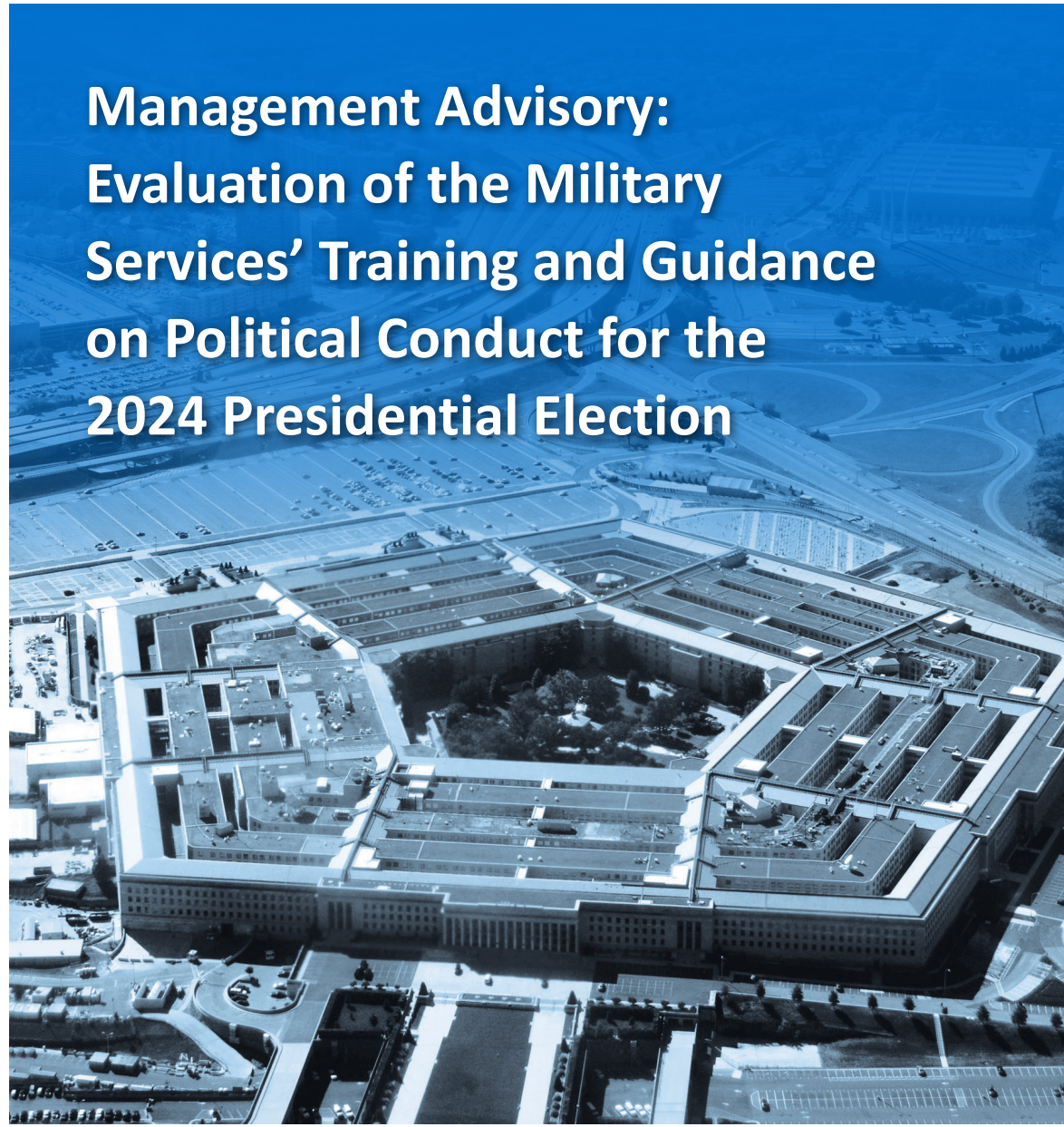




# INSPECTOR GENERAL

*U.S. Department of Defense*

MAY 28, 2024



## Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Presidential Election

INDEPENDENCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ EXCELLENCE ★ TRANSPARENCY







**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500**

May 28, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL  
AND READINESS  
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

SUBJECT: Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and  
Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Presidential Election (DODIG-2024-091)

This final management advisory provides the results of the DoD Office of Inspector General's evaluation. We previously provided copies of the draft management advisory and requested written comments on the recommendations. We considered management's comments on the draft management advisory when preparing the final management advisory. These comments are included in the management advisory.

The Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law, the Judge Advocate General for the Air Force, and the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness agreed to address the recommendations in the management advisory; therefore, we consider the recommendations resolved and open. We will close the recommendations when you provide us documentation showing that all agreed-upon actions to implement the recommendations are completed. Therefore, within 90 days please provide us your response concerning specific actions in process or completed on the recommendations. Send your response to

This management advisory contains recommendations that are considered unresolved because the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau did not provide a response to the management advisory. Therefore, Recommendation 1 remains unresolved and open. We will track this recommendation until management has agreed to take actions that we determine to be sufficient to meet the intent of the recommendations and management officials submit adequate documentation showing that all agreed-upon actions are completed. DoD Instruction 7650.03 requires that recommendations be resolved promptly. Therefore, within 30 days please provide us your response concerning specific actions in process or

alternative corrective actions proposed on the recommendations. Send your response to [REDACTED]

FOR THE INSPECTOR GENERAL:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryan T. Clark  
Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations  
Programs and Combatant Commands

## Executive Summary

The objective of this evaluation was to determine the extent to which the Services took action to provide guidance and training to Service members for the 2024 Federal election campaign season to help ensure that military members comply with DoD Directive (DoDD) 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces,” February 19, 2008.

