

DAPA/Army News

SOP #420

PRINT-WEB - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR NEWS ARTICLES

REFERENCE:

1. SOP #420.1 Print-Web - Writing A First Draft
2. SOP #420.2 Print-Web - Style Guide for Articles
3. SOP #430 Photo - Submission Guidelines

AIM:

This SOP outlines the guidelines for submitting print/web news articles to Army News.

BACKGROUND:

Text and photos submitted to Army News may be posted to the Army Internet site (www.army.gc.ca), published in *The Maple Leaf* or used in a variety of other communications products.

The target audience for internal communications products such as *The Maple Leaf* is young soldiers and officers. The primary target audience for the Army Internet site is the Canadian public, as well as members of the Canadian Forces.

PROCEDURES:

1. For writing a first draft consult SOP #420.1. For accompanying photos, follow the guidelines outlined in SOPs #430.
2. Obtain approval for the article from a public affairs officer or chain-of-command.
3. Ensure that all facts are accurate. Have the subject matter expert review your final draft for accuracy, not style.
4. Submit articles with accompanying photos via email to print-web editors at the Ottawa Production Centre.

SOP OPI: DAPA 9-3

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SOP #420.1

PRINT-WEB - WRITING A FIRST DRAFT

Write the first draft of your article while the story is still fresh in your mind.

Plan time for writing, revising and obtaining any required approvals. Submit your article in a timely manner. Do not wait until the story is outdated before submitting it.

Start by organizing your thoughts and your material.

Keep your readers in mind. Who's my audience? What do they need to know? What do they want to know? Why am I telling this story?

Write your lead or first paragraph. It contains the core of the story, helps you focus on what you want to tell, and gives the reader a quick overview of the article. You must also be writing a teaser for use on the Army website. A well-written teaser and lead draw potential readers into your article. The teaser and lead can be the same.

Simplify your story telling. While writing your lead/teaser, you may discover that you have more than one story to tell. Tell the most newsworthy story. If there is time, write the second story as a sidebar, a shorter article focusing on a specific angle. Feature articles of national importance can be broken down into a series as needed.

Stick to the facts. Ensure that all facts are accurate. Have the subject matter expert review your final draft for accuracy, not style.

Use the inverted pyramid format. Start with the most important facts. Readers often don't read a whole article and editors sometimes need to reduce the length of an article to fit page layouts.

Write tight. You are writing a news story, not a novel.

Use active verbs. Have people doing things, not having things done to them.

Write your article in chunks (short paragraphs) of information. Readers should be able to scan the first sentence of each paragraph for a primary fact and get the gist of the story. The body of each paragraph contains secondary information about the primary fact.

Answer who, what, when, why, where and how while telling the story.

Include quotes in your article from people involved in the story. Let the soldier say the exercise was a success, exciting, useful, or boring. Let the soldier say if the equipment is more efficient, the boots more comfortable, or there is a problem, etc. Ensure that the quote is relevant or worth using. Don't add a quote just to please your editor—it must add value to the story you are telling.

Avoid editorializing. Unless you are writing an editorial, your opinions are not included.

Avoid summing up, wrapping up or writing a conclusion to your article. It is not necessary in news writing.

Double check:

a) The spelling for

- people
- places
- exercises
- operations
- equipment
- ranks
- units

b) and that your story includes

- dates
- locations
- first names
- photo credits
- bylines
- tag lines

For additional submission guidelines, refer to SOP #420.2.

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SOP #420.2

PRINT-WEB - STYLE GUIDE FOR NEWS ARTICLES

While Army News writers and editors refer to *The Canadian Style, A Guide to Writing and Editing* as their primary reference, the following style guide outlines required elements for news articles and accompanying photos.

For additional guidelines, see sample article and IPTC (photo) information documents included in this SOP or refer to SOP #420.1 and #430.

Use the inverted pyramid style — begin with the most important facts.

Write tight — about 450 words maximum for news articles and 700 words maximum for features.

Calculate the total word count by including the body as well as the filename, headline, teaser and photo captions.

Compose a short file name to be used when saving the document. The filename and word count are written on the first line of the document: 06-014_OP_Archer_Departure/282. If you have been assigned a project work order number, include the number in your filename.

Write a short, active headline of 5 to 10 words (e.g., *Roto 1 departs for Afghanistan on Op ARCHER*). Capitalize only the first word and proper nouns in headlines, exercises and operations excluded.

Write a short, active teaser of up to 15 words for use on the web (e.g. *Army's regeneration period ends with Afghanistan deployment.*). The teaser and lead paragraph can be the same or similar.

Write out in full the first reference to a person, always using ranks or honorifics: Sergeant Pete Maltais, then Sgt Maltais; and for civilians, Mark Ross, then Mr. Ross.

Avoid the use of too many abbreviations and always write out the first reference to a unit in full followed by the correct abbreviation: 1 Military Police Platoon (1 MP Pl).

Use this document as a reference for names and abbreviations of Army units:

http://armyonline.kingston.mil.ca/CLS/143000440016206/LFC_GUIDE_E.PDF

Capitalize the name of operations or exercises as follows: Op ARCHER.

Write dates as day, month and year (20 January 2006). Omit the year in the article if the date is in the current year.

Accuracy

Double check that all names of people, places, exercises, operations, equipment, rank, units, etc. are spelled correctly, and that dates, locations, first names, photo credits, bylines and tag lines are included.

Other required elements (see attached article sample)

Include a print byline (e.g., *By Sgt Mike Van Den Broek*).

Include a place line and capitalize the first part (e.g., *CFB EDMONTON, Alberta*).

