

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH PRICE FLOYD, PRINCIPAL
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, VIA
TELECONFERENCE SUBJECT: THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S USE OF INTERNET-BASED
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LIEUTENANT JENNIFER CRAGG (Office of the Secretary of Defense
for Public Affairs): I'd like to welcome you all to the Department of
Defense's Bloggers Roundtable for Monday, March 1st, 2010. My name is
Lieutenant Jennifer Cragg, with the Office of the Secretary of Defense
for Public Affairs, and I'll be moderating the call today.

A note to the bloggers and journalists on the call: Please
remember to clearly state your name and organization you're with prior to
asking your questions, and also, if you have to place your phone on hold,
please exit the call and call back in. We'll hear your hold music, and
if possible place your phone on mute.

With that, today's guest is Mr. Price Floyd. He's the principal
deputy assistant secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, and he'll be
talking about the new policy regarding the use of Internet-based
capabilities, including social media.

With that, sir, I'll turn the floor over to you, if you'd like
to start with the opening statement, and we'll go to questions. So the
floor is yours.

MR. FLOYD: Thank you, Lieutenant Cragg.

Thanks, everyone, for joining us today on this Bloggers
Roundtable. This is the -- (inaudible) -- I've done. I enjoy taking
part in this -- in this format, so please feel free to ask lots of
questions, tough questions, and if you want to, you can even ask some
easy ones.

This is exciting for those of us in Public Affairs and for those
of us who have been working on this issue for some months now. Last week
the deputy secretary signed out the DTM, which, for those who don't know
-- and God bless you -- is a directive-type memorandum -- on the
responsible and effective use of Internate -- Internet-based capabilities

-- in other words, the ability to access social media sites via the NIPRNet, our unclassified communications system here in -- at the Defense Department.

This means that all the combatant commands, all DOD components are told, have been told and will be told as we push this message out far and wide -- hopefully, through some of your good work today -- that the default switch on access is to be open. And at the same time, it's balanced with the need to be -- to be security-conscious, and tells the combatant commands to also continue to deny access to their sites when people are trying to access them inappropriately; and for those who are using this stuff, to make sure they use these social sites appropriately, don't go to sites they shouldn't go to -- pornography, gambling, hate-crime sites, et cetera. And that's not new. That's been -- that's been part of our regulations for a long time. And also, of course, to remember OPSEC, operational security: Don't say or do anything on these sites that you wouldn't say or do on other forms of communication, which I think is important.

And the people here in public affairs have started a(n) education campaign to push out both the fact that we have this new policy and the need to use it appropriately.

I want to leave as much time as possible for questions, so with that opening statement, I'll turn it over to whomever has the first question.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. I know a bunch of other people have called in.

Can I get your name, sir, quick, before we turn it over to the bloggers?

Q It's Nathan Hodge, with wired.com.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, Nathan. You're right after Taylor.

Can I get your other names, please?

Q Mark Malseed, with OhMyGov.com.

LT. CRAGG: Mark, thank you so much. Did I miss anybody else? (No response.) Okay, I'll take that as a no.

Let's go back around to Clyde. Clyde, you were first on the call. Please go ahead.

Q Great, thank you. Sir, my name's Clyde Middleton from patriotroom.com and libertypundits.com. Over the last several weeks, we've noticed on the Internet a significant pullback and even deletion of social media involvement and blog posting by military personnel in the war zones. Perhaps this is unintended consequences of this new policy, or they're just not sure so they're completely backing out. What's your response to that occurring? And I take it, when you state that there'll

be educational procedures going forward, that it is going to give them rather clear guidelines on usage. And what would those be?

MR. FLOYD: Got lots of questions in there.

News to me that the number of blogs had been reduced from those who were on the front lines. I certainly hope it's not true. I want -- I want more, not less. This policy -- it couldn't be a result of this policy, because this policy is to open participation and access to social media sites. So -- and unintended consequences of that I don't think can be less blog posts. I assume an intended consequence would be more blog posts. But I guess we can wait and see. But the policy was just effective starting on Friday, so no matter what is happening out there, it's not a part of this.

