



# Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 5120.20

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ASD(PA)

SUBJECT: Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS)

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 5120.20, "American Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS)," December 23, 1980 (hereby canceled)
  - (b) [DoD 5120.20-R](#), "Management and Operation of Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS)," February 1988
  - (c) [DoD 5025.1-M](#), "DoD Directives System Procedures," December 1990
  - (d) [DoD Directive 5122.10](#), "American Forces Information Service," March 13, 1989
  - (e) through (i), see enclosure 1

## 1. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This Directive:

- 1.1. Reissues reference (a) to reflect primary organizational changes, to update policy, and to assign responsibilities for the AFRTS.
- 1.2. Authorizes the continued publication of reference (b) in compliance with reference (c).

## 2. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Unified and Specified Commands, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities (hereafter referred to collectively as

"the DoD Components"). The term "Military Service," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this Directive are defined in enclosure 2.

### 4. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

4.1. The AFRTS, an activity of the American Forces Information Service (AFIS) and a DoD Field Activity under the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) (ASD(PA)), shall:

4.1.1. Support the DoD internal information program, as stipulated in DoD Directive 5122.10 (reference (d)), by providing a broad range of information and entertainment programming, through the radio and television (TV) media, to overseas DoD personnel and their family members. The term "overseas," as used herein, refers to geographic locations outside of the contiguous United States, including U.S. Navy ships at sea.

4.1.2. Provide U.S. military commanders, worldwide, with unique means to communicate internal information directly to DoD personnel and their family members overseas.

4.1.3. Assist in maintaining and enhancing the morale, readiness, and well-being of DoD personnel.

4.1.4. Not seek to compete for audiences with any other broadcast facility or organization. AFRTS broadcasts are directed toward DoD audiences overseas. The fact that others may receive those broadcasts is the result of the inherent characteristics of radio and TV transmissions.

4.1.5. Not endorse or imply DoD endorsement of any commercial product or service.

4.1.6. Be part of the DoD internal information program. Equipment, personnel, and funds appropriated for the AFRTS may not be used to support external information programs, in accordance with congressionally-imposed budget and operational limitations.

4.2. AFRTS Outlets:

4.2.1. Shall operate under the centralized management and control of the Military Departments, in accordance with the policies and procedures developed by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, under this Directive, DoD 5120.20-R, and DoD Directive 5122.10 (references (b) and (d)).

4.2.2. Shall adhere to AFIS broadcast policy, which prohibits censorship, propagandizing, or manipulation, and which mandates that overseas DoD personnel and their family members are entitled to the same type of information and entertainment programming as their fellow citizens in the United States.

4.2.2.1. That policy is subject to the following considerations:

4.2.2.1.1. Host-Country Sensitivities. AFRTS outlets broadcast in foreign countries with the approval of the host government, which assigns broadcast frequencies and authorizes cable systems and satellite reception capabilities. Program topics considered sensitive to a host country may be restricted from broadcast on an AFRTS outlet in that country, if they are listed on the official "Host-Country Sensitivity List," as follows:

4.2.2.1.1.1. The official "Host-Country Sensitivity List" is the only legitimate basis for deleting AFRTS broadcasts. That list is comprised of U.S. Embassy and host-country team inputs from each country. Only those activities can add to, or delete from, that list. It must reflect only genuine concerns of host nations, that, if violated, could threaten AFRTS broadcast rights.

4.2.2.1.1.2. Host-country sensitivity lists do not apply to AFRTS radio or TV programs distributed on a base cable TV system and/or an encoded broadcast channel. Therefore, there is no reason for such AFRTS outlets to screen any AFRTS program before airing. In those cases, the cablecast and/or encoded broadcasts are primarily limited to the authorized U.S. DoD audience and are not available for consumption by the general local national population.

4.2.2.1.1.3. The "Host-Country Sensitivities List" applies to over-the-air broadcast transmissions, including both radio and TV news programs. The

responsibility for reviewing programing for sensitivities rests with the receiving network or station, which must determine whether those programs may be aired on schedule or should be delayed to permit reviewing for possible sensitivities infringements. The decision to delay programing shall be made by the receiving network or station in conjunction with the local command. The decision to actually withhold programing can be made only by the country team and then based solely on the "Host-Country Sensitivities List." A decision to withhold programing must be relayed immediately by the network or station to the AFIS through command channels. Networks may unilaterally tape-delay Satellite Network (SATNET) programs for time shifting; i.e., to broadcast the programs at a time generally accepted as more convenient and/or accessible to the audience.

4.2.2.1.1.4. News programs must not be edited to eliminate host-country sensitivities. If a host-country sensitivity occurs within a news program, the entire news program must be canceled.

4.2.2.1.2. Area Restrictions. When legal owners of programs prohibit the AFRTS from broadcasting certain programs in specified geographic areas, those restrictions must be honored.

