

ENCLOSURE 3

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE MANAGEMENT

1. ASSIGNING ACTION ON SECDEF AND DEPSECDEF CORRESPONDENCE

a. The Correspondence Management Division (CMD), ESD, WHS, shall receive, analyze, and assign action for correspondence addressed to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the ExecSec, congressional correspondence addressed to the ASD(LA), and all White House correspondence referred to the Department of Defense.

b. CMD shall assign and identify correspondence using a control number consisting of the letters "OSD," followed by a five-digit number and the last two digits of the current year (e.g., "OSD 12345-10").

2. ASSIGNING SUSPENSE DATES

a. CMD shall use the document tasking date as the basis for the suspense timeline, which begins the next duty day following the tasking date. As shown in Table 1, suspense timelines are:

(1) For correspondence from the President, Vice President, or White House Chief of Staff: 1 calendar day.

(2) For correspondence from a Cabinet Head, Governor, or senior White House staff member: 4 workdays.

(3) For an action assigned as an Answer SecDef Note (ASN) or Answer DepSecDef Note (ADN): 5 workdays.

(4) For a Prepare Reply for the ExecSec (PRE): 5 workdays.

(5) For an action assigned for Comments and Recommendations (C&R): 5 workdays.

(6) For replies to controlled White House referrals: 6 workdays.

(7) For replies to Members of Congress: 7 workdays.

(8) For a non-congressional or foreign Minister of Defense (MOD) action assigned as a Prepare Reply for SecDef (PRS) or DepSecDef (PRD) signature: 10 workdays.

(9) For a non-congressional action assigned as a Reply Direct for Component Head (RDC), Reply Direct (RD), or For Appropriate Action (FAA): 14 workdays.

(10) For congressional actions addressed to the Office of the ASD(LA) assigned as RD: 15 workdays.

(11) For personnel detail requests from outside the Department of Defense coming from any agency other than the White House Military Office (WHMO): 50 workdays.

b. CMD may alter timelines when actions require shorter or longer processing times.

Table 1. Suspend Actions

STANDARD SUSPENSE TASKINGS	SUSPENSE (WORKDAYS)
ASN	5
ADN	5
PRE	5
C&R	5
PRS	10
PRD	10
RDC	14
RD	14
FAA	14
SITUATION OR CATEGORY-SPECIFIC SUSPENSE TASKINGS	SUSPENSE (WORKDAYS)
President, Vice President, White House Chief of Staff	1 calendar day
Cabinet Heads, U.S. Governors, and Senior White House Staff	4
White House Referrals	6
Members of Congress	7
MODs and Non-Congressional Correspondence Tasked PRS or PRD	10
Invitations Tasked for C&R	14
Detail Requests from Outside DoD	50

3. ROUTING INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE. To forward incoming SecDef and DepSecDef correspondence to the OSD and DoD Components, CMD shall use a digital process for:

a. Disseminating action and information copies to the appropriate offices.

b. Indicating how the responsible office shall act and establishing a suspense date for the action. (See Table 1 for a complete list of directed actions and standard suspense times.)

c. Identifying required coordination.

d. Providing specific guidance as necessary.

e. Assigning an OSD control number.

4. PROCESSING OSD AND DoD COMPONENT ACTIONS. CMOs shall process SecDef and DepSecDef materials through CMD, except those materials in Table 2, which shall be processed as indicated.

Table 2. Materials Not Processed Through CMD

TYPE OF MATERIAL	WHERE TO DELIVER
Read-Ahead Material ¹	ExecSec Confidential Assistant
Intelligence Daily Summaries	Executive Secretariat Rear (ESR)
Operational Summaries (Daily and Weekly) From the Operations Directorate of the Joint Staff	ESR
Notification to White House of Service Member Death	ESR
Time-Sensitive Communications Requiring SecDef or DepSecDef Attention Within 2 Hours, as Confirmed by the ExecSec, Who Takes Them Directly to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense ²	ESR
¹ Guidance for preparing and submitting read-ahead materials is included in ExecSec publication (Reference (i)). ² CMD controls the correspondence after the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense has acted on it.	

5. PROVIDING STATUS OF OR REQUESTING CHANGES TO TASKINGS

a. Role of the Secretary of Defense Correspondence Action Report, SD Form 391

(1) CMOs must submit an SD Form 391 with all action correspondence to request the actions in subparagraphs 5.a.(1)(a) through 5.a.(1)(f) of this enclosure. The SD Form 391 can be obtained on the Internet at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/forminfo/forminfo1203.html> or by contacting the CMD Suspense Desk.

(a) Close an action.

(b) Request a suspense extension.

(c) Forward a copy of an interim reply to CMD.

(d) Request cancellation of an action.

(e) Request transfer of an assigned action to another OSD or DoD Component. The request shall provide the name and phone number of the Component point of contact (POC) accepting the action and a rationale to justify the transfer.

(f) Request downgrade of an assigned action.

(2) CMD shall provide an SD Form 391 upon request and when routing paper copies of correspondence that requires action. CMD shall also provide the requesting organization with a copy of the approved/disapproved SD Form 391.

b. Changes to Action Assignments

(1) To appeal an action assignment, an executive officer or military assistant to the Head of an OSD or DoD Component or to an agency head (or higher-level person in the responsible office) shall contact CMD within 24 hours of the date of receipt.

