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer 3
W-2	chief warrant officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer 2
Enlisted personnel*		
Grade	**Rank**	**Abbreviation**
E-9	master chief petty officer of the Navy	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy/ Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard
	master chief petty officer	Master Chief Petty Officer
E-8	senior chief petty officer	Senior Chief Petty Officer
E-7	chief petty officer	Chief Petty Officer
E-6	petty officer first class	Petty Officer 1st Class
E-5	petty officer second class	Petty Officer 2nd Class
E-4	petty officer third class	Petty Officer 3rd Class
E-3	seaman	Seaman
E-2	seaman apprentice	Seaman Apprentice
E-1	seaman recruit	Seaman Recruit

Table 2, Force structure

The following table provides the basic force structure of the five services, listing units from smallest to largest groupings of service members. Other organizational groupings do occur within each service. This table is 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.

Branch	Element	Consists of
U.S. Army	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. Air Force	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 (MAJCOM)	1 or more NAFs
	Air Force	MAJCOMs report to Headquarters, Air Force
U.S. Marine Corps	Marine	individual
	Team	4 Marines
	Squad	3 teams
	Platoon	3 squads
	Company/Battery	3 platoons
	Battalion	3 companies/batteries
	Regiment/Brigade	3 battalions
	Division (MARDIV)	3 regiments/brigades
	Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF)	
	Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU)	Infantry battalion, aviation squadron, combat logistics battalion
	Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB)	Infantry regiment, Marine air group (MAG), combat logistics regiment (CLR)
	Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF)	Marine division (MARDIV), Marine aircraft wing (MAW), Marine logistics group (MLG)
	Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF)	Elements of MARDIV, MAW, MLG
USMC Aviation	Squadron	4-24 aircraft
	Aircraft Group (MAG)	3 or more squadrons
	Aircraft Wing (MAW)	3 or more groups

Table 2, Force structure (Cont.)

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.

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. John Jones relieves Rear Adm. Sam Smith as commander of the Ninth Coast Guard District during a ceremony in Cleveland July 1, 2017. Vice Adm. Sally Simpson, the commander of Coast Guard Atlantic Area, under which the Ninth District falls, presided over the ceremony.

Table 3, Selected weapons

Anti-armor	Javelin shoulder-fired anti-tank missile; TOW missile system; M136E1 AT4-CS confined space light anti-armor weapon
Bombs	GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided bomb; GBU-31 joint direct attack munition; GBU-32 joint direct attack munition; GBU-15 guided weapon system; GBU-87 cluster bomb; GBU-43/B MOAB; BDU-33 practice bomb
Indirect fire	M102/M119 105 mm howitzer; M109A6 Paladin howitzer; M120/M121 120 mm mortar system; M198 155 mm howitzer; M224 60 mm mortar system; M252 81 mm mortar system; M777 towed 155 mm howitzer
Individual and crew-served	M2/M2HB/M2A1 machine gun; M4/M4A1 carbine, M9 pistol; M14 rifle; M14 Enhanced Battle Rifle; M16/M16A1/M16A2/M16A3/M16A4 rifle; M18 Claymore mine; XM25 grenade launcher; M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle; M107 .50-caliber Special Applications Scoped Rifle; M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System; M203/M203A1 grenade launcher; M240B machine gun; M249 light machine gun; Mark 19 40 mm grenade machine gun; M1911/M1911A1 pistol ; M45A1 pistol; GAU-8 Avenger 30 mm cannon
Missiles	AGM-65 Maverick missile; AGM-86* air-launched cruise missile; AGM-88 high-speed anti-radiation missile (HARM); AGM-129A advanced cruise missile; AGM-130 air-to-surface missile; AGM-154 joint standoff weapon; AGM-158 joint air-to-surface standoff missile; AIM-7 Sparrow missile; AIM-9 Sidewinder missile; LGM-30G Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile; Tomahawk cruise missile; AGM-84 Harpoon; MIM-104 Patriot surface-to-air missile
**Indicates that there is more than one version of this weapon; this is not the full designator.*	

Table 4, Selected aircraft and vehicles (active)