As far as education, if you go to the dod.gov homepage, right now, at the bottom of -- one of the -- the main pictures on there is our social media site. And if you go to that site, you'll find on there lots of short videos on how to use Twitter, Facebook appropriately, things to do and not to do, how to set up your own account, how -- you know, how does OPSEC matter in these areas of communication. Everything you need to know is already there.

You did have an interesting question. You said, will we -- will they have specific guidance? And I guess for me the answer to that is yes and no. We're not supposed to script people on what they can and can't say, exactly. But the overall guidance on what you should and shouldn't do when you communicate hasn't changed. Whether you're using Twitter or Facebook or MySpace or anything, the guidance should be the same there as if you were calling or writing home in the past. So in one sense, there's nothing new here.

So does that answer your questions, or do you have any follow-ups?

Q No, that's fine. Thank you, sir.

MR. FLOYD: All right.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, Clyde. Thank you, sir.

Beth, please go ahead.

Q Thank you for your time, sir. This is Beth Wilson with Homefront in Focus. My passion is family support and family readiness issues. And I would like to know your thoughts on how family programs will be brought in. And what I hear, especially from the Navy side, is that NMCI blocks them from all access from anything and that's why they don't even have a Facebook page at this point.

What will be done to help open up especially the Navy side to be able to access new media and social network systems through -- for family support programs?

MR. FLOYD: That's a great question. Before I answer it, though, let me -- I forgot to do something at the beginning. I'm joined here in the room by Sumit Agarwal, who is the new deputy assistant secretary of Defense for New Media and Outreach, a name we -- a title we may change as we move forward. But Sumit Agarwal comes to us from Google. His career is actually to do this sort of work. And so is -- he joined us a few weeks ago, so we're glad to have him.

And he's welcome to jump in here anytime he wants as well. I just wanted to make sure on this call, people knew that we had a new deputy assistant secretary of Defense for New Media and Outreach.

To answer your specific question, I think we have work here to do at the Defense Department on culture. And using social media I think is as much a cultural issue as it is an education one. People who are coming into the military, they take all this for granted. They can't imagine a world where one didn't have access to these sort of sites.

For those of us who are a little longer in the tooth, and I'd put myself in there, this is something that's fairly new. Only in the last couple years have we discovered this and found how useful it can be.

I think people at the most senior levels understand it as well. I think in the middle, we have some education, cultural shifting to do. And then that's going to take a little time.

I think though people will find quickly as I did, when I started using it, the benefits to using this sort of communication tool. My ability to engage with audiences far and wide, people I have never and probably will never meet, is amazing because of these tools.

And notice I said engage, not just communicate to but engage with, because that's the promise and the actuality of this, the actual outcome of this kind of technology.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

Q Thank you, sir.

MR. FLOYD: Sure.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, Beth.

With that, let's go to Dan.

Dan, you're next. Please go ahead.

Q Hey, good afternoon. This Dan Kissinger calling in from militaryavenue.com.

I just had a question in regards to, social media is incredible. Our family -- excuse me, our website works with military families. And social media is one way a lot of spouses communicate back and forth how well they're doing during deployments and others.

But an issue has arrived with a lot of spouses not knowing when a tweet or a Facebook page is an official message versus a personal message put out by someone within a command unit. Is there going to be any way or any forced way that an official tweet or message will have a symbol or will state a certain statement next to it?

MR. FLOYD: I haven't thought of that yet. That's a great idea, though. And we will actually take that under advisement. I actually like that idea.

I guess, you know -- but to kind of go back to the previous question about culture, for me this is not so much about official messaging. This is about the men and women of the armed forces having access to these ways of communicating. And even my own Twitter site, which I would say is official, but I don't communicate, in essence, official messages, other than -- you know, the most official one I did was to announce that we were going to have new social media policy.

Other than that, I discuss interesting articles that I see, books I've read, comments that other people have made on things. I even threw in a couple of cross workout routines. And if you follow it, if you try one of those workouts, just don't blame me if you're in pain the next day.

But also, to go back to a previous question about the family, when I sent out the news that we were going to have this new policy, it got lots of feedback. And a lot of it was -- what was interesting to hear, there was one person who said they lived 3,000 miles from their family and: I saw my niece's first bike ride, and thrilled that military families can now do this as well.