The DoD has policy encouraging military personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship. However, according to longstanding DoD policy, active duty personnel cannot engage in partisan political activities, and all military personnel should avoid the inference that their political activities imply or appear to imply DoD sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a partisan political party, candidate, or cause. The primary guidance concerning political activity for military members is DoDD 1344.10. However, during our evaluation, we found that while the DoD issued guidance and provided some training to select Service members containing content from DoDD 1344.10, the DoD did not consistently issue guidance or provide training to all Service members related to permissible and prohibited partisan and nonpartisan political activities.

As a result, the DoD does not have assurance that all Service members understand their responsibilities related to partisan and nonpartisan political activities and the associated consequences for failure to adhere to the guidance outlined in DoDD 1344.10. Failure to ensure awareness of and compliance with policies regarding permissible and prohibited political conduct activities could result in Service members unintentionally violating DoDD 1344.10 and portraying the DoD, for which nonpartisanship is a core tenant, in a partisan manner.

We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments issue a memorandum that reminds Service members of DoDD 1344.10 requirements. Additionally, we recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness update DoDD 1344.10 to include a requirement for the Services to provide guidance and training on political activities at a minimum each presidential election year.

# Introduction

## Objective

The objective of this evaluation was to determine the extent to which the Services took action to provide guidance and training to Service members for the 2024 Federal election campaign season to help ensure that military members comply with DoD Directive (DoDD) 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces.”

## Background

The DoD has policy encouraging military personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship, which include participation in political activities. The primary policy concerning political activity for military members, DoDD 1344.10, provides specific guidance on the permissible nonpartisan activities and the prohibited partisan political activities for all Service members and members of the National Guard. The following terms are defined in DoDD 1344.10.

- Nonpartisan Political Activity—an “[a]ctivity supporting or relating to candidates not representing, or issues not specifically identified with, national or state political parties and associated or ancillary organizations or clubs.”
- Partisan Political Activity—an “[a]ctivity supporting or relating to candidates representing, or issues specifically identified with, national or state political parties and associated or ancillary organizations or clubs.”

## ***Nonpartisan and Partisan Political Activities for Service Members***

DoDD 1344.10 defines nonpartisan and partisan political activities. Table 1 summarizes the activities.<sup>1</sup>

*Table 1. DoDD 1344.10 List of Nonpartisan and Partisan Political Activities for Members of the Armed Services*

Nonpartisan Political Activities	Partisan Political Activities
Encourage others to exercise their voting franchise.	Use official authority or influence to interfere with the outcome of any election. Solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue, require, or solicit political contributions from others.
Join a partisan or nonpartisan political club and attend its meetings when not in uniform, in accordance with DoD Instruction 1334.1.	Participate in partisan political fundraising activities, rallies, conventions (including making speeches in the course thereof), management of campaigns, or debates, either on one’s own behalf or on that of another, without respect to uniform or inference or appearance of official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement. Sell tickets for or otherwise actively promote partisan political dinners and similar fundraising events.

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with DoDD 1344.10, the list of nonpartisan and partisan political activities is not all-inclusive and activities not on the list may still be considered inappropriate.

*Table 1. DoDD 1344.10 List of Nonpartisan and Partisan Political Activities for Members of the Armed Services (cont'd)*

Nonpartisan Political Activities	Partisan Political Activities
Serve as an election official if such service is not as a representative of a partisan political party, does not interfere with the performance of military duties, is performed when not in uniform, and the Secretary concerned has given prior approval.	Solicit or otherwise engage in fundraising activities in Federal offices or facilities, including military reservations, for any political cause or candidate.
Sign a petition, as a private citizen and not as a representative of the Armed Forces, for a specific legislative action or a petition to place a candidate's name on an official election ballot if the signing does not obligate engagement in partisan political activity.	Allow or cause to be published partisan political articles, letters, or endorsements signed or written by the member that solicits votes for or against a partisan political party, candidate, or cause.
Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper expressing personal views on public issues or political candidates.	Participate in an organized letter-writing campaign or a solicitation of votes for or against a political party or partisan political cause or candidate.
Make monetary contributions to a political organization, party, or committee favoring a particular candidate or slate of candidates, in accordance with section 441a of title 2, United States Code.	Conduct a political opinion survey under the support or approval of a partisan political club or group or distribute partisan political literature.
Display a political bumper sticker on a private vehicle.	Perform clerical or other duties for a partisan political committee or candidate during a campaign, on an election day, or after an election day during the process of closing out a campaign.
Attend partisan and nonpartisan political fundraising activities, meetings, rallies, debates, conventions, or activities as a spectator when not in uniform and when no inference or appearance of official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement can reasonably be drawn.	March or ride in a partisan political parade. Attend partisan political events as an official representative of the Armed Forces, except as a member of a joint Armed Forces color guard at the opening ceremonies of the national conventions of the Republican, Democratic, or other political parties recognized by the Federal Elections Committee.
Participate fully in the Federal Voting Assistance Program.	Display a large political sign, banner, or poster (as distinguished from a bumper sticker) on a private vehicle.

Source: DoDD 1344.10, summarized by the DoD OIG.

DoDD 1344.10 also states that Service members should avoid political activities that imply or appear to imply DoD sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a partisan political party, candidate, issue, or cause.

### ***Responsibilities of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Services***

Under section 5.1 of DoDD 1344.10, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD[P&R]) has the overall responsibility to administer the Directive. The Secretaries of the Military Departments are required to issue guidance that implements the Directive.

During the course of this evaluation, the OUSD(P&R) stated that it is coordinating a revision of the current DoDD 1344.10 that will be issued in 2024.<sup>2</sup> As of March 2024, the draft revision of DoDD 1344.10 does not have a requirement for the Services to issue guidance or mandatory training on DoDD 1344.10 requirements, annually or during an election year, for all Service members.

