



**2024 Department of the Air Force Public Affairs  
Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell  
Media Awards Guidelines**

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Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

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The Department of the Air Force Media Awards are named in memory of Chief Master Sgt. Douglas Morrell, a combat photographer who bailed out of aircraft three times, earned two Purples Hearts and a Bronze Star, and was held as prisoner of war during World War II.

Morrell's passion for production started at a young age when he shot and sold his first motion picture for \$10 at age 12.

He joined the Army Air Corps in 1939, beginning a career that would go on to span three wars. In 1943, by then in the Army Air Forces, he was transferred to Africa and Italy, where he flew 33 missions as a combat photographer in B-17 Flying Fortress and B-24 Liberator bombers, hitting Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Yugoslavia, France and Romania.

In March 1944, his B-24 bomber was disabled by anti-aircraft fire over Romania, forcing the crew to bail out. He evaded capture for 27 days, ultimately making his way to Italy.

In May 1944, while documenting his fifth raid against the oil refineries at Ploesti, his aircraft was disabled by anti-aircraft fire and Morrell bailed out as the aircraft exploded. He was captured by German troops upon landing and was held prisoner in Bucharest until released by the advancing Russian Army 4 ½ months later.

He was then sent to Tinian in the Pacific to document a "special" bomb drop over Hiroshima, Japan, but was not aboard the Enola Gay due to a last-minute decision. During a 3-month stay in Tinian, then-Staff Sgt. Morrell flew six B-29 Superfortress firebomb missions over Japan as practice for the raid on Hiroshima.

He later was assigned to the 509th Composite Group and sent to Kwajalein Atoll as a senior photographer to document the atomic tests at Bikini in the Marshall Islands. Morrell documented two devices set off during the test in Bikini lagoon.

Upon returning again to the U.S., he documented guided missile tests in the Sahara Desert in Africa for two months and Alaska for two more months. Morrell was voluntarily discharged from the Army Air Forces Feb. 12, 1947, seven months before the Air Force became a separate service from the Army.

Morrell returned to service with the Air Force in March 1952 during the Korean War. He served three years as lead and standardization first photo on RB/GRB-36 Peacemaker aircraft with the 99th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington.

He served as a loadmaster aboard C-124 Globemaster aircraft at Pinecastle Air Force Base in Orlando, Florida, for three months before pursuing a special assignment as an Air Force Advisor (Photo) to the Alabama Air National Guard in Birmingham for five years.

Morrell was then reassigned to the Air Photographic and Charting Service's 1365th Photo Squadron in Orlando as chief documentary cameraman until September 1963, when he was sent to the Panama Canal Zone to start a new detachment for coverage of Air Force activities in Latin

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

America. He received commendations from three Latin American presidents for coverage of civic actions in their countries. Morrell arrived in Panama as a technical sergeant and left five years later as a chief-select.

He was assigned to Detachment 2, 1352nd Audiovisual Squadron, at Ent Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and was sent to Keflavik, Iceland, for three months to fly with F-102 Delta Dagger fighters intercepting Russian "Bear" aircraft over the North Sea. He documented a total of 24 intercepts (14 in one day) and was made an honorary member of the 57th Fighter/Interceptor Squadron.

Morrell was then assigned to the 601st Photo Flight at Korat Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand, in November 1968 as the Operations NCOIC and chief of Aircrew Standardization.

At age 50, he was on a mission over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos when his aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. Morrell and the pilot bailed out and were fired upon by the anti-aircraft gunners. He was picked up by a rescue helicopter nine hours after he hit the ground. After three months in the hospital at Clark Air Base in the Philippines, Morrell was reassigned to Headquarters Aerospace Audiovisual Service at Norton Air Force Base, California, where he served as chief of Aircrew Standardization for AAVS worldwide until he retired in 1974.

He returned to HQ AAVS in 1980 as a civilian, critiquing documentary projects and coordinating the Air Force combat documentation program.

During the next 15 years he conducted annual 2-day seminars on Combat Camera documentation techniques at each AAVS unit worldwide. He wrote operational regulations, including a comprehensive Combat Camera Documentation Techniques manual, the Combat Camera Basic Unit Supplement and supplements to Department of Defense and Air Force regulations and directives.

Chief Morrell managed the Military Cinematographer of the Year competition for the Department of Defense and was a leader in the establishment of the Military Motion Media Studies Program at Syracuse University that he managed for the Air Force.

Prior to his retirement in 1994 he was awarded the Combat Camera Lifetime Achievement Award and, on his retirement, the Air Force Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award. Chief Morrell died Sept. 2, 2017, at age 98 and is buried at the Riverside, California, National Cemetery.

## Table of Contents

1. The Awards Program	7
2. Points of Contact	7
3. Milestones	7
4. Eligibility	8
5. Entry Criteria	10
6. Entry Disqualification and Rejection	11
7. How to Submit Entries	12
8. Entry Authority	12
9. Notification of Winners	13
10. Judging Guidance	13
11. DoD Eligible Award Categories	15
a. Communicator of the Year	15
b. Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year	16
c. Military Graphic Designer of the Year	17
d. Civilian Photographer of the Year	18
e. Military Photographer of the Year	19
f. Civilian Videographer of the Year	20
g. Military Videographer of the Year	20
h. Civilian Writer of the Year	21
i. Military Writer of the Year	22
12. Department of the Air Force Award Categories	22
a. Graphic Design Products	22
1) Animation	22
2) Digital Art	23
3) Identity Design	23
4) Layout & Design	23
5) Photo Illustration	23
b. Photo Products	23
1) Feature Photo	23
2) News Photo	23
3) Photo Series	24
4) Portrait	24
5) Sports Photo	24
6) New Photographer of the Year	24
c. Video Products	25

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards

Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

1) Video Documentation (B-Roll)	25
2) Multimedia Product	25
3) Video Series	26
4) Video Story	26
5) Video Spot	26
6) Audio Product	26
7) Short-form Production Video	26
8) Long-form Production Video	27
9) New Videographer of the Year	27
d. Written Products	28
1) Commentary	28
2) Feature Story	28
3) Information Story	28
4) Photojournalism	28
5) New Writer of the Year	29
e. Music Products	29
1) Live Recording Instrumental	29
2) Live Recording Vocal	30
3) Studio Recording	30
4) Large Instrumental Composition/Arrangement	30
5) Small Instrumental Composition/Arrangement	31
6) Jazz Instrumental Composition/Arrangement	31
7) Original Popular Song	32
8) Music Video Production or Live Stream, Short-form	32
9) Music Video Production or Live Stream, Long-form	33
10) New Musician of the Year	33
11) Musician of the Year	34
Appendix A - Federal Law and DoD Policy	35
Appendix B - Terms	36
Appendix C - Caption Examples	37
Appendix D - Policy Review Checklist	39

## 1. The Awards Program

a. The Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards (short title is Morrell Media Awards (MMA)) are a Department of the Air Force Public Affairs competition for Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, and Department of the Air Force civilians sponsored and administered by the Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs. The awards recognize military and civilian public affairs practitioners and military musicians for excellence in outstanding achievements in furthering Air Force, Space Force, and Department of Defense communication objectives. It also fosters an environment of innovation and growth, leading to more effective communication programs. Individuals and units receive awards for outstanding achievements in furthering Air Force, Space Force, and Department of Defense communication objectives. The 2024 contest is the 69th iteration of the competition. At the DoD level, awards are administered by the Defense Media Activity.

b. Entry requirements and category descriptions for the 2024 MMA competition were created and approved by Department of the Air Force PA leadership.

c. There are nine categories in the 2024 competition that will be forwarded to the DoD level. The highest-level award in the DoD program is the Defense Communicator of the Year Award, which recognizes the individual who used his or her photography, writing, videography, and other skills to communicate information and stories relevant to his or her unit or command.

d. There are administrative changes to this year's nomination criteria. This year's MMA does include a DoD Visual Information Policy Review Checklist. This checklist should be used at all levels.