4.2.2.2. The considerations in subparagraphs 4.2.2.1.1. through 4.2.2.1.2., above, do not permit the calculated withholding or editing of information and entertainment programming based on personal taste or preference. Such practices constitute censorship and are prohibited.

4.2.3. Shall maximize the use of information and entertainment programing provided by the AFRTS Broadcast Center (AFRTS-BC) located in Los Angeles, CA, and Service-produced internal information programing distributed by the Military Departments. AFRTS outlets may produce local information, entertainment, and religious programing to meet internal information objectives.

4.2.4. Shall not produce news editorials, commentary, or analysis; engage in investigative reporting; or initiate political news coverage.

4.2.5. Shall protect all programing and associated broadcast products from unauthorized use. Those materials remain in the custody of the Department of Defense.

4.2.6. May be advised by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, to broadcast special programing on certain occasions. Failure to comply with that requirement must be justified to the ASD(PA).

4.2.7. May not offer broadcasts in other than the English language, except as stated in DoD 5120.20-R, Chapter 4, section 4-101 (reference (b)).

4.2.8. May be used to promote military training or off-duty education only at designated remote sites and aboard Navy ships, and as stated in Chapter 4, paragraph 4-100.5 of reference (b). Further exceptions to that policy shall be considered by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, on a cases. AFRTS outlets receive manpower, equipment, and other resources from the Military Broadcasting Services primarily for internal information. Outlets may not be used to produce non-AFRTS briefings, image tapes, or distinctly external (public information) public affairs products. In no instance shall the primary mission of the AFRTS be jeopardized.

4.2.9. May not use films and program materials from the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) and the Navy Motion Picture Service (except at Navy Broadcasting Service detachments, which are authorized on a case-by-case basis). That does not prevent use of AAFES-provided promos and/or trailers to inform the audience of coming attractions.

4.2.10. May not be used for any type of political and/or psychological operations, and may not produce or broadcast programing to serve interests of other than the DoD internal audience.

4.3. The AFRTS-BC, a field activity of the AFIS, shall:

4.3.1. Provide radio and television news, information and entertainment programing that is representative of U.S. broadcasting for the exclusive use of AFRTS outlets.

4.3.2. Be the only source authorized to negotiate for, acquire, and distribute commercial and public broadcasting programing, except as stated in DoD 5120.20-R, Chapter 4, paragraph 4-102.13 (reference (b)), which authorizes contracting for commercial news services to ensure balanced news programing. Further exceptions to that policy shall be considered by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, on a case-by-case basis.

4.3.3. Provide, through satellite, and distribute, through information cassette and disk, internal information programing in support of DoD internal information themes, goals, and objectives. That includes radio and TV spot announcements provided by the AFIS.

4.3.4. Distribute religious programming and religious spot announcements approved solely by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel).

4.3.5. Establish procedures to alert AFRTS outlets of specific entertainment programming containing discretionary subject matter including that considered sensitive to a host country.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) shall:

5.1.1. Develop broad DoD policy guidelines and objectives for DoD internal information programs.

5.1.2. Exercise authority, direction and control of AFIS and AFRTS and provide DoD policy and operational direction to the Director, AFIS and AFRTS.

5.1.3. Provide DoD Instructions and/or Regulations to the Military Departments on AFRTS matters.

5.2. The Director, American Forces Information Service, shall:

5.2.1. Serve as Director of the AFRTS.

5.2.2. Comply with DoD Directive 5122.10 (reference (d)).

5.2.3. Develop policies and procedures and oversee their implementation, for the management and operation of AFRTS radio and TV broadcasting activities of the Department of Defense, and evaluate and direct corrective action by the Military Departments to ensure that the AFRTS is properly structured and managed.

5.2.4. Exercise AFRTS fiscal and manpower resource control through the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System, and monitor the implementation of approved programs.

5.2.5. Authorize the configuration and capabilities of AFRTS outlets and networks.

5.2.6. Ensure a free flow of information and entertainment programming to overseas DoD personnel and their dependents without censorship, propagandizing, or manipulation.

5.2.7. Ensure that all AFRTS broadcast activities are in conformance with host-country rules and regulations governing radio and TV transmissions and are guided by the applicable rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

5.2.8. In coordination with the Military Departments, establish standards for the training of management, production, and technical staffs and for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of equipment at AFRTS outlets.

5.2.9. Oversee and develop policies for:

5.2.9.1. The worldwide Armed Forces Satellite-Transmitted Radio Service (AFSTRS).

5.2.9.2. The worldwide TV SATNET distribution system.

5.2.9.3. The superstation SATNET distribution systems.

5.2.9.4. The worldwide organized network of extended terminals (ONET) management information systems.

5.2.9.5. Joint workforce standards for the management and the O&M of AFRTS outlets worldwide.

5.2.9.6. Centralized deliberate wartime and contingency planning and operations for AFRTS outlets worldwide. To accomplish that function, the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, shall:

5.2.9.6.1. Act as the control element of AFRTS resources of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps on behalf of the ASD(PA) and the Unified Commands.

