



Connecting with the Local Community *Inside* the Gate

Establishing relationships within the military installation is crucial for maintaining compliance and achieving support as well as knowing who the stakeholders are and who the MSC can serve. Below you will see some suggestions of who to speak to on your installation to help you as a Club. However, knowing where to start can be a bit daunting. If you don't know how to locate the people we mention below, we suggest you contact the installation's Morale Welfare Recreation (MWR), Military Family Readiness Center (M&FRC), or Army Community Services (ACS). They are great starting places to start in locating people on an installation when you don't know where to start. They will be able to connect you to people in the positions listed below.

Here are some ideas on how MSCs can cultivate mutually beneficial relationships on their installation:

- **Private Organization Office:** At board turnover, president and possibly executive board should at minimum, make email introductions. Most installations require new documents to be filed with governing executive board contact information. Schedule an appointment to meet with Private Org Rep to go over expectations of filings, learn regulations for events and marketing, etc. Make sure to have the most current checklist and timeline for required documentation.
- **Installation Commander/Deputy Commander:** As the club kicks off the new year, MSC representatives such as the president and an advisor should make an appointment with senior military leadership on the installation. The purpose of this meeting is to make an introduction to new MSC leadership and provide information about the MSC and its mission.
 - Give an elevator pitch about your organization, especially if they are new to the command. Provide key components of your organization: historical data - years in existence, how and why it started, who it has served; current membership and basic demographics; key initiatives such as philanthropy – how much money raised last year, how many and who received funds?
 - Inquire how your MSC can support the military community throughout the next 12 months and if there is anything specifically the MSC can do for them.
 - Service Projects: If your MSC plans to do service projects, you may need to inquire about proper procedures for approvals (such as):
 - Walking dogs at the Vet Clinic
 - Volunteering to assist/provide volunteers with something like a 10K run or a bowl-a-thon, Truck or Treats, or decorating the Club for the holidays, etc.
 - Hosting your fundraising events on the installation such as a 5K race, golf tournament, auction, Tour of Homes, etc.
 - Membership and guest protocols:



- i. Ask about installation specific regulations regarding MSC membership and invited guests.
 - ii. Can civilian community members be MSC members?
 - iii. Learn security protocols for bringing civilians on base for events.
 - Ask if there is a monthly community information meeting that you might be able to send a Board Representative to share the club's upcoming events with the key stakeholders.
 - This is mainly just a formality, but it might open the communication lines up so that when you have an issue, there is already a connection.
 2. Talk to the community Public Affairs Office.
 - Is there still an installation newspaper? Find out how the Club can leverage the "news" to help get the word out.
 - i. Sometimes there is a Community Corner for Private Orgs to send in upcoming events for publication.
 - ii. Find out if you can have someone from your club write monthly articles about what the club is doing for submission.
 - iii. Find out when you can invite a reporter to report on your event.
 - If there is not a newspaper, find out how the installation is putting out their news. Is it only online? If so, will they allow you to give them information to post as well?
 - Work with the Public Affairs office to talk about reposting and sharing each other's news postings.
 3. Connect with other Private Organizations on the installation. More than likely, you are experiencing many of the same issues that they are as well and you can help one each other. Recruiting people to fill leadership roles, becoming members of the organization, building relationships on the installation, networking, raising funds for activities, putting on events, staffing events with volunteers, etc. Promote and collaborate with each other! Strengthen the work of each other and lift each other up. After all, the money you raise often goes to the same population, which is the same population you all serve! The person responsible for Private Orgs often have a list of organizations and Person of Contact (POC) for those organizations on the base.
 4. Go by and meet the event managers of each of the installation venues. Find out if they have special rates if you book on something like a Tuesday rather than a Friday, or if there is a magic number of people you need to hit a discount threshold, etc. If they want your business, maybe you can work together to figure out how to make that work? I.e., if the Base/Post is already serving a lunch buffet to their everyday customers, maybe your club can have the same menu, yet meet in a different room to keep the per person cost down? If you sit down with them in advance, maybe you can come up with some outside the box ideas to save money.
 5. Go by and talk with the installation housing office.
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- They usually have resident newsletters that you may be able to get information posted into.
 - A lot of installation housing also have community centers that you may be able to utilize for events for very low costs or for free.
6. Speak to base Exchange and Commissary to introduce yourself.
- See how you can partner with both businesses.
 - Hold a registration event or other marketing event outside their doors.
 - Do they have community boards for advertising upcoming events?
7. Build a relationship with the Legal Office on the installation.
- The legal office will be another organization that can help ensure you maintain compliance with installation and local guidelines and laws.
 - They are a great resource for you to go to if you have any questions and need a legal perspective.

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