Another one was: Brother goes to Afghanistan next week, thankful we will be able to communicate with him via Facebook.

So I was encouraged by these kind of comments. But great idea about putting a symbol or something by an official tweet or a Facebook posting, as opposed to a personal one.

Q I'm sure that would be tough. I know we were stationed in Keflavik, Iceland. We sure would have appreciated --

MR. FLOYD: (Laughs.)

Q Thank you.

MR. FLOYD: Yes. I've been through there. It's -- that's a tough post.

Q Yeah. We actually enjoyed it. It was a good time.

MR. FLOYD: All right.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Dan.

Paul, you're next. Please go ahead.

Q Hi. This is Paul Bove from Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

You're talking about education. The question is at our office, what should we be doing, to prepare to allow the rest of our airmen know how this new policy is going to impact them?

I mean, we're already getting questions from our different MAJCOMs in different air bases. What should we do to get ready, aside from directing them to the DOD site and saying, hey, just read the DTM that came out.

MR. FLOYD: The Air Force actually has a very robust social media policy. In fact, it's their second version of it, I believe. And so the Air Force I think is probably better prepared than all the rest to deal with this stuff.

It's got the who, what, when, where of social media. I don't have a copy in front of me. I gave my last one away to someone. But it's the Air Force social media policy guide. Q I'm familiar with it. I helped write that actually.

But in terms of kind of having the information come out from somebody in Air Force saying, okay, this is now how it's going to be, you know, do you recommend that we write some type of memo as well, to send to our airmen, that would go along with what's already in the DTM?

MR. FLOYD: Unless airmen speak a special language that you need to translate the DTM, I mean, the DTM might need to be translated into just plain English, but I'm not sure again for the Air Force.

But I would send them, I mean, this memorandum -- but I guess -- I mean, you know, try not to -- we shouldn't be so dogmatic with this stuff. Try new things. Find out what works. Things that work at -- here in Washington on my Twitter account may not be things that work at a base someplace else in the country.

I do know that once this DTM has been out for 180 days, they will put out more guidance to folks on what it means and what to do. But in the meantime, I would just encourage people to open up a Twitter account, Facebook page, to go and do and see what works for them and for their audience.

It's a good question, though.

Q Okay. Thank you.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Paul.

Let's go to Sagar. You're next. Please go ahead.

Q Thanks a lot for your time, sir. This is Sagar Pathak from HorizontalRain.com. And it's obviously no doubt that this is going to be a major benefit to the men and women of the armed forces and their families, but how does this potentially open up the DOD to OPSEC and cybersecurity attacks? And secondary, is the DOD's infrastructure actually ready for the added bandwidth?

MR. FLOYD: We're not adding -- I mean, this policy doesn't add bandwidth. So it might add to the strain on the existing bandwidth, if that's what you meant, and that certainly has a -- and in places like Afghanistan, that's a struggle. And in some cases, this new policy -- just because we have a new policy doesn't mean all of a sudden everything's open.

We have to live in the real world. And if there are issues of bandwidth, there are issues of bandwidth. Whether or not we had this policy in existence wouldn't change that.

So -- what was the first part of the question? I forgot.

Q No, just if this actually opens it up to OPSEC and cybersecurity attacks with more and more airmen actually going online and with possibly lacking knowledge on what to put out there, what not to put out there, like some of the previous fellow bloggers have mentioned. Is this potentially a harmful thing in the long run?

MR. FLOYD: I don't believe it's harmful. I believe it'll be helpful in the long run. There will be a process here where we're all learning.

The combatant commands and those given the specific job of protecting our infrastructure are actively looking at maintaining security of our information infrastructure.

On OPSEC, you know, like -- as I said before, we do -- we need to do more training but also the main thing to remember is, OPSEC hasn't changed. OPSEC still applies. This is not OPSEC-free zone; if anything, the opposite. What you used to say in a letter or on a phone call would just impact one or two people, and if they told one or two people, it was a small group. But with just one Twitter, you can reach hundreds, even thousands of people.