5.2.9.6.2. Act as the DoD agent responsible for the allocation, reapportionment, and redistribution of available AFRTS resources, based on the documented requirements of the Unified Commands.

5.2.9.6.3. Direct and coordinate the AFRTS resupply efforts of the Military Broadcasting Services, the AFRTS-BC, and the Television-Audio Support

Activity (T-ASA), in time of war and for contingency operations, based on the documented requirements of the Unified Command(s).

5.2.10. Oversee management of the AFRTS-BC.

5.2.11. Issue instructional-type memorandums and provide policy guidance to the Military Departments for ASD(PA)-approved programs.

5.2.12. As appropriate, consult with and inform the Unified and/or Specified Commands on matters that impact on their mission and responsibilities.

5.2.13. Establish policies and procedures for negotiation and payment of music and artist agreements, and for performing rights under DoD Directive 5535.7 (reference (e)).

5.2.14. In coordination with the Military Broadcasting Services, develop and implement the Joint-Service Application Report for manning AFRTS outlets worldwide.

5.2.15. Review and concur or nonconcur in the selection of the Commander, T-ASA, and provide letter input to the officer efficiency report of the Commander, T-ASA.

5.3. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

5.3.1. Comply with DoD Directive 5122.10, paragraph 6.3. (reference (d)).

5.3.2. Through their respective Military Broadcasting Service, provide all personnel, financial, engineering, maintenance, and logistical resources to establish, centrally manage, control, operate, and maintain AFRTS outlets, in accordance with this Directive, DoD Directive 5122.10, DoD 5120.20-R, DoD Directive 4100.15, and DoD Instruction 4100.33 (references (d), (b), (f), and (g)).

5.3.3. Ensure that a U.S. citizen is designated as the commander or manager of an AFRTS outlet. That individual may be either military or civilian. Civilians must be employed by the U.S. Government, or a concern under contract to the U.S. Government.

5.3.4. Establish and maintain centralized equipment allowances and authorizations for AFRTS outlets, in accordance with DoD Directive 5040.2 (reference (h)), and the AFIS program for the standardization and certification of broadcast equipment.



5.3.5. Negotiate an Inter-Service Support Agreement, in accordance with Chapter 10, section 10-100 of reference (b), and DoD Directive 4000.19 (reference (i)), when an AFRTS outlet serves personnel of more than one Military Service. Normally, those agreements shall be negotiated at the lowest possible level. Differences in reaching agreements shall be adjudicated by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS.

5.3.6. Ensure that nothing inhibits the free flow of radio and TV information and entertainment programming to overseas DoD personnel and their family members.

5.3.7. Through their respective Military Broadcasting Service, manage and monitor the Military Department-unique public affairs issues, internal command information materials, and support efforts for broadcast by AFRTS outlets on outbreak of hostilities.

5.4. The Commanders of the Unified and Specified Commands shall:

5.4.1. Comply with DoD Directive 5122.10, paragraph 6.5. (reference (d)).

5.4.2. Establish an organization under the Unified Command Director of Public Affairs to which allocated AFRTS resources would be assigned on implementation of the theatre wartime operational plan (OPLAN) and ensure that follow-up is integrated into the OPLAN.

5.4.3. Provide a list of subjects considered sensitive to host countries, as related to AFRTS programming in accordance with paragraph 6.2., below.

5.4.4. On request of the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, negotiate agreements or memorandums with host countries authorizing the establishment and continuance of AFRTS outlets.

5.4.5. Ensure that nothing inhibits the free flow of radio and TV information and entertainment programming to overseas DoD personnel and their family members.

5.5. The Secretary of the Army shall designate the T-ASA to provide support to the DoD-wide AFRTS missions. The T-ASA, an activity located at the Sacramento Army Depot, Sacramento, CA, shall comply with DoD 5120.20-R, Chapter 9 (reference (b)).

5.6. The Heads of the DoD Components shall follow the AFRTS management and operations procedures in reference (b).

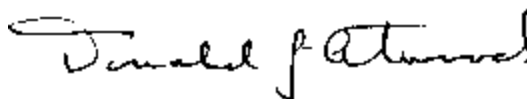
## 6. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

6.1. DD Form 2137, "The AFRTS Outlet/Network Registration," Report Control Symbol DD-PA(AR)1572, shall be submitted through channels to the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, at the time of initiation of a request for an AFRTS outlet and within 30 days of a substantive change affecting an AFRTS outlet, and shall be updated within 30 days following the end of each fiscal year.

