

**24 APRIL 2004**

**Public Affairs**

**TIP OF THE SWORD POLICY**



**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY**

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This instruction implements AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*, and DODD 5330.3/Air Force Supplement, *Defense Automated Printing Service (DAPS)*, and establishes procedures, policies and guidelines for the *Tip of the Sword* base newspaper. This instruction applies to all US personnel assigned or attached to Incirlik Air Base Wing (ABW) units and its Geographically Separated Units (GSUs). Submit recommended changes and questions to Incirlik ABW, 39 ABW Public Affairs Office, Unit 7090, Box 135 APO AE 09824-0135. Use AF Form 847, **Recommendation for Change of Publication**, through channels when making recommended changes. See **Attachment 1** for a Glossary of References and Supporting Information. Maintain and dispose of records created as a result of prescribed processes in accordance with AFMAN 37-139, *Records Disposition Schedule* (will become AFMAN 33-322 Vol 4).

**1. Ownership.** The *Tip of the Sword* is an authorized publication supporting the 39th Air Base Wing's internal information program.

1.1. The *Tip of the Sword* is published by a printer under contract with the US Air Force. News and editorial content are furnished by the 39th ABW Public Affairs Office. The *Tip of the Sword* becomes property of the commander upon delivery, according to the terms of the contract.

**2. Editorial Policy.** The *Tip of the Sword* is the commander's primary communication tool to transmit information to the Incirlik community. The following editorial policy guidelines apply to achieve this goal:

2.1. The *Tip of the Sword* provides the commander a primary means of communicating mission-essential information to members of the organization. The 39 ABW commander normally defers all decisions on news propriety, story placement, publication date and use of photography to the public affairs officer.

2.2. News and feature stories on 39 ABW people and organizations provide recognition of excellence in performance and help set forth norms for mission accomplishment.

2.3. News coverage and content will conform to policies of the Air Force and the commander. News reporting will be factual and objective. News coverage will avoid morbid, sensational or alarming details not necessary to factual news reporting.

2.4. News writing will distinguish between fact and opinion. When an opinion is expressed, the source will be identified. The *Tip of the Sword* will not publish commercial news, editorials or other material.

2.5. The *Tip of the Sword* will keep the community accurately informed about military matters affecting their futures. This will assist the commander in improving morale and quelling rumors.

2.6. The *Tip of the Sword* news and editorial content will provide information to all members of the Incirlik community to improve the quality of their lives and the effectiveness of the 39 ABW work force. This includes officers, enlisted members, US and Turkish civilian employees, family members, retirees, reservists and guardsmen.

2.7. The *Tip of the Sword* will de-glamorize the use of alcohol and tobacco products.

2.8. The *Tip of the Sword* will conform to applicable regulations and laws relating to libel and copyright, the Air Force Privacy Program and Standards of Conduct, as well as US government printing and postal regulations.

2.9. Locally originated articles will reflect the policies of the commander and be in the interest of the Air Force. Editorials should help readers understand Air Force policies and programs. They must not imply criticism of other government agencies, nor advocate or dispute specific political, diplomatic or legislative matter. Statements or articles on legislative matters by people of agencies outside the Department of Defense, including officials or candidates for public office, will not be used.

2.10. The *Tip of the Sword* will, given the consent of the family, publish a short article regarding the death of an Incirlik active-duty person or Department of Defense civilian. The article will not include the cause of death if it is sensitive in nature, the surviving family does not consent to the release of such information or the cause of death is under investigation.

2.11. Publishing schedules are fixed by contract and must be met. The *Tip of the Sword* staff is excused from additional duties that interfere with newspaper production.

**3. Submission Guidelines.** Due to printing and copy deadlines set by contract with the local publisher, requestors must submit information to the *Tip of the Sword* staff at 6-6060 or email before 1630 Wednesday the week prior to desired publication date.

3.1. Printability of all submitted copy is determined by the 39 ABW Public Affairs staff with final approval given by the 39 ABW commander or his representative. All submissions run on a space-available priority basis. Meeting deadlines does not guarantee publication or, if publishable, the date of publication.

3.2. All copy submitted to the *Tip of the Sword* will be edited as needed to ensure it conforms to the Air Force journalism guidelines for news writing. This includes conforming to the guidelines in the *Associated Press Stylebook* and *Libel Manual*, and appropriate story length to facilitate layout and design.

3.3. Base agencies are discouraged from writing recurring columns. This will ensure no base agency or organization receives an excessive amount of coverage for its special interest at the expense of other base agencies.

3.3.1. The editor will determine equitable space for these items and allocate news, feature or editorial space as deemed appropriate.

3.4. Award winners may be featured in articles for USAFE-level awards or higher only. Awards at wing level and below may be mentioned in the "Salutes" section and published on a space-available basis.

3.4.1. Stripes for Exceptional Performers promotees, graduates of Airman Leadership School, Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, medical training program graduates, Officer Training School selectees and Community College of the Air Force will be mentioned in the "Salutes" or commander's commentary section.

3.5. Classified ads are a free service for sale of personal items. The ads will run for a maximum of two weeks and cannot be used for commercial gain.

3.6. Change-of-command coverage is limited to group, wing-level or major tenant organizations. Squadron-level change-of-command announcements may be published in news briefs.

3.7. Fund drive coverage will be limited to those campaigns authorized by the Air Force regulations, mainly the Combined Federal Campaign and the Air Force Assistance Fund. Public Affairs will coordinate with the fund drive key personnel to ensure appropriate coverage of these events.

#### 4. **Photos.** On-the-job action photos will be published.

4.1. Unacceptable photos include:

4.1.1. A posed grip-and-grin picture of a person or wing receiving an award

4.1.2. Ribbon cuttings

4.1.3. Photos containing alcoholic beverages or cigarettes

4.1.4. Retirement and reenlistment photos

4.1.5. Photos containing clearly legible controlled area badges, medical badges and other sensitive items

4.1.6. Photos of people not conforming to AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal of Air Force Personnel*

4.1.7. Poor quality photos, to include blurry, poorly composed, under- or over-exposed photos and those with low resolution

4.2. The *Tip of the Sword* conducts a cover contest every three months and award first, second and third place cover photos, photo illustrations or graphic illustrations certificates. A panel including the commander, vice commander, command chief master sergeant, Visual Information manager, Chief of Public Affairs and AFN detachment chief will judge the contest. The contest will promote quality work by the Visual Information department.

5. **Content placement.** Public Affairs will not guarantee placement of photos or articles in any area of the newspaper, for instance front-page coverage of an event.

5.1. During any given week, news value and the communication needs of the ABW commander determine story placement. Stories may be moved from one week to the following week, depending on current news.

**6. Coordination.** *Tip of the Sword* articles will be coordinated with affected agencies as deemed appropriate by the Public Affairs officer. Potentially controversial or “sensitive” articles will be coordinated with the commander and higher headquarters, when necessary, before publication. POC for this instruction is 39 ABW/PA at 6-6060.

MICHAEL C. GARDINER, Colonel, USAF  
Commander

**Attachment 1**

**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

***References***

AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*

DODD 5330.3/Air Force Supplement, *Defense Automated Printing Service (DAPS)*

***Abbreviations and Acronyms***

**ABW**—Air Base Wing

**AFI**—Air Force Instruction

**AFMAN**—Air Force Manual

**DAPS**—Defense Automated Printing Service

**DODD**—Department of Defense Directive

**GSU**—Geographically Separated Unit

**PA**—Public Affairs