On February 15, 2024, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued the memorandum “Political Activities” to senior Pentagon leadership and Defense agency and DoD field activity directors to remind all DoD personnel of the rules pertaining to participation in political activities.<sup>3</sup> This memorandum emphasized the importance of complying with Federal law and DoD policy that address participation in the political process during the 2024 Federal election campaign season. The 2024 political activity memorandum was issued with a “Political Activities Quick Guide” that provides a non-comprehensive list of permissible and prohibited political activities for civilian and military personnel. Although the guide does not reference DoDD 1344.10, it includes a link to the DoD Standards of Conduct Office website, which provides DoD guidance on political activities for civilian and military personnel.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The OUSD(P&R) provided us with a copy of the draft DoDD 1344.10. As of the date of this advisory, the updated DoDD 1344.10 has not been issued.

<sup>3</sup> Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Political Activities,” February 15, 2024.

<sup>4</sup> DoD Standards of Conduct Office, “Political Activities,” accessed March 4, 2024, <https://dodsoco.ogc.osd.mil/ETHICS-TOPICS/Political-Activities/>.



## Finding

### The DoD Did Not Provide Guidance and Training to All Service Members for the 2024 Federal Election Campaign Season

The DoD has policy encouraging military personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship. The primary policy, DoDD 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Services,” establishes policy “[i]n keeping with the traditional concept that members on active duty should not engage in partisan political activity, and that members not on active duty should avoid inferences that their political activities imply or appear to imply official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement [..].”<sup>5</sup> DoDD 1344.10 also includes specific guidance on the permissible nonpartisan activities and the prohibited partisan political activities for all military personnel. However, during our evaluation, we found that while the DoD issued guidance and provided some training to select Service members containing content from DoDD 1344.10, the DoD did not consistently issue guidance or provide training to all Service members related to partisan and nonpartisan political activities.

Specifically, the Services issued guidance and training with inconsistent timeframes and content from DoDD 1344.10 because the Directive does not establish specific requirements for the Services to provide training or education to its Service members. Rather, the Directive encourages military personnel to carry out obligations of political activity responsibility without detailing the process for ensuring that all Service members follow DoDD 1344.10.

As a result, the DoD does not have assurance that all Service members understand their responsibilities related to partisan and nonpartisan political activities and the associated consequences for failure to adhere to the guidance outlined in DoDD 1344.10. Failure to ensure compliance with and awareness of the permissible and prohibited political conduct activities could potentially result in Service members’ unintentionally violating DoDD 1344.10 and portraying the DoD, for which nonpartisanship is a core tenant, in a partisan manner to the public.

### The DoD Did Not Issue Guidance and Provide Training to All Service Members

The DoD has policy encouraging military personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship. This policy includes guidance concerning political activity for military members. The primary policy, DoDD 1344.10, provides specific guidance on the permissible nonpartisan activities and the prohibited partisan political activities for all military personnel. However, during our evaluation, we found that while the DoD issued guidance and provided some training to select Service members containing content from DoDD 1344.10, the DoD did not consistently

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<sup>5</sup> DoDD 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Services,” section 4.

issue guidance or provide training to all Service members related to partisan and nonpartisan political activities. The OUSD(P&R) has a responsibility to administer the Directive. Currently, DoDD 1344.10 has no requirement for the Services to issue guidance or conduct mandatory training related to DoDD 1344.10, annually or during an election year.

### ***The Army Did Not Issue Guidance and Conducted Limited Training on DoDD 1344.10 Requirements***

The Army did not issue guidance related to the elements of DoDD 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Services.” Army training did not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10, but the Army offered the limited training to all its personnel. The Army Office of General Counsel provided us with information that summarized the Army’s current actions on political activities. Since the Army does not issue guidance or conduct annual training specifically related to the nonpartisan and partisan political activities identified in DoDD 1344.10, the Army relies on the guidance outlined in the Directive for matters relating to Federal, state, and local political campaigns and elections.

Although not required, according to the representative from the Army Office of General Counsel, legal, public affairs, and Army Office of Inspector General, personnel issue available information and training regarding political activities to all Army members, primarily in Federal election years. The Army Office of General Counsel combines DoDD 1344.10 political conduct content with annual ethics training. However, this training does not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10. For example, the ethics training does not include the element that Armed Forces members on active duty can promote and encourage others to use their voting rights if that promotion does not constitute use of their official authority or influence to interfere with the outcome of any election.

### ***The Navy Issued Guidance and Conducted Limited Training on DoDD 1344.10 Requirements***

The Navy issued guidance and training that covered all elements of DoDD 1344.10 and shared the guidance with select personnel. However, the Navy did not offer its training to all its personnel. The Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) provided us with information that summarized the Navy’s current guidance and training on political activities. The Navy issued Naval Administrative Message 213/20, “Public Affairs Policy Guidance Concerning Political Campaigns and Elections,” which provides information on the policies for election year support and the process for conducting political activity training across the Service.<sup>6</sup> The Message cites various Federal and DoD requirements, including DoDD 1344.10, and is accessible to all Navy personnel on the internal network.

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<sup>6</sup> Naval Administrative Message 213/20, “Public Affairs Policy Guidance Concerning Political Campaigns and Elections,” July 24, 2020.

According to NETC representatives, the Navy guidance does not require training specific to DoDD 1344.10, but political activity content is provided in various Naval ethics trainings. The ethics training, which incorporates political conduct content, is accessible to certain personnel through the Navy's Total Workforce Management System. Examples of Service members who may have received this training are:

- Naval Education and Command personnel,
- student Naval aviator junior officers, and
- flag officers.

However, the NETC representative could not provide us with information on how many members received political activity training because NETC does not have a requirement to track training attendees. Additionally, the representative stated that NETC is not responsible for training all Navy Service members.

### ***The Department of the Air Force Issued Guidance and Conducted Limited Training on DoDD 1344.10 Requirements***

Department of the Air Force (DAF) guidance covered all of the required elements of DoDD 1344.10, and the DAF shared the guidance with its personnel. However, DAF training did not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10, and the DAF did not offer the training to all its personnel. The DAF Civil Law and Policy Division provided us with information that summarized the DAF's current guidance and training on political activities. The Division issued an updated DAF Instruction 51-508, "Political Activities, Free Speech and Freedom of Assembly," in March 2023 following the re-publication of DoD Instruction 1325.06, "Handling Protest, Extremist, and Criminal Gang Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces."<sup>7</sup> The DAF Civil Law and Litigation Directorate is responsible for the publication that implements DoDD 1344.10.