**2. Points of Contact.** For information regarding entry requirements, individuals should first contact their MAJCOM coordinator. For general information or questions specific to the DAF-level program contact the following personnel.

a. David Steele (Primary)  
[david.steele.24@us.af.mil](mailto:david.steele.24@us.af.mil)  
301-885-9926 (cell)

b. SMSgt Scott Wise (for music categories only)  
[scott.wise.1@us.af.mil](mailto:scott.wise.1@us.af.mil)

## 3. Milestones

Name	Date	Description
Competition year	January 1 to December 31, 2024	Products must have been uploaded to DVIDS between Jan. 1, 2024, and 11:59

Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

		p.m. <b>Eastern Standard Time</b> on Dec. 31, 2024.
Early bird entry submission window	November 1, 2024	Entrants can enter submissions
Submission deadline to SAF/PA (Submissions to MAJCOM will set by individual MAJCOM)	February 29, 2025	Last day for MAJCOM and Band submissions to be forwarded to SAF/PAI and SAF/PAB.
Policy review and judging of entries	March 1-March 22 2025	Compliance review and judging of all entries
Official results released	March 26, 2025	Department of the Air Force announces winners
Submissions to DMA	March 26, 2025	Service submission deadlines to DoD
DoD Policy Review	April 7-11, 2025	Compliance review
DoD Judging	April 28, 2025	DoD Judging begins
DoD winners announced to services	May 8, 2025	Winner's list sent to Service's PA/VI chiefs, Service' contest coordinators, and NGB PA office.
Winner's list posted	May 15, 2025	Winning entries posted to DVIDS.
After-Action review	June 10-11, 2025	Conduct after-action review with Service representatives.

#### 4. Eligibility

a. All entries for the MMAs must be submitted through their respective MAJCOM, FOA, DRU or DoD activity (see paragraph 8, Entry Authority). No individual may enter the competition directly. Only one entry per category may be submitted.

b. SAF/PA is responsible for establishing DAF-specific procedures to judge and select their qualified entries for submission to the DoD Media Awards competition. Each unit and MAJCOM will ensure military nominees meet quality force standards prior to their entrance to the MMAs.

c. Products entering the MMAs must be the work of active-duty, Reserve, and National Guard members of the DAF as well as DAF U.S. government civilian employees with the photographer, journalist, photojournalist, videographer, broadcast journalist, graphic artist, mass communication specialist, public affairs specialist, band specialist, or equivalent occupation specialty. Products created by service members and civilian employees who leave the DAF during the year may not enter the competition. Personnel assigned to the Civil Air Patrol are prohibited from competing unless they meet the eligibility criteria stated above.

d. Individuals can enter a product in any award category as long as they carry one of the occupation specialties listed below.



Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

- 1) Enlisted: 3N0XX, 3N1XX, 3N2XX, or 3N3XX
- 2) Civilian: 1001, 1020, 1035, 1060, 1071, 1082 or 1084

e. Products produced by personnel assigned to “Stars and Stripes” newspapers are not eligible to participate. Non-appropriated fund (NAF) products and NAF personnel are also ineligible.

f. Products created by government contractor employees are not authorized to compete. Team (unit) products produced with the assistance of government contract employees are eligible to compete in the MMAs.

g. Local national employees performing a DAF public affairs function may compete at the MAJCOM or lower level in all categories open to DAF civilians, that are commensurate with their assigned position description. **However, no host-nation employee winner(s) will be forwarded to the DAF level of the MMAs. Host nation civilians are not allowed to complete at the DoD level and will be disqualified if forwarded to the DAF level.**

h. Civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, defense agencies, DoD field activities, and joint task forces, must refer to the DMMA competition rules for entry information. The DAF will not judge civilian or unit awards from the Defense Media Activity, joint/unified commands, or other defense agencies. U.S. government civilians assigned to the Defense Media Activity’s military production divisions are ineligible to submit their individual and unit entries to the Services’ competitions. DMA will judge these individuals and submit winners to the MMAs.

i. If a member was assigned to a different MAJCOM (or unit) in the awards year, it is the current unit of assignment that the person will submit through, regardless of time in the unit. It is the member’s responsibility to update the unit of assignment in DVIDS when PCSing or changing unit of assignment. If the unit of assignment is not updated, the member may be disqualified.

j. Air National Guard members and U.S. government civilian staff members assigned to Air National Guard units will enter individual and unit categories through the National Guard Bureau, which will, in turn, submit winning entries through the Services' competitions.

k. Reserve members will enter through their respective Service competition.

l. For the purpose of the MMAs, deployed broadcast networks are not considered a part of DMA. These submissions must be made through ACC. All other deployed personnel will submit individual entries through their home stations and major commands. Unit awards for deployed locations will be submitted through ACC.

m. Guard or Reserve Airmen that also fill DAF civilian PA positions are allowed to submit separate products done in their two different capacities. These personnel may not submit mixed products from military and civilian status to compete in a category. If the product is authored by TSgt XXX, that product is eligible for military categories only. The same rule applies for products created in a civilian status.

n. Air Reserve Technicians. ARTs are eligible to submit products for the MMAs. All products must be entered in the correct categories based on the technician's status at the time of product publication. Technicians' status will be determined by the byline/author name of the original publication. If the product is authored by TSgt XXX, that product is eligible for military categories only. The same rule applies for products created in a civilian status. Technicians may not submit mixed products from military and civilian status to compete in any category.

o. Bands. All submissions to the music categories from Active Duty and Air National Guard Bands, to include Airmen assigned to the SHAPE International Band will be submitted directly to SAF/PAB. The SHAPE International Band is not eligible for the unit music awards.

