



**NCOA**<sup>®</sup>

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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (SCP)

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Version 1.1  
27 June 2017



## VERSION HISTORY

Version #	Implemented By	Revision Date	Approved By	Approval Date	Reason
.10	David Marston	05/11/2016			Initial draft
.11	Jim Mallette	05/16/2016			Add: 1.2, 1.4, 3.3, 3.5
.12	Terry Haines	5/17/2016			Edit: 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 3.2 3.4, Appendix
.13	Terry Haines	6/12/2016			Edit: Table of Content, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.3 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2
.14	David Marston	6/13/2016			Incorporated new Fig 1 per Sir Terry Haines and corrected all format issues
1.0	David Marston	6/14/2016			Incorporated additional minor changes requested by the Comm committee and BoD, Chairman
1.1	Recommended by Terry Haines. Edited by David Marston	6/27/2017			Corrected minor changes to acronym BoD vs BoDs and updated Org Layout to reflect Enlisted Advisors.

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 VISION**

To be recognized as the premier veteran service organization promoting and protecting the rights and benefits for all enlisted personnel from all branches of the military, active duty, reserve, National Guard, retired, and veteran as well as their families, widows/widowers.

### **1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The overall objective of the Strategic Communications Plan (SCP) is to promote the success of our Association by meeting the information needs of our membership. The NCOA SCP defines the NCOA's structure and methods of information collection, screening, formatting, and distribution and outline understanding among all NCOA leadership entities regarding the actions and processes necessary to facilitate the critical links among people, ideas, and information that are necessary for our success.

The intended audience of the NCOA SCP is the Board of Directors (BoD), NCOA Auxiliary Board of Directors, NCOA HQs staff, National Capitol Office (NATCO), Knights of the Square Table (KST), chapters, and any and all senior leaders whose support is needed to carry out this communications plan, but ultimately the audience who benefits from this communications plan is our membership.

### **1.3 COMMUNICATION GOALS**

- Promote our programs... Educate military leaders on: Who we are; What we do; When we do it; Where we do it; Why we do it; and How we do it.
- Improve membership... "Strength in Unity!"
- Market our primary reasons for existence; Legislative representation, Social Improvement programs and Membership Service & program support.
- Establish membership enhancement/recruiting board(s)

### **1.4 ORGANIZATION**

The Non-Commissioned Officers Association a Federally Chartered 501c19 Association, more commonly known as NCOA, is currently a leader in veterans and spouse employment, a strong and viable voice on Capitol Hill and with the Veteran's Administration, and our members around the world are making a difference in their local communities.

The NCOA was established in 1960 to enhance and maintain the quality of life for noncommissioned and petty officers in all branches of the armed forces, active duty, national guard, reserves, veterans (separated and retired), widows, and their families. NCOA does this through active legislative advocacy and lobbying campaign to solicit support of our Congressional representatives. The NCOA offers its members a wide range of benefits and services designed especially for enlisted service members and their families. The Association, with its member involvement, continues to evolve and articulate its legislative program in support of the Uniformed Services of the USA. It is a founding organizational member of The Military Coalition and other strategic alliances that share common purpose and provides "Strength in Unity" in the legislative process.

The figure below shows the communication relationship between all groups within and outside of our organization. The methods of communication are broken down by advisory roles represented by the dashed arrows and directive communication represented by the solid arrows. Everything points to the General Membership. The Board of Directors has the responsibility to govern the organization utilizing the input from all of the groups listed and then directing our decisions to our staffs to execute.