DAF Instruction 51-508 does not require political activity training. However, the DAF stated that the Judge Advocate General Corps conducts regular training on political activities for the following DAF populations the DAF considers most in need of political activity training:

- O-6 command positions
- E-9 command chief positions
- first sergeants
- staff judge advocates
- judge advocates
- reservists

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<sup>7</sup> DAF Instruction 51-508, "Political Activities, Free Speech and Freedom of Assembly," March 24, 2023. DoD Instruction 1325.06, "Handling Protest, Extremist, and Criminal Gang Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces," December 20, 2021.

However, the DAF Civil Law and Policy Division representative could not provide us with the number of individuals who had access to or took the political activity training because the Judge Advocate General Corps does not have a requirement to track training attendees.

In addition, articles notifying and reminding Judge Advocate General Corps personnel of DoDD 1344.10 and related political activity guidance are published in the weekly Judge Advocate General Online News Service every election year since at least 2014.

### ***The Marine Corps Issued Guidance and Conducted Limited Training on DoDD 1344.10 Requirements***

U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) guidance covered all of the required elements of DoDD 1344.10, and the USMC shared the guidance with all of its personnel. However, USMC training did not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10, and the USMC did not offer the training to all its personnel. The USMC Judge Advocate Division provided us with information that summarized the USMC's current guidance and training on political activities. According to USMC officials, the USMC issues political activity guidance to staff judge advocates through an ethics email distribution list. To provide guidance on appropriate political activities during election cycles, USMC senior leadership issues a Marine Corps Administrative Message to the global Total Force.<sup>8</sup>

The Marine Corps Administrative Message for the current 2024 election cycle was published on February 23, 2024, on the official USMC website. The guidance states that its purpose is to prepare the force for the 2024 presidential and Federal elections on November 5, 2024, and to ensure that Marines, Sailors, and Federal civilian employees exercise their rights and obligations of citizenship without violating Federal statutes, regulations, and policies that prohibit official involvement, or the appearance of official involvement, in partisan political activities, such as favoring a candidate, party, or cause. The 2024 Marine Corps Administrative Message covers all elements of DoDD 1344.10.

Additionally, in January 2024, the Counsel for the Commandant and Deputy Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant provided the 2024 Brigadier General Select Orientation Course, which is an annual training for all new general officers, senior executives, and senior enlisted advisors in the USMC. The training was related to DoDD 1344.10 and included a brief description of prohibited and permissible political activities by Service members. However, the training did not cover an inclusive list of political activities cited in DoDD 1344.10. For example, the training did not address a Service member's right to sign a petition for a specific legislative action if signing does not obligate the member to engage in partisan political activity and is done as a private citizen and not as a representative of the military. Additionally, the USMC Judge Advocate Division could not provide us with information on how many members received this training because the division does not have a requirement to track training attendees.

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<sup>8</sup> Total Force is applicable to all active and Reserve Marines, civilian employees of the Marine Corps, and Sailors attached to USMC units worldwide.

## ***The National Guard Issued Limited Guidance and Conducted Limited Training on DoDD 1344.10 Requirements***

National Guard Bureau (NGB) guidance and training does not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10, but the NGB distributes the limited guidance and offers the limited training to all its personnel. Additionally, the NGB does not currently issue guidance related to DoDD 1344.10 annually or during a Federal election year. The NGB General Law Division provided us with information that summarized the NGB's current guidance and training on political activities.

However, the NGB provided limited political activity guidance in the form of information papers to its members in 2022 and 2023. Each of the information papers included examples of the permissible and prohibited political activities from DoDD 1344.10. For example, the NGB Judge Advocate Information Paper, "Participation in Political Activities by National Guard Bureau Personnel Regarding COVID-19 Vaccination Recission," explains that, in accordance with DoDD 1344.10, Service members are prohibited from acting in any manner that reasonably gives inference of official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of candidates for political office.<sup>9</sup> Specifically, the information paper states that, "NGB personnel must abide by the statutory and regulatory limitations imposed on political activities and lobbying Congress," and that NGB personnel acting in an official capacity are prohibited from using Federal funds to lobby members of Congress or for public or propaganda activities. The information paper also outlines examples of prohibited activity on personal social media accounts for all employees (military and civilian) on duty and off duty, as described in DoDD 1344.10.

Additionally, the NGB General Counsel Division included a political activity section in its last three annual ethics training briefs, "2023 Newcomers Ethics Training," "NGB Senior Leaders Ethics Essentials," and "2023 Annual Ethics Training," for the general NGB military workforce (military and civilian). Each of the briefs included elements of the permissible and prohibited political activities of DoDD 1344.10 but did not cover all requirements outlined in DoDD 1344.10. For example, the briefs did not include information related to a Service member not being allowed to speak before a partisan political gathering that promotes a partisan political party, candidate, or cause.

## ***The OUSD(P&R) Issued Limited Guidance and Conducted Limited Training on DoDD 1344.10 Requirements***

OUSD(P&R) guidance and training did not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10, but the OUSD(P&R) distributed the limited guidance to all of its personnel. The Military Deputy Director for the OUSD(P&R) Office of Legal Policy provided us with information

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<sup>9</sup> NGB Judge Advocate Information Paper, "Participation in Political Activities by National Guard Bureau Personnel Regarding COVID-19 Vaccination Recission," January 23, 2023.



that summarized the office's current actions on political activities. OUSD(P&R)'s Office of Legal Policy periodically posts links on its webpage to political activity guides that provide information on permissible and prohibited political activities for Service members. Most recently, the OUSD(P&R) issued DoD Instruction 5400.18, "Public Affairs Procedures and Operations for Political Campaigns and Elections," to replace previous political activity guides that were issued during election years.<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, in August 2023, the OUSD(P&R)'s Office of Legal Policy and the Standards of Conduct Office developed and provided annual political activity training to only the military Services' ethics attorneys. The OUSD(P&R) training includes references on political activities of military personnel and military installations regarding regulations, laws, and DoD policy, which includes DoDD 1344.10.