So OPSEC is more important, but -- in one sense, but also it hasn't changed. So don't say or do anything you wouldn't say or do in front of your boss (on some measures ?), and there's personal information that you wouldn't say or do in front of your grandmother. And you know, that stuff still applies, because the impact on -- with these sites are so much greater than, as I said before, just a phone call or a letter home.

Q Thank you.

MR. FLOYD: Yep.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Sagar.

Taylor, you're next. Please go ahead.

Q Yes, hi. This is Taylor Kiland, with the Navy Memorial. I write for The-Navy-Log-Blog and examiner.com.

I'm curious to know how difficult it was to get all of the services to agree to this default switch being open, since so many of the services had a variety of different policies. Was there any pushback in opening up the floodgates, shall I say?

MR. FLOYD: I was very persuasive. No, it was -- it was not easy. I think what was interesting, though, was when we did -- over about six or seven months, as this process took place, it was actually an education process for all involved. People were unaware of each other's concerns and each other's opinion on the benefits of this. And so what it was is, as opposed to a struggle, it was more of a learning process for everyone.

I think everyone is -- now has a better idea of what the benefits and the concerns are in using this communication -- these communication platforms. And in that sense, we're all better for it. I know for myself, I came into this discussion with just one position, which was it just needs to be all open, and that's all we need to care about; everything needs to be open. And that was a naive position to have.

After actually sitting at a Twitter on this issue, when the Marine Corps shut down access to all social media, thinking that the response I would get would be overwhelming in support of having complete open and free access to social media, counterintuitively, that's not what I heard back from people on Twitter -- which was interesting, because it's a social media site itself. People wrote back, and a large minority, probably about 40 percent -- this is not a scientific poll -- agreed with the Marine Corps shutting down access to social media sites. And they had lots of reasons for doing it.

Some of them have been mentioned on this call: OPSEC, concerns about people trying to intrude into our networks; one person said they're supposed to be fighting, not sending tweets or being on Facebook; et cetera. There were lots of reasons.

And so now I temper what I say, and I talk about a balanced and responsible approach to using social media sites. And so I've been educated in a form by this process, and I think everyone else who took part has as well.

Q Thank you.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Taylor.

Nathan, you're next. Please go ahead.

Q Hi. It's Nathan Hodge with wired.com's Danger Room blog. At the beginning of this conversation you said you'd like to see more, not less, blogging from the front lines. But in practice that's not so easy, especially when, you know, especially on larger FOBs, access to social media sites is often cut off. How do you propose to change that, or encourage commanders to think differently about this?

MR. FLOYD: Well, I think the first step has been taken with this, just so that the default switch is open, so -- not closed. The default switch is to allow access, not deny it, and that even if it's denied it has to be temporary in nature. So, as you said, we can't block all access, you know, forever.

And as these things are blocked temporarily, we need to look at ways to mitigate any problems that may have arisen which caused the blockage to take place. But as I said before, it's -- these broadband issues are real. I was in Afghanistan a few months ago, and I tried to send an e-mail home and back to my office here, and it took about 25 minutes for the e-mail to be sent. And it's -- the bandwidth issue is just -- I mean, it really -- it's a concern.

And they're trying to get more bandwidth into places like Afghanistan.

I don't think it's -- at least I haven't heard that it's a problem in Iraq. Iraq is a much more modern -- has a much more modern communication infrastructure than Afghanistan, so it's not as big a deal there as it is in Afghanistan.

But I still would like to see more blogs, more tweets, more communication from the people on the front lines back to their family and friends, but also to these great blog sites, even yours on the Danger Room or -- and there's lots of blogs out there I'd like to see folks -- you know, the Small Wars Journal and things of that nature that discuss counterinsurgency and how to use it, lessons learned. The military has its own site like that that the folks out at Fort Riley, I believe, are using to update their counterinsurgency manual. So we need more of this kind of engagement and interaction.

Q Thanks.

MR. FLOYD: You bet.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir. And thank you, Nathan.

Mark, you're next. Please go ahead.

Q Thanks. This is Mark Malseed. I write for OhMyGov.com. A question on the public affairs side of this and opening up what you're trying to do, the outreach on the various social media sites.

What is your take on preserving the -- not just the tweets and the Facebook posts that you make, but the comments on Facebook, Flickr, all the other sites? Given that these are third-party sites, they may not be around forever, is the department taking -- are you doing your own crawling, your own archiving of the conversations taking place on these third-party sites?