## 5. Entry Criteria

a. Only Airmen with the rank of E-6 and below and DAF public affairs civilians working in their job series of GS-11 and below are eligible for the MMAs (see paragraph 4.d.). Individuals promoted to E-7 or above or GS-12 and above **anytime** during the competition year are ineligible.

b. Products submitted to the competition must have been created, approved for public release, and published to **DVIDS between Jan. 1, 2024, and 11:59 p.m. EST on Dec. 31, 2024.**

c. All products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and meet the highest standards of production, execution and professional excellence. Products must convey, by content and delivery, relevant information that supports the command's information and/or mission needs and, therefore, must be authorized products approved for public release. Consequently, ***all products must have military or DoD relevance.***

d. No product may be entered more than once, regardless of category.

e. Entries to the Communicator of the Year category may be from a military member or DAF civilian employee if the entrant meets the eligibility criteria listed in paragraph 4. The entrant may enter multiple of-the-year-categories during the same competition year. Products may not be used more than once within a category entry or within separate category entries. If duplicate products are discovered, the unit or MAJCOM will not be allowed to replace the duplicate product nor will they be allowed to submit a replacement entry.

f. Each “of-the-year” entry requires multiple products highlighting the entrant’s work. In order to create the entry, *each product must be uploaded and published to DVIDS as a separate file.*

g. Each graphic, photo or video product must contain an embedded caption and other required metadata. Also assign a Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) as required in the DoD Visual Information Style Guide and Change 2 to DoDI 5040.02, “Visual Information,” dated April 23, 2018. Captions for products released from operational areas of responsibility will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Partial or condensed captions may be allowed if directed by the release authority or higher headquarters within the operational command. While editing metadata during upload to DVIDS, list the person who created the product in the credit field and ensure their name is included in the caption.

h. All products must comply with federal law and DoD policy. See Appendix A.

i. A thorough policy adherence review and entry eligibility screening will be conducted on all VI products. When the review is complete, the team will submit any discrepancies with recommendations for disqualification or corrections.

## 6. Entry Disqualification and Rejection

a. Products entered by personnel not meeting eligibility requirements listed in paragraph 4 will be disqualified.

b. Products that do not meet the specific requirements listing in paragraph 5, paragraph 10 and paragraph 11 in this guide or that fail to follow federal law or established DoD policy will be disqualified.

c. Entries not uploaded and published to DVIDS, unless otherwise stated (band entries), will be disqualified.

d. Individual products with more than one name in a byline or credit will be disqualified.

e. Unit awards means that the product was created by more than one individual. Since it is a team product, the VIRIN must contain a DVIAN in place of the Vision ID. List all contributors in the credit field during metadata review. Productions must have a Product Identification Number (PIN). **Unit entries without a DVIAN in the VIRIN, a PIN issued by AFPAA, and a completed production folder submitted to AFPAA will be disqualified.**

f. Products containing copyright protected or licensed music, video, or graphics will be disqualified unless clarified in the caption. Individual or personal licenses may not be used in accordance with DoD policy.

g. Challenges will be decided by SAF/PA.

## 7. How to Submit Entries.

a. MAJCOMs, FOAs, DRUs, or DoD will only submit/forward *first place winners* for the DoD and DAF MMAs to SAF/PA. Units, MAJCOMs, FOAs, and DRUs may award additional winners.

b. Entry to the MMAs will be accomplished through DVIDS. Entry is a two-step process.

(1) Upload and publish products to DVIDS at <https://www.dvidshub.net/>. Once logged in, go to the training section for upload instructions. Publishing graphics after they have been uploaded requires extra steps; refer to DVIDS website for instructions. Only products uploaded and published to DVIDS between Jan. 1, 2024, and 11:59 p.m. EST Dec. 31, 2024, are eligible to enter. Requests for exceptions will be denied.

(2) Select products using the DVIDS Awards interface module under the Admin Portal. Instructions may be found on the DVIDS website. Entries must be submitted through the DVIDS Awards interface module to enter the competition. Requests for exceptions to this rule will be denied. The entry submitter may NOT select their own entry as the winner. This second step must be done by a supervisor or third party and they must certify the entry meets eligibility. This separation rule also applies to entries submitted on behalf of a content producer.

c. The MAJCOM, FOA, DRU or DoD activity will submit a list of their nominees by 11:59 p.m. EST February 29, 2024, and will ensure military nominees meet quality force standards prior to submission. MAJCOMs will provide the entry information on the spreadsheet provided by SAF/PA.

d. Should a name on the submission list be different from the name associated with the product in DVIDS, the name associated with the entrant's DVIDS profile will take precedence. Should the unit's name and address differ from that listed in DVIDS, the information in DVIDS will take precedence.

e. Entry to the MMAs, except the music categories, will be accomplished through DVIDS. Send or upload the Music entries to SAF/PAB in accordance with guidance from contest coordinator.

## 8. Entry Authority.

a. Submissions to the MMAs must be approved by the contestant's chain of command and submitted through their respective MAJCOM, FOA, DRU or DoD activity.

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

b. Uniformed Airmen assigned to offices under the Secretary of Defense may compete in individual categories of the media awards through their corresponding geographic MAJCOM/FOA/DRU public affairs office. Geographic OPRs are:

- (1) Airmen assigned to United States European Command (EUCOM) and United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) submit through U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE).
- (2) Airmen in United States Pacific Command (PACOM), including Alaska, submit through Pacific Air Forces (PACAF).
- (3) Airmen in United States Central Command (CENTCOM) submit through Air Combat Command (ACC).
- (4) Airmen in United States Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) submit through Air Mobility Command (AMC).
- (5) Airmen in United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM) submit through Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC).
- (6) Airmen in United States Space Command (SPACECOM) submit through United States Space Force (USSF).
- (7) Non-Defense Media Activity (DMA) Airmen in United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) submit through SAF/PA.
- (8) Airmen assigned to DMA, DMA-Atlantic or DMA-Pacific submit through their appropriate headquarters or regional headquarters to DMA.
- (9) Airmen assigned to Combat Camera and subordinate units submit through Air Force Public Affairs Agency (AFPAA).
- (10) Airmen in United States Strategic Command (STRATCOM) submit through Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC).

**9. Notification of Winners.** Department of the Air Force Notification - notification of winners will be sent to the field by SAF/PA.

## **10. Judging Guidance**

a. Judges will be selected for each medium: graphic design, photo, video, and journalism. Selection criteria for judges will be based on their professional experience in the communication and visual information fields.

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
 Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

b. All entries will be judged on professional excellence, communication impact, originality, and caption / description. The rubric below will be used in the DVIDS system by judges for all entries at the Major Command (MAJCOM) and higher. Judges’ decisions are final. The judges’ discretionary comments and feedback will be provided to the MAJCOM after the competition, if available.

Category	Weighed Score	Rating	Score
Professional Excellence	40%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
Communication Impact	35%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
Originality / Military Relevance	15%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
Caption / Description	10%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
			Total: 0

c. If no entry in a category is considered within contest standards, judges may choose to withhold any award within that category.

d. An entrant of a category may NOT be a judge in the same category. When practical, supervisors may NOT be a judge of a category in which subordinates have entered.

e. Captions for products released from operational areas of responsibility should be carefully reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Partial or condensed captions may be allowed if directed by the release authority or higher headquarters within the operational command.

**f. Department of the Air Force Awards forwarded to the Department of Defense.** DoD level awards will be given in nine categories: (1) Defense Communicator of the Year, (2) Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year, (3) Military Graphic Designer of the Year, (4) Civilian Photographer of the Year, (5) Military Photographer of the Year, (6) Civilian Videographer of the Year, (7) Military Videographer of the Year, (8) Thomas Jefferson Civilian Writer of the Year, and (9) Thomas Jefferson Military Writer of the Year.

(1) MMA winners in the “of the Year” categories are authorized to wear the Air Force Recognition Ribbon (military) or Air Force Recognition Ribbon lapel pin (civilian). The AF recognition lapel pin is available from local civilian personnel offices or online [National Stock Number (NSN) 8455-01-127-4186]. See AFMAN 36-2806, Awards and Memorialization Program.