## **DoDD 1344.10 Does Not Require the Services to Educate Service Members on the Policy Requirements of Political Activity Responsibility**

The Services issued guidance and training with inconsistent content from DoDD 1344.10 because, while the Directive places responsibility on the Service Secretaries to issue appropriate implementing documents, it does not require the Services to provide political activity training or education to its Service members on a recurring basis or at all.

In February 2024, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued the political activity memorandum to all senior Pentagon leadership and Defense agency and DoD field activity directors that included a quick guide detailing information related to political activity participation.

## **The DoD Cannot Demonstrate Compliance with Policy for Partisan and Nonpartisan Political Activities**

As a result, the DoD does not have assurance that all Service members understand their responsibilities as they relate to partisan and nonpartisan political activities and the associated consequences for failure to adhere to the guidance outlined in DoDD 1344.10. For example, the DoD Hotline received 58 complaints or reports of military members allegedly participating in prohibited political activities from January 1, 2019, through February 13, 2024.<sup>11</sup> The alleged prohibited political activities included:

- social media posts,
- display of politically affiliated patches or badges,
- conveying political opinion to staff,

<sup>10</sup> DoD Instruction 5400.18, "Public Affairs Procedures and Operations for Political Campaigns and Elections," November 30, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> Our scope did not include hotline complaints received by the Services or other OIGs, which likely would increase the number of hotline complaints.

- participation in political campaign rallies in uniform, and
- failure to hold staff accountable.

Failure to ensure compliance and awareness of the permissible and prohibited political conduct activities could result in Service members unintentionally violating DoDD 1344.10 and the DoD, a nonpartisan institution, illustrating a partisan position to the public.

## Management Comments on the Finding and Our Response

### *Army Comments*

The Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law, responding for the Secretary of the Army, disagreed with our presentation of DoDD 1344.10 in the management advisory. Specifically, the Army disagreed that DoDD 1344.10 has "required elements," and stated that DoDD 1344.10 does not have any training requirements. The Army suggested alternate language for the management advisory.

### *Our Response*

We acknowledge the Army's comments regarding the required elements in DoDD 1344.10. However, the management advisory does not state that training is required; rather, the management advisory advises that training Service members may provide assurance that all Service members understand their responsibilities related to partisan and nonpartisan political activities.

## Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response

### ***Recommendation 1***

**We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau promptly issue a memorandum that reminds Service members of DoD Directive 1344.10 requirements.**

### *Army Comments*

The Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law, responding for the Secretary of the Army, agreed and stated that the Army will coordinate drafting the recommended memorandum through the Secretary of the Army for signature.

### *Our Response*

Comments from the Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law addressed all specifics of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when we verify that the memorandum is issued by the Army.

### ***Air Force Comments***

The Judge Advocate General for the Air Force, responding for the Secretary of the Air Force, agreed and stated that the Air Force will coordinate drafting the recommended memorandum through the Secretary of the Air Force for signature. The Judge Advocate General also stated that if the Secretary of the Air Force delegates the issuance of this memorandum, the memorandum will be issued by the Judge Advocate General for the Air Force and Space Force. This memorandum should be issued no later than May 31, 2024.

### ***Our Response***

Comments from the Judge Advocate General addressed all specifics of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when we verify that the memorandum is issued by the Air Force.

### ***Marine Corps Comments***

Although not required to comment, the Senior Special Assistant of the Office of the Counsel for the Commandant, Marine Corps Headquarters, agreed with the recommendation. The Senior Special Assistant also provided editorial comments for consideration.

### ***Our Response***

Although action is not required by the Marine Corps for this recommendation, coordination within the Department of the Navy would be appropriate to issue a memorandum that reminds its Service members of DoD Directive 1344.10 requirements.

## **Management Comments Required**

### ***Department of the Navy***

The Secretary of the Navy did not respond to the recommendation. We request that the Secretary of the Navy provide comments on the final management advisory.

### ***National Guard Bureau***

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau did not respond to the recommendation. We request that the Chief of the National Guard Bureau provide comments on the final management advisory.

## ***Recommendation 2***

**We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness update DoD Directive 1344.10 to include a requirement for the Services and the National Guard Bureau to provide guidance and training on partisan and nonpartisan political activities to all Service members at least each presidential election year.**

### ***Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Comments***

The Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness agreed with the recommendation and will coordinate with the Military Services and the National Guard Bureau to update DoD Directive 1344.10. The Acting Under Secretary stated that the DoD is in the late stages of formally reissuing the Directive. The reissuance includes changing the Directive to a DoD Instruction. The Acting Under Secretary stated that the OUSD(P&R) will publish an updated Instruction containing the training requirements no later than December 2027.

### ***Our Response***

Comments from the Acting Under Secretary addressed all specifics of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when we verify that DoDD 1344.10 is updated to include Service member training requirements.

## **Scope and Methodology**

We conducted this evaluation from December 2023 through March 2024 in accordance with the “Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation,” published in December 2020 by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Those standards require that we plan and perform the evaluation to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our evaluation objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained was sufficient, competent, and relevant to lead a reasonable person to sustain the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

To accomplish the objective, we contacted representatives at the OUSD(P&R) and the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, as well as the NGB Chief. We reviewed DoDD 1344.10 and requested copies of current policy, guidance, and training requirements on political activity and details on any upcoming, planned training from the Services. We analyzed the Service-level policies, guidance, and documentation, including the following.

