



Defense Media Awards

Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2016

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I. ABOUT THE AWARDS PROGRAM

- A. The Defense Media Awards program honors excellence among military and civilian broadcasters, graphic artists, journalists, photographers, public affairs practitioners, mass communication specialists and videographers. It also fosters an environment of innovation and growth, leading to more effective communication programs. The awards are administered by the Defense Media Activity under the authority of Department of Defense Directive 5105.74, “Defense Media Activity (DMA),” paragraph E3.1.22.
- B. The history of the program is rooted in the 1960s and 1970s when the Military Photographer of the Year and the Thomas Jefferson Awards programs were created to promote excellence and recognize outstanding performance among military photographers, editors, broadcasters, and Armed Forces newspapers and magazines. During the late 1990s, video and graphic categories were added to the long-standing military photography contest to create the Visual Information Awards Program (VIAP). Another award program, the DoD Visual Information Production Awards (VIPA), was created in 1998 to recognize and promote outstanding productions achieving Military Component communication goals. By the mid-2000s, oversight for all three award programs had been transferred to the Defense Information School (DINFOS) at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. DINFOS continued to conduct these separate annual award programs while also merging their award ceremonies into one large event called the Communicators of Excellence Awards. By 2015, increasing resource pressure and Military Service mergers of the PA and VI career fields had undermined the viability of sustaining three separate, complex and diverse award programs.
- C. In late spring and early summer of 2016, a multi-Service working group of PA and VI representatives met at the Defense Media Activity to devise a new consolidated award program designed to recognize outstanding performance by 21st century communication units and professionals. This newly established Defense Media Awards program takes the most essential elements of the three previous award programs and places them under one program that promotes communication excellence.
- D. The highest-level award in the new program is the Defense Communicator of the Year Award, which recognizes individuals who used their photography, journalism, videography and graphic arts skills to communicate stories relevant for their unit or command.

II. POINT OF CONTACT

For information regarding entry requirements, individuals should contact their Military Services’ contest coordinator. For general information, send an email to:

DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil or call (301) 222-6757.

III. MILESTONES

2016

Jan. 1 Program year began
Dec. 31 Program year ends

2017

Feb. 10 Judges selected
April 5 Deadline for Services and Defense Media Activity to submit entries
April 17-21 Entries judged
 April 17: Graphic Arts
 April 18: Photo
 April 19: Video
 April 18-21: Print
 Judging of the graphic arts, photo and video entries will be livestreamed on the day of judging.
April 28 Winners announced
June 8 Awards sent to Service representatives for presentation to winners
June 8 Conduct after-action review with Service representatives

IV. ELIGIBILITY

- A. The competition is open to military units, military personnel, and civilian employees of the DoD and the Military Services. This includes active-duty, Reserve, and National Guard members of the Armed Services, and U.S. Coast Guard members as well as civilian employees with the photographer, journalist, photojournalist, videographer, broadcaster, graphic artist, mass communication specialist, public affairs specialist or equivalent occupation specialty. Members who leave the Armed Forces during the year may compete as long as the material submitted was completed in its entirety while on active duty or in a Reserve or National Guard status. Personnel assigned to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Civil Air Patrol are prohibited from competing unless they meet the eligibility criteria stated above.
- B. Individuals can enter a product in any award category as long as they carry one of the occupation specialties listed in the previous paragraph. For example, a photographer or journalist may compete in the graphic arts or video categories and a graphic artist may compete in the photo, print and video categories.
- C. No individual may enter the competition directly. Individuals must enter through their respective Services' or the Defense Media Activity competition. (See Section IV for more details.)
- D. The Services will ensure military nominees meet quality force standards for their respective service prior to their entrance to the Defense Media Awards.
- E. Military and civilian staff members of Service commands will enter categories through their respective Services' competitions. The Military Services are responsible for establishing Service-unique rules and procedures to judge and select their qualified entries for submission to the Defense Media Awards.