(2) *Requests to replace a lost or misplaced trophy will not be honored.*

**g. Department of the Air Force Awards.** Only Airmen with the rank of E-6 and below and DAF public affairs civilians GS-11 and below working in their job series (see paragraph 4.d.) are eligible for MMAs, with the exception of the band awards.

(1) DAF-level judges will select first-place winners only for the MMAs. Awards will be given for all categories listed in paragraphs 11 and paragraph 12.

(2) First place finishers, individuals and units, will receive a trophy/plaque. Only one trophy/plaque will be given for unit awards.

(3) ***Unit awards with only one name in the byline and/or a Vision ID in the VIRIN will be disqualified.*** Because it is a unit (team) product, the VIRIN must contain the unit's DVIAN in place of an individual's Vision ID. The production must have a Product Identification Number (PIN). List all contributors in the credit field during metadata review. Entries without a DVIAN in the VIRIN, PIN issued by AFPAA, and a completed production folder submitted to AFPAA will be disqualified.

***h. Products with more than one name, with the exception of unit awards, in a byline or credit line will be disqualified.***

i. Captions for products released from operational areas of responsibility should be carefully reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Partial or condensed captions may be allowed if directed by the release authority or higher headquarters within the operational command.

**11. DoD Eligible Award Categories.** The first-place winners in the “of the Year” categories (except Music categories, New Photographer, New Videographer, and New Writer OTY) in the MMAs are the only awards that will be forwarded to the DoD Media Awards. All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN. Refer to the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) for specific details. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for public release.

**a. Communicator of the Year.** Open to both military and civilian personnel as long as they meet eligibility criteria listed in paragraph 4. Entry must be a portfolio profiling the work credited to one individual. Submit entry as a portfolio within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

(1) The portfolio will consist of ***five*** products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

(a) One print story (Must be either a commentary, feature story, information story or one story of a series.)

(b) One video story

(c) One photo (Must be either a news photo, feature photo, portrait or one photo from a photo series.)

- (d) Two products of the candidate's choice (Must not be a photo series,)
- (2) Other requirements:
- (a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.
  - (b) Only one of the candidate's choices may be a photojournalism product (3-5 photos and a story), but it must be on a topic or event different from the other products in the portfolio. Only one photojournalism product may be entered as part of the portfolio.
  - (c) Any of the candidate's choice may *not* be a photo series.
  - (d) Do not extract and submit component elements of a product as a candidate's choice if that product in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to this or another category. For example, do not extract and submit as a logo or other graphic from a multimedia product if the entire multimedia product is being submitted as a candidate's choice to this or another category. This rule, however, does not prohibit individuals from submitting a graphic element extracted from a team-produced video, a multimedia product or a video credited to another person, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant and it must have been uploaded and published to DVIDS as a separate file.

**b. Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year.** Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

- (1) Entry must consist of *six* graphic design products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:
- (a) One layout & design product
  - (b) One digital art product
  - (c) Four graphic design products of the candidate's choice
- (2) Other requirements:
- (a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.
  - (b) Do not submit two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, watercolors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal; pictures of displays; and fine art pieces.



(c) Do not extract and submit component elements of a multimedia product, video story or video spot as one of the six graphic design products if the multimedia product, video story or video spot in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to another category. This does not prohibit individuals from extracting a graphic element they created for a team-produced product or a product credited to another individual, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant.

(d) Do not extract and submit component elements from a layout & design product as a separate product if the layout & design product in its entirety is being entered by the entrant to this or other category. Conversely, do not enter a layout & design product that contains elements submitted as digital art and identity design products. Each product must be separate and distinct from the other.

(e) Do not submit layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents.

**c. Military Graphic Designer of the Year.** Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

(1) Entry must consist of *six* graphic design products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

(a) One layout & design product

(c) One digital art product

(d) Four graphic design products of the candidate's choice

(2) Other requirements:

(a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.

(b) Do not submit two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, watercolors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal; pictures of displays; and fine art pieces.

(c) Do not extract and submit component elements of a multimedia product, video story or video spot as one of the six graphic design products if the multimedia product, video story or video spot in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to another category. This does not prohibit individuals from extracting a graphic element they created for a team-produced product or a product credited to another individual, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant.

(d) Do not extract and submit component elements from a layout & design product as a separate product if the layout & design product in its entirety is being entered by the

entrant to this or other category. Conversely, do not enter a layout & design product that contains elements submitted into the digital art and identity design products. Each product must be separate and distinct from the other.

(e) Do not submit layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents.

**d. Civilian Photographer of the Year.** Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **portfolio** within DVIDS Awards interface module.

(1) Each entry must contain *seven* photo products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

(a) One news photo

(b) One feature photo

(c) One portrait

(d) Three photos of the candidate's choice

(e) One photo series consisting of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos. Do not submit a composite layout. **Tip:** Create the photo series as a collection within DVIDS before adding the collection to the portfolio and attempting to create the entry.

(2) Entry will consist of 13 to 18 images in total.

(3) Other requirements:

(a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.

(b) Submit only one photo series.

(c) Photo illustrations are not authorized.

(d) Do not submit a photojournalism product as a candidate's choice.

(e) Do not submit photos from a photojournalism product if it is part of the Communicator of the Year portfolio.

(f) Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another category.

(g) **Do not submit the same photo more than once.** Do not enter the same photo from the photo series as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another entry. This rule does not prevent submission of a different photo from that same operation as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. Note, however, the purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, products from more than one operation or event may earn higher scores.

**e. Military Photographer of the Year.** Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **portfolio** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

(1) The portfolio will contain *seven* photo products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

(a) One news photo

(b) One feature photo

(c) One portrait

(d) Three photos of the candidate's choice

(e) One photo series consisting of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos. Do not submit a composite layout. **Tip:** Create the photo series as a collection within DVIDS before adding the collection to the portfolio and attempting to create the entry.

(2) Entry will consist of 13 to 18 images in total.

(3) Other requirements:

(a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.

(b) Submit only one photo series.

(c) Photo illustrations are not authorized.

(d) Do not submit a photojournalism product as a candidate's choice.

(e) Do not submit photos from a photojournalism product if it is part of the Communicator of the Year portfolio.

(f) Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another category.

(g) **Do not submit the same photo more than once.** Do not enter the same photo from the photo series as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another entry. This rule does not prevent submission of a different photo from that same operation as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. Note, however, the purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, products from more than one operation or event earn higher scores.

**f. Civilian Videographer of the Year.** Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

(1) The entry will contain *four* video products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

(a) One b-roll product

(b) One video story

(c) Two products of the candidate's choice, either a video story, multimedia product, video spot, or one video from a video series. A video designed exclusively for use on a social media platform may also be entered as a candidate's choice.

(2) Other requirements:

(a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.

(b) A b-roll video may not be submitted as a candidate's choice however, a portion of the b-roll may be used to create the candidate's choice products (e.g. video story, multimedia product, etc.).

(c) Slates are not required.

(d) Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.

**g. Military Videographer of the Year.** Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

(1) The entry will contain *four* video products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

- (a) One b-roll product
  - (b) One video story
  - (c) Two products of the candidate's choice, either a video story, multimedia product, video spot, or one video from a video series. A video designed exclusively for use on a social media platform may also be entered as a candidate's choice.
- (2) Other requirements:
- (a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.
  - (b) A b-roll video may not be submitted as a candidate's choice however, a portion of the b-roll may be used to create the candidate's choice products (e.g. video story, multimedia product... etc.).
  - (c) Slates are not required.
  - (d) Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.

