



**HEADQUARTERS RESOLUTE SUPPORT**  
**Public Affairs**  
**APO AE 09356**



NON SENSITIVE INFORMATION RELEASABLE TO THE PUBLIC

**RS Media Ground Rules**

For the safety and security of RS Forces and embedded media, media will adhere to the below established ground rules. These ground rules will be agreed to in advance and signed by media prior to embedding. Violation of the ground rules may result in the immediate termination of the embed, revocation of RS media credentials, and removal from the area of operations. These ground rules recognize the right of the media to cover military operations and are in no way intended to prevent release of derogatory, embarrassing, negative or uncomplimentary information. RS does restrict the release of certain categories of information which could provide mission details useful to the enemy, putting military and civilian lives at stake.

Violations of any of the following rules may result in termination of accommodated status:

1. Unless supported through national programs, accommodated media are responsible for obtaining their own passports and visas and entrance into the Area of Operations (AOR). We recommend arriving in Afghanistan via civilian air in order to obtain proper passport stamps upon arrival. Departure from Afghanistan will be delayed without entry stamps. Media are strongly encouraged to be properly immunized before embedding with units as per the Center for Disease Control recommendations for the region or country;
2. Accommodated media will display their RS Media Verification Badge in a clearly visible location at all times. Notice: Issuance of the RS Media Verification Badge does not constitute endorsement of the user, their views or the views of their employer, sponsoring agency or organization. Use of this badge for personal or professional gain is prohibited and will result in the immediate revocation of access to RS support, personnel and facilities. For security reasons, the badge may not be photographed or reproduced in any way. Any electronic likeness of the badge is prohibited. Any tampering or misuse of this badge will result in immediate revocation of access to RS support, personnel and facilities.
3. Accommodated media will not enter any restricted areas without a military escort.
4. Accommodated media are responsible for procuring/using personal protective gear, to include at a minimum military-grade helmet and body armor. Clothing and equipment will be subdued in color and appearance, but non-military in appearance (i.e. not camouflage).
5. Accommodated media are responsible for their own personal and professional gear, including protective cases for professional equipment, batteries, cables, converters, personal protective equipment, etc. Each media representative is responsible for carrying his or her own gear.



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6. When accepting accommodation from units under NATO command, media will comply with the respective RS military codes of conduct (e.g. bans on alcohol, drugs, taking of war trophies, etc.).
7. If accepting accommodation from ANSF units, media release RS from all obligations (food, shelter, security, medical care, etc.) until such time as media rejoin an RS unit. At all times and regardless of accommodation in RS or ANSF unit, media remain bound by the rules contained in this agreement regarding the release of sensitive information regarding RS units and operations. An RS unit whose embedded media choose to embed with an ANSF unit incurs no obligation to facilitate the return of the media to itself or another RS unit. Media returning to an RS unit from an ANSF unit will be in compliance with all ground rules contained herein immediately upon their return to an RS unit.
8. All interviews with service members will be on the record. Security of information will be the responsibility of the service member being interviewed. However, the military member must be informed by the accommodated media when he or she is in an interview situation. The service member will always have the right to decline an interview. Interviews with service personnel are authorized upon completion of missions, but the release of information must conform to these media ground rules.
9. Media will be expected to follow instructions regarding activities and movements.
10. Media representatives, support staff, producers, or personal protection teams will not carry weapons.
11. Products will be datelined according to local ground rules that will be provided to accommodated media.
12. Visible light sources and infra-red devices, including flash or television lights, will not be used when operating with troops at night unless specifically approved in advance by the on-scene commander. Likewise, media will follow tactical movement and noise discipline while covering operations.
13. Temporary embargoes may be imposed to protect operational security. Embargoes will be lifted as soon as the operational security issue has passed.
14. Communications equipment (such as cell phones) will not be specifically prohibited. However, unit commanders may impose temporary restrictions on electronic transmissions for operational security reasons and as the threat assessment or security situation dictates.
15. Media are expected to be self-sufficient with respect to filing product. On occasion, media may be allowed to file stories via military communications systems subject to national regulations and the limitations of available systems. Media may not be allowed to connect privately-owned computers or



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USB thumb drives to military networks and should have the capability to burn to a CD/DVD. It should be noted that bandwidth limitations may restrict the ability to file video and large files.