- F. Military members assigned to combatant commands, defense agencies, DoD field activities, and Joint Task Forces will enter individual categories through their respective Service competition, but will enter unit categories through the Defense Media Activity competition. All civilian staff members assigned to combatant commands, defense agencies, DoD field activities, and Joint Task Forces will submit individual and unit entries through the Defense Media Activity competition. The Defense Media Activity is responsible for establishing rules and procedures to judge and select qualified entries for its competition and submitting them to the Defense Media Awards.
- G. Army and Air National Guard members and civilian staff members will enter individual and unit categories through the National Guard Bureau, which will in turn submit winning entries through the Services' competitions. However, Joint Force Headquarter staff will submit unit products produced at the state level through the Defense Media Activity competition.
- H. Reserve members will enter individual and unit categories through their respective Services' competitions.
- I. Personnel assigned to Stars and Stripes newspapers are not eligible to participate. All non-appropriated fund (NAF) products and NAF personnel are also ineligible.
- J. Government contractor employees are not authorized to compete in any individual category. Products produced with the assistance of government contractor employees are eligible for the unit categories. However, contractor employees will not be recognized individually for their contributions.

V. ENTRY CRITERIA

- A. All entries must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and meet the highest standards of production, execution and professional excellence. Products must convey, by content and delivery, relevant information that supports the command's information and/or mission needs and, therefore, must be authorized products approved for public release.
- B. Entries also must have been published, broadcast or posted in one or more communication means available to the public between Jan. 1, 2016, and Dec. 31, 2016. The Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) is one of those communication means.
- C. Entries will only be accepted from the following competitions:
 - 1. Air Force: Air Force Media Contest
 - 2. Army: Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Mass Communications Awards
 - 3. Coast Guard: Chief Journalist Alex Haley Awards
 - 4. Defense Media Activity: DMA Media Awards Program
 - 5. Marine Corps: USMC Office of Marine Communication Visual Information and Excellence in Communication Awards
 - 6. Navy: Russell Egnor Navy Media Awards

- D. The Services and Defense Media Activity may submit no more than three entries per category with each entry from a different competitor. The of-the-year portfolio categories, however, are limited to one nomination from each Service and one from the Defense Media Activity.
- E. No single product may be entered in more than one category except when entered as part of an of-the-year portfolio or listed on the products sheet for the Outstanding Communication Plan entry. In addition, individual components (graphics, photos, video, etc.) of a multimedia story, picture story or photojournalism entry may not be entered into other categories as these items were created for the overall product, not for individual use.
- F. The Defense Communicator of the Year category is open to both military and civilian personnel as long as they meet the eligibility criteria listed in Section I. However, individuals who elect to compete in the Defense Communicator of the Year category may not simultaneously enter the graphic artist, journalist, photographer or videographer of-the-year categories during the same competition year.
- G. Those individuals who are not competing in the Defense Communicator of the Year category may enter more than one of the following categories: graphic artist, journalist, photographer or videographer of the year.
- H. Civilian enterprise guides and directories, yearbooks, cruise books and products produced with non-appropriated funds are not eligible to compete.
- I. All still and motion imagery (photos and videos) and graphic products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, and will be assigned a Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) as instructed in the DoD Captioning Style Guide and Change 1 to DoDI 5040.02.
- J. All entries must comply with federal law and DoD policy. See Appendix A for a complete list.

VI. ENTRY DISQUALIFICATION AND REJECTION

- A. Products entered by personnel who do not meet eligibility requirements listed in Section II will be disqualified.
- B. Products that do not meet the specific category entry requirements listed in Section XII or that fail to follow federal law or established DoD policy will be disqualified.
- C. Challenges will be decided by the Defense Media Activity Director or the Director's designee.
- D. DVIDS upload requirements enforce as much objective criteria as possible and will prohibit the submitter from a successful upload if errors are found using automation checks. Entries uploaded using other methods will be disqualified. .

