



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CECG

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander/Directors, Major Subordinate Commands, Laboratories, Field Operating Activities, Directors and Chiefs of Separate Offices, HQUSACE

SUBJECT: Getting to Green in Communication

1. During the Senior Leader Conference this year, I told you that we needed to do a much better job of communicating both to the American public and to ourselves. Today, we are “red”—unacceptable—and must move to “green”—successful—in our Corps strategic goal of Communication. Enclosed see the “Getting to Green in Communication” Plan.

2. As an organization we will be taking specific actions in this area, but communication is also a leadership issue and one that we must each advance on our own. I encourage you to study and use the Corps Communication Principles and make these widely available and understood by your subordinates. Additionally, here are my expectations for you:

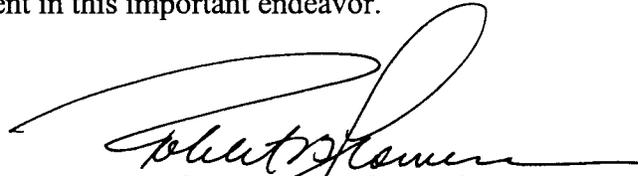
- As you talk to your external stakeholders, customers and partners, your communication must be focused on relationships and on truly hearing what the other person is saying. Before we can offer the solution, we must spend time seeking to understand.
- From the standpoint that we use taxpayer’s money to accomplish our mission, it is important that you take every opportunity to tell the American people what their Corps of Engineers is doing for them today around the world. Maximize your participation in your speakers bureaus and take advantage of every opportunity to communicate about the Corps and our work.
- Internally, you should focus your communication on facilitating an exchange of information and especially on capturing your organization’s lessons learned.
- Whenever you are briefed on any situation, you should be asking: “Who else needs to know about this?” “What do I know that others need to know?” “What are the communication plans on this issue?”
- We will be implementing USACE 2012 over the next year. Listening will play a key role in your keeping a finger on the pulse of your organization to determine the progress we are making or the places we need to work harder. We will provide you with communication enablers, but nothing will replace your personal attention to your people, your customers and your partners on this issue.

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3. I also ask that you let me know when we, as an organization, have opportunities and lessons learned that could improve our communication efforts. I have two people working this issue very hard for the Corps who need your help: Fred Caver is the Chairman of our Corps Communications Committee and Carol Sanders, is the Chief of Public Affairs and the head of the Community of Practice for Communication and Public Affairs. Please provide them with your ideas and lessons learned.

4. Finally, attached are the actions that we will take as the Corps moves to green in this important area. These actions are based on the objectives outlined in our Corps campaign plan. I need your support and involvement in this important endeavor.



ROBERT B. FLOWERS
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

Enclosure

COMMUNICATION: GETTING TO GREEN

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP KEY STRATEGIC MESSAGES THAT FOSTER UNDERSTANDING OF SERVICE TO THE NATION.

The Corps key strategic messages focus on our service to the nation in the areas of National Security, Strengthening the Nation's Economy, and Enhancing the Environment. Messages will continue to be developed and disseminated to the Corps on specific activities and initiatives. However, the following key action is the focus for this objective to move the Corps to green.

Action: Strategic Use of Technology to Communicate the Corps Message: The USACE web presence will be revamped this year to improve readability and usability and to ensure that the corporate identity is uniformly displayed. A web PDT has been formed with representatives from USACE HQ Offices, MSCs, Districts and ERDC. Stakeholders will also be engaged to assist us in developing a web presence that is user friendly.

- ❑ Redo the USACE Home Page (www.usace.army.mil), and the headquarters page (www.hq.usace.army.mil). By 1 January 2004 including providing search and interactive capabilities and with a common corporate look. Incorporate web-cast capability to help bring our people, sponsors and work to life.
- ❑ Implement a Corps Electronic News Room to disseminate news releases, contacts, upcoming events, tips on stories, experts, fact sheets and additional information to the media. All Public Affairs Offices will focus on gathering and maintaining contacts with the media in all size markets to ensure widespread dissemination of stories.
- ❑ Provide guidance so that web sites reflect the corporate identity and are consistent throughout the command by the end of the FY 2005.
- ❑ Develop and implement plans for use of the Internet for internal communication and with our customers and stakeholders.

• **Metrics:**

- ❑ A before and after survey will show an increase in favorable reactions to the Corps web by those who visit the site.
- ❑ A before and after survey of the media who cover Corps issues will show an increase in favorable reactions to availability of information about the Corps and our responsiveness.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP A WORK CLIMATE THAT IS OPEN, INFORMED AND ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN LISTENING AND BEING RESPONSIVE.

Action: Develop a plan to actualize the Communication Principles within USACE. A plan that will increase the understanding and use of the Communication Principles within USACE will foster an open climate within the organization in addition to providing the foundation for excellent relationships with our external stakeholders

- ❑ Provide additional products and information about the Corps Communication Principles including stories in Engineer Update, newsletters and publications, information for Commander's presentations and examples of Communication Excellence.