16. If, in the opinion of the unit commander, a media representative is unable to physically, psychologically, mentally, or emotionally withstand the conditions required to operate with the forward deployed forces, the commander or his/her representative may limit the representative's participation to ensure both the reporter's and the unit's safety. Disputes should be raised through PAO channels. The PAO community will work as the honest broker, but the ultimate decision to accommodate media is held by the commander.

17. RS forces will provide life-saving medical treatment to any media who have been injured while accommodated with a RS formation or unit in accordance with RS or national regulations within available capabilities.

18. If a media representative is injured or killed in the course of military operations, RS will notify the media representative's agency in accordance with instructions provided on the embed application. It is important that media representatives clearly communicate your desires for these contingencies. The agency will be responsible for further notification of next of kin (NOK). Repatriation of media who have been killed or injured is the responsibility of the media outlet employing the journalist. Media outlets employing freelance journalists must pay particular attention to this responsibility. Individual nations may have reporting requirements that must also be followed. This SOP should be used in conjunctions with national reporting requirements. It does not supersede each nation's statutory or regulatory requirements on NOK notification.

19. The following will not be visually recorded without the expressed approval of the local Chief Public Affairs Officer (CPAO) and the local commander:

(a) Restricted military areas, facilities, or installations, such as Operations Centers, field detention sites, and unit capture facilities.

(b) Images of maps, navigation devices, communications equipment, or Counter Improvised Explosive Device/Electronic Warfare equipment. Care should be taken in tactical vehicles to ensure these categories of sensitive equipment are not documented.

(c) Classified systems, classified equipment, or demonstrations of their capabilities.

(d) Any flight line in the theatre of operations and military aircraft operating on or near it. Media will adhere to the ground rules for ramp ceremonies as briefed prior to each ceremony.



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20. The following information is not releasable:

(a) Specific information on troop strength and capabilities, equipment, or critical supplies (e.g. artillery, radars, trucks, water, etc.).

(b) Specific number of aircraft in units below wing level, or identification of specific mission aircraft points of origin; stating "land or carrier based" as a point of origin is acceptable. Number and type of aircraft may be described in very general terms such as "large flight", "small flight", "many", "few", "fighters", "fixed wing", etc.

(c) Units in the Area of Operation, unless specifically authorized by the unit PAO at the Task Force, local Train Advise Assist Command (TAAC), or HQ RS level in which the embed is taking place.

(d) Information regarding future, current, postponed, or cancelled operations – unless otherwise indicated by the local CPAO.

(e) During an operation, specific information on RS or ANSF troop movements, tactical deployments, and dispositions that would jeopardize operational security or lives. Information on on-going engagements will not be released unless authorized by the on-scene commander.

(f) Imagery that would show level of security at military installations or encampments, especially aerial and satellite imagery which would reveal the name or specific location of military units or installations.

(g) Names of military installations or specific geographic locations of military units in the area of operations, unless specifically released by the RS or authorized by RS Public Affairs. News and imagery products that identify or include identifiable features of these locations are not authorized for release.

(h) Details of the rules of engagement or escalation of force measures or information regarding force protection measures to include, but not limited to, those at military installations or encampments, except those that are visible or readily apparent.

(i) Information on intelligence collection activities including targets, methods of attack, and results.

(j) Extra precaution in reporting will be required at the start of an operation to maximize operational surprise. Therefore, live broadcasts from airfields by accommodated media members are prohibited until authorized by the unit commander.

k) Information on missing personnel or sensitive equipment or downed aircraft while search and rescue and recovery operations are being planned and executed unless expressly authorized by PA staff.