**h. Civilian Writer of the Year.** Entry must be work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

- (1) Entry must contain *five* products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:
- (a) One information story
  - (b) One feature story
  - (c) Three stories of the candidate's choice
- (2) Other requirements:
- (a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.
  - (b) Products must be from separate events.
  - (c) Do not submit a photojournalism product in its entirety. A story from a photojournalism product may be entered as a candidate's choice, but only if the entire photojournalism product (photos and story) is not entered into the Communicator of the Year category.
  - (d) Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS. Do **not** upload PDF files.

**i. Military Writer of the Year.** Entry must be work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

- (1) Entry must contain *five* products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:
  - (a) One information story
  - (b) One feature story
  - (c) Three stories of the candidate's choice
- (2) Other requirements:
  - (a) Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.
  - (b) Products must be from separate events.
  - (c) Do not submit a photojournalism product in its entirety. A story from a photojournalism product may be entered as a candidate's choice, but only if the entire photojournalism product (photos and story) is not entered into the Communicator of the Year category.
  - (d) Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS. Do **not** upload PDF files.

**12. Department of the Air Force Award Categories.** *Only Airmen with the rank of E-6 and below and DAF public affairs civilians GS-11 and below working in their job series are eligible for MMAs, with the exception of the band awards* (see paragraph 4.d.). All ranks are eligible to be part of a unit award. All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN, as required by the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#). In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for public release. Products that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified. These products are not forwarded to the DoD competition.

**a. Graphic Design Products.** Upload products to DVIDS using the graphics upload portal. Once uploaded, **ensure the graphics are then published to DVIDS**. This requires extra steps. See DVIDS website for instructions. **Ineligible:** two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, watercolors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal; pictures of displays; and fine art pieces. Ensure products contain the required metadata, including a VIRIN and a caption prior to uploading to DVIDS.

- (1) **Animation.** Products include various media components that allow for animation, such as video production elements, digital displays, web animations or info graphics.

Any animation style is allowed, such as 2-D, 2.5-D, 3-D, or stop motion. Standard lower thirds do not qualify as animation, even if motion is present. Must not use any copyrighted materials, such as movie clips and sound bites or music without broadcast rights. Product may not contain copyrighted rigs, props or characters. Upload to DVIDS as a high-resolution MP4 or SVG file. **Award type: Individual.**

(2) **Digital Art**. Original work created by digital means. Examples include digital paintings, vector art, and 3-D renderings. A hand-drawn sketch, which is then digitized, may be used as the starting point, but these marks may not be visible in the final product. Does *not* include animation, cartoons, comic strips, and still photographs enhanced by digital means. **Award type: Individual.**

(3) **Identity Design**. Original work that represents a logo or crest that was used in some kind of official military capacity. Examples include unit coin designs, team logos and unit crests. Unit crests must have been registered with the appropriate office of heraldry prior to entry. Entrant must be prepared to provide proof of registration. **Award Type: Individual.**

(4) **Layout & Design**. Single- or two-page layouts created using elements from various sources. Examples include info charts, info graphics, flyers, certificates, CD covers, cover art, and posters. All must be completed by the entrant, but elements can come from other sources. Entry is limited to two pages that may be extracted from a larger work published between Jan. 1, 2024, and Dec. 31, 2024. Layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents are **not** allowed. **An entry created and entered in the Digital Art category cannot enter this category.** For example, adding elements to a Digital Art entry and submitting it as a Layout and Design entry. **Using a Digital Art entry as part of the layout is also not permitted.** **Award Type: Individual.**

(5) **Photo Illustrations**. Single image or graphic created using a single or multiple images. Images used may be sourced from other means (i.e. not the nominee), but 100% of graphic production must be from the nominee. **Must be properly identified as a photo illustration in the caption.** **Award Type: Individual.**

**b. Photo Products.** Upload entries in DVIDS as a high-resolution file. Ensure products contain the required metadata, including a VIRIN and a caption prior to uploading to DVIDS.

(1) **Feature Photo**. Storytelling picture not news related, usually a situation that has strong human interest or a fresh view of a commonplace occurrence featuring a military organization, military equipment, employees or family members. **Award Type: Individual.**

(2) **News Photo**. Scheduled or unscheduled news event featuring a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. **Award Type: Individual.**

**(3) Photo Series.** A series of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos that depict a military or military-related storyline or theme, including a military operation or contingency, or participation in a military exercise or other training event. ***Coverage of the event must be preplanned and deliberate.*** Photos of a cancer victim receiving treatment over the course of the contest year are acceptable. Photos depicting one particular aspect of a military operation or exercise, or the entire event are also acceptable. Key is that the coverage was planned with a specific communication objective. Controlled and uncontrolled action photos are acceptable. **Award Type: Individual.**

**(4) Portrait.** A picture of a person that identifies and captures the essence of that person's character and depicts his or her personality. Subject must have a connection to the military. Only one person may be portrayed prominently (as the main subject) in the photo. Official photos are not allowed. **Award Type: Individual.**

**(5) Sports Photo.** A picture depicting some form of physical activity or sport (football, martial arts, swimming, etc.). Subjects must have a connection to the military. **Award Type: Individual.**

**(6) New Photographer of the Year.** Only Airmen in the rank of E-6 and below and DAF public affairs civilians up to GS-11, with no prior public affairs experience for 24 months or less upon award of an AFSC or series from paragraph 4.d., as certified by the submitting entry authority may enter. Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **portfolio** within the DVIDS Awards interface module. **Award Type: Individual.**

(a) The portfolio will contain *seven* photo products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

1 One news photo

2 One feature photo

3 One portrait

4 Three photos of the candidate's choice

5 One photo series consisting of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos. Do not submit a composite layout. Tip: It may be easier to create the photos series as a collection within DVIDS before attempting to create the entry.

(b) Entry must contain 13 to 18 images in total.

(c) Other requirements:



Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

1 Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.

2 Submit only one photo series.

3 Photo Illustrations are not authorized

4 Do not submit a photojournalism product as a candidate's choice.

5 Do not submit photos from a photojournalism product if it is part of the Communicator of the Year portfolio.

6 Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another category.

7 **Do not submit the same photo more than once.** Do not enter the same photo from the photo series as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. This rule does not prevent submission of a different photo from that same operation as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. Note, however, the purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, products from more than one operation or event may earn higher scores.

**c. Video Products.** Ensure product contains the required metadata, including a VIRIN and a caption prior to uploading to DVIDS.