VII. HOW TO SUBMIT ENTRIES

- A. Entry to the Defense Media Awards will be accomplished through DVIDS. Specific upload instructions will be provided to the Services one month prior to judging
- B. The Services and Defense Media Activity will submit a list of their nominees by April 5, 2017, and will ensure military nominees meet quality force standards prior to entrance. Information required is as follows:
 - 1. Individual Awards: First name, middle initial, last name, rank, product title, VIRINs for graphic, photo and video entries, and PDF names for print entries. For of-the-year submissions, list the product titles, and the VIRINs and PDF names, as applicable, for all elements of the portfolio.
 - 2. Unit Awards: Unit or organization name, and the first name, middle initial and last names of the primary and significant contributors. Also list the product title, VIRINs for video entries, PDF names for print entries and the URL for the digital publication entry and, if applicable, the blog post.

VIII. DESCRIPTION OF AWARD CATEGORY TYPES

Each award category is marked as either an individual (I) or a unit (U) entry.

- A. Individual awards are for products created by a single person who performed a majority of the work. Photos or graphics must not contain signatures, logos or markings of any kind on the image.
- B. Unit awards are for products created as the result of a team effort with primary and significant contributors.

IX. AWARDS

- A. Awards will be given in five graphic arts, nine print, nine photo, 10 video and one Defense Communicator of the Year categories. First-, second- and third-place awards will be given for all categories except for the of-the-year categories. Only one person will receive an award in each of-the-year category. No award will be made if the judges deem that no one entry meets program standards.
- B. Individual Awards.
 - 1. First-place individual award winners will receive plaques and certificates except for the nine of-the-year winners who will each receive a trophy and a certificate. The trophy for the Thomas Jefferson Military Journalist of the Year and the Thomas Jefferson Civilian Journalist of the Year will be a bust of Thomas Jefferson with an engraved nameplate.
 - 2. Second- and third-place individual award winners will receive certificates.

- C. Unit Awards.
 - 1. First-place unit award winners will receive a plaque for the office of primary responsibility. Primary and significant contributors will each receive certificates.
 - 2. Second- and third-place unit award winners will receive certificates. One to the unit and one each to the primary and significant contributors.
- D. Trophies, plaques and certificates will be conveyed to the Services' for presentation to the winning individuals and units.

X. NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS

- A. Each Service public affairs office, the Army VI career field manager and the National Guard Bureau public affairs office will be notified of the winners with the understanding that they, in turn, will notify the winners' chain of command. The chains of command will then notify the winners. The Services will also ensure their Reserve components are notified since entry by Reserve units and members is through their respective competition.
- B. Winning entries will also be posted on the DoD website at <http://www.defense.gov> one week after the Services have been notified. All entries remain the property of the Department of Defense.

XI. AFTER-ACTION REVIEW/MEDIA AWARDS GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Defense Media Activity will host a Defense Media Awards Governance Committee meeting June 8, 2017, with the Services' appointed voting members and National Guard Bureau advisors to review and update competition guidance for the 2017 award cycle.

XII. JUDGING GUIDANCE

- A. Judging will take place April 17-21, 2017. See Section II for the judging schedule. Judging of the graphics, photo and video entries will be livestreamed. Judges' comments of the print entries will be shared with the Services' points of contact.
- B. Three judges will be selected for each medium: graphic arts, photo, video and print. Selection criteria for judges will be based on their professional experience in the communication and visual information fields.
- C. All entries will be judged on professional excellence, originality, storytelling ability and creativity. Judges' decisions are final. The judges' discretionary comments and feedback will be provided after the competition.
- D. Judges will select only one first-, second- and third-place winner in each category if deemed worthy of these distinctions. Judges will select only one winner in each of-the-year category. If no entry in a category is considered within contest standards, judges may choose to withhold any or all awards within that category.