Bombers	B-1B Lancer; B-2 Spirit, B-52H Stratofortress
Cargo planes	C-5 Galaxy; C-5M Super Galaxy; C-17 Globemaster III; C-27J Spartan; C-130* Hercules; C-130J Super Hercules; C-2A Greyhound
Combat search and rescue (CSAR)	HC-130 P/N King; HC-130 Hercules; HC-130J Combat King II; HC-130P/N
Fighter/attack and gunships	A-10 Thunderbolt II; AC-130* Spectre; F-15* Eagle; F-15E Strike Eagle; F-16* Fighting Falcon; F/A-18* Hornet; F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet; F-22 Raptor; F-35* Lightning II
Helicopters	AH-1Z Viper; AH-1W Super Cobra; AH-64D Apache Longbow; AH-64E Apache Guardian; UH-60* Black Hawk; CH-47 Chinook; MH-47 Special Operations Aircraft; OH-58 Kiowa Warrior; UH-1* Iroquois; UH-1Y Venom; CH-53D Sea Stallion; CH-53E Super Stallion; CH-53K King Stallion; SH-60 Sea Hawk; VH-3D Sea King; HH-60G Pave Hawk; MH-53J/M Pave Low; MH-60J/T Jayhawk; MH-65 Dolphin
Special mission	E-2 Hawkeye; E-3* Sentry; EA-6B Prowler; E-8 Joint STARS; EA-18G Growler; EC-130*; P-3C Orion; P-8A Poseidon; EA-18G Growler; MC-130E/H Combat Talon I/II; MC-130P Combat Shadow; MC-130J Commando II; CV-22* Osprey (USAF); MV-22* Osprey (USMC); MQ-1 Predator; RQ-11 Raven; U-2; WC-130 Hercules; X-47B unmanned combat air vehicle (UCAV)
Tankers	KC-10 Extender; KC-46 Pegasus; KC-135 Stratotanker; KC-130J Super Hercules
Amphibious	AAV-P7/A1 assault amphibious vehicle (USMC)
MRAP vehicles	Category 1 (small): MaxxPro; Cougar H 4x4; Cheetah; RG-33; M1117 Guardian Armored Security Vehicle Category 2 (medium): MaxxPro; Cougar H 6x6; Golan; RG-33L mine-protected vehicle Category 3 (large): Buffalo mine-protected vehicle
Tracked vehicles	M1/M1A1/M1A2* Abrams tank; M1 assault breacher vehicle; M2/M3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle; M88A2 Hercules recovery vehicle; M113 Armored Personnel Carrier
Wheeled vehicles	Humvee; Stryker armored vehicle; mine-resistant, ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicle

**Indicates there is more than one version of this aircraft or vehicle; this is not the full designator.*

Table 5, Afghan provinces

Province	Provincial Center	Location	Notable cities/towns
Badakhshan	Fayzabad	northeast	
Badghis	Qala-e-Naw	west	
Baghlan	Pul-e-Khomri	northeast	
Balkh	Mazar-e-Sharif	northwest	
Bamiyan	Bamiyan	west	Panjab, Waras
Daykundi	Nili	southwest	
Farah	Farah	west	
Faryab	Meymaneh	northwest	Pashtun Kot, Qaysar
Ghazni	Ghazni	southeast	
Ghor	Chaghcharan	west	
Helmand	Lashkar Gah	southwest	Garmsir, Gereshk, Marjah, Musa Qala, Nawa-i-Barakzai, Sangin, Washir
Herat	Herat	west	Gulran, Guzara, Injil, Kushk, Sabzawar
Jowzjan	Sheberghan	northwest	
Kabul	Kabul	central	Paghman, Surobi
Kandahar	Kandahar	southwest	Daman, Shorabak, Spin Boldak
Kapisa	Mahmud-i-Raqi	central	Alasai, Mahmud-i-Raqi, Nijrab, Tagab
Khost	Khost	southeast	
Kunar	Asadabad	east	
Kunduz	Kunduz	northeast	Archi, Imam Sahib, Khan Abad, Qalay-i-Zal
Laghman	Mehtar Lam	east	
Logar	Pul-e-Alam	central	Padkhab Shana
Nangarhar	Jalalabad	east	Bihsud, Khogyani
Nimroz	Zaranj	southwest	
Nuristan	Parun	east	
Paktia	Gardez	southeast	Jaji, Zurmat
Paktika	Sharan	southeast	Margah
Panjshir	Bazarak	central	
Parwan	Charikar	central	Bagram, Pul-e-Sayad
Samangan	Aybak	northwest	
Sar-e Pul	Sar-e Pul	northwest	
Takhar	Taloqan	northeast	
Uruzgan	Tirin Kot	southwest	
Wardak	Maydan Shahr	central	Saydabad
Zabul	Qalat	southeast	

Note: **Afghan** is the term for the people and culture of Afghanistan.
Afghani is the Afghan unit of currency.