- Naval Administrative Message 213/20, “Public Affairs Policy Guidance Concerning Political Campaigns and Elections”
- DAF Instruction 51-508, “Political Activities - Free Speech and Freedom of Assembly”

- various Service-specific administrative messages issued on political activities
- Service-specific guidance issued on political activity topics
- Service-specific training documentation incorporating elements of DoDD 1344.10

Additionally, we obtained the list of DoD Hotline complaints regarding the political conduct of Service members that occurred between January 1, 2019, and February 13, 2024.

## **Use of Computer-Processed Data**

We did not use computer-processed data to perform this evaluation.

## **Prior Coverage**

No prior coverage was conducted on training related to DoDD 1344.10 during the last 5 years.



# Management Comments

## Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL  
104 ARMY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0104

SAGC-EF

2 May 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR [REDACTED], Department of Defense Inspector General (DoDIG)

SUBJECT: Department of the Army Response to DoDIG Draft Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election (Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000)

1. The Army submits this response to the Draft Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election (Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000).
2. The DODIG recommends that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau promptly issue a memorandum that reminds Service members of the requirements of DoD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces. The Army concurs with Recommendation 1 and will coordinate the drafting of the recommended memorandum through the Secretary of the Army for her signature.
3. The Army's partial concurrence relates to how DoDIG framed training requirements under DoDD 1344.10. Page 6 of the draft report contains references to "required elements of DoDD 1344.10,"<sup>1</sup> framing that publication as having "required elements" for those who train Service members on permissible and prohibited political activities. However, there is no requirement in DoDD 1344.10 to accomplish training of any kind, and thus any training that is accomplished is not required to cover all permissible and prohibited activities. To characterize trainings on DoDD 1344.10 as missing "required elements" overstates that publication's current requirements. The Army provides alternate language in the attached DD 818, Comment Resolution Matrix.
4. The Army will appropriately coordinate to assess the implications of the recommendation that the "Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness update DoDD 1344.10 to include a requirement for the Services to provide guidance and training on political activities at a minimum each Presidential election year." We do not have enough information at this time to determine whether the Army concurs or non-

<sup>1</sup> "Army training did not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10, but the Army offered the limited training to all its personnel. . . . The Army Office of General Counsel combines DoDD 1344.10 political conduct content with annual ethics training (sic) However, this training did not cover all required elements of DoDD 1344.10. . . ."

## Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law (cont'd)

SAGC-EF

SUBJECT: Department of the Army Response to DoDIG Draft Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election (Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000)

concur with this recommendation but suggest that mandating focused training on the more commonly encountered aspects of the DoDD (for example, the political activities implications of uniform wear, social media use, and bumper sticker use), and on exercise of the right to vote is preferred over required training on every subsection of paragraph 4.1 of the DoDD.


5. This response was coordinated and drafted in conjunction with the Department of the Air Force [REDACTED] (USAF Civil Law and Policy Division) and the Department of the Navy [REDACTED] (DON OGC). Point of contact is [REDACTED]



SHELLEY P. TURNER  
Deputy General Counsel  
Ethics and Fiscal

Encl  
DD 818, Comment  
Resolution Matrix

## Army's Deputy General Counsel for Ethics and Fiscal Law (cont'd)

SELECT A CLASSIFICATION						
CONSOLIDATED DoD ISSUANCE COMMENT MATRIX						
Issuance Type and Number, "Title"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
U	1	6	n/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> The draft report consistently refers to "required elements" of DoDD 1344.10. This mischaracterizes DoDD 1344.10 and overstates that there are any requirements for training on this publication. As the report notes, DoDD 1344.10 does not require any training to be accomplished whatsoever, and saying that there are required elements of training this publication is an overreach. We believe DoDIG is attempting to say that the Services' trainings did not cover all of the permissible and prohibited activities, but to characterize them as "required" goes beyond what is on the page of the publication itself.</p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> Recommend "required elements" be changed to "all of the prohibited and permissible activities for Service members" to more accurately state that the trainings provided by the Services were not fully comprehensive.</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	
Choose an item.				<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b></p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b></p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	
Choose an item.				<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b></p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b></p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	

# Judge Advocate General for the Air Force



CUH  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**  
**WASHINGTON, DC**

3 May 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

FROM: HQ USAF/JA  
1120 Air Force Pentagon Suite 4E252  
Washington, DC 20330

SUBJECT: Department of the Air Force Response to DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election" (Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038)

1. This is the Department of the Air Force response to the DoDIG Draft Report, "Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election" (Project No. D2024 - DEV0PF - 0038). The DAF **partially concurs** with the report as written and welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on this Management Advisory.
2. AF/JA provides feedback on the report's findings as it relates to the DAF in the Attachment, a DD 818 Comment Resolution Matrix.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** The DODIG recommends that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau promptly issue a memorandum that reminds Service members of DoD Directive 1344.10 requirements.

**DAF RESPONSE:** The Air Force concurs with Recommendation 1 and will coordinate the drafting of the recommended memorandum through the Secretary of the Air Force for his signature; if the Secretary of the Air Force delegates the issuance of this memo, it will be issued by me in my capacity as The Judge Advocate General for the Air Force and the Space Force. To account for staffing requirements, this memorandum should be issued no later than 31 May 2024.

The DAF's partial concur relates to how DoDIG framed training under DoDD 1344.10, *Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces*. The Draft Management Advisory consistently states that publication has "required elements" for those who train Service members on permissible and prohibited political activities. Specifics are outlined in the Attachment, but generally speaking, there is no requirement in DoDD 1344.10 to accomplish training of any kind, and thus any training that is accomplished is not required to cover all permissible and prohibited activities. To characterize trainings on DoDD 1344.10 as missing "required elements" overstates that publication's current requirements.