6.2. The AFRTS host-country "Sensitive Subject Summary Narrative Report," Report Control Symbol DD-PA(A&AR)1537, shall be submitted to the Director, AFIS and AFRTS; the Commander, AFRTS-BC; and the Commandant, Defense Information School. Public Affairs Officers of the Unified and Specified Commands, or other major commands having AFRTS outlets under their cognizance, shall forward that report annually and as changes, additions, and deletions occur. Annual reports are due September 15th of each year.

## 7. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective immediately. Forward one copy of implementing documents to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) within 120 days.



Donald J. Atwood  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Enclosures - 2

- E1. References, continued
- E2. Definitions

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES, continued

- (e) DoD Directive 5535.7, "License Agreements with Foreign Performing Rights Societies," November 1, 1985
- (f) [DoD Directive 4100.15](#), "Commercial Activities Program," March 10, 1989
- (g) [DoD Instruction 4100.33](#), "Commercial Activities Program Procedures," September 9, 1985
- (h) [DoD Directive 5040.2](#), "Visual Information (VI)," December 7, 1987
- (i) DoD Directive 4000.19, "Interservice, Interdepartmental, and Interagency Support," October 14, 1980

## E2. ENCLOSURE 2

### DEFINITIONS

E2.1.1. AFRTS Broadcast Center (AFRTS-BC). A field activity of the AFIS, which is the only source authorized to provide AFRTS outlets with information and entertainment programming produced by the private sector and other Federal Agencies.

E2.1.2. AFRTS Mini-TV. A self-contained videotape playback system used in remote or isolated areas not served by a TV signal from an AFRTS outlet.

E2.1.3. AFRTS Network. Two or more AFRTS stations, authorized by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, to disseminate programming through interconnecting broadcast quality transmission circuits or satellites.

E2.1.4. AFRTS Network Affiliate Station. A station that is operated under the control of a network headquarters, and receives a programming feed from that headquarters through interconnecting broadcast quality transmission circuits or satellite.

E2.1.5. AFRTS Network-Operated Station. A station that is operated by a network headquarters, but does not receive a program feed from that headquarters.

E2.1.6. AFRTS Outlet. Any facility authorized by the Director, AFIS and AFRTS, to disseminate AFRTS radio or TV programming. An outlet includes AFRTS radio and TV stations and networks, relay sites, translators, Navy ships, mini-TV sites, and any other AFRTS broadcast (over-the-air or cable) facility.

E2.1.7. AFRTS Satellite Network SATNET. The worldwide satellite distribution system originating at the AFRTS-BC that provides radio and TV news, sports, information, and time-sensitive entertainment programming to AFRTS outlets.

E2.1.8. AFRTS Station. An AFRTS radio or TV outlet that has dedicated broadcast and/or technical personnel assigned, has local program origination capability, and is under direct control of one of the Military Broadcasting Services.

E2.1.9. AFRTS Unmanned Outlet. A location authorized to receive an AFRTS radio or TV signal, but which has no AFRTS personnel assigned.

E2.1.10. The Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS). A worldwide broadcast organization that comprises:

E2.1.10.1. An AFRTS headquarters element within the AFIS.

E2.1.10.2. The AFRTS-BC.

E2.1.10.3. AFRTS centralized management Headquarters within the Military Departments.

E2.1.10.4. AFRTS networks and/or outlets around the world.

E2.1.11. Armed Forces Satellite-Transmitted Radio Service (AFSTRS). A satellite radio service carrying the AFRTS-BC radio broadcast service to remote locations and ships at sea.

E2.1.12. Censorship. The withholding or editing of information and entertainment programming, when such action is not supported by legitimate host-country sensitivities or by broadcast restrictions imposed by program owners.

E2.1.13. Entertainment Programming. Radio and TV programming that affords pleasure, diversion, or amusement; i.e., comedy, drama, variety, sports, and musical performances.

E2.1.14. Host-Country Sensitivities. Subjects that are restricted from broadcast on an AFRTS outlet, when determined by the U.S. Ambassador or U.S. country team, normally in writing, to be sensitive to the host-country concerned and which would jeopardize AFRTS broadcast rights in that country.

E2.1.15. Information Programming. Radio and TV programming that communicates knowledge and includes world, national (U.S.), Military Service, major and/or local command, community, and host-country news; news analysis and commentary; public affairs; and spot announcements on internal information subjects.

E2.1.16. Organized Network of Extended Terminals (ONET). The AFRTS management information system installed at AFRTS stations, networks, Military Broadcasting Services, and DoD Headquarters and support locations. The ONET system is centrally managed by the AFIS, while the installed equipment and its daily operation is the responsibility of the Military Service concerned.

E2.1.17. Superstation. An AFRTS network station that distributes its daily programming to its affiliated stations by satellite.