Chapter 3
Captioning still and motion imagery

The ABCs

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

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 DoD 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 to include in 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.

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.

• 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. 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.

• If it's a group of 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*). 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. 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). Also, see the list of selected vehicles in "Table 4, Selected aircraft and vehicles (active)" on page 24, and the list of selected weapons in Table 3, on page 23.

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.

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.

Active vs. Passive Voice

Active: U.S. Soldiers destroy confiscated ordnance.

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

In the first example, the *what* is "*checks the status of an entry control point using radio communications*." In the second, it is simply "*checks the status of an entry control point*." Looking again at the image, nothing is lost by using the shorter description of the second caption. The information given in the first caption is apparent in

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.

the image itself.

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.

Use the following format: Aug. 21, 2011. 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, 2011*, but *February 2011*.

Style Check: Dates

- Use month, day, year format.
- Do not include *on* before the date.
- 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 sample captions on page 30.

Constructing a caption

The first sentence contains the who, what, when and where and 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 will be written as if from that moment.

Subsequent sentences include the background information (the *why?*) and should almost always be written in past tense. It explains why the image is significant and provides context. This is where you provide information explaining the significance of the *action in the image*.

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 a deployment.*

U.S. Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board Landing Craft Utility 1627 in the well deck of the forward-deployed amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) Feb. 10, 2012, off the coast of Thailand. The Germantown was underway in support of Cobra Gold 2012. Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint/combined 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)

Examine the following image and sample caption:

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 well deck of the forward-deployed amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) 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)

Additional rules of construction

Define all acronyms on first use within the caption. Spell out the term, and then place the acronym in parentheses. Use only the acronym on second use.

- **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 Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms for official definitions of abbreviations and acronyms (see "Chapter 9 Additional resources" on page 51). Acronyms need not appear in the DoD 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 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 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 March 30, 2007.

ID by placement. 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 individually 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.

> 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.
>
> 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.

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 asking the parents first. Do not include the names of U.S. citizens, including service members, receiving medical treatment without the express written consent of the patient.

Photographer's credit

Include the photographer's credit at the end of the caption. See examples.

NOTE: This is where 'photo' or 'photo illustration' is indicated. See Chapter 8, DoD Visual Information ethics, for more information.

Examples of photographers' credit lines

(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. John Smith)
(U.S. Army National Guard photo illustration by Spc. Bill Miller)
(U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Jane Johnson)
(U.S. Air National Guard photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Bob McKenzie)
(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Betty Jones)
(U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Lance Cpl. Juan Silva)
(DoD photo by Ralph Williams)
(DoD photo by Cpl. Mike Johnson, Canadian Army)

If the photographer 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: (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Bob Smith). *Note: National Guard civilians, including Title 5 technicians, use the same format.*

If the photographer is from a non-U.S. service, credit it as a DoD photo, listing the photographer's rank, name and service affiliation.

Style Check: Sample captions

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Juan Martinez, left, assigned to the 50th Aerial Port Squadron (APS), 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, N.Y., to support recovery efforts after Hurricane Sandy struck New Jersey and New York City Oct. 29, 2012. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacquelyn Estrada)

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

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 the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Oct. 21, 2012, in the Arabian Sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kenneth Abbate)

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)

U.S. Coast Guardsmen assigned to the 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)

U.S. Soldiers with the 82nd Airborne Division jump from an Air Force C-17 Globemaster III aircraft during Large Package Week/Joint Operational Access Exercise (LPW/JOAX) 13-01 Oct. 11, 2012, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. LPW/JOAX is a joint Army and Air Force training exercise held several times a year to practice large-scale airdrop missions for personnel and equipment. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Joanna Hensley)

Chapter 4
Keywording still and motion imagery

DIMOC has created a new repository of keywords and other metadata, called a controlled vocabulary, which can be accessed through dimoc.mil. The purpose of the controlled vocabulary is to more completely standardize keywords and certain sets of metadata in order to make images archived by DIMOC more easily accessible. The Controlled Vocabulary will be integrated into DVIDS and other digital imagery management systems in the future.

DIMOC Controlled vocabulary

http://dimoc.synaptica.net/pvs/pvs.asp?p=1004&pc=DoDCV

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 (no more than six) 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.

Example 1.

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.

A U.S. Marine with the 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion pa trols 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)

Keywords for Example 1:
USMC, Marine, 3rd AAB, M4 carbine, Training

Example 2.

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 the terms 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.