Additionally, AF/JA will coordinate with the appropriate offices to assess the implications of Recommendation 2, which would require training on political activities at least every Presidential election year. We do not have enough information at this time to determine whether

CUH

## Judge Advocate General for the Air Force (cont'd)

2

the DAF concurs or non-concurs with this recommendation, but suggest that mandating focused training on the more commonly encountered aspects of the DoDD (for example, the political activities implications of uniform wear, social media use, and bumper sticker use), and on exercise of the right to vote is preferred over required training on every subsection of paragraph 4.1 of the DoDD.

Despite this partial non-concur, the DAF agrees generally that reminding Service members of the importance of political activities training and the requirements of DoDD 1344.10 and that having such a reminder come from the Secretary of the Air Force is appropriate.

3. This response was coordinated and drafted in conjunction with the Department of the Army [REDACTED] and the Department of the Navy [REDACTED]

The AF/JA point of contact is [REDACTED]

Digitally signed by  
[REDACTED]


CHARLES L. PLUMMER  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
The Judge Advocate General

Attachment:  
DD 818, Comment Resolution Matrix



# Judge Advocate General for the Air Force (cont'd)

## CONSOLIDATED DoD ISSUANCE COMMENT MATRIX

DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
U	1	7	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> The draft report consistently refers to "required elements" of DoDD 1344.10. This mischaracterizes DoDD 1344.10 and overstates that there are any requirements for training on this publication. As the report notes, DoDD 1344.10 does not require any training to be accomplished whatsoever, and saying that there are required elements of training in this publication is an overreach. We believe DoDIG is attempting to say that the Services' trainings did not cover all of the permissible and prohibited activities, but to characterize them as "required" goes beyond what is on the page of the publication itself.</p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> Recommend "required elements" be changed to "all of the prohibited and permissible activities for Service members" to more accurately state that the trainings provided by the Services were not fully comprehensive.</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	
Choose an item.				<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b></p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b></p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	
Choose an item.				<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b></p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b></p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p>	

## Judge Advocate General for the Air Force (cont'd)

### CONSOLIDATED DoD ISSUANCE COMMENT MATRIX

DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
					<b>Originator Reasoning:</b>	

### HOW TO FILL OUT THE DD 818-1 MATRIX

#### GENERAL GUIDANCE:

- **To sort table** by page/paragraph number, hover your mouse over the top of the first cell in the "page" column until a downward arrow appears; click and drag to the right to select both page and para columns. Under Paragraph on the Home ribbon, select A-Z button, set to sort by Column 3 and then Column 4, and select "OK." **To add new rows**, copy and paste a blank row to keep consistent formatting. **To add automatic numbering to column 2**, select entire column and click on the Numbering button under Paragraph on the Home ribbon.

#### OSD COMPONENT (OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY):

- Do **not** use the DD Form 818.
- Consolidate comments from all coordinators and adjudicate them. When **pasting** coordinator's comments from the coordinating Components' DD Form 818s into your consolidated DD Form 818-1, use "Insert New Row" paste option. You do not need to include administrative comments (spelling, paragraph numbering, etc.), in the consolidated DD Form 818-1. Leave columns 3 and 4 blank for general comments that apply to the whole document.
- **Sort comments** by the pages/paragraphs to which they apply using the **General Guidance** sort feature (e.g., all comments from all coordinators that apply to Page 3, Paragraph 1.1.a., should be together; all comments that apply to Page 3, Paragraph 1.1.b., should be next). Set classification header, footer, Column 2, and complete the last two entries in Column 6:

*COLUMN 6* If you rejected or partially accepted a comment, enter your rationale in the originator reasoning area. If any material is **classified** or **controlled unclassified information**, follow DoDM 5200.01 or DoDI 5200.48 guidance for marking the document. Leave originator reasoning area blank if you accepted it. Include any related communications with the coordinating Component. You **must** provide convincing support for rejecting nonconcurrency comments.

# Office of the Counsel for the Commandant, Marine Corps Headquarters

## SELECT A CLASSIFICATION DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE

### COMPONENT COORDINATOR RESPONSE

April 30, 2024

**SUBJECT:** DODIG DRAFT REPORT PROJCT NO. D2024 DEV0P 0038.000  
MANAGEMENT ADVISORY EVALUATION OF THE MILITARY SERVICES'  
TRAINING AND GUIDANCE ON POLITICAL CONDUCT FOR THE 2024  
FEDERAL ELECTION Choose an item.

On behalf of my Component, my formal response to this issuance is: Concur with comment. Below are comments for your consideration.

I am the point of contact for this action and may be reached at

[REDACTED]

4/30/2024

X Amanda L. Lythgoe

Double-click the 'X' to insert a digital signat...  
or print and sign a hard copy.

[REDACTED]

**Coordinating Official's Name:** LtCol Amanda L. Lythgoe  
**Coordinating Official's Position Title:** Senior Special Assistant, Office of the Counsel for the Commandant  
**Coordinating Official's Component:** The Counsel for the Commandant, Headquarters Marine Corps




DD FORM 818, AUG 2016

SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

## Office of the Counsel for the Commandant, Marine Corps Headquarters (cont'd)

### SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

**DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: DODIG Draft Report, Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000, "Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election"**

CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
U	1	9	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> "counsel" should be capitalized to read "Counsel for the Commandant"; "deputy staff judge advocate" should be capitalized to read "Deputy Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant"</p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> capitalize billet titles</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	HQMC CL 
U	2	9	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> Inaccurate description of BGSOC, which is not for senior enlisted advisors. Senior enlisted advisors who are slated to support General Office level Major Subordinate Commands attend SELOC (Slated Enlisted Leaders Orientation Course).</p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> sentence should read "...all new general officers and senior executives in the USMC." Remove reference to senior enlisted.</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	HQMC CL 
U	3	9	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> This is an inaccurate summary of training materials that CL provided to the IG during the data call. In addition to BGSOC, CL provided the materials for the EOS (Executive Off Site) and GOS (General Officer Symposium) training, Cornerstone (for new commanders), and OLA (for fellows) which all include training on political activities. These are not mentioned in the report.</p>	HQMC CL 