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- (l) Information on the effectiveness of enemy electronic warfare.
  - (m) Information on friendly forces electronic warfare equipment or procedures or friendly forces counter-IED activities which would result in a tactical advantage to the enemy.
  - (n) Information on effectiveness of enemy camouflage, deception, targeting, direct and indirect fire, intelligence collection, or security measures.
  - (o) Visual media of detainees showing any detail above the shoulders (from the front), their nametag, or any other feature that could readily identify the individual. All imagery of detainees or any transport of detainees will respect the detainee's rights and protect the detainee from public curiosity in accordance with Article 13 of the Third Geneva Convention.
  - (p) Accommodated media will not interview or directly interact with detainees.
  - (q) Accommodated media will not interview, photograph, film, or report on Special Operations Forces or personnel and operations they conduct or participate in, without prior approval of a NATO Special Operations Forces Command representative and Commander RS (COMRS).
  - (r) Accommodated media will not record any identifiable means such as names, pictures, identification numbers of Afghan Special Operations forces and Afghan Air force personnel.
  - (s) Any other information that may be restricted from time to time by COMRS due to operational requirements.
21. Accommodated media consents to search of their materials if it is suspected that classified material has been compromised. If it is determine the accommodated media purposely documented classified information, the accommodated media will be removed from theatre and appropriate legal measures will be taken.
22. The following categories of information are releasable:
- (a) Non-sensitive, unclassified information regarding air and ground operations, past and present.
  - (b) Size of friendly force participating in an action or operation may be disclosed using general terms such as "multi-unit". Specific force or unit identification may be released when authorized by COMRS or his designate.
  - (c) Date, time, or location of completed military missions and actions as well as mission results.
  - (d) Types of ordnance expended in general terms (i.e. missile, hellfire).



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- (e) Number of aerial combat or reconnaissance missions or sorties flown in the AOR.
- (f) Type of forces involved (e.g. air defense, infantry, armor) except for Special Operations forces and those of participating nations.
- (g) Confirmed figures of enemy personnel detained or captured.
- (h) Information and location of military targets and objectives previously under attack.
- (i) Date, time, or location of previous conventional military mission and actions, as well as mission results is releasable only if described in general terms.
- (j) Names and hometowns of RS military units.
- (k) Service members' names and hometowns with the individual's consent.
- (l) Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan-approved media coverage of detainee release, AFTER detainee has been released or transferred to GIRONA.
- (m) Approximate friendly casualty figures by service. Embedded media may, within OPSEC limits, confirm unit casualties they have witnessed.

**Media Accommodating and Ground Rules Agreement**

I, (print) \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that the following information is accurate:

a. "I am not aware of any existing physical or health conditions which would adversely affect my participating in strenuous activities." \_\_\_\_\_ (Initial)

b. "I have read the media ground rules provided to me by Resolute Support (RS) Public Affairs staff and agree, with my signature, to abide by them. I also understand that any violation of these ground rules is cause for the revocation of my accommodated media status with RS." \_\_\_\_\_ (Initial)

c. "I understand that should my accommodated media status be revoked by the command hosting my embed, final resolution of my embed status will be made by the RS Director of Public Affairs." \_\_\_\_\_ (Initial)



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**RS Indemnification Agreement and Liability Waiver,**  
**Media Organization**

\_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME), in consideration of being permitted to have organizational media representatives become registered as accommodated media with Resolute Support (RS) from on or about \_\_\_\_\_ to on or about \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_ and the surrounding area.

1. Acknowledge and agree that covering combat and other military operations is inherently hazardous and may result in death, personal injury, whether physical or otherwise, or in damage to organizational property, and wishing in any event to have organizational personnel participate in covering combat and other military operations, voluntarily consent to participate and assume any risks that may be associated with said participation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) agrees to notify the next of kin of our representative being credentialed or embedded by RS. RS will return the deceased or injured representative (after first aid) to the nearest commercial transportation facility, but

\_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) will be financially responsible for repatriating the remains of or evacuating the injured representatives back to their home of record.

2. Acknowledge, agree, and declare that \_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) has been advised of the nature of covering combat and other military operations and has been advised of the procedures and safety measures in effect and that their representatives will agree to abide by them.

3. Acknowledge, agree, and declare that (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) has been advised that RS, in pursuing the successful accomplishment of its mission, cannot guarantee their representative's safety or the safety of our organization's equipment.