The keywords for Example 2: *F/A-18E Super Hornet, F-22 Raptor, Aircraft*

Standard format for keywords

1. Treat the keyword field similarly to the caption field, proper spelling and capitalization is important.
   - For example: *M1A1 Abrams tank, USAID, Secretary of Defense*
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 Photographer's Service is a keyword, but only in its acronym/abbreviated form.
   - For example: *USMC, USA, USN, USAF, USCG, RAF*
6. Words that are NEVER keywords:
   - Photographer's name (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 34.
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 Defense 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 either 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 wellness, MEDCAP (medical civic action project), ENCAP (engineering civic action project)

Activities

Recreation, Replenishment at sea, RAS (replenishment at sea), Vertical replenishment, VERTREP (vertical replenishment), Change of command, MWR (morale, welfare and recreation)

Events

Change of command, Retirement, Basic training, Recruit training, AIT, A-school, Commissioning, Decommissioning, Award, Funeral, Ceremony, Changing of the guard

Places

USNA, USAFA, USMA, FOB, COB, Bridge, Barracks: Galley, DFAC

People

(by service, certain positions and occupational specialties)
Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, Coast Guardsman, National Guardsman, POTUS (President of the United States), VPOTUS (Vice President of the United States), CJCS (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff), SECDEF (Secretary of Defense), SEAL, Seabee, Culinary Specialist, Infantryman, Rifleman, Intelligence Analyst, Cadet, Drill instructor, Student

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

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

Ships — *Include the type, class and hull number in parentheses with the ship name:*

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
Still and motion imagery metadata

The style guidance contained in this publication also applies to other metadata associated with still and motion images. It is important to ensure this information is both complete and accurate to ensure every image is as accessible as possible and of the utmost value to the end user.

Excepting abbreviations, all entries should be in regular text, not in all capital letters. The tables on pages 39-41 list the metadata 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.

Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN)

(Reference: Department of Defense Instruction 5040.02, Enclosure 6, October 27, 2011)

Assign each image 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, the first six characters, is the date the imagery was taken, in YYMMDD format.

Field two, the seventh character, represents the Service of the photographer.

- A: Army uniformed member or civilian/contract employee
- D: Department of Defense uniformed member on DoD assignment, or civilian/contract employee of the DoD (including the Office of the Secretary of Defense 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
- 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 or a unit's DVIAN (see boxes below).

VISUAL INFORMATION IDENTIFIER (VISION ID)

(Reference: DoD Instruction 5040.02 (Change 2), Enclosure 7, April 23, 2018)

Field three (LLNNN): The two-letter, three-digit VISION ID of the image originator, which is assigned by DIMOC through https://vipro.defenseimagery.mil. **All DoD photographers and videographers must have a VISION ID.** However, a person does not need to be formally qualified as a VI specialist to have a VISION ID.

If the VI specialist is a member of a foreign government, use an assigned DVIAN if possible. **U.S. service members, civilians or contract personnel shall NOT use ZZ999 or other false VISION IDs.**

DEFENSE VISUAL INFORMATION ACTIVITY NUMBER (DVIAN)

(Reference: DoD Instruction 5040.02 (Change 2), Enclosure 8, April 23, 2018)

Field three (LNNNN): The DVIAN which is a one-letter, four-digit unit-level identifier, may be used in a VIRIN of a motion or still image 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 DoD contract, donation or transfer, will use the unique DVIAN for the releasing activity.

Email dvicustomerservice@defense.gov for assistance in obtaining a DVIAN for your unit.

Field four, the final four digits, are used to create a unique VIRIN for each photo or video file uploaded. *NOTE: The number of digits in field four was increased from three digits to four digits by Change 1 to DoDI 5040.02, dated July 8, 2016. The purpose of the extra digit is to provide a content organizing function when VI professionals capture VI in multiple jobs, locations, or scenes on the same day.*

The first digit is used to indicate 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.

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

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

Date Shot

Enter the date the image was captured (*not the date it was submitted to DVIDS or DIMOC, if different from the date it was shot)*. The date must match what is reflected in the VIRIN and the caption. **Note: Ensure all cameras are set to the correct *local* date and time before conducting a shoot.**

Operation/Exercise

This 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 2015* or *Anakonda 16*. Do not include the words *Operation* or *Exercise* in this field. If the image(s) are not part of a named exercise or operation, leave this field blank.

Headline (optional)

This is an optional field 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 photographer credit line at the end of the caption.

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.