**(1) Video Documentation (B-roll).** Product must be of the same military or military-related theme, and must be filmed by one individual in its entirety. Do not include reporter standups, narration, or music bed. Natural sound is allowed **and encouraged**. An interview with a subject matter expert may be included; however, the interview may not be used in the sound bed throughout. Some of the b-roll footage may also be used in a multimedia product, video story or video series produced by the same individual. Upload to DVIDS as one file. **Award Type: Individual.**

**(2) Multimedia Product.** Illustrates the use of visual storytelling techniques across multiple digital mediums while telling a story. Must have a military or DoD relevance. All forms of media are allowed: audio, video, photography, graphics, animation, or any other visual tool. **Product must use a minimum of four elements.** May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Product must be a single story produced and edited by one individual with at least 51 percent of the story's content created by that individual. Product may include dramatization if (1) the enhancement does not misrepresent the subject of the original, (2) it is clearly and readily apparent from the content that it is not intended to be an accurate representation of the actual event, and (3) the caption indicates

the product contains dramatization. See Enclosure 10 of DoD Instruction 5040.02 for specific requirements. Entry will be judged by the quality of storytelling and creative use of combined mediums. **Award Type: Individual.**

(3) **Video Series**. A series of at least two, but no more than five video stories on a common military-related or DoD-related theme. Must be planned in advance with each video clearly identified as part of a series with either an anchor lead, or a consistent opening and closing. For example, this video is the first (second, third, or fourth) in a series of four videos about <topic>. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. **Award Type: Individual.**

(4) **Video Story**. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Lower-thirds and an opening title are acceptable. The product must have military or DoD relevance. Entrant must have filmed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required. **Award Type: Individual.**

(5) **Video Spot**. Must be 60 seconds or less in duration. Must be the work of one individual in its entirety (planned, filmed and edited). Identify the target audience in the caption. **Award Type: Individual.**

(6) **Audio Product**. The target audience must be readily identifiable from the product. Story must be event/mission-oriented. Lead-in/tags are not required. Product may not be submitted in any other category **Award Type: Individual.**

(7) **Short-form Production Video**. A self-contained video production conveying military information using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production, and post-production. Sound, music, narration, and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. This is a unit award, which means that the product was created by more than one individual. Since it is a team product, the VIRIN must contain the unit's DVIAN in place of an individual's Vision ID. The production must have a Product Identification Number (PIN). *Entries without the unit's DVIAN in the VIRIN, a PIN issued by AFPAA, and a completed production folder submitted to AFPAA will be disqualified.* List all contributors in the credit field during metadata review. **Award Type: Unit.**

(a) **Production in its entirety must be 5 minutes or less in duration.**

(b) Product may not be submitted in any other category.

**(8) Long-form Production Video.** A self-contained video production conveying military information using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and, post-production. Sound, music, narration, and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. This is a unit award, which means that the product was created by more than one individual. Since it is a team product, the VIRIN must contain the unit's DVIAN in place of an individual's VISION ID. The production must have a Product Identification Number (PIN). ***Entries without the unit's DVIAN in the VIRIN, a PIN issued by AFPAA, and a completed production folder submitted to AFPAA will be disqualified.*** List all contributors in the credit field during metadata review. **Award Type: Unit.**

(a) **Entry must be greater than 5 minutes in duration.** Enter productions 15 minutes or less in duration in their entirety. Productions greater than 15 minutes must be condensed to 15 minutes or less for judging. Upload original production in DVIDS first and then upload the condensed version. While editing metadata during upload to DVIDS, list all contributors in the credit field and add a link to the original version in the caption. For example:

1 U.S. Soldiers assigned to the 842nd Signal Company participate in a unit history commemoration at Fort Bragg, N.C., April 21, 2022. (U.S. Army video by Cpl. Jane Smith, Sgt. 1st Class Jack Sparrow and Staff Sgt. Jill Jones.

2 This is a condensed version of the original production, which may be found at [www.dvidshub.net/video/XXXXXX/title-of-product](http://www.dvidshub.net/video/XXXXXX/title-of-product).

(b) Product may not be submitted in any other category.

**(9) New Videographer of the Year.** Only Airmen in the rank of E-6 and below and DAF public affairs civilians up to GS-11, with no prior public affairs experience for 24 months or less upon award of an AFSC or series from paragraph 4.d., as certified by the submitting entry authority may enter. Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module. **Award Type: Individual.**

(a) The entry will contain **four** video products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

1 One video documentation (b-roll) product

2 One video story

3 Two products of the candidate's choice, either a video story, multimedia product, video spot, or one video from a video series. A video designed

exclusively for use on a social media platform may also be entered as a candidate's choice.

(b) Other requirements:

1 Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.

2 A b-roll video may not be submitted as a candidate's choice however, a portion of the b-roll may be used to create the candidate's choice products (e.g. video story, multimedia product... etc.).

3 Slates are not required and should not be included.

4 Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.

**d. Written Products.** Upload stories to DVIDS as a news story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged. Ensure products contain the required metadata, including a VIRIN and a caption prior to uploading to DVIDS.

(1) **Commentary.** A commentary is an article that conveys the writer's opinion on a topic as specified in [DoDI 5120.04](#), DoD Newspapers, Magazines, Guides, and Installation Maps. Ghost-written are ineligible. Commentaries posted to an official military website are allowed as are commentaries published in a command newspaper, magazine or newsletter. Photos uploaded with the commentary to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged. **Award Type: Individual.**

(2) **Feature Story.** Feature story must have a focus that is maintained and supported throughout. Product may be a sports, human interest, personality or news feature. Photos uploaded with the story to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged. **Award Type: Individual.**

(3) **Information Story.** A story that conveys information while answering the five W's (who, what, where, when, why) and H (how). It can be written in different shapes and forms, including the Inverted Pyramid, Kabob/Wall Street Journal Style, Hour/Martini Glass, and Question and Answer. News and sports stories are allowed. Photos uploaded with the story to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged. **Award Type: Individual.**

(4) **Photojournalism.** Product includes a story and at least three, but no more than five photographs with embedded captions. All elements will be judged. Photos and story must be on the same topic and must be the work of one individual. **Award Type: Individual.**

**(5) New Writer of the Year.** Only Airmen in the rank of E-6 and below and DAF public affairs civilians up to GS-11, with no prior public affairs experience for 24 months or less upon award of an AFSC or series from paragraph 4.d., as certified by the submitting entry authority may enter. Entry must be the work of one individual. Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module. **Award Type: Individual.**

(a) The portfolio will contain *five* products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

- 1 One information story
- 2 One feature story
- 3 Three stories of the candidate's choice

(b) Other requirements:

- 1 Follow entry criteria listed in paragraph 5.
- 2 Products must be from separate events.
- 3 Do not submit a photojournalism product in its entirety. A story from a photojournalism product may be entered as a candidate's choice, but only if the entire photojournalism product (photos and story) is not entered into the Communicator of the Year category.
- 4 Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS. Do **not** upload PDF files.

**e. Music.** Upload all spreadsheets and products for categories 1 – 9 to the AF Bands SharePoint (instructions to follow); submit categories 10 and 11 directly to SAF/PAB via e-mail. One submission is allowed per location for each award category. The SHAPE International Band is not eligible for unit awards but assigned Air Force personnel are eligible for individual awards.

**(1) Live Recording Instrumental.** Outstanding live instrumental (instrumental only, without vocals, and can be an ensemble of any kind) recording of a piece during the 2024 calendar year. The genre of music is not being judged. A 'live' recording refers to the nature of the recording (one continuous recording without cuts/edits). An in-person/live audience is not specifically required. Judging will be based on the performance of the ensemble, audience appeal, tie to mission, and the quality of the recording. Audio recording only – no video. **Award Type: Unit**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Digital audio recording

2 Brief synopsis of the performance to include, but not limited to who, where, what, why, and when (location, target audience and size, special event), tie to mission, etc.