4. Waive all claims of any nature or kind, including, but not limited to claims for personal injury or damage to property, against NATO, Allied Command Operations, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, RS, the governments and military departments of Troop Contributing Nations supporting the RS mission, and the military personnel and civilian employees of said organizations, to include civilian contractors employed in support of the RS mission, in any manner arising out of, based upon, occasioned by, attributable to or connected with my participation in covering combat and other military operations while being an accommodated media:

a. Agree that \_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) will not commence or maintain against any person, any action or proceeding which will give rise to a claim



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against NATO, Allied Command Operations, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, RS, governments and military departments of Troop Contributing Nations supporting the RS mission, and the military personnel and civilian employees of said organizations, to include civilian contractors employed in support of the RS mission for contribution or indemnity.

b. Agree that \_\_\_\_\_(MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) shall have no claim against NATO, Allied Command Operations, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, RS, governments and military departments of Troop Contributing Nations supporting the RS mission, and military personnel and civilian employees of said organizations, to include civilian contractors employed in support of the RS mission for contribution or indemnity in the event that one or more of its media representatives elect to embed with ANSF; acknowledge that said media representatives remain bound by the RS Media Ground Rules at all times, release RS from all support obligations if choosing to embed with ANSF until their own return to an RS unit, and embed themselves with ANSF units entirely at their own risk.

c. Acknowledge, agree and declare that \_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) signing this agreement is a condition to being registered to cover RS’s operations and receiving assistance for that coverage; and

d. Acknowledge having read this liability waiver in its entirety and, understanding that this waiver is intended to be broad and all-inclusive so as to preclude any claims, \_\_\_\_\_ (MEDIA ORGANIZATION NAME) voluntarily indicate our acceptance of this document by my signature.

DATED at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Organization Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone) (Mobile phone)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Email)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Media Organization Supervisor Date



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**RS Indemnification Agreement and Liability Waiver,**  
**Individual Media Member**

\_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER), in consideration of being permitted to become registered as accommodated media with Resolute Support (RS) from on or about \_\_\_\_\_ to on or about \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_ and the surrounding area.

1. Acknowledge and agree that covering combat and other military operations is inherently hazardous and may result in death, personal injury, whether physical or otherwise, or in damage to property and equipment, and wishing in any event to participate in covering combat and other military operations, voluntarily consent to participate and assume any risks that may be associated with said participation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER) agrees to notify my next of kin of being credentialed or embedded by RS. RS will return the deceased or injured media member (after first aid) to the nearest commercial transportation facility, but

\_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER) or my estate will be financially responsible for repatriating my remains or, if injured, my evacuation back to my home of record.

2. Acknowledge, agree, and declare that \_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER) has been advised of the nature of covering combat and other military operations and has been advised of the procedures and safety measures in effect and agrees to abide by them.

3. Acknowledge, agree, and declare that (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER AND ESTATE) has been advised that RS, in pursuing the successful accomplishment of its mission, cannot guarantee my safety or the safety of my property and equipment.

4. Waive all claims of any nature or kind, including, but not limited to claims for personal injury or damage to property, against NATO, Allied Command Operations, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, RS, the governments and military departments of Troop Contributing Nations supporting the RS mission, and the military personnel and civilian employees of said organizations, to include civilian contractors employed in support of the RS mission, in any manner arising out of, based upon, occasioned by, attributable to or connected with my participation in covering combat and other military operations while being an accommodated media:

a. Agree that \_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER AND ESTATE) will not commence or maintain against any person, any action or proceeding which will give rise to a claim against NATO, Allied Command Operations, Supreme



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Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, RS, governments and military departments of Troop Contributing Nations supporting the RS mission, and the military personnel and civilian employees of said organizations, to include civilian contractors employed in support of the RS mission for contribution or indemnity.

b. Agree that \_\_\_\_\_(INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER AND ESTATE) shall have no claim against NATO, Allied Command Operations, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, RS, governments and military departments of Troop Contributing Nations supporting the RS mission, and military personnel and civilian employees of said organizations, to include civilian contractors employed in support of the RS mission for contribution or indemnity in the event that I elect to embed with ANSF; acknowledge that I remain bound by the RS Media Ground Rules at all times, release RS from all support obligations if choosing to embed with ANSF until my return to an RS unit, and embed myself with ANSF units entirely at my own risk.

c. Acknowledge, agree and declare that \_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER) signing this agreement is a condition to being registered to cover RS’s operations and receiving assistance for that coverage; and

d. Acknowledge having read this liability waiver in its entirety and, understanding that this waiver is intended to be broad and all-inclusive so as to preclude any claims, \_\_\_\_\_ (INDIVIDUAL MEDIA MEMBER) voluntarily indicates my acceptance of this document by my signature.

DATED at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Individual/Organization Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone) (Mobile phone)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Email)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Media Organization Supervisor (if applicable) Date