DIMOC 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 DIMOC and can be viewed at the website listed above under "Department of Defense Keywords." **See Chapter 5 for more information on Keywords.**

Command Shown

DIMOC Controlled Vocabulary

http://dimoc.synaptica.net/pvs/pvs.asp?p=1004&pc=DoDCV

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

Base/Location

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. See the online controlled vocabulary for an acceptable list of countries and bodies of water. If the location of the image is withheld, enter *undisclosed location* here.

Release Instructions/Information

The status will either be **Released** or **For Official Use Only (FOUO)**. Remember, only Released imagery may be submitted through DVIDS.

FOUO: If an image is FOUO, it must be submitted directly to DIMOC, and cannot be posted on any form of social media until it is fully released.
See Chapter 6 for instructions. FOUO imagery must include a justification in the Release Authority field.

Secret: If an image is Classified Secret, it must be submitted directly to DIMOC via SIPR. See Chapter 6 for instructions. Imagery classified Secret must include a justification in the Release Authority field.

Enter the name, duty position, phone number and/or email address of a person authorized in writing by his or her command to release images or deem them FOUO.

In the case of FOUO or Secret imagery, the release authority must include justification for designating an image as such (see table at right).

The justifications should come from exemptions 2 through 9 the Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) exemptions list on page 38. Exemption 1 only applies to classified imagery.

Examples of proper Release Instructions

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

Release Status: FOUO
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: FOUO
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

Photographer (VI Professional) Rank/Name

Include the rank/rate and name of the photographer.

Photographer (VI Professional) Home Unit

Include the home unit of the photographer (e.g., *3rd Marine Division* or *1st Combat Camera Squadron*). Do not enter the name of the shooter's service (e.g., *U.S. Marine Corps*).

Photographer (VI Professional) contact information

Include the photographer's email (preferably an official .mil or .gov account) and a phone number.

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.

FOIA exemptions for FOUO 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; DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 4

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.

SCC MediaGrid	Photoshop	Photo Mechanic	Nikon View	Field Contents for DoD Imagery
PH Rank & Name	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Contact/ Creator	PH Rank/ Name	Author	The photographer's rank and full name. (32 character limit)
PH Home Unit	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Contact/ Creator's Job Title	PH Home Unit	Author's Position	The photographer's home unit. (32 character limit)
Date Shot	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Image/ Date Created	Not Used	Date Created	The date the image was taken. This date must match the date in the VIRIN. (8 character limit)
Base/Locale	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Image/ City	Base/Locale	City	The base locale or city of the shoot. (32 character limit)
State/Prov.	CS3 - IPTC/IPTC Image/State CS2/CS4/CS5 - IPTC Image/State/Province	State/Prov.	State/ Province	The state or province of the shoot. (32 character limit)
Country/ Area	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Image/ Country	Country/Area	Country	The country or area of the shoot; for aerials, use either the country or the ocean area being flown over. (64 character limit)
Operation/ Exercise Name	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Headline	Operation/ Exercise Name	Headline	The name of the operation or exercise. If not part of an official operation or exercise, leave blank.
Caption	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Description	Caption	Caption	The caption block should contain a caption and photographer's credit written in accordance with this guide (Chapter 3).
Keyword	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Keywords	Keywords	Keywords	Insert appropriate keywords as instructed in Chapter 4.
Caption Editor	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Content/ Description Writer	Caption Editor	Caption Writer	The name of the individual editing the caption, if different than the photographer. (32 character limit)

SCC MediaGrid	Photoshop	Photo Mechanic	Nikon View	Field Contents for DoD Imagery
VIRIN	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/ Title	VIRIN	Title	Enter the Visual Information Record Identification Number Example: 180515-M-AB123-1001 Refer to page 35 for a complete description of the VIRIN.
Command Shown	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/Job Identifier	Command Shown	Trans-mission Reference	Enter the combatant command where the image was taken (USINDOPACOM, USEUCOM, etc.).
Release Instructions	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/ Instructions	Release Instructions	Instructions	Enter the release authority and contact information. - If an approved release authority has released the image, insert “Released” and the name, rank, unit, phone and email contact information of the release authority. - If the image is explicitly not cleared for public release, insert “FOUO” and the name, rank, unit, phone and email contact information of the release authority. - If a release authority has not reviewed the image, insert “FOUO.” Also include the plan to get it reviewed as well as contact information (email and/or phone).
PH TDY Unit	CS2/CS3/CS4 - IPTC/IPTC Status/Provider CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/Credit Line	PH TDY	Credit	The unit to which the photographer was temporarily assigned during the shoot (must be on official orders). If not assigned, then leave blank.
Image Source	CS2/CS3/CS4/CS5 - IPTC/IPTC Status/ Source	Image Source	Source	The medium used to capture the image; either digital or film is entered here (do not enter the film type or camera model).