DD FORM 818, AUG 2016



**REPLACES SD FORM 818, WHICH IS OBSOLETE**  
SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

2

## Office of the Counsel for the Commandant, Marine Corps Headquarters (cont'd)

### SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

**DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: DODIG Draft Report, Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000, "Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election"**

CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
					<p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> List all of the training materials provided to the IG by CL.</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	
U	4	9	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> CL has updated the Cornerstone training materials to include the inclusive list of prohibited and permissible political activities for service members.</p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> Include a sentence stating that CL has updated training materials to be in compliance with DoDD 1344.10.</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p> <p><b>Originator Reasoning:</b></p>	HQMC CL 
U	5	9	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</b> Paragraph 2 includes language related to the National Guard that does not belong in this paragraph, but instead should be in its own section.</p> <p><b>Coordinator Recommended Change:</b> Start a new paragraph after "...track training attendees." Embolden "The National Guard Issued..." which appears to be a heading before the new paragraph on the national guard.</p> <p><b>Originator Response:</b> Choose an item.</p>	HQMC CL 

DD FORM 818, AUG 2016

**REPLACES SD FORM 818, WHICH IS OBSOLETE**  
SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

3

## Office of the Counsel for the Commandant, Marine Corps Headquarters (cont'd)

### SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

**DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: DODIG Draft Report, Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000, "Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election"**

CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
					<b>Originator Reasoning:</b>	



# Office of the Counsel for the Commandant, Marine Corps Headquarters (cont'd)

## SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: DODIG Draft Report, Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.000, "Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Federal Election"

## HOW TO FILL OUT THE DD 818 MATRIX

### GENERAL GUIDANCE:

- **To sort table** by page/paragraph number, hover your mouse over the top of the first cell in the "page" column until a downward arrow appears; click and drag to the right to select both page and para columns. Under Paragraph on the Home ribbon, select A-Z button, set to sort by Column 3 and then Column 4, and select "OK." **To add new rows**, copy and paste a blank row to keep consistent formatting. **To add automatic numbering to column 2**, select entire column and click on the Numbering button under Paragraph on the Home ribbon.

### COORDINATING OSD AND DOD COMPONENTS:

- Do not use the DD Form 818-1.
- Fill in the memo indicating your Component's position on the issuance. Fill in the authorized coordinator's name, position, and Component. The authorized coordinator (digitally) signs the response after the comment matrix has been completed. **Making additional changes after filling in a digital signature invalidates and removes the signature.**
- Use the comment matrix to provide comments to the OSD Component that created the issuance. Complete the header and footer and Columns 1 -7:
  - COLUMN 1* Enter the classification of the comment. If any material is **classified**, follow DoDM 5200.01 guidance for marking the document. If all comments are unclassified, mark the header and footer and ignore the column.
  - COLUMN 2* Order comments by the pages/paragraphs that they apply to in Columns 3 and 4.
  - COLUMNS 3&4* Cite the page on which the paragraph appears; cite the paragraph number as it appears in the text, e.g. 2.1.a..
  - COLUMNS 5* Only mark this box if you non-concur with the issuance and the comment in the applicable row is part of the basis for that non-concur. A nonconcur is typically used only when an issuance contains: (a) a violation of the law or contradiction of Executive Branch policy or of existing policy in a DoDD, DoDI, or other instrument approved by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense; or (b) an unnecessary risk to safety, life, limb, or DoD materiel; waste or abuse of DoD appropriations; or unreasonable burden on a DoD Component's resources.
  - COLUMN 6* Place only one comment per row. Enter your comment, justification, and recommended changes in the first two areas provided. If any material is **classified** or **controlled unclassified information**, follow DoDM 5200.01 or DoDI 5200.48 guidance for marking the document.
  - COLUMN 7* As stated.
- **Review** the comments, **resolve** any conflicting views, and **confirm** that the completed matrix accurately represents your Component's position. Upload the form to the DoD Directives Program Portal in **Microsoft Word format (.docx)**, with the signed memo representing your Component's position.

DD FORM 818, AUG 2016

**REPLACES SD FORM 818, WHICH IS OBSOLETE**  
SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

5

# Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

MAY - 9 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Response to Department of Defense Inspector General Draft Report, "Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Presidential Election" (Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.00)

This is the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness' response to the DoD Inspector General (IG) Draft Report, "Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Military Services' Training and Guidance on Political Conduct for the 2024 Presidential Election" (Project No. D2024-DEV0PF-0038.00) (the Management Advisory).

Recommendation 2, which specifically involves my office, reads:

*We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness update DoD Directive 1344.10 [to] include a requirement for the Services and the National Guard Bureau to provide guidance and training on partisan and nonpartisan political activities to all Service members at least each Presidential election year.*

DoD concurs. After coordinating with the Military Services and National Guard Bureau, DoD will update the DoD Directive 1344.10. Because the Directive is currently in the very last stages of formal reissuance to include changing it to an DoD Instruction, DoD will publish an updated issuance containing the new training requirements no later than December 2027.

Additionally, DoD IG noted that the management advisory will be "considered for release to the public, congressional committees of jurisdiction and to individual members of Congress consistent with the authorities and responsibilities of the DoD OIG and the markings applied to the final management" and requested comment on whether my office believes any specific information in the draft management advisory and the Department's response are exempt from release as controlled unclassified information or under the Freedom of Information Act. DoD believes the draft Management Advisory and this response are not exempt from public release.

Administrative (technical) comments were provided separately. My points of contact are

[REDACTED] or [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the Management Advisory's draft Recommendation 2.

Ashish S. Vazirani  
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of  
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>DAF</b>	Department of the Air Force
<b>DoDD</b>	DoD Directive
<b>NETC</b>	Naval Education and Training Command
<b>NGB</b>	National Guard Bureau
<b>OUUSD(P&amp;R)</b>	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
<b>USMC</b>	U.S. Marine Corps

# **Whistleblower Protection**

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703.604.8324

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