XIII. AWARD CATEGORIES

- A. **Graphic Arts.** All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata as specified in Section IV, paragraph I. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for public release as explained in Section IV, paragraph A. Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.
1. **Digital Art.** This category includes original artwork created entirely by digital means. Examples of artwork accepted in this category are digital paintings, vector art, 3D renderings, etc. A still photograph enhanced by digital means is allowed; however, animation is not. Submit entry as a high-resolution JPEG file.
Award type: Individual. Category Code: GIDA.
 2. **Identity Design.** This category includes original artwork that represents a logo or crest that was used in some kind of official military capacity. Examples include unit coin designs, team logos and unit crests. An entry entered in the Digital Art category cannot be entered in this category. All unit crests must have been approved by the appropriate office of heraldry prior to entry. Submit entry as a high-resolution JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: GIID.
 3. **Layout and Design.** This category includes a single-page or double-truck layout created using elements from various sources. All layout and design work must be completed by the entrant, but elements can come from other sources. Examples include interactive PDFs, info charts and info graphics, fliers, certificates, CD covers, cover art and posters. An entry created and entered as a Digital Art entry cannot be entered in this category. For example, adding elements to a Digital Art entry and submitting it as a Layout and Design entry. Using a Digital Art entry as part of the layout is also not permitted. Submit entry as a high-resolution JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: GILD.
 4. **Military Graphic Artist of the Year.** Candidates must submit a portfolio containing no less than six and no more than eight entries with at least one entry from the Digital Art category and one from the Layout and Design category. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: MGY.
 5. **Civilian Graphic Artist of the Year.** Candidates for the Civilian Graphic Artist of the Year must submit a portfolio containing no less than six and no more than eight entries with at least one entry from the Digital Art category and one from the Layout and Design category. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: CGY.

B. **Photo.** All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata as specified in Section IV, paragraph I. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for release as explained in Section IV, paragraph A. Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.

1. Operational Documentation. Entries will depict the U.S. military's participation in a Joint or Service operation or contingency. Photo will depict real-world operations to include combat operations, disaster relief, and any contingency event not related to training, exercise or simulation. Submit as a JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIOD.
2. Training Documentation. Entries will depict the U.S. military's participation in a Joint or Service exercise, or other training event. Submit as a JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PITD.
3. Picture Story. A series of pictures that reveal a storyline or a single theme. A composite picture story layout is not required. Submit at least seven but no more than 12 photos. Submit as JPEG files. VIRINs must be sequential, using the series field to attribute the proper and intended order.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIPS.
4. News Photo. Scheduled or unscheduled military news event featuring a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. Submit as a JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PINP.
5. Feature Photo. Storytelling picture not news related; usually a situation that has strong human interest or a fresh view of a commonplace occurrence featuring a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. Submit as JPEG.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIFP.
6. Portrait. A picture of a person that identifies and captures the essence of that person's character and depicts his or her personality. Official photos not allowed. Submit entry as a JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIPO.
7. Pictorial. A photograph that enhances the visual qualities of the subject with primary emphasis on composition and aesthetics. Expresses beauty, tension, harmony, chaos and other abstract concepts through composition, and tonal and color relationships more than through human interaction and features a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. Silhouettes, sunsets or photographs of military hardware are permitted in this category. Submit as a JPEG file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIPI.
8. Military Photographer of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of at least eight but no more than 10 entries with at least one from one of the two documentation categories, one picture story, one news photo, one feature photo and one portrait. Portfolio may NOT include pictorial, photojournalism or multimedia story entries, and will include only one picture story. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be

judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office. Submit photos as JPEG files.

Award Type: Individual. Category Code: MPY.

9. Civilian Photographer of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of at least eight but no more than 10 entries with at least one from one of the two documentation categories, one picture story, one news photo, one feature photo and one portrait. Portfolio may NOT include pictorial, photojournalism or multimedia story entries, and will include only one picture story. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office. Submit photos as JPEG files.