Note: The Service Shown (category) has been rescinded. Email/phone (supplemental category) now goes in Release Instructions.

Chapter 6
Submitting imagery to DIMOC

DIMOC is the official records manager for DoD visual information (VI), ensuring DoD visual history is preserved through regular transfers of VI to the National Archives and Records Administration.

Before selected images are submitted to DIMOC using one of the methods described below, **photographers, videographers and their respective units have the primary responsibility** for ensuring each submitted image meets the captioning and metadata standards described elsewhere in this guide.

Per DoD Instruction 5040.02, all imagery, with associated captions and metadata, must be submitted to DIMOC using one of the methods described below, regardless of release status. This includes images posted to DoD and non-DoD web pages and social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and Instagram.

While many military commands post selected imagery on social media sites such as the ones described above, posting imagery on social media is not a substitute for sending imagery to DIMOC.

Submit only high-resolution images using the methods below; low-resolution imagery is of little historical value.

Imagery used in social media

DoD imagery used in social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, etc.) is considered a permanent, released DoD record. The original, hi-res version of all images and video used on social media must also be sent to DVIDS for archiving.

DVIDS (Released only)

Submitting to the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (DVIDS) is by far the most common and most expedient way of submitting unclassified, released imagery. DVIDS forwards a copy of all received images directly to DIMOC 180 days after receiving it; the original version remains in DVIDS.

DVIDS accepts only properly released, public domain imagery. Do not send unreleased, copyrighted or For Official Use Only (FOUO) files.

DVIDS website: https://www.dvidshub.net
(Registration required for submission)

In order to submit imagery to DVIDS, you must have an account with DVIDS. 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 you are registered, find the DVIDS Direct tab at the top of the DVIDS page to begin the submissions process.

- Up to 2GB of imagery can be submitted through the web interface in a single session.
    - Ensure each imagery 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 at the DVIDS Direct page.
    - DVIDS customer service can be reached at (877) 384-3724.

Email or AMRDEC SAFE direct to DIMOC (Released and FOUO)

If you can't access or transmit to DVIDS, or you have FOUO imagery to send to DIMOC, please call the DIMOC Joint Combat Camera Center (JCCC) at (301) 222-6273 or DSN (312) 733-4273. The JCCC staff will issue specific instructions for transmitting the images via regular email or AMRDEC SAFE, which allows for the secure transmission of up 25 items or 2GB of data.

FOUO imagery direct to DIMOC - Joint Combat Camera Center

For Official Use Only (unclassified, but not released for public consumption) imagery will be transmitted to DIMOC via direct email to jccc@mail.mil (under 10 MB), or via AMRDEC to jccc@mail.mil (up to 2GB). Contact the Joint Combat Camera Center for assistance. **FOUO imagery will be transmitted to the JCCC, as it can be used in DoD internal briefings.** *(Note: The direct web uploader at defenseimagery.mil was closed in August 2017.)*

DIMOC Joint Combat Camera Center:
Commercial: (301) 222-6273
DSN: (312) 733-4273
EMAIL: JCCC@mail.mil

AMRDEC SAFE:
https://safe.amrdec.army.mil/safe

Classified (Secret) imagery direct to DIMOC

Still and video imagery classified up to Secret can be transmitted via SIPR for storage and internal (DoD) use until the imagery is declassified and released. All classified imagery must be marked and safeguarded in accordance with the requirements of Volumes 2 and 3 of DoDM 5200.01. Contact the Joint Combat Camera Center at the phone or email listed in the box above.

Physical and non-current visual information

DIMOC regularly receives physical (or 'legacy') visual information records or media, to be digitized, preserved and included in the DoD's permanent VI collection. Legacy VI includes all forms of media, such as film, slides, prints, tapes, negatives and audio, as well as unsubmitted digital VI stored on hard drives and other electronic media.

In many instances, when units or commands relocate or are inactivated, or when facilities are closed, large amounts of legacy VI are discovered in storage areas. These media items or records are DoD property, and must be handled appropriately in accordance with Federal law and DoD regulations. If your unit or command is in possession of such content, please consult with the DIMOC Archivists for instructions on the handling and disposition of those records by following the link in the box above.

For more information:

www.dimoc.mil/Submit-DoD-VI/Preparing-Physical-legacy-VI/

DIMOC-Archivists@mail.mil

Physical assets must be shipped to DIMOC for further processing and archiving. Please do not ship physical assets without contacting DIMOC first. Do not scan physical media on your own or send it to DVIDS or JCCC.

