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#### CHAPTER 4. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

- 4-1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS. The Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs advises the Secretary and Principal Staff on matters relating to public information, public opinion, participation in public events, relationships with the news media, and the impact of policy decisions on the public. The Assistant Secretary counsels and acts for and with the Secretary in the discharge of this responsibility and coordinates, advises on, implements, and evaluates all aspects of public affairs activities within the Department. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for:
- a. Issuing press materials for initiatives on all public affairs activities of the various offices of the Department. Developing informal public affairs materials describing and explaining the programs and activities of the Department. Preparing informational public affairs materials and briefings of a nonlegislative nature for referrals from Congress and providing program offices with such materials and briefings upon request.
  - b. Maintaining liaison with and responding to the requests of national, regional and local news media. Maintaining liaison with national and regional organizations which have an interest in the activities of the Department. Responding to or initiating requests for Departmental participation in public events.
  - c. Preparing speeches and remarks to be delivered by the Secretary and the Under Secretary and providing this service to other senior officials as capabilities permit.
  - d. Coordinating requests to the Under Secretary's Office for Special Purpose travel.
  - e. Directing activities of and chairing the Communication Review Board which includes representation from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and the other major Offices of the Department.

- f. Coordinating all proposed public communication activities that involve the Department, except those of the Office of the Inspector General, including clearance of all publications, audiovisuals, exhibits, and all other public communication activities before production and distribution of the final product. Preparing specifications for materials to be produced under contract, monitoring the production process and assigning staff to serve as Government Technical Representatives and Government Technical Monitors for Departmental public communication projects and activities, and arranging for distribution of products.
- g. Developing cost data for public affairs-related communication activities for inclusion in annual budget requests and assisting in the preparation of plans for the optimal use of those funds.
- h. Providing for overall Departmental coordination of the Freedom of Information function in accordance with Handbook 1327.1 , Freedom of Information.
- i. Providing guidance to Field public affairs personnel in developing a national information strategy. Providing training in Departmental public affairs activities at Headquarters and in the Field. Exercising functional supervision of the public affairs staff in Regional and Field Offices and the following Offices in Headquarters:

General Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Office of Scheduling and Liaison  
Office of Field Operations and Exhibits  
Office of Press Relations  
Office of Policy Support

- 4-2. GENERAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS. The General Deputy Assistant Secretary assists the Assistant Secretary in the performance of the overall duties of the office, as requested, and acts for the Assistant Secretary. Serves as Acting Assistant Secretary in the absence of the Assistant Secretary.

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- 4-3. OFFICE OF SCHEDULING AND LIAISON. This office considers requests for meetings, appointments, and public appearances by the Secretary and prepares briefing papers for the Secretary, the Under Secretary, and other Principal Staff. The office provides support for the Under Secretary and maintains liaison with key Departmental personnel, the White House Speakers Bureau, and national organizations requesting Secretarial appearances.
- 4-4. OFFICE OF FIELD OPERATIONS AND EXHIBITS. This office aids the Assistant Secretary in monitoring and directing public affairs activities in the Field. Provides policy guidance and coordinates dissemination of information materials to the Field and collects materials from those offices to meet Headquarters needs. The office makes recommendations on public affairs personnel in the Field, including their development, training, and implementation of the Department's national information strategy, and assists Regional and Field public affairs personnel in developing and implementing communication plans. The office provides the Secretary's News Report, produces HUDLINES, processes and distributes informational materials to the news media and general public, and coordinates the development of exhibits and distribution of the completed products. The office records selected pronouncements of the Secretary and other senior officials and makes this material available to the news media. The office acts as the Departmental Freedom of Information Officer for overall Departmental coordination of the Freedom of Information function in accordance with Handbook 1327.1, Freedom of Information; and heads and coordinates the activities of the Communication Review Board.
- 4-5. OFFICE OF PRESS RELATIONS. This office assists the Assistant Secretary in the initiation and execution of Departmental information program activities and establishes and maintains liaison throughout the Department to provide public affairs expertise to policy and program decision making. The office assists in the development of overall Departmental information planning and provides specific informational activities and products to meet public affairs objectives and fulfill related communications planning in support of Departmental goals. The office

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prepares announcements, statements, news items, articles, and related written materials on the activities of the Department and its personnel. The office arranges and monitors Washington news conferences, interviews, and other news contacts involving senior officials of the Department and provides written transcripts of news conferences and other significant events involving the Secretary and the Under Secretary.

- 4-6. OFFICE OF POLICY SUPPORT. This office provides speech writing services for the Secretary and the Under Secretary, and for other Principal Staff as capabilities permit; develops and writes features on significant Departmental issues and editorials for magazines and Department-oriented publications, and assists in preparation of special articles for Principal Staff. The office researches and drafts responses to correspondence, responds to queries from the general public, maintains reference materials of public information value for Departmental and informational uses, and maintains liaison with national organizations that have an interest in the Department's activities. The office develops issues for delineation of policy matters for the Department, the Secretary, and the Administration and oversees all audio-visual material produced by the Department.