**(2) Live Recording Vocal.** Outstanding live recording of a song with vocal during the 2024 calendar year. This category is specifically targeting recordings that include vocals and can be an ensemble of any size. A ‘live’ recording refers to the nature of the recording (one continuous recording without cuts/edits). An in-person/live audience is not specifically required. The genre of music is not being judged. Judging will be based on the performance of the vocalist(s), ensemble, audience appeal, tie to mission, and the quality of the recording. Audio recording only – no video. **Award Type: Unit**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Digital audio recording

2 Brief synopsis of the performance to include, but not limited to who, where, what, why, and when (location, target audience and size, special event), tie to mission, etc.

**(3) Studio Recording.** Outstanding studio recording of a single musical work. Studio recording submissions must not feature guest artists. The work may be one track or multiple tracks of the same composition. The work (either CD or downloadable) must have been produced during the 2024 calendar year. The genre of music is not being judged. Judging will be based on the performance of the ensemble and the quality of the recording. Audio recording only – no video. **Award Type: Unit**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Digital audio recording

2 Brief synopsis of the performance to include, but not limited to who, where, what, why, and when (location, target audience and size, special event), tie to mission, etc.

**(4) Large Instrumental Composition/Arrangement.** Outstanding large instrumental is for a new original composition or arrangement written during the 2024 calendar year for concert band. Solo, vocal, or chamber works with concert band accompaniment are allowed. There is neither a time limit on the length of entries, nor is there a limit on the number of movements. Recording must be of the instrumentation provided in the score. MIDI/electronic mockups will not be accepted in lieu of performance. The genre of

music is not being judged. Judging will be based on originality, creativity, audience appeal, and how it represents the prescribed genre, target audience, and tie to mission. Recording quality will not be a primary factor considered in the judging process.

**Award Type: Individual or Team**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Score – PDF

2 Lyrics, if applicable

3 Digital audio recording

4 Brief synopsis of the intent of the work, when was it premiered, for whom, tie to mission, etc.

**(5) Small Instrumental Composition/Arrangement.** Outstanding small instrumental is for a new original composition or arrangement written during the 2024 calendar year for small groups (brass quintet, woodwind quintet, etc.). Solo or vocal with small group accompaniment are allowed. There is neither a time limit on the length of entries, nor is there a limit on the number of movements. Recordings must be of the instrumentation provided in the score. MIDI/electronic mockups will not be accepted in lieu of performance. The genre of music is not being judged. Judging will be based on originality, creativity, audience appeal, and how it represents the prescribed genre, target audience, and tie to mission. Recording quality will not be a primary factor considered in the judging process. **Award Type: Individual or Team**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Score – PDF

2 Lyrics, if applicable

3 Digital audio recording

4 Brief synopsis of the intent of the work, when was it premiered, for whom, tie to mission, etc.

**(6) Jazz Instrumental Composition/Arrangement.** Outstanding jazz instrumental is for a new original composition or arrangement written during the 2024 calendar year for any jazz ensemble (big band, combo, etc.). Solo or vocal with jazz ensemble accompaniment are allowed. There is neither a time limit on the length of entries, nor is there a limit on the number of movements. Recording must be of the instrumentation provided in the score. MIDI/electronic mockups will not be accepted in lieu of

performance. Judging will be based on originality, creativity, audience appeal, and how it represents the prescribed genre, target audience, and tie to mission. Recording quality will not be a primary factor considered in the judging process. **Award Type:**

**Individual or Team**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Score – PDF

2 Lyrics, if applicable

3 Digital audio recording

4 Brief synopsis of the intent of the work, when was it premiered, for whom, tie to mission, etc.

**(7) Original Popular Song.** Outstanding original popular song is for a new original popular song written by a member of the Air Force during the 2024 calendar year; both the music and lyrics must be original and written by a member of the Air Force. Suggested styles include, but are not limited to pop, rock, country, R&B, and funk. The song may be instrumental or with vocal. Judging will be based on originality, creativity, audience appeal, and how it represents the prescribed genre, target audience, and tie to mission. Recording quality will not be a primary factor considered in the judging process.

**Award Type: Individual or Team**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Score/Lead sheet – PDF

2 Lyrics, if applicable

3 Digital audio recording

4 Brief synopsis of the intent of the work, when was it premiered, for whom, tie to mission, etc.

**(8) Music Video Production or Livestream, Short-form.** A self-contained music video, created and recorded during the 2024 calendar year, using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and post-production. Sound, music, narration, and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. Production in its entirety must be 10 minutes or less in duration. The submission must be complete in and of itself; ‘highlight’ or ‘excerpt’ videos of a longer production are not eligible. The genre of music is not



being judged. Judging will be based on the performance of the ensemble, audience appeal, tie to mission, and the quality of the recording and video production.

Self-contained is defined as featuring Air Force band personnel. Manning Assists are authorized participants. Public Affairs or contracted entities may be utilized for various aspects of production, however, the band unit should play an active role in developing video concepts and producing the final product. **Award Type: Unit**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Video recording (web link)

2 Brief synopsis of the performance to include, but not limited to who, where, what, why, and when (location, target audience and size, special event), tie to mission, etc.

**(9) Music Video Production or Livestream, Long-form.** A self-contained music video, created and recorded during the 2024 calendar year, using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and post-production. Sound, music, narration, and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. Production in its entirety must be longer than 10 minutes in duration. Judging will be based on the performance of the ensemble, audience appeal, tie to mission, and the quality of the recording and video production. The genre of music is not being judged.

Self-contained is defined as featuring Air Force band personnel. Manning Assists are authorized participants. Public Affairs or contracted entities may be utilized for various aspects of production, however, the band unit should play an active role in developing video concepts and producing the final product. **Award Type: Unit**

(a) The submission will include:

1 Video recording (web link)

a Submit productions 15 minutes or less in duration in their entirety

b Productions greater than 15 minutes must be condensed to 15 minutes or less for judging

2 Brief synopsis of the performance to include, but not limited to who, where, what, why, and when (location, target audience and size, special event), tie to mission, etc.

**(10) New Musician of the Year.** This award recognizes 3N1XX/3N2XX/3N3XX

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

Airmen in grades E-6 and below, performing musician duties for 24 months or less, as of 31 December 2024, as certified by the submitting unit. The intent of this submission is to focus on the primary duty (music) and its impact on both the Air Force and the public. **Award Type: Individual**

(a) The submission will include:

1 AF Form 1206

a 8 Performance Statements (Narrative w/approved Air Force acronyms only)

b Total nomination limited to 16 lines

**(11) Musician of the Year**. This award recognizes 3N1XX/3N2XX/3N3XX Airmen in grades E-7 and below, performing musician duties. The intent of this submission is to focus on the primary duty (music) and its impact on both the Air Force and the public. **Award Type: Individual**

(a) The submission will include:

1 AF Form 1206 (Narrative w/approved Air Force acronyms only)

a 8 Performance Statements

b Total nomination limited to 16 lines

## **Appendix A, Federal Laws and DoD Policy**

1. All products must comply with applicable laws and DoD policy, including copyright and intellectual property laws and regulations, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Information regarding copyright and intellectual property laws may be found at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov). HIPAA information may be found at [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov).
2. Productions containing commercial music must conform to U.S. copyright laws. This generally includes synchronization rights obtained via a music license agency. Otherwise, military units must obtain written approval from the artist, musicians' union and/or record company, to include synchronization rights. Rights obtained for commercial music used in productions submitted to the DoD Media Awards contest must include unlimited distribution. Individual or personally purchased licenses may not be used. Organizations may be asked to provide written confirmation that all music complies with copyright law and DoD standards.
3. All products must meet the requirements for public affairs release as stated in Change 1 of [DoD Instruction 5230.29](#), "Security and Policy Review of Information for Public Release." Any questions regarding public release should be directed to the local public affairs office.
4. Stories must conform to Change 1 of [DoD Instruction 5120.04](#), "DoD Newspapers, Magazines, Guides, and Installation Maps," dated November 20, 2017.
5. Graphics, photos and video products must conform to Change 2 of [DoD Instruction 5040.02](#), "Visual Information," dated April 23, 2018, and include metadata in accordance with the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#).