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.

In the above sentence, the subject 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 appear to 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: The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) during a training exercise in the Pacific Ocean June 22, 2011.

Sentence: The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) participates in a training exercise in the Pacific Ocean 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: The Sailors returned home from a six-month deployment and they celebrated when their ship moored pierside.

Fix the sentence with a comma:

- 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. The only 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.

Incorrect: 1st Marine Division is engaged in operations in the Anbar province of Iraq.

Correct: The 1st Marine Division is engaged in operations in the Anbar province of Iraq.

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

> The Airmen needed a uniform that was wash and wear.
>
> The Airmen needed new boots, which are expensive.

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

The aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) conducts flight operations in the Pacific Ocean June 7, 2014.

Commas and quantity Use a comma in numbers showing quantity (e.g., 1,200 troops, but 1200 hours).

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

Note that the examples to the right are hyphenated only when used as compound adjectives. For example: *The troops were forward deployed.*

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

Examples of compound adjectives

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

Periods Use a period when abbreviating military titles. For example: *Tech. Sgt. James Cooper*. Refer to "Table 1, Military rank abbreviations (per AP)" on pages 20 and 21 for more information. 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 DoD 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

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

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 *DoD-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.

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.

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.

Capitalization

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

Capitalize the proper names of foreign military branches: *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* 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 *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 (e.g., *Sgt. Sharon Anderson, Department of Defense, 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 (e.g., *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 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
DoD Visual Information Ethics

The Department of Defense (DoD), primarily DoD military, civilian and contractor personnel who produce, edit or release visual information (VI), must maintain complete credibility when presenting DoD VI as fact. All personnel involved in the creation of DoD VI shall ensure it meets or exceeds the highest ethical standards followed by the DoD and the news industry.

As visual information technology continues to advance, it is imperative DoD photographers maintain integrity by presenting VI accurately depicting a scene and subject as originally recorded by the camera. Photographers must acknowledge any manipulations beyond standard preparation of visual information 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).

DoD Instruction 5040.02, Enclosure 10, Section 4 states, in part, "The undisclosed modification or enhancement of official DoD imagery by persons acting for or on behalf of the DoD is prohibited. Any and all image modification or enhancement for any purpose must be disclosed in the caption data so that the image does not mislead or deceive."

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 Chapter 3, Photographer's credit, page 29.

Photos

Department of Defense VI documentation is defined in DoD Instruction 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 direction 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 (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 example at right)

Photo security disclosure example

(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Gitte Schirrmacher) (This photo has been altered for security purposes by blurring out identification badges.)

Photo cropped to show detail.

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 disclosure – 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 DIMOC, 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.

Photos or video that was staged or made use of props for illustrative purposes would also be considered a photo illustration.

The responsibility lies with the photographer — and anyone else involved in the processing of an image — to disclose manipulations above and beyond standard color adjustments.

Rule of thumb: If you think you need to disclose manipulation techniques used on an image, do so.

In short, if an image has been manipulated above and beyond basic color corrections, it must be labeled as such in the caption block, after the caption credit, using plain language, as shown in the examples at right.

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

Photo illustration disclosure examples

(U.S. Army photo illustration by Sgt. Terry Cummings) (This image was created using high dynamic range techniques.)

(U.S. Air Force photo illustration by Tech. Sgt. Donny Morales) (This image was created in color and changed to black-and-white.)

(U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Gunnery Sgt. Chris Tryon) (This image was used multiple filters, and dodging and burning techniques.)

(U.S. Coast Guard photo illustration by Petty Officer 1st Class Megan O'Brien) (A unit logo and text was added to the upper left hand of the frame.)

(DoD photo illustration by William F. Morgan) (This image was cropped to emphasize the subject.)

NOTE: The disclosure also should appear in the Release Instructions field of the metadata (see page 37). This demonstrates the releasing authority is aware of the modifications to the image being sent to DIMOC.

Prohibited alterations

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

DoD Instruction 5040.02, Enclosure 10, Section 1 states, "The alteration of official DoD imagery by persons acting for or on behalf of the DoD 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 alterations, including 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 of Defense website or social media platform.

There have been several notable cases of altered DoD photos being submitted to public-facing websites and media outlets and presented as fact, resulting in one major news outlet temporarily banning all DoD-produced visual information 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 constitutes a visual lie, and is a serious threat to the credibility and trustworthiness of the DoD, the military services and the DoD Visual Information community.

