

From: Schulz, David <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 4:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Parnell, R Sean (Sean) SES (USA) <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Pentagon Press Association

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you again for taking the time to discuss the concerns of the Pentagon Press Association with the initial in-brief concerning the media that was distributed last month. I have received a copy of the revised In-brief statement of Pentagon policy, which continues to request reporters to acknowledge their “understanding” of the policy as a condition to the receipt of a press pass. As previously explained, this language is problematic for many reporters because the discussion of what constitutes “solicitation” and other aspects of the policy are far from clear. We had understood that this unnecessary language would be replaced by a simple “received and read” acknowledgment.

While we appreciate the addition of language confirming that signing the acknowledgement is neither an endorsement of the policy nor a waiver of rights, you should understand that so long as an affirmation of understanding is required, many Pentagon Press Association members will likely be unable or unwilling to sign.

David A. Schulz

Cell: [REDACTED]

From: Gabe Rottman <grottman@rcfp.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 3:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Parnell, R Sean (Sean) SES (USA) <richard.s.parnell.civ@mail.mil>
Subject: Re: Revisions to in brief for media membners

Dear Mr. Parnell and [REDACTED] and removing Mr. Schulz),

The Reporters Committee thanks you for taking the time to engage with us on the new in-brief form and for your willingness to attempt to address our concerns.

We are in receipt of the revised in-brief form. We had expected based on our meeting of September 30 and the correspondence below that the acknowledgement would reflect the simple receipt and review of the policy, not the signatory's "understanding" of the policy, and that that word would not appear in the revised acknowledgement. It has been reintroduced twice, in the first sentence ("received, read, and understand") and in the second sentence ("[m]y signature represents my acknowledgement and understanding").

We also anticipate that a number of news organizations will continue to have concerns about the purported legal distinction between passive receipt of information and active "solicitation" that DoW regards as improper, particularly as it would sweep in unclassified information or even information that merely hasn't been specifically pre-authorized. The revised policy contains new language on that point -- including the Privacy Act language, the discussion of Article 92 of the Uniform Code, and the Department's view of the legal implications of journalists' interactions with servicemembers, DoW civilian employees, and contractors -- but, as you know, this is the same underlying distinction that we discussed as a concern in our meeting and prior correspondence.

These issues may continue to be an impediment to signing for many journalists, though of course those decisions will have to be made by the journalists themselves in consultation with their employers.

Thank you again.

Best,

Gabe Rottman
Vice President of Policy
The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
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[REDACTED]