## **Appendix B, Terms**

**Caption.** Used to identify the people or unit in the product, and to describe what happened, and where and when it happened. The caption also explains why the event took place: the purpose of the event. It is added to the product's metadata upon upload to DVIDS. Refer to the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) for specific information.

**Closed caption (closed captioning).** Used to display the audio portion of a television program or video product as text on the screen for individuals who are deaf or partially deaf.

**Collection.** A series of photos or a group of products organized for entry in specific categories.

**Portfolio.** A group of specific products and a portfolio also allows a collection of other items required for entry in certain categories. (*example: the Photographer of the Year categories require a series of photos as a collection in addition to individual products rolled up as a portfolio*).

## Appendix C, Caption Examples

While editing metadata during upload to DVIDS, list the person who created the product in the credit field and ensure their name is included in the credit line. Captions for products released from operational areas of responsibility will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Partial or condensed captions may be allowed if directed by the release authority or higher headquarters within the operational command.

### Graphic Caption



The 1st Marine Division Band held the Honor Our Fallen concert at the Marines' Memorial Theatre in San Francisco Oct. 4, 2018. The graphic depicts a Fallen Soldier Battle Cross, the San Francisco Fleet Week logo and text with information about the event. This graphic was designed Oct. 3, 2018 at I Marine Expeditionary Force CommStrat, Camp Pendleton, California, and intended for use by any U.S. Marine Corps units or installations. (U.S. Marine Corps graphic by Cpl. Rachel E. Conrad)

### Photo Caption



U.S. Air Force military working dog Ukkie jumps out of a patrol car during training at RAF Mildenhall, England, Nov. 6, 2018. Military working dog teams train the six phases of aggression daily, including the field interview, pursuit of attach, search, escort and a standoff. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Christine Groening)

Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

**Video Caption**



U.S. Soldiers with the 797th Engineer Company, Army Reserve, and members of the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands Department of Fire and Emergency Services build tents for homeowners after Super Typhoon Yutu destroyed their roofs Nov. 13, 2018 on Saipan, Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands. Teamwork and communication between the services and the CNMI Fire Department has been instrumental in relief efforts after Yutu. (U.S. Air Force video by Staff Sgt. Bethany La Ville)

**Appendix D, Policy Review Checklist**

The below Checklist will be used by contest submitters, supervisors and contest coordinators to ensure the products meet eligibility and follow DoD guidelines. Judges will be provided specific guidance via separate correspondence.

<b>DoD VI Policy Compliance Checklist</b>			
<p>Use this checklist to verify a visual information (VI) product complies with DoD VI policy prior to upload to the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS) and entry to the DoD Media Awards competition. Go to the reference listed for an explanation of each policy requirement.</p> <p><b>Legend:</b>                      Pass: Complies with DoD VI policy.                      A-DQ: Automatic Disqualification (A-DQ)                      C-A: DoD will allow corrections. If none are made, points will be deducted.                      C-D: DoD will allow corrections. If none are made, entry will be automatically disqualified.                      VIRIN: Visual Information Record Identification Number</p>			
<b>Entry Requirements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1. Was the VI product produced and published to DVIDS in 2024? (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	A-DQ	Corrections not allowed.
2. Does the VI product have military or DoD relevance? (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	A-DQ	Corrections not allowed.
<b>VIRIN Requirements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Notes</b>
3. Does the Vision ID listed in the product’s VIRIN match the individual listed in the credit line? (Page 23, <a href="#">DoDI 5040.02.</a> )	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
4. Does the VIRIN contain the correct sequence number? (Page 24, <a href="#">DoDI 5040.02.</a> )	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
5. Does the date in the VIRIN match the date in the caption? (Page 23, <a href="#">DoDI 5040.02.</a> ; page 27, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> )	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
6. Does the DVIDS “Date Taken” field match the date in the VIRIN and the date listed in the caption? (“Date Shot” entry, Page 36, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> )	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
<b>Caption Requirements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Notes</b>
7. Does the caption answer the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where, and why)? (Pages 26-30, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> )	Pass	Points deducted	C-A

Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

8. Is only one person listed in the caption's credit line? For the DoD Media Contest, only one person may be listed in the caption's credit line. (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
9. Does the caption list the hometown and state of any person or persons identified in the VI product? ("Hometown" entry, page 7, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> , and paragraph C4.2.2.5.2.1.14, pages 39-40, <a href="#">DoD 5400.11-R</a> , "Department of Defense Privacy Program.")	Go to question 9.a	Pass	
9.a. Does the unit have <u>written</u> permission from the individual to publish their hometown and state? An individual's hometown and state may not be released to the public without their written consent. State alone, however, may be disclosed per <a href="#">DoD 5400.11-R</a> .	Go to question 9.b	A-D	Corrections not allowed.
9.b. Was written permission obtained <u>before</u> the VI product was published to DVIDS? Disclosing an individual's hometown and state without their permission is a violation of the Privacy Act of 1974. Therefore, obtain written permission from the individual before uploading the VI product to DVIDS. Disclosing the state alone is authorized. Entrants must be prepared to provide written documentation when queried.	Pass <sup>1</sup>	A-D	Corrections not allowed.
<b>Metadata Requirements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Notes</b>
10. Is the correct location where the image was taken listed in the metadata? (City/Base/Location/Ship; State or Province; Country or Area) (Page 37, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> )	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
11. Do the release instructions include a release status? (Page 37, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> )	Pass	See notes.	C-D
12. Do the release instructions include the release authority's name, duty position, phone number and/or email address? (Page 37, <a href="#">DoD Visual Information Style Guide</a> )	Pass	See notes.	C-D
13. Does the VI product contain copyrighted material, including music and other proprietary information? (Page 16, <a href="#">DoDI 5040.07</a> )	Go to question 14.	Pass	



Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards  
Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

<p>14. Does the unit have <u>written</u> permission stating the organization and the DoD have permission to use the copyrighted material into perpetuity?</p> <p>A screenshot from the company’s website is not adequate permission and will not be accepted. Note that a legal review by the entrant’s legal office is also required per <a href="#">DoDI 5040.07</a>. Entrants must be prepared to provide this documentation when queried.</p>	Pass <sup>1</sup>	A-DQ	DoD will not allow corrections.
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<sup>1</sup> Entrants must provide documentation when queried. Entrants who fail to do so will have their entries disqualified.