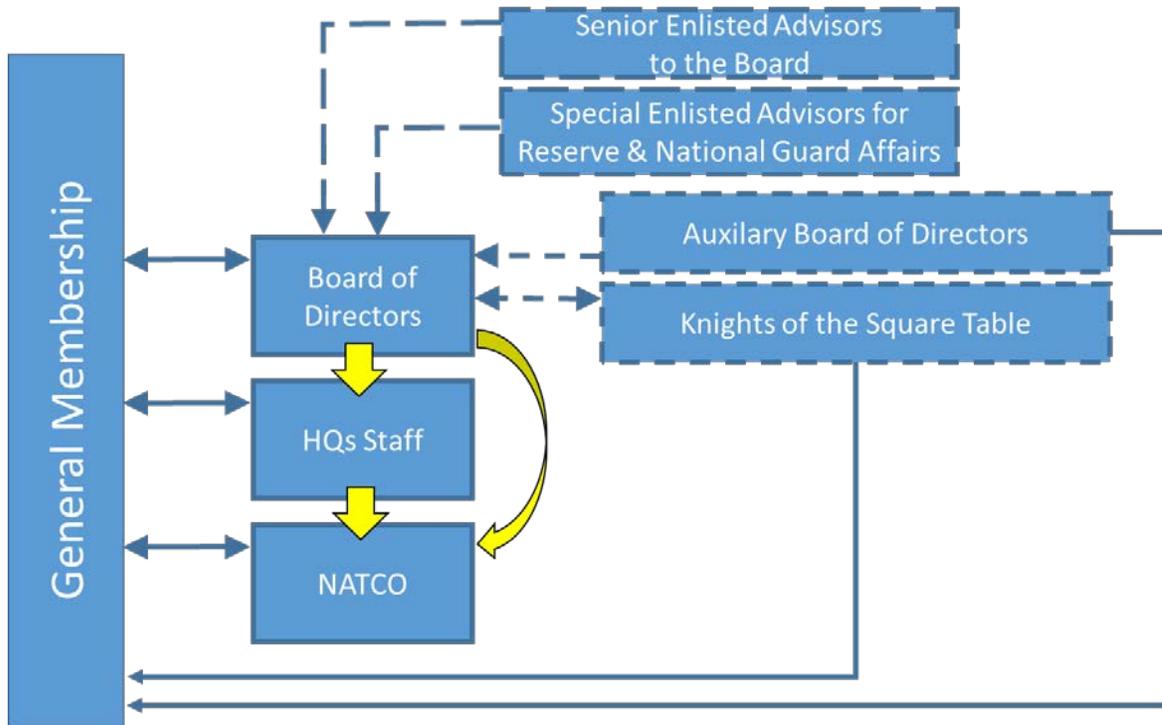


Figure 1, NCOA Organizational Layout

## **2 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **2.1 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP ANALYSIS**

The general membership is the true foundation of the association. For without our members who believe in what NCOA represents we have no association. Our ~60,000 members varies in age, diversity and come from all branches of the armed forces, active duty, National Guard, reserves, veterans (separated and retired), widows, and their families. We believe that our membership median age is ~45-50+ and that age is increasing. More of our members are dying each day than we are getting new members in the door. Additionally, many of our members are either not affiliated with a local chapter or are assigned to a chapter but are geographically separated from chapter activities and contact. Hence, this is why we need an effective communications plan to keep our membership informed and motivated. Communication is key to any successful organization.

### **2.2 CHAPTERS**

NCOA's chapters are the foundation of the association. They are the centers of social interaction among association members, grass-roots benevolent activity, and community support and involvement programs.

Association chapters exist worldwide from small towns in the United States to countries like South Korea and Italy; almost everywhere American service members are stationed or call home. But there are members who are not affiliated with a Chapter and/or reside where no chapter exists and they are still a part of the general membership.

NCOA chapters participate in a variety of national and local activities. Chapter efforts in NCOA's national voter registration program have been responsible for the registration of hundreds of thousands of military personnel, veterans and their families.

Various base and community projects (including Special Olympics, muscular dystrophy, holiday food baskets, JROTC program, Quarterly and Annual awards programs, Air Force Enlisted Village, USO's, Wounded Warrior Project, VA homes and hospitals and local scholarship programs) have received more than 1.5 million volunteer hours and benefited to the tune of nearly \$5 Million in donations. NCOA recently stepped forward to become the official military fraternal association partner for Snowball Express – a charity for the children of fallen military members.

### **2.3 AUXILARY**

The International Auxiliary membership division was formed in 1980 and consists of: Spouses/former spouses, widows/widowers, and family members 18 years of age or older of enlisted service members, whether active duty, separated, veteran, Reserve or National Guard, in Grades E-1 through E-9. Though smaller in numbers, as far as how many auxiliary chapters and how many members in this division, they have stood the test of time and bring immeasurable value to NCOA. They bring a perspective that our regular members do not have; i.e. how to keep the Homefront together when the service member is deployed. Today as we formulate our strategic communication plan, we as an organization can ill afford to omit any group or perspective that will strengthen our organization.

### 3 COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

This section will explain the different forms of communication, where the communication will come from, who owns the content and approval to release the information, the purpose of the communication and who the target to receive the information is. Additionally, this section will outline the vehicles to disseminate the information as well as how often the information will be shared. Currently, communication is ineffective and does not take advantage of ever changing technology. This procedure will provide guidance to address all of these issues.

