Field Organizations

Journals and Journal Files

Unclassified
AR 220-15
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This is a transitional reprint of this publication which places it in the new UPDATE format. The new UPDATE format.
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journal files, has been revised. This revision provides a sample form and format for a journal, provides for disposition of journal files, describes what types of information will be entered into a journal, sets forth responsibilities for preparing a journal, and adds the requirement that only one side of a journal form may be used.

Applicability. This regulation applies to all organizations involved in the preparation and maintenance of journals and journal files in the Active Army, Army National Guard, and US Army Reserve.

Proponent and exception authority. Not applicable.

Impact on New Manning System. This regulation does not contain information that affects the New Manning System.

Army management control process. Supplementation. Supplementation of this regulation is prohibited unless prior approval is obtained from HQDA (DAMO–ODS), WASH DC20310.

Interim changes. Interim changes to this regulation are not official unless they are authenticated by The Adjutant General. Users will destroy interim changes on their expiration dates unless sooner superseded or rescinded.

Suggested Improvements. The proponent agency of this regulation is the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to HQDA (DAMO–ODS), WASH DC 20310.

Distribution. Active Army, ARNG, and USAR: A, B, C, and D.
RESERVED
1. Purpose
This regulation prescribes policies, responsibilities, and procedures for preparing and maintaining journals and journal files.

2. References
Required publications are listed below.
   b. FM 101–5 (Staff Officers' Field Manual: Staff Organization and Procedure). Cited in paragraph 7b(2).

3. Explanation of terms
   a. Journal. Chronological record of events pertaining to an unit or a staff section during a given period.
   b. Journal file. A file containing material necessary to support entries in the journal.

4. Responsibilities
   a. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and plans will establish policies and procedures for the preparation and maintenance of journals and journal files.
   b. Journals will be prepared and maintained by the following:
      (1) During wartime: Organizational chiefs of staff and directorates of each general, directorate, and special staff section in all Army groups, armies, corps, divisions, logistical commands, and other tables of organization and equipment units of comparable size and responsibility.
      (2) In combat zone during wartime: Commanders of brigades, groups, regiments, task forces, combat commands, battalions, and separate companies. These unit commanders may maintain journals for the entire command or, at the discretion of the commander or higher authority, for each staff section.
      (3) Commanders of units listed in (1) and (2) above, while—
         (a) Involved in training maneuvers of battalion or greater strength.
         (b) Extending aid to civil authorities in the event of riots, disasters, and declarations of martial law.
         (c) Performing occupational or civil affairs duties.
         (4) Any unit at any time at the discretion of its commander or higher authority.

5. Objectives
Journals and journal files are designed to do the following:
   a. Assist in a more efficient conduct of operations.
   b. Provide a ready reference for the commander and staff and for higher and lower headquarters.
   c. Serve as a record for training matters, operational reviews, and historical research.

6. Guidance
   a. Differences in size, organization, and missions of units and staff sections preclude rigid adherence to a model form of journal. However, DA Form 1594 (Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer’s Log), shown at figure 1, provides an example.
   b. Journal forms must be used on one side only because of the following:
      (1) Legal and historical information is recorded in the journal.
      (2) Problems encountered with normal “bleed through” characteristics.
      (3) Journals normally will cover a 24-hour period.

7. Procedures
   a. Accurate data with sufficient detail to fix the time and place and describe important events will characterize all entries in the journal.
      (1) Events will be recorded as they occur. Examples are listed below.
         (a) Purposes, subjects, and conclusions of command conferences will be described briefly.
         (b) Command decisions will be set down.
         (c) Plans will be summarized.
         (d) Movements of units, down to company, battery, and troop level, will be described; this description will enable their locations to be pinpointed and traced.
         (e) Dates of changes of command will be set down; these entries will include initial assumption of command.
         (f) Change in unit status will be shown; examples are activation, inactivation, redesignation, reduction to zero strength, and assignment.
      (2) The following will also be noted:
         (a) Liaison activities.
         (b) Training activities.
         (c) Weather and other conditions influencing operations.
         (d) Visits of commanders and staff officers of higher and adjacent units.
      (3) Synopses of written, oral, electronic, and visual messages and orders will be entered and identified for future reference.
      (4) At the close of each period, the following will be entered:
         (a) Summary of important events which took place during the period. This summary should include, in particular, the reasons behind decisions and happenings.
         (b) Plans for the following period.
      b. Preparation of the journal can be eased by referring to the sample—
         (1) DA Form 1594 at figure 1.
         (2) Forms in FM 101–5, paragraph 2–16.
         (3) Available periodic reports of the unit and its subordinate and attached units.
         (4) Messages.
         (5) Memorandums.
         (6) Conference notes.
         (7) Maps.
         (8) Overlays.
         (9) Firing charts of artillery units, when applicable.
         (10) Personnel reports.
         (11) Ammunition expenditure reports.
         (12) Other statistics and data considered appropriate.
Figure 1. Sample of a completed DA Form 1594 used as a journal