Reference: DoDI 5040.02, Enclosure 10

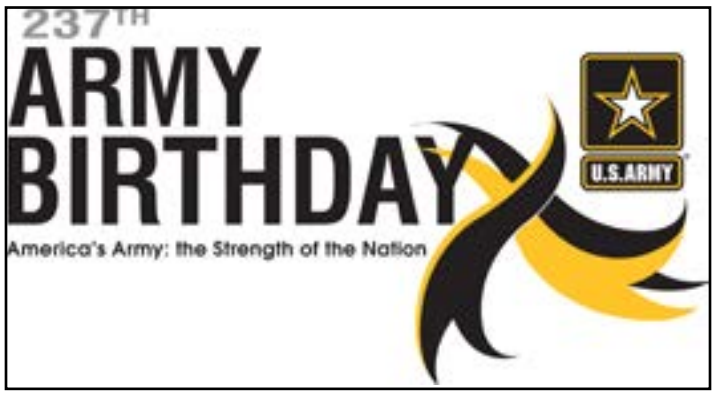
Further reading: National Press Photographers Association (http://www.nppa.org/ethics)

Examples of photo illustrations requiring disclosure

Panoramas (multiple shots stitched together)

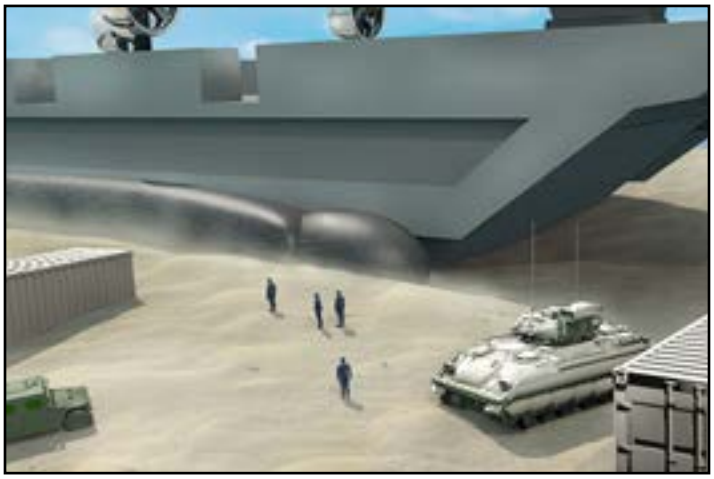
HDR or filtered images (detail shows "ghosting")

Graphics and logos (above and below)



Multiple exposures

Collages



Artist's renderings/drawings

Superimposed images/changed backgrounds

Chapter 9
Additional resources

The following publications are useful tools when writing captions for still or motion imagery. Use these sources for items not listed in this guide.

The Associated Press Stylebook, Associated Press, New York

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

JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary*. http://www.jcs.mil/Doctrine/

The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency.
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition, Wiley, Hoboken, New Jersey
http://www.yourdictionary.com

Controlled Access Program Coordination Office (CAPCO) Register and Manual, March 30, 2012.
http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/FOIA/Public_CAPCO_Register%20and%20Manual%20v5.1.pdf

How to submit to DIMOC:
Digital: http://www.dimoc.mil/Submit-DoD-VI/Digital-VI-Toolkit-read-first/
Physical: http://www.dimoc.mil/Submit-DoD-VI/Preparing-Physical-legacy-VI/

Policies:	http://www.dimoc.mil/References/DoD-VI-References/
To obtain a VISION ID:	https://vipro.defenseimagery.mil/

Grammar and Writing

AP Stylebook (login required):	http://www.apstylebook.com/
Poynter's News University:	http://www.newsu.org/

Service-specific fact sheets and style guides:

	Army
Equipment:	http://www.peosoldier.army.mil/portfolio/
Style Guide:	https://www.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/385432.pdf
	Navy
Fact file:	http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact.asp
Style Guide:	http://www.navy.mil/submit/navyStyleGuide.pdf
	Air Force
Equipment:	http://www.af.mil/information/factsheets/index.asp
Style Guide:	(Air Force uses the DoD Visual Information Style Guide)
	Marine Corps
Equipment:	http://www.marines.com/operating-forces/equipment
	Coast Guard
Equipment:	https://www.overview.uscg.mil/Assets/
Style Guide:	(online at a future date)

References to non-DoD websites are provided as a service and do not constitute or imply endorsement of these organizations or their programs by the U.S. Department of Defense. DoD is not responsible for the content of pages found at these sites.

URLs listed in this reference are current as of the date of publication.