Award Type: Individual. Category Code: CPY.

- C. **Video**. All products will contain required metadata as specified in Section IV, paragraph I. Slates are not required and should not be included. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be approved for release as explained in Section IV, paragraph A. Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.

1. Short-form Production. A self-contained video package conveying military information using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and post-production. Sound, music, narration and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. Production in its entirety must be 5 minutes or less in duration. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Unit. Category Code: VUSP.
2. Long-form Production. A self-contained video package conveying military information using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and post-production. Sound, music, narration and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. Production entries must be greater than 5 minutes in duration. Enter productions 15 minutes or less in duration in their entirety. Productions greater than 15 minutes must be telescoped down to 15 minutes for judging purposes with a link provided to the entire production. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Unit. Category Code: VULP.
3. Operational Documentation. A product that depicts the U.S. military's participation in a Joint or Service operation or contingency composed primarily of uncontrolled activities. Natural sound and interviews with identified participant for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. There will be no reporter standups. Entry must not exceed 5 minutes. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: VIOD.

4. Training Documentation. A story composed primarily of uncontrolled activities depicting the U.S. military's participation in a Joint or Service exercise, or other training event. Natural sound and interviews with identified participant for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. There will be no reporter standups. Entry must not exceed 5 minutes. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: VITD
5. Multimedia Story. Entry must illustrate the use of visual storytelling techniques across multiple digital mediums while telling a story. All forms of media are allowed: audio, video, photography, graphics, animation, design or any other visual tool. Entry may be a narrative feature, personality or news journalism piece. Entry may not include dramatization. An entry is defined as a single story produced and edited by one individual with at least 51 percent of the story's content created by the producer. Entry must not exceed 5 minutes. Entry will be judged by the quality of storytelling and creative use of the medium. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: VIMS.
6. Video Feature Story. A storytelling video not news related; usually a situation that has strong human interest or a fresh view of a commonplace occurrence. Story must have a military tie. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required. Entry must not exceed 5 minutes. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: VIFS.
7. Video Spot. Entries must be one spot 60 seconds or less in length. The target audience must be identified. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: VISP.
8. Video Series. Entry must include two or more video stories dealing with a common theme. The entry must be clearly identified as part of a series with either an anchor lead, or a consistent opening and closing. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. Each story in the series must not exceed 5 minutes. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required. Submit entries as an MPEG-4 or H.264 file.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: VISR.
9. Military Videographer of the Year. Candidates must submit three video products: one from one of the two video documentation categories, one from the video feature story category and one from either of the multimedia, video spot or video series categories. Only one video of a video series is required. Entry in its entirety may not exceed 15 minutes. Judges are briefed on the descriptions of the categories. Failure to properly categorize the videos will result in the disqualification of the

entire portfolio. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office.

Award Type: Individual. Category Code: MVY.

10. Civilian Videographer of the Year. Candidates must submit three video products: one from one of the two video documentation categories, one from the video feature story category and one from either the multimedia, video spot or video series categories. Only one video of a video series is required. Entry in its entirety may not exceed 15 minutes. Judges are briefed on the descriptions of the categories. Failure to properly categorize the videos will result in the judges disqualifying the entire entry. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office.

Award Type: Individual. Category Code: CVY.