MR. FLOYD: That is a great question. And that's an issue that we are not only having to deal with, but the government as a whole is. And we have yet actually to come up with a position on that.

But everyone is looking at how to do recordkeeping with this, how to be in compliance with -- there's laws and regulations for this kind of activities. I mean, anything -- any e-mail I send, any Twitter I send or Facebook -- I do from my official e-mail is supposed to be -- in essence can be viewed as an official statement, because it's coming from my government side.

So all that stuff is supposed to be kept. It's a great question. And it is one that CIOs, chief information officers, around the government are looking at and trying to come up with a unified position on.

Great question, and I look forward to an answer on that, as do a lot of people, soon.

Q Okay, thanks.

MR. FLOYD: Yeah.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mark.

I know that, Adam, you're on the call.

And I know some other people have dialed in. Can I please get your names, so we can fold you in, please?

Q Megan McCloskey with Stars and Stripes.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, Megan, for joining us.

Adam, are you still on the line?

Okay. Anyone else, please?

Okay, Megan, please go ahead.

Q Hi. I just wanted to follow up on what Nathan was talking about or had asked about. And I was wondering if there's any specific guidance that has come out, with this change, for downrange commanders and how they can use their authority, to turn off access.

MR. FLOYD: No. I mean, none. None yet, and within 108 days, there's supposed to be more implementation guidance coming out. I do know that the CIA -- the CIO here -- sorry, that was a Freudian. The CIO here will look at compliance across the system and that combatant commands and bases cannot simply block access to all social media sites as a policy; in fact, the opposite. It has to be open.

If there are denial of service attacks, if intrusions are taking place, they can block and limit access to these sites to deal with that, and that's good that they had the ability to do that. But it has to be on a temporary basis until they've dealt with that issue itself, and then things will be opened up again. We have not put out specific guidance on that yet. That's due in about 180 days.

Q How is it that you define temporary?

MR. FLOYD: Not permanent.

Q (Chuckles.) Yeah, but that could be -- I mean, you could say a year block is not permanent.

MR. FLOYD: True. So, like, I -- I mean, it -- that kind of specific -- specific -- I can't even say the word -- that specific guidance is due in about 180 days. You know, I would err on the side of, you know, temporary being much less than a year for sure, and -- but I'm not sure of the exact number of days, or in that matter, hours, that temporary should be.

But the CIO -- the CIO here has the lead on implementing that guidance once it comes out.

SUMIT AGARWAL (deputy assistant secretary of Defense for Outreach and Social Media): Price, I'll chime in here.

MR. FLOYD: Sure. Yeah, Sumit Agarwal has something to say as well.

MR. AGARWAL: I'd share one additional thought, which is that this DTM is about establishing a baseline and a bias. There's a lot that will happen operationally and in practice that we'll all learn about together. We're not trying to prescribe what commanders should do in all instances.

There's another word that's very important in the DTM, and that word is commensurate. And the idea is that commanders will take action commensurate to what they are experiencing. We would never seek to ask them to do anything outside of what they consider reasonable in their judgment. And if judgment tells them that temporary should be a year, given the situation at hand, then that's appropriate; and if it's a week, that's appropriate. The question is, what is an action that is commensurate to what they are experiencing in the field? Q Okay. Thank you.

Could you spell your name?

MR. AGARWAL: It's Sumit Agarwal. It's S-U-M-I-T, first name; last name, Agarwal, A-G-A-R-W-A-L.

Q Thank you.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, gentlemen.

MR. FLOYD: And as you can tell by his answer, he's really smart, and uses big words like "commensurate."

MR. AGARWAL: From the DTM.

MR. FLOYD: I know. (Laughter.)

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you, Megan.

And as promised, I was going to go around the horn and ask Corporal Schmidt, did you have any follow-on questions? You're from DMA-Marines. Corporal?

Q Yes. I just wanted to know, as far as planning, what were some of the initial kind of planning procedures or data collected to write the policy?

