



Senior Communications Specialist

Position Overview

The Afghanistan War Commission (AWC) is seeking an experienced communications professional to lead its communications engagement through completion and release of its Congressionally mandated review of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021. This person will serve as the primary communications advisor to the Commission's Co-Chairs, Commissioners, and Executive Director providing strategic counsel and direct support across traditional communications and outreach lines of effort.

Key Responsibilities

- Serve as the primary communications advisor to the Commissioners, preparing them for public speaking engagements, congressional testimony, media interviews, and policy forums.
- Draft written products for the Commissioners such as op-eds, testimony, talking points, blog posts, social media content, etc.
- Build and execute an integrated communications plan spanning manuscript completion, report release, and post-release engagement.
- Work with AWC congressional engagement team throughout the Commission's final year to communicate and build understanding and ownership of the Commission's work with appointing committees and relevant offices through substantive briefings and feedback sessions on findings and recommendations, pre-submission briefings, and support for hearings or testimony.
- Coordinate with the research and recommendations team to ensure government engagement informs the Commission's work without compromising its independence or getting ahead of Commissioner deliberations.
- Manage the Commission's communications contract including vendor oversight, deliverable review, and coordination with the contracting officer.
- Develop key narratives and messaging strategies, coordinating closely with senior staff on the report's broader public narrative and rollout.
- Lead day-to-day press engagement and secure earned media and speaking opportunities for Commissioners and staff, coordinating with senior staff on major media, print, and launch opportunities.
- Translate complex analytical findings into clear, accurate public-facing products.
- Support the Commission's execution of the final report launch, including press engagement, Hill and executive-branch briefings, Commissioner appearances, and digital rollout.

- Manage crisis and rapid-response communications, preparing Commissioners to engage on sensitive or politically charged issues and maintaining if-asked guidance for foreseeable risks.
- Manage AWC website.

Qualifications

Required:

- Ten years of experience in communications, with several years supporting principals at the C-suite, flag officer, ambassadorial, or member-of-Congress level.
- Demonstrated ability to build and execute multi-quarter communications plans.
- Demonstrated experience engaging Congress and senior executive-branch stakeholders, with the judgment to operate in a bipartisan and institutionally sensitive environment.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to adapt register and voice across principals and audiences.
- Experience navigating crisis and rapid-response communications.
- Proven ability to pitch stories, engage reporters, and manage press relationships to secure results in defense, foreign policy, and national security venues.
- Experience developing platform-specific social media strategies.
- Strong project management skills.

Qualifications

Preferred:

- Capitol Hill experience, including work as a committee or personal office staffer on national security, foreign policy, defense appropriations, or oversight matters.
- Familiarity with Department of Defense contracting, deliverable review, and program management.
- Background in defense, foreign policy, veterans affairs, and/or national security communications.
- Experience with congressional oversight bodies, independent commissions, or federal advisory committees.
- Prior work with military service members, veterans, or Gold Star families.
- Existing relationships with defense and foreign policy press.

Term & Compensation

This is a full-time position, based in the Washington, DC area, aligned with the life of the Commission. Compensation is competitive with congressional pay scales (~GS-14 equivalent), commensurate with experience level. Full government benefits included.

Security Clearance

- An active Secret security clearance is required.

Application Process

- Candidates should submit a resume to Jobs@awc.senate.gov.