D. Print

1. Civilian Enterprise News Publication. Printed DoD publications (newspapers, newsletters and magazines) that support the command's information mission and are printed using the commercial-enterprise concept as stated in DoDI 5120.04. For the 2016 competition year, enter only one issue. Submit entry as a PDF and, if a digital version is also created, provide the URL. Printed and online version must be the same. Advertisements may be included, but are not required.
Award Type: Unit. Category Code: PUCE.
2. Funded News Publication. Printed DoD publications (newspapers, newsletters and magazines) that support the command's information mission and printed using government-appropriated funds as stated in DoDI 5120.04. For the 2016 competition year, enter only one issue. Submit entry as a PDF and, if a digital version is also available, provide the URL. Printed and online version must be the same.
Award Type: Unit. Category Code: PUFN.
3. Digital Publication. Entries will be judged as they exist the day of judging and must be an issue or edition such as a newsletter, magazine or newspaper designed for the Web. Electronic versions of printed publications are not eligible. This entry must display transmedia properties, such as hyperlinks, embedded video, 3-D imagery and slideshow, and be built on HTML 5, iFrames or some other mobile-enabled platform. Provide URL information on the nomination letter.
Award Type: Unit. Category Code: PUDP
4. Outstanding Communication Plan. This award recognizes an organization's ability to assist the command in achieving its goals through the use of a communication plan. Entry is comprised of a two-page information paper and a separate one-to-two page products sheet. Submit information paper and products sheet as one PDF.

- a) Information paper must contain:
- 1) An introduction describing the issue or problem the command is trying to solve, a potential problem the command wishes to avert or an opportunity the command wishes to leverage. Provide an explanation of how the issue, problem or potential problem affects the command's ability to achieve its goal or how the opportunity helps with goal achievement. Also include the types of research (primary and/or secondary) used to define or redefine the situation and the publics affected by the issue, problem or potential problem, or opportunity. Lastly, list when the plan was developed. If the plan was developed prior to the competition year, state so, but be sure to include what updates, if any, were made during the competition year and why.
 - 2) List the specific, measurable objective the plan is designed to achieve, and the overall strategy or strategies used to achieve it. Explain why the strategy or strategies were selected. If one of those strategies was a campaign run in coordination with other organizations, such as local broadcast stations or tenant organizations with their own PA office, list it and include an explanation as to why the campaign was chosen.
 - 3) List the communication tactics used and the specific audience each tactic was designed to reach. At least half of the communication tactics must have been implemented during the program year, though it may have started during the previous year.
 - 4) A paragraph summarizing the results. This paragraph may include outputs (numbers of products produced overall and number of website views); however, there must be an explanation of the outcomes achieved such as increased awareness of the unit's mission. To do so, an analysis of the specific, measurable objective and whether or not it was achieved is required. The analysis must include how this was measured and the evaluation methods used. For example, pre-plan and post-plan assessments. Lastly, explain how the plan helped the command resolve the issue or problem, avert a potential problem or leverage an opportunity.
- b) Products Sheet must:
- 1) List the communication products produced to support communication tactics such as spots, news stories, and special programs; be sure to provide hyperlinks to where the products may be found.
 - 2) Include at least two digital platforms with URLs and explain how the platforms accomplished communication objectives. The platforms may be the unit's official website or official social media sites.
- c) Content for the digital platforms must be provided by DoD or Service PA practitioners with overall management of the sites and release authority residing within the Service or Defense Media Activity. The sites must conform to DoD, Defense Media Activity and Service information, security review, and web instructions and regulations. The sites must have been in existence for a minimum of three months during the program year and must be updated on a regular schedule,

either daily or weekly. The sites will be judged as they exist on the day of judging. If the URLs are not workable, judges reserve the right to disqualify the entry.
Award Type: Unit. Category Code: PUOC.