#### 3.1 INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Vehicle	Owner	Description/ Purpose	Target	Distribution Vehicle	Frequency
Legislative Alerts	NATCO	To rally the membership to an immediate call to action	Membership	Email/Voters Voice	As needed
HQs updates/ NCOA Press Releases/ Congressional Testimony	BoD/HQs Staff  <b>Approval: BoD</b>	To keep the membership informed of key events, actions or happenings effecting NCOA	Membership	Email	As needed
NCOAdvocate Newsletter	NATCO	One page informational email to keep the membership informed	Membership	Via Voters Voice / Email	Daily, Weekly
NCOA Website	HQs Staff	To keep membership informed of upcoming events and chapter activities	Membership	Web	Updated Weekly
Chapter Activity updates	Chapter Chairmen	To keep membership and chapters informed of things going on across the country	Membership	NCOA Website, Email, FaceBook, Twitter	As needed
Auxiliary updates	Auxiliary President	To keep membership and chapters informed of things going on across the country	Auxiliary & Regular Membership	NCOA Website, Email	As needed
Chapter Issues	Membership Director	To advise and assist Chapters	Chapter Chairman	Email, Telephone	As needed
Videos	BoD/HQs Staff	To share and generate support for NCOA	Membership	Email/Website	As needed

#### 3.2 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Vehicle	Owner	Description/ Purpose	Target	Distribution Vehicle	Frequency
Congressional Testimony	BoD, NATCO  <b>Approval: BoD</b>	To rally Congressional support for various NCOA legislative resolutions	Congress and various House/Senate Subcommittees	Direct face-to-face testimony	As needed, or when opportunities present themselves
HQs updates/ NCOA Press Releases/	BoD, NATCO  <b>Approval: BoD</b>	To keep the membership informed of key events, actions or happenings effecting NCOA	Potential members	HQs Email distro group or all chapter chairmen group or sent to all	As needed

Congressional Testimony				Knights via the GK. Or, forwarded by any member that may receive the initial email	
NCOAdvocate Newsletter	NATCO	One page informational email to keep the membership informed	Potential members	Email forwarded by any member that may receive the initial email	Daily, Weekly
NCOA Website	HQs Staff	To keep potential membership informed of what NCOA is about and what we are doing to represent them	Potential members	Web	Updated as needed.  Recommend weekly
Videos	BoD/HQs Staff	To share and generate support for NCOA	Potential members	Youtube	As needed
FaceBook	TBD	To share and generate support for NCOA	Potential	FaceBook Updates	Daily, Weekly

### **3.3 COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES**

Develop a multi-level communication approach using our vast leadership network.

- Board of Directors Executive Committee-Serves as the Senior Champion of the NCOA Communications Plan, providing guidance for the development of our message to all target audiences.
- Select members of the Board of Directors, International Auxiliary Board of Directors, Grand Knight, the Knights Executive Council and volunteers may serve on the Strategic Communications Plan Working Group (SCPWG), providing input into the development of the SCP.
- Board of Directors, International Auxiliary board members, Grand Knight and Past Grand Knights, Knights - Serve as chief communicators of the Communication Plan; delivering the messages to all target audiences and ensuring all team members consistently and appropriately do the same. Provide feedback to the SCPWG.
- All Members of NCOA- deliver NCOAs messages to all target audiences.
- Utilize staff as well as qualified volunteer members to meet our goals and priorities.
- Incorporate social media into our SCP.

### **3.4 FUTURE COMMUNICATION VEHICLES**

Additional communication vehicles, i.e. social media, will be explored as an option to increase membership information flow and ultimately getting our message out to the masses. The social media sites and capabilities such as Twitter, Kakao and a multitude of others will be explored as NCOA's social media expertise expands. This may necessitate hiring or through the use of volunteers to get the immediate expertise required to exploit this capability. In order to remain a viable organization and to meet the needs of our new younger social media savvy military generation we will need to learn this new social media as soon as possible. Establish a means to notify membership of changes to our website through the use of RSS feeds.

## **4 MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE**

### **4.1 MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT**

1. Fall-SCPWG receives guidance from the BoD to improve the message
2. Winter-SCPWG returns recommendation for improvement to the BoD
3. Early Spring- The BoD approves the message
4. Spring-BoD sends the new message to Key Leaders

### **4.2 FEEDBACK & EVALUATION**

1. Summer-collect feedback from the membership. Through email, telephone and probably put space on the website (for members only) to evaluate the performance of the association.

We should also ask:

- How well is the message working?
  - What could be improved on?
  - What is working?
  - What is not working?
2. Late summer-BoD develops the new message/messages, and then back to 4.1 #1.

## 5 PLAN APPROVALS

The undersigned acknowledge they have reviewed the NCOA Strategic Communications Plan and agree with the approach it presents. Changes to this Communications Plan will be coordinated with and approved by the undersigned or their designated representatives.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Chairman, Communications Committee

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Chairman, NCOA Board of Directors

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 APPENDIX: KEY TERMS

The following table provides definitions for terms relevant to this document.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
BoD	Board of Directors
HQ	Headquarters
KST	Knights of the Square Table
NATCO	National Capitol Office
NCOA	Non-Commissioned Officers Association
SCP	Strategic Communications Plan
USO	United Service Organization
VA	Veterans Administration