Include a print tag line identifying the author as the final paragraph of the article: (e.g., *Sgt Van Den Broek is a reporter with Army News*).

Include a web bylines after the final paragraph (e.g., *Article by Sergeant Mike Van Den Broek, Army News; Photos by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News* or *Article and photos by Sergeant Mike Van Den Broek*).

Formatting

- Use Arial font, 12 points.
- Set line spacing to single.
- Start all paragraphs at the left margin.
- Leave a blank line between paragraphs.
- Use a single space after periods.
- Save the file in Rich Text Format (RTF).

Guidelines for photos accompanying articles

- A minimum of three photos is required.
- A caption for each image is to be included at the end of the news article.
- Include a print photo credit with each caption: PHOTO: MCPL PETER SIMPSON
- Ensure that you have permission to use the images and that each photo is credited accordingly.
- Keep captions tight — one sentence.

Photos must meet Army News photo submission guidelines, #SOP430. Create and attach a second document that contains the IPTC information for these photos. See SOP #430.1 for more details.

[Sample news article]

06-014_OP_Archer_Departure/282

Roto 1 departs for Afghanistan on Op ARCHER

Army's regeneration period ends with Afghanistan deployment.

By Sgt Mike Van Den Broek

CFB EDMONTON, Alberta—The Army moved back into high gear 21 January with the deployment of Task Force Afghanistan Roto 1. After saying good-bye to loved ones, 63 soldiers departed from Edmonton and 60 from CFB Shilo as part of Operation ARCHER.

The Army has been on low operational period for the last two years. This allowed time to transform and prepare the soldiers for a more professional robust military.

“What this tour means to me is applying 22 years of service to doing some good in a country that needs our help. I feel a sense of pride in representing our country in a place that needs our assistance so much,” said Sergeant Pete Maltais of 1 Military Police Platoon.

The scene in the Lecture Training Facility at Edmonton Garrison was one of anticipation from the soldiers deploying and sadness on the part of the families.

The Chief of the Defence staff, General Rick Hillier, was on hand to say a few words of encouragement and to bring them up to date on the condition of their wounded comrades in Landstuhl, Germany.

After leaving the Garrison the troops boarded a Canadian Forces Airbus from Edmonton International Airport and began the long journey to the troubled region of Kabul, Afghanistan.

Sgt Mike Van Den Broek is a reporter for Army News.

Article by Sergeant Mike Van Den Broek, Army News
Photos by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News

LE2006-0012.jpg

Corporal Gordon Whitton from 1 PPCLI holds his 4-year-old daughter Brooklyn.
PHOTO : MCPL PETER SIMPSON

LE2006-0013.jpg

Sergeant Chris Van Schmeling from 1 Field Ambulance waits with his wife Dalphine before deploying.
PHOTO : MCPL PETER SIMPSON

LE2006-0014.jpg

Corporal Robin Dawatsare from 1 PPCLI hugs his 8-year-old son Cheyne.

PHOTO : MCPL PETER SIMPSON

LE2006-0017.jpg

Ms. Marie France Brousseau from CFB/ASU Edmonton does a last minute check of Corporal John Hamilton's paper work.

PHOTO : MCPL PETER SIMPSON

LE2006-0018.jpg

Medical personnel hand out malaria medication to deploying soldiers.

PHOTO : MCPL PETER SIMPSON

[Sample IPTC information document]

IPTC OpArcher_Departure

LE2006-0012

20 January 2006

CFB EDMONTON, Alberta<p>

Corporal Gordon Whitton from 1st Battallion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (1 PPCLI) holds his 4 year old daughter Brooklyn in the lecture training facility before he leaves for Afghanistan.<p>

Over the next several weeks, approximately 1250 soldiers from Edmonton will depart for Southern Afghanistan for a six-month tour, as part of the Canadian commitment to peace in that country.<p>

Photo by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News<p>

LE2006-0013

20 January 2006

CFB EDMONTON, Alberta<p>

Sergeant Chris Van Schmeling from 1 Field Ambulance waits with wife Dalphine and dog Peetie in the lecture training facility before he leaves for Afghanistan.<p>

Over the next several weeks, approximately 1250 soldiers from Edmonton will depart for Southern Afghanistan for a six-month tour, as part of the Canadian commitment to peace in that country.<p>

Photo by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News<p>

LE2006-0014

20 January 2006

CFB EDMONTON, Alberta<p>

Corporal Robin Dawatsare from 1st Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (1 PPCLI) hugs his 8 year old son Cheyne in the lecture training facility before he leaves for Afghanistan.<p>

Over the next several weeks, approximately 1250 soldiers from Edmonton will depart for Southern Afghanistan for a six-month tour, as part of the Canadian commitment to peace in that country.<p>

Photo by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News<p>

LE2006-0017

20 January 2006

CFB EDMONTON, Alberta<p>

Ms. Marie-France Brousseau from CFB/ASU Edmonton does a last minute check of Corporal John Hamilton's paper work in the lecture training facility before he leaves for Afghanistan.<p>

Over the next several weeks, approximately 1250 soldiers from Edmonton will depart for Southern Afghanistan for a six-month tour, as part of the Canadian commitment to peace in that country.<p>

Photo by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News<p>

LE2006-0018

20 January 2006

CFB EDMONTON, Alberta<p>

Medical personnel from CFB/ASU Edmonton hand out malaria medication to members of Operation ARCHER in the lecture training facility before they leave for Afghanistan.<p>

Over the next several weeks, approximately 1250 soldiers from Edmonton will depart for Southern Afghanistan for a six-month tour, as part of the Canadian commitment to peace in that country.<p>

Photo by Master Corporal Peter Simpson, Army News<p>