5. Feature Story. Feature story must have a focus that is maintained and supported throughout. Entry may be a sports, human interest, personality or news feature. Submit entry as a PDF and, if the story is posted online, submit the URL. PDF and online version must be the same.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIFS.
6. Commentary / Blog Post. Entry may be a commentary, which conveys the writer's opinion on a topic as specified in DoDI 5120.04, or a blog post as long as it is written using an informational or conversational style and conveys the writer's opinion. Articles or blog posts written by commanders or those in a leadership position are ineligible. Blog posts must be from an official military blog that has been registered as such as required in DoDI 8550.01, "DoD Internet Services and Internet-based Capabilities." Blog post will be judged as it exists on the day of judging. If the URL is not working, judges reserve the right to disqualify the entry. Commentaries posted to an official military website are also eligible as are commentaries published in a command newspaper, magazine or newsletter. Commentaries published as a printed product must be submitted as a PDF and, if posted online, provide the URL. PDF and online version must be the same.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIBC.
7. Photojournalism. Entries must include three to five photographs with embedded captions and a story. All elements will be judged. Photos and story must be on the same topic. No elements may be entered in any other category. Photos and story must be the work of one individual. Submit article as a PDF and photos as JPEG files. If the entry is also posted online, provide the URL. PDF and online version must be the same.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: PIPJ.
8. Thomas Jefferson Military Journalist of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of five entries: one feature story, one photojournalism entry and three entries of the candidate's choice. Candidates must submit a certificate of authenticity from the responsible public affairs officer for articles published without a byline. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office. Submit articles and certificates of authenticity, if applicable, as PDFs and photos as JPEG files. If the articles are posted online, provide URLs where they may be found. PDF and online versions must be the same.
Award Type: Individual. Category Code: MJY
9. Thomas Jefferson Civilian Journalist of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of five entries: one feature story, one photojournalism entry and three entries of the candidate's choice. Candidates must submit a certificate of

authenticity from the responsible public affairs officer for articles published without a byline. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office. Submit articles and certificates of authenticity, if applicable, as PDFs and photos as JPEG files. If the articles are posted online, provide URLs where they may be found. PDF and online versions must be the same.

Award Type: Individual. Category Code: CJY

- E. Defense Communicator of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of seven products of the following media: graphic arts, photographs, published articles or videos. Four products must deal with a common theme and consist of at least three different types of media. The remaining three products are at the candidate's discretion consisting of at least two different types of media. Candidates do not have to enter examples of all four media types, but the portfolio should contain at least three different types of media demonstrating the candidate's ability to communicate using various media. Candidates must submit a certificate of authenticity from the responsible public affairs officer if an article was published without a byline. The Defense Communicator of the Year category is open to both military and civilian personnel as long as they meet the eligibility criteria listed in Section I. However, individuals who elect to compete in the Defense Communicator of the Year category may not simultaneously enter the graphic artist, journalist, photographer or videographer of-the-year categories during the same competition year. Candidates also must submit a one-page biography and a digital photograph with their portfolio; they will not be judged. The biography, submitted as an OCR scanned PDF, and the photo, submitted as a separate JPEG file, must be cleared by the local public affairs office. Submit articles and certificates of authenticity, if applicable, as PDFs and photos as JPEG files. If the products may also be found online, provide URLs. PDF and online versions must be the same.

Award Type: Individual. Category Code: DCY

Appendix A, Federal Laws and DoD Policy

1. All products must comply with applicable laws and DoD policy, including copyright and intellectual property laws and regulations, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Information regarding copyright and intellectual property laws may be found at <http://www.copyright.gov>. HIPAA information may be found at <http://www.hhs.gov/regulations/index.html>.
2. Productions containing commercial music must conform to U.S. copyright laws. This generally includes synchronization rights obtained via a music license agency. Otherwise, military units must obtain written approval from the artist, musicians' union and/or record company, to include synchronization rights. Rights obtained for commercial music used in productions submitted to the Defense Media Awards contest must include unlimited distribution. Organizations may be asked to provide written confirmation that all music complies with copyright law and DoD standards.
3. All products must meet the requirements for public affairs release as stated in DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of Information for Public Release." Any questions regarding public release should be directed to the local public affairs office.
4. Printed products must conform to DoD Instruction 5120.04, "DoD Newspapers, Magazines, Guides, and Installation Maps."
5. Graphics, photos and video products must conform to DoD Instruction 5040.02, "Visual Information" and be captioned with metadata in accordance with the DoD Captioning Style guide.
6. U.S. Coast Guard products must also follow U.S. Coast Guard guidelines.