MR. FLOYD: That is a great question. We did everything from have -- you know, this is the Department of Defense, so you've got to -- you have to have meetings. So we had lots of meetings with all of the -- you know, with the heads of the -- of the interested parties. Strategic Command was a part of all these discussions. We even put up on the DOD.gov, Defense.gov, website a place where people could add their thoughts and ideas.

We reached out to lots of family groups. I think even some of the people on this call may have been able to take part in it, send their ideas and their stories, anecdotal stories of people using social media sites, and what it meant to them. We took a lot of stuff from families, lots of input from service members' families on how it enabled them to stay in contact with their -- with their service member. And we used, I mean, multiple ways to communicate.

I sent out lots of Twitters on it. The people who work in community relations, in public liaison, did lots of work to reach people. I know that those concerned more with the security aspects of it took a hard look at what they thought their needs were, and pushed themselves and questioned themselves on their concerns.

And I think, at the end of the day, that, as I said before, made everyone smarter and wiser on this issue.

Q All right, sir. Thank you.

MR. FLOYD: You bet.

LT. CRAGG: And also, there's one other person participating from DMA-Marines, Corporal Priscilla Smeeden (ph). Is that correct?

Q That is correct. She had to step out, actually.

LT. CRAGG: And did you want to talk about Marine Corps? She had just sent me an e-mail about --

Q Yes. We just -- we wanted to see if you would have the opportunity to talk about it. I know the -- there's a lot of controversy surrounding the MARADMIN about the social media sites being blocked. And I just wanted to get the opportunity to state that the MARADMIN had set up a -- basically a waiver process for the individual units to fill out waivers in order for them to get access to it, because the NMCI network had always blocked these sorts of sites for bandwidth and security reasons.

MR. FLOYD: Right.

Q I just wanted to clarify the issue.

MR. FLOYD: Sure. And do -- well, I was going to ask you a question: Do you know how many waivers were given?

Q We're not too sure about exactly how many specific waivers were given, but that's basically what the hunch was for the -- for the full policy.

MR. FLOYD: Gotcha. Well, the good news is, you don't have to worry about waivers now, because the default switch is on open.

Q Yes, sir, and that's what we wanted, so we greatly appreciate it.

MR. FLOYD: (Chuckles.) Good.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you, Corporal. And then Ashley, I don't know if you have any questions. Army, do you have any questions, Ashley?

Q No, ma'am. We are good to go.

LT. CRAGG: Okay, great.

National Guard, do you have any follow-up questions?

Q Yes. This is Jameel Moses (sp) with the National Guard Bureau of Public Affairs. What kind of a response has the DOD received from the social media sites, if any -- Facebook, Twitter? Have there -- has there been any reaching out from their end in response to this policy being announced?

MR. FLOYD: Sure. This is Sumit Agarwal. He'll -- he has a comment.

MR. AGARWAL: Yeah, I -- we haven't reached out terribly recently. But the most recent ones that I'm aware of, several representatives, I think one from Facebook, just supported the idea that this made a lot of sense.

They know that their tool is an incredibly valuable one for connecting family members to deployed servicemembers. And I think they expressed their support that we were recognizing the valuable role that they play. So there's been general support, as far as I'm aware.

Q Did they have any comment on our security concerns, as far as a possible breach in networks or anything like that, maybe anything -- any kind of additional security that they're willing to provide or able to provide, to make it more secure, to kind of -- I mean, obviously you can't eliminate it, but to lessen the possibility of one of those threats?

MR. FLOYD: They have. This is Price.

I met with a group of representatives from several social media companies probably six months ago actually in here, in my office. And all of them are actively working on making their sites more secure or working with us and talking to us, about our concerns of their sites, specific concerns.

So they've been in touch with the chief information officers here and out network folks, to talk about that. So it's an important issue. They get it. They know that their sites being more secure is -- you know, it's just good for business.

Q Sure.

MR. FLOYD: They want it. We want it. And so we're trying to help each other out.

Q Thank you, sir.

MR. FLOYD: You bet.

LT. CRAGG: Okay. With that, let's go back around the horn real quickly.

Clyde. Q Ma'am, I do have a question.

Outside of the armed forces, the answer that was given, to under what circumstances could access be denied and for how long, would be summarily dismissed as void for vagueness on a constitutional standard.

