

- OPSEC RULES FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

Operations Security can't be summed up in a brief list of rules and regulations and be expected to cover every possible situation. However, many forum, blogs and chat rooms need to set certain standards and guidelines in order to promote good OPSEC practices. These guidelines are often referred to as "OPSEC Rules", and must be acknowledged before an account is created.

This article will provide a basic set of OPSEC rules for free, unrestricted use on any site or forum. Please note that this is not an inclusive list, and should be modified to fit the requirements on the medium. Please note that these OPSEC rules are primarily directed towards Military sites, but it may be modified to fit any other application.

OPSEC Rules for (forum, blog, chatroom name):

1. Do not post exact deployment dates or redeployment dates
2. Do not reveal camp locations, including nearby cities. After the deployment is officially announced by Military officials, you may discuss locations that have been released, normally on the Country level.
3. Do not discuss convoy routes ("we travelled through Takrit on our way to X")
4. Detailed information on the mission, capabilities or morale of a unit
5. Specific names or actual nicknames
6. Personnel transactions that occur in large numbers (Example: pay information, powers of attorney, wills, etc)
7. Details concerning security procedures, response times, tactics
8. Don't discuss equipment or lack thereof, to include training equipment
9. Don't speculate about future operations
- 10. If posting pictures, don't post anything that could be misconstrued or used for propaganda purposes. A good rule of thumb is to look at your picture without your caption or explanation and consider if it could be re-captioned to reflect poorly on coalition forces. For example, your image might show your Soldier rescuing a child from a blast site, but could be re-captioned to insinuate that the child being captured or harmed. (it's happened!)**
11. Avoid the use of count-up or count-down tickers for the same reason as rule #1
12. be very careful if posting pictures of your loved one. Avoid images that show significant landmarks near their base of operations, and black out last names and unit affiliations
13. Do not, ever, post information about casualties (coalition or enemy) before the official release of the information.
14. Do not pass on rumors ("I heard they're coming home early", etc)

If you have any questions, contact your Recruiter or Station Commander.

These OPSEC rules aren't meant to limit your free speech or restrict your liberties- that's exactly what our Men and Women in uniform fight to protect. However, they are designed to help ensure the safety and security of the Service Members in your life.

Remember, no matter your affiliation, status, rank or age- you have a part in the security of your loved one!

Put simply... as a soldier, you could be a target and your family could be a target. Terrorist looks and sees you are not going to be home, wife alone at home... goes to your profile, finds your wife, finds out address.... OR, terrorist sees you are shipping on a specific date, knows what airport is there, sees your profile and pictures on it, meets you at the airport and you never make it to BCT. IT HAS HAPPENED!!!! DO NOT POST YOUR SHIP DATE!!

Safe:

“My Marine/Sailor/Soldier/Airman/Coastie is coming home soon!” “A few more months and he’ll hopefully be home!”

“Spoke with my Marine/Sailor/Soldier/Airman/Coastie RECENTLY and they are busy!”

Not Safe:

“My Marine/Sailor/Soldier/Airman/Coastie will be home between 5-10 June!”

“5 days until I see my Marine/Sailor/Soldier/Airman/Coastie.” “He’s due home in July!”

“Spoke with my Marine/Sailor/Soldier/Airman/Coastie today and they are busy doing patrols in XYZ province.”

"3 weeks and counting... can't wait to see him at homecoming!"

"Thanks everyone for letting me know my son was on chat at 8 this morning! I got to chat with him because of all of you letting me know. He is doing fine. He will be going on a mission in a couple of hours to (city named) and will be going into homes unexpectedly to catch the enemy unawares!"

The "Not Safe" examples are ACTUAL status messages pulled from people's FB and Myspace accounts.

Posting specific information can and will delay homecomings. It has happened before.

15. Do not "Tag" your soldier. With today's technology, face recognition on facebook & other applications or forums may seem fun & easy for us, the civilian. These same programs could be harmful to those in the military along with their family.

16. Smart phones, iPads, all these new electronic gadgets that help us connect to our secret or closed groups....Be safe! Remember what we list on our Facebook, twitter, myspace, etc. will be accessible in the event our gadget is lost or stolen. Put a password, lock or code to keep your private information private!

17. INTERNET SAFETY.

This CANNOT be stressed enough. If you do not know them, do not friend them! There has been an up rise within the internet applications as a whole. As an example and in no way to defame, the following

applications have been used, Facebook, Twitter, and even the "Official" sites who are open to the public as a whole. These people be it an individual or group will with the intent to do harm, will capture information and jeopardize the safety of our military loved ones. They will post fake photos, use false name and go thru hoops to make you and an unsuspected military member believe that they are the girl/boy from next door. Use all precautions at all times!

A **printable** copy of OPSEC <http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/sfrc/OPSECTrifold.pdf>

### **OPSEC The Fun Way**

I am Sam.

Sam I am.

Do you like OPSEC and ham?

I do not get it, Sam I am.

I do not get OPSEC and ham.

We must use it here and there.

We must use it everywhere.

You CAN share it in a car.

But you CANNOT in a bar.

You CANNOT share it in a text.

You CANNOT share it at the NEX.

You CAN say it in your house.

But should NOT tell a random spouse.

You CAN say it in the shower.

But do NOT go sharing at happy hour.

DON'T make the Ombudsman sweat.

DON'T post it on the internet.

You CANNOT share it in a tweet.

That would not be very sweet.

Beware of Facebook and Myspace too.

It's tempting to let your feelings through.

You Cannot tell it to a friend.

NOT even at the very end.

It is a privilege to know a date.

DON'T tell ANYONE or they may be late!

Oh, I get it, Sam I am.

Now I get OPSEC and ham!

I will not tell anyone. I will keep hushed until they're done!

I will not tell him or her. I will not tell my dog with fur.

I will not tell my child's teacher. I will not tell any creature.

Thank you, THANK YOU, Sam I am.

Thank you for clearing up OPSEC and Ham!!!