



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
Defense Information School  
6500 Mapes Road  
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-5620

DINFOS – DOT/PALD

MEMORANDUM FOR Intermediate Public Affairs Specialist Course Attendees

SUBJECT: Intermediate Public Affairs Specialist Course Welcome Letter

1. Welcome to the Intermediate Public Affairs Specialist Course (IPASC). IPASC is one of DINFOS' Advanced Courses. This nine-day course is designed to train and prepare mid-grade noncommissioned officers and civilians in the public affairs skills they need as they assume more leadership responsibility within their units.
2. IPASC classroom instruction includes training in public affairs management, media relations, community relations and deployment operations. Some of the specific training includes preparing public affairs guidance (PAG), crisis communication, communication planning, on-camera interviews, and subject matter expert preparation. You are expected to already be proficient in PA basics; if you are not, you will find it difficult to perform well during this course.
3. Course Conference Fee: We also ask that you bring \$30 to satisfy the IPASC course conference fee. The schoolhouse will provide a Memorandum for Record that you may submit to your commands for reimbursement.
4. The following information can be used to assist with your planning as you prepare to attend IPASC:

**Directions to Fort Meade**

**Flying:** If you arrive by commercial air, we recommend you fly into Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport. Fort Meade is about 10 miles south of the airport. Military transportation is not available. Taxi service is available from the airport to Fort Meade at an estimated cost of \$20 for one person. Ask for a receipt, since this expense is reimbursable when you file your travel voucher. A rental car may be beneficial if it is authorized on your orders. You can register your vehicle at the post's visitor center for the period you will be here.

Washington Reagan National and Dulles International, the other two major airports in the area, are a considerable distance from Fort Meade. Taxi fare from National is approximately \$65, while a taxi from Dulles can run as high as \$150. Using the Metro (the D.C. subway system) to the closest stops might reduce those costs, but the stops are several miles from the post.

**Driving:** Fort Meade is northeast of Washington, D.C. and southwest of Baltimore off the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Route 295). From the B/W Parkway, take the MD-175 exit toward Fort Meade and Odenton. After turning onto 175, the fort is about two miles down the road. Look for the Reece Road entrance to the fort on your right. Automobiles with a valid military registration decal will not need to be registered on post. **Automobiles without a valid military registration decal** must be registered for Fort Meade at the visitor's center, located at the Reece Road gate. The Visitor Control Center is open Monday through Friday from 0730 to 1530. (Please check <http://www.ftmeade.army.mil/vcc.html> before you depart for any last minute changes in the Visitor Control Center hours of operation).

If you arrive after hours or on the weekend, the gate guards can issue a one-day pass until you can get your car registered on post. Once your vehicle is registered, you may enter and leave through any gate.

**Vehicle registration**

You will need your vehicle registration, proof of insurance, a valid driver's license, a military or government ID and a copy of your orders. You will be issued a pass for the dates on your orders.

**NOTE:** If your name does not appear on the car's registration, you will need a power of attorney from the person to whom the car is registered.

### **Health Care**

Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center on post is not a full-service hospital. It may not be able to provide the health care you require. However, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda Naval Medical Center and the hospital at Andrews Air Force Base are within driving distance. If you have specific health care issues, it would be best to call Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center at 301-677-8982 before you get here.

For Defense Department civilians who are enrolled in a health benefits plan, most plans are accepted in this area. Ensure you bring an adequate supply of any prescription medications. Room 1191 has been set aside within the DINFOS building for military sick call. The hours of operation are 0600-0630 Monday through Friday.

### **Reporting and billeting**

Billeting normally will not be available prior to the day before class starts. If you expect to arrive early, contact the Billeting Office on post at (410) 674-7700.

Billeting is located in Bldg. 2793, Abrams Hall. **Once you have received confirmation of the course, you should contact Billeting and confirm your reservation with a credit card.**

If, when contacting the billeting office you are informed that on-post accommodations are not available, you will be asked to call 1-800 Go Army 1 (1-800-462-7691). Personnel at this number will assist you in locating accommodations at one of four contract hotels in the area.

### **Class Information**

**You are to report to the Defense Information School, located at 6500 Mapes Road, and be in the classroom not later than 0755 the first day of class. All students are expected to check in at billeting not later than the day prior to class.**

### **Parking**

For those who have a vehicle, student parking is in the lot across from the school adjacent to the Shoppette. Once parked, cross the street (Zimborski Avenue). You will use the student entrance off Zimborski Avenue. Simply go through the doors, get a visitor's badge from the front desk, and proceed up the stairs.

### **Absence policy**

You need to determine your priorities before arriving. The head of the Public Affairs Leadership Department has the authority to grant time off from class for important business and emergencies, but each request is reviewed individually. Absences for non-emergency, personal reasons **are not normally approved**. Clear your schedule now.

5. Again, welcome to IPASC – we look forward to working with you. Your instructors – experienced, demanding, and dedicated – are working hard to ensure you have a great experience and leave DINFOS equipped to handle whatever missions you may face in the future.

//SIGNED//

BRUS E. VIDAL  
Major, USAF  
Advanced Courses Team Chief