



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

26 SEP 2002

CECW-ZB

MEMORANDUM FOR All Headquarters Staff Principals and MSC Commanders

SUBJECT: Approval of USACE Communications Strategy

1. I am pleased to forward the final USACE Communications Strategy. This marks another milestone along the implementation of the USACE Campaign Plan and our efforts to communicate effectively to build and maintain the relationships that we need to serve the Nation.
2. I have reviewed the thoughtful comments that some of you made on the proposed strategy after our August Command Council meeting. I know some would like more specificity in the strategy, but I am comfortable that we have achieved the right balance with a broad strategy that will allow you to articulate to your employees, customers, and stakeholders the many ways that the Corps and your work contribute to our Nation's security, environment, and economy. I expect further specificity to come as you develop regional strategies and action plans to implement the USACE strategy.
3. Over the next few months under the auspices of the Communication Committee we will begin moving forward to formulate plans under the four initiatives that the Communications Committee has identified: a corporate exhibit strategy, a corporate web revamping, modernizing public affairs, and training to help us integrate communications into our project management business process and become better communicators. As plans are formulated, you will have an opportunity to consider alternatives and help shape them through your role on the Command Council. You will also see a plan for how HQ USACE will support this strategy.
4. I cannot stress enough the importance of your individual efforts to model effective two-way communication: to tell the Corps story, to listen and to ensure that your actions align with your words. I believe communication is key to our future success. We must understand the needs and views of others before we can effectively serve. Using the communication principles I sent out last month and the enclosed communication strategy, I believe we have an opportunity to understand the needs of others and ultimately be more responsive.

CECW-ZB

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5. I appreciate the many urgent issues confronting you in your day-to-day leadership of our organization. I believe that working closely with our employees, customers, and many stakeholders to communicate and build relationships is among the most critical. I am counting on you to continue to work hard in this area, and let me know what I can do to assist you. Keep up the good work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert B. Flowers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

ROBERT B. FLOWERS  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

Encl

## CORPS STRATEGY TO COMMUNICATE SERVICE TO THE NATION AND THE ARMY 2002

**USACE Vision:** *“Communicate effectively to build synergistic relationships that serve the nation.”*

**Communications Goal:** Engage in open, transparent, and appropriate dialogue throughout the Corps and with all Corps customers, partners, and stakeholders. Establish a common understanding of the essential role of Corps service to the Nation and the Army—solving water related problems and supporting our Nation’s war-fighter in war and peace. Provide better, more relevant solutions and work for our customers and more valuable public service through developing a better understanding of the needs and values of the nation.

**Strategy:** Communication must complement action. Communications and relationships are essential to accomplishing the mission. The missions are important to the future of the nation.

**Principles:** The Army Corps of Engineers has proudly served the American people for more than 225 years. In war and in peace, the USACE provides essential services to the Army and the nation, working closely with a variety of important, varied, and valued constituencies. Accordingly, effective, two-way communication with these constituencies helps us build positive, mutually respectful relationships that are important to the successful accomplishment of our mission. To build and maintain these relationships, the USACE dedicates itself to the following communication principles. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will:

- *Listen to all constituencies both inside and outside USACE regarding issues of importance to them, respecting their viewpoint. Seek opportunities for synergy.*
- *Communicate early, clearly, completely, honestly, accurately, and often with all constituencies on issues of importance*
- *Incorporate communication as an integral part of all project management business processes.*
- *Be accessible to all constituencies and respond promptly without censorship or misinformation.*
- *Proactively inform the public and other constituencies of the Corps vital role in areas where we have special expertise.*
- *Do what we say we will do.*

The policy of the USACE is to communicate in an open, factual, and timely way with our Corps team, the American people, the Administration, Congress, tribes, the international community, and the news media. We will make relevant information fully and readily available to these constituencies consistent with law and national security interests.

### **Themes:**

**National Security** – Supporting the Nation’s war-fighter today and in transforming for the future. Protecting life and property through engineering solutions. Working to prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters.

**Economy** – Managing a water resources infrastructure that is the foundation of the economic growth and development of the nation and the American way of life. Supporting the marine transportation system that keeps the US competitive in the world market.

**Environment** – Developing and implementing environmentally sustainable solutions for the nation's problems and quality of life. Managing, restoring and protecting the nation's water resources and watersheds. Cleaning up waste to make the nation's communities safer and more economically productive.

**Key Issues:** Corps work is complex and there are many issues that surround our mission and how we implement that mission. Below are some current aspects of Corps work that might be communicated.

- Credibility and quality – constantly striving to improve the process and provide more precise and reliable analysis and recommendations
- Expertise – constantly working to hone and maintain our capability
- Complexity of problems – require multi-disciplinary approach with multiple stakeholders to develop and implement sound solutions
- Complexity of Corps work
- Continual organizational system learning and application
- Partnership and collaboration
- Proactive in communications
- Stewards of national resources – effective and efficient use of public funds, time and energy for the best use of our national and natural resources.

**Maintain, grow and improve relationships with these audiences:**

Business  
Recreation  
Industry  
Internal – Corps employees, Army and DOD  
Congress  
Tribes  
Federal agencies  
State and local officials and agencies  
Academia  
Military  
Administration  
Environmental  
Public at large (e.g., Youth, future engineers and scientists, communities, etc)

**Means: Talk (and listen) to more people, in more ways, more often, using real examples of how the Corps has solved problems and changed.** Activities under these areas will be worked on the national, regional and local levels.

1. Anticipate issues and scenarios to develop integrated, strategic communication messages and action plans (**Issues Management and Strategic Communications**)
2. Foster open, proactive relations with the media. (**Media Relations**)

3. Build relationships through effective two way communications, listening and personal contacts; educate about engineering challenges and needs of the nation from the water resources infrastructure standpoint. (**Outreach, Education and Community Relations**)
4. Support Corps employees in becoming better listeners and communicators; provide useful timely information. (**Command Information, Web Sites and Learning Organization**)
5. Tell the Corps story to the general public in the places we meet them most often – recreation sites, regulatory permit requestors, public meetings. (**Public Information, Exhibits and Newsletters**)
6. Communication plans as part of every project – incorporated in project management plans (**PMBP and Communications training**)
7. Conduct after-action reviews – Review communication actions to determine best practices and lessons learned. (**Learning Organization**)
8. Leverage technology – on-line newsroom; use web to facilitate the sharing of best practices. (**E-government**)
9. Use Cross functional PDTs to identify audiences and opportunities for communications and relationship building. (**PMBP**)
10. Develop and use communication products that support the message, explain the process and show clear examples. (**Listening Sessions**)
11. Change the roles, responsibilities and capabilities of Corps PA professionals to meet the challenges of today's strategic communications environment. (**Campaign Plan**)