I know that does not apply to members -- active members in the armed forces. However, with the default switch being open, how specific do you intend on being in establishing a rigid structure that is going to fall upon the local community and officer to comply to so that this

default switch is not just changed on -- perhaps arbitrarily, and secondly, for a duration that is inappropriate?

MR. FLOYD: Well, without accepting the premise of your question, because I --

Q (Chuckles.) I understand.

MR. FLOYD: -- I don't understand it, but -- (laughter) -- but, you know, these kind -- the kind of guidance you're talking about has not come out yet. That is due out in 180 days. You know, the commanders we're talking about, these are senior folks. They've been promoted partly based on their ability to use their judgment, and we expect them to do so.

So my guess is -- and I'll quote Sumit Agarwal here -- is that, using their judgment, they'll decide what is commensurate with the action that they're trying to fight against.

So I'm not sure how prescriptive we're going to be in our guidance, but we'll have to see when it happens.

Q Okay, thank you.

LT. CRAGG: Thank you.

Real quickly, Beth, any questions, follow-on questions?

Q I do have a couple of quick little questions. One is, as I was reading the directive, it seems like there's two sides. One is, we're throwing the gates open for families and service members to utilize these resources. The other side is the official presences.

And I was just wondering what communication or education is going to go out to encourage, as you identified, kind of that middle group of people that are a little bit fearful of new media and social media, to encourage them that -- in utilizing the opportunity that it presents.

I'll let you answer that one. I'll stop there. (Chuckles.)

MR. FLOYD: Okay. That's a great question. And I'll go back to my cultural, you know, kind of fight we have. That's going to be an ongoing process, and there's lots of ways to do it. You know, part of it is, you know, pushing people to go to our social media hub, social media site on the DOD or defense.gov.

But another one is for -- is for folks who are out there and they can do, you know, something called managing up. And for anyone's commander who doesn't think they need to use social media sites to communicate, that don't need to take part, just ask them to search for themselves on the Web or what they do.

So, you know, any unit that's going overseas whose commander says, "Oh, I don't need to do this kind of Twitter or Facebook or anything like that; there's no need for me to take part in that," they might be surprised to know that they already are taking part in that; they just don't know it, in the sense that if you search for that unit, you'll find that that unit probably already has Facebook sites, Twitter sites, MySpace, things already out there being run and participating -- people participating in that are already there.

And so if -- so the question is not whether or not they want to participate. The question is, do they want to impact what is said about them and their unit or their base or their command? That's the real question, and I think when commanders see that, they'll want to have ability to impact what is said about their command, their base, their unit, because it's already there. They're already out there.

I'll give you an example. When I took the job -- before I took the job here, I searched for Secretary Gates, and I found that he had about six Facebook pages. And I thought that was great, that he had six Facebook pages.

And they all -- looks very official. They had his official photo, the official Department of Defense seal.

But when I came onboard, I realized that none of those were his. Other people had created those Facebook pages for him. It's just good news that they all seem to like him. But he was there, whether he wanted to be or not. So -- you know, so I encourage folks out there to manage up, and have their leaders see that they're already out there in this area.

Q Can I ask a quick follow-on? Would that be appropriate?

MR. FLOYD: Sure. Please.

Q Will there be coming more -- I don't know -- directives to more -- to make use, greater use, of the opportunity that new media and social media presents? For instance, from where I live, my local fleet and family support center does not have a Facebook page or a Twitter account or anything. And that would be a great place for me to quickly find information. I don't live on base, so it's not convenient necessarily for me to run into the fleet and family support center. And their website is very static Web 1.0.

I would love to see a new effort on the part of DOD and Department of the Navy and others to really embrace and utilize -- more fully utilize the opportunities presented by new media.

MR. FLOYD: I think that's a great idea. One of -- one of my goals on our social media site is to have the ability of how to -- you know, how to start your own Twitter or Facebook page, and give them, in essence, templates to do that for free. Folks would just use it if they want. But on Facebook it's just like -- I mean, we're talking less than a minute to set up.

And my guess is, even though there's not an official one, are there other sites where people in your area go to try to find information?

Q Not officially, no.