Action: Use the Community of Practice for Communication and Public Affairs to increase the expertise of all those who communicate about the Corps. This Community of Practice will extend beyond professional public affairs practitioners and will provide Corps employees with products, training and services regarding communicating as a representative of the Corps. Included in this Community of Practice are all who represent the Corps in public and with our customers including, but not limited to, project managers, planners, natural resources rangers and interpreters, regulators, planners, historians,

engineers who work in adopt a schools and our senior leaders who make speeches and tell the Corps story.

- ❑ Assess, develop and emphasize excellent communications skills among leadership and the workforce, promoting healthy work relationships throughout USACE.
- ❑ Develop an exchange for lessons learned within the community of practice.
- ❑ Identify, develop and provide training needed—especially for answering media inquiries and in the areas of risk communication.
- ❑ Use the FY 04 Conference for Community of Practice for Communication and Public Affairs to further the development of the community and foster learning through the exchange of ideas and lessons.
- ❑ Add communications as a topic in training conferences, workshops and other Community of Practice conferences that play a significant role in relating to the public, internal communications or telling the Corps story.

Action: Enhance the technical expertise of the professional Public Affairs community through training, enhancing technology and capability. As the Corps professional communication staff, we must ensure that we are continuing to increase the capability of the Public Affairs Community.

- ❑ Establish a Public Affairs Emerging Leader program that will focus on Public Affairs professionals at the GS-7 to GS-11 level.

Metrics:

- ❑ An overall communication survey will be conducted in 1st Quarter 2004. The results will be analyzed and an action plan developed and implemented. The Corps will be resurveyed on the communication issues after six months.
- ❑ Identify measures on the Army Climate Survey that can be indicative of achieving these goals.
- ❑ Identify communication training requirements to indicate a level of minimum competence needed at specific levels and for specific situations.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: BUILD EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS, STAKEHOLDERS AND CUSTOMERS.

Action: At all levels, identify key stakeholders, opinion leaders, partners, customers, other government officials, and interest groups and assure that we are taking the necessary action to build and maintain trust based relationships. Effective two-way communication helps us build positive, mutually respectful relationships that are important to the successful accomplishment of our mission of service to the American people and the Armed Forces. Partners and customers are different. Partners are those who have share the burden of work and funding and agree to provide specific studies and projects that benefit a third party—a state that cost shares with the Corps to provide a harbor for commerce, for instance. Customers provide funding for Corps services—a military customer who provides funding for the Corps to build a barracks. In building effective relationships, it is important to understand and act on the way that those external to the Corps wish to be treated.

- ❑ Meet with external stakeholders and discuss how we can best work together and develop guidelines similar to the Tribal Communication Guide developed by Northwestern Division.
- ❑ Identify and reduce barriers to effective working relationships.
- ❑ Develop and share plans to ensure sustaining relationships through command changes.
- ❑ Survey customers where appropriate (such as military customers or campground users) to identify where we can better serve. (It should be noted that Military Programs already had a customer survey that can used as a baseline for those customers.)

Metrics:

- ❑ Partner relationships, based on trust, cannot be easily measured. However, actions taken to better understand the partner's concerns and needs can be documented and reported so that the learning can happen across the organization.

- ❑ For customers where there is an established base line, identify actions needed to increase customer satisfaction. Where there is not a baseline will be identified by May 2004 with a reading every 6 to 12 months thereafter depending on the requirements established by the PDT and agreed to by the leadership.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: INTEGRATE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS IN ALL BUSINESS PROCESSES.

ER 5-1-11, US Army Corps of Engineers Business Process, establishes the imperative to “Build effective communications into all activities and processes” and requires a communication plan to be part of Project and Program Management Plans within the Corps. In 2000 the Corps developed a business process to develop the communication portion of project management plans, but it still is very difficult to get high quality, appropriate communication plans included in PMPs.

Action: Identify and eliminate the barriers to excellent communications in projects. Use various forums (PDT conferences, command inspections, etc.) to gather information about what is needed to increase the level of communication in the Corps.

- ❑ As needed, develop training, templates and examples for communication plans in Program/Project Management Plans.
- ❑ Capture information from After Action Reviews on communication successes and mistakes and share the results widely and post on the Community of Practice web site. Recognize good plans and share them. Improve the PMBP communications tool kit and include good examples of plans.

Action: Identify and define the professional public affairs role in quality assurance of communication including communication plans in PMP, use of contractors and development of communication products.

Metrics:

- ❑ Analyze the measures currently used in command inspections to measure the progress in this area. Include a question on the overall communication survey being done for the Corps. Place sample plans on Community of Practice web pages.
- ❑ Assess the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of Organizational Communication plans.
- ❑ Assess the effectiveness of public affairs participation in PDTs.