(a) If returned within 24 hours with a reasonable rationale for reassignment, CMD will typically accept the action for transfer without further coordination and re-task the action.

(b) If Section 3, "Tasked Agency," of an SD Form 391 is originated or completed by a tasked OSD or DoD Component, the Secretary of the Military Department, Under Secretary of the Military Department, military or executive assistant, or designated official from the tasked OSD or DoD Component Head's executive secretariat shall clearly sign, or digitally sign, the SD Form 391 to indicate review and concurrence with the requested action.

(2) The action office is responsible for coordinating all action assignment transfers after the initial 24-hour period. When requesting transfer, the initiating office shall ensure the accepting official has the authority to accept and the capability to complete the action; annotate the SD Form 391 with the name, office, and telephone number of the accepting official; and return it with the tasked document(s) to CMD. CMD shall then forward it to the new responsible office with a revised suspense, as appropriate.

(a) When newspaper articles, press releases, speeches by DoD officials, or policy change announcements result in repeated public inquiries or a write-in campaign, the OSD or DoD Component assigned initial action may initiate a transfer to the ASD(PA) and request the Office of the ASD(PA) be designated as the responsible office for future inquiries on the subject.

(b) When initiating a transfer to the ASD(PA), the initial action office shall return the original correspondence (if the original was received) and proposed reply to CMD along with the SD Form 391 annotated with the name and telephone number of the ASD(PA) accepting official.

(c) The responsible office shall furnish the ASD(PA) with information upon which to base replies and updated information if circumstances change.

(3) On occasion, the SecDef or DepSecDef, their Military or Special Assistants, or the ExecSec may change an action assignment. In these instances, CMD shall forward a revised action assignment notifying the responsible office that the requirement has changed.

6. COORDINATING ASSIGNED ACTIONS. CMOs shall:

a. Coordinate with offices designated in the action assignment and any office that may have an interest in or be affected by the outcome of the action; coordinate with other OSD and DoD Components simultaneously to ensure responses are received as quickly as possible.

b. For correspondence prepared for SecDef, DepSecDef, or ExecSec signature, obtain concurrence or comments from the Heads of the OSD and DoD Components or, in their absence, their Principal Deputies.

c. For correspondence prepared for the signature of the Heads of the OSD and DoD Components, or below, obtain coordination at the appropriate level as determined by the responding Component.

d. Not allow disagreements about recommendations or lack of response from a coordinating office to delay the action. To address such situations, CMOs shall:

(1) List nonconcurrences and place the comments at the coordination tab of the action package.

(2) Address nonconcurrence issues in a memorandum or attached supplement.

(3) For failures to respond, note on the coordination sheet when coordination was attempted but not accomplished, and include the amount of time allotted.

e. If no coordination is required on an Action or Information Memorandum (hereafter referred to as "Action" or "Info" Memorandums), enter "NONE" on the coordination line. (See sections 3 and 4 of Enclosure 7 for details.)

f. Coordinate with the ASD(PA) on all correspondence that:

(1) Contains information with public affairs implications.

(2) Involves requests for SecDef or DepSecDef participation in public forums, such as speaking and media events, or in events in DoD or military settings that may draw media coverage.

g. Coordinate with the GC, DoD, on all correspondence having legal implications or possible adverse reflections on the Department of Defense, and on all correspondence based on law.

h. Coordinate with the ASD(LA) on all correspondence to Members of Congress.

i. Coordinate with the Assistant to the SecDef and DepSecDef for Protocol on all SecDef and DepSecDef Schedule Proposals. (See Enclosure 4 of Volume 2 of this Manual for information on preparing Schedule Proposals.)

7. SUBMITTING MATERIALS TO THE SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. CMOs submitting materials to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense shall:

a. Use either an Action or Info Memorandum. (See sections 3 and 4 of Enclosure 7 for details.)

b. Submit packages to CMD for control and forwarding through the ExecSec.

c. Flag correspondence requiring expeditious processing with a red tape flag in the upper left corner. CMD staff shall ensure these materials receive priority processing and prompt delivery to the ExecSec.

d. Flag extremely urgent communications requiring SecDef or DepSecDef attention within 2 hours with a green tape flag in the upper left corner and hand-carry to the ExecSec. (See Table 2 of Enclosure 3).

8. SUSPENSE REPORTING. CMD shall maintain correspondence suspense and status reports available to CMOs and other authorized personnel on the Internet under the Staff Action Control and Coordination Portal (SACCP) "Reports" option at https://eccssaccp.whs.mil/josso/signon/login.do?josso_back_to=http://eccssaccp.whs.mil/saccp/josso_security_check. SACCP login capability using a Common Access Card or username and password is required for entry to this site.

a. Available reports shall include:

- (1) Action Listing.
- (2) Overdue Tasks.
- (3) Upcoming Tasks.
- (4) Overdue Congressionals.
- (5) Overdue PRS/PRDs

- (6) Overdue RDCs/RDs.
 - (7) Stoplight Detail Report.
 - (8) Stoplight Summary Report.
 - (9) ASN Report.
 - (10) ADN Report.
 - (11) Pending Signature Approval Report.
 - (12) Pending Signature Approval – Sent Back Report.
 - (13) Due or Overdue Correspondence Report.
 - (14) White House Due or Overdue Correspondence Report.
- b. CMD may publish other correspondence tracking and suspense reports as necessary.