And what I hear from when I speak to --

MR. FLOYD: No, no, no, no, no -- that's what I'm saying -- I'm --

Q When I speak to the Fleet and Family Support Center, they say the number-one challenge for them is they cannot access it through NMCI.

MR. FLOYD: Oh, I understand. Now I understand the question.

Yes, so that is -- that is a challenge. We're -- you know, this new policy was just signed Friday, so it's going to take a little time for it to be promulgated amongst all the commands. But I take your point. In other words, even if you did have a Facebook page, folks there couldn't access it. I understand, yes -- which is a problem people here in the building have as well. Some people in the building can't go to the DOD website, much less someone else's.

Q Right.

MR. FLOYD: I understand. So it's a challenge. We need to push this out there, and -- this DTM. And I think one of the quicker ways to do it is amongst the CIO community, the chief of mission officer. And so -- actually, because you raised it, I will call the CIO here after this call's over and find out what she's doing to push out this new DTM.

Q Super. Thank you.

MR. FLOYD: You bet.

LT. CRAGG: With that, we are approaching the end of today's roundtable. I just wanted to try to squeeze at least one more person in. And the remaining people that I didn't get to on the second round, if you have any follow-on questions, please forward them to me, and I will pass them on to Mr. Price Floyd.

Dan, did you have any follow-on questions?

Q No, I do not at this time. Just thank you gentlemen for being on the call.

LT. CRAGG: Okay. Quickly, Paul, do you have any follow-on questions? Q No, I'm all set, thank you.

LT. CRAGG: Okay. Sagar? (No audible reply.)

Okay, we're going down the list pretty good.

Taylor?

Q No, thanks.

LT. CRAGG: Okay. Nathan, Mark or Megan? (No audible reply.)

Okay. I'll take that as a no. Thank you, everyone.

Right now I'm going to turn it back over to Mr. Price Floyd, if you'd like to end with any closing thoughts; we'll wrap up today's roundtable.

Sir, the floor is yours again.

MR. FLOYD: I don't have any closing thoughts, other than thanks for the opportunity to talk with you and answer your questions.

Please feel free to reach out to Lieutenant Cragg on actually this call with any more questions; or in the days to come if you have more, reach out to her and she'll be glad to get those questions to me.

I want to also ask Sumit Agarwal if he had anything he wanted to say in closing.

MR. AGARWAL: Sure.

In the spirit of social media, I would ask you for two specific things. One, given that we've now started this process by ever-so-slightly opening the door and creating that positive bias, what would you like to see happen next? What specific outcomes would you like to see? Begin to share those with us. Please share them with me personally. My info's going to be easily findable, if it isn't already. And we'll hold ourselves accountable to reaching those goals that we set.

And two, in terms of specific implementation guidance, I think that being prescriptive is a little antithetical for social media. That said, I understand that we do need to give people clarity in terms of what we would like to see and how they might go about making the right decisions. So if have thoughts on how the rollout should happen, again on that front please share those thoughts with me. We have about six months before we finalize that second round of guidance, and so this is a great period during which you can help shape what happens next.

Q Sumit, this is Clyde Middleton, Liberty Pundits. Can you give us contact information for you, please, or should that come through Lieutenant Cragg?

MR. FLOYD: Yeah. Just -- go ahead.

MR. AGARWAL: You can go through Lieutenant Cragg.

Q Thank you.

LT. CRAGG: I will send it to all the bloggers on the call immediately like three minutes after the call. I promise.

MR. AGARWAL: Thank you.

Q Thank you, ma'am. LT. CRAGG: You're welcome.

Sir, do you have any other thoughts before I wrap up today's call? Either gentlemen? (No response.)

With that, I just wanted to say thank you, everyone, for participating in today's Bloggers Roundtable to discuss the new policy regarding the use of Internet-based capabilities, including social media. You've been listening to Mr. Price Floyd, principal deputy assistant secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, and Sumit Agarwal.

And thank you, gentlemen, very much for participating in today's Bloggers Roundtable.

And everyone will get a copy of the transcript when it's completed by Federal News. And you can access the actual podcast and a transcript and a story if you visit www.dodlive.mil/bloggersroundtable.

With that, that ends today's Bloggers Roundtable. Thank you, everyone.

END.