



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

July 5, 2007

Assistant Secretary for Health
Office of Public Health and Science
Washington D.C. 20201

TO: Assistant Secretary for Health

FROM: Director, Office of Commissioned Corps Force Management (OCCFM)

SUBJECT: Revisions of Uniform, Personal Appearance and Grooming Standards.

ISSUE

A Working Integrated Project Team (WIPT) was formed in order to address numerous issues regarding the proper wear of the uniform of the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (Corps), future uniform options to the Corps uniform based on Navy supply and available uniform options, along with phase-in/out of new and previous uniforms. The charge to the WIPT was to align current Corps regulations to match as closely as possible to the uniform, personal appearance and grooming standards of the U.S. Navy (Navy). The WIPT was also charged with recommending appropriate transition periods for implementing the new policies. With your approval of the new policy concepts contained in the attachment, the Office of the Surgeon General and Office of Commissioned Corps Operations, will develop a transition plan for implementing the new policies.

DISCUSSION

Item 1. Daily Uniform Wear

On 15 July 1993, Commissioned Corps Issuance System (CCIS) CC26.3.2, Directive to Wear the Public Health Service Uniform, was enacted. In section C, the expected minimum wear of the Corps uniform was for no less than one workday per week. This instruction was for all Corps officers on extended active duty, except for officers in the Junior and Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JR/SRCOSTEP), assigned to Department of Defense (DOD) positions, assigned to Coast Guard (USCG) positions, assigned to a non-Federal agency or a program specific need.

Since this policy was first incorporated, the Corps has become a more vital link in the public health and welfare of this Nation. Other members of the other uniformed services wear their respective uniforms whenever they are on duty, with limited exceptions such as undercover investigative agents, military attaches to foreign countries or other mission specific exclusions. The Corps should be no different in the consistent wear of the uniform. This daily wear establishes an esprit de corps, provides the Corps with a recognizable identity and solidifies our service as truly a uniformed service. This should be considered a condition of service.

Option 1. It is the unanimous recommendation of the WIPT that the policy be revised to order the daily wear of a prescribed Corps uniform while on extended active duty for all officers, except for officers detailed to DOD and USCG whom may at the will of the Department, allow for wear of that service's distinctive uniform; for officers enrolled as a JR/SRCOSTEP; or for local or programmatic exceptions which require application for a uniform waiver through the Director of the Office of Commissioned Corps Operations (OCCO).

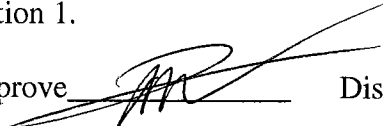
Option 2. Keep CCIS CC26.3.2 as written, requiring no less than one workday per week, with current exceptions as noted in the policy.

Recommendation

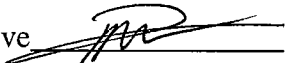
OCCFM and the Oversight Integrated Project Team (OIPT) recommend approval of Option 1.

Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) supports Option 1, with limited waivers for local or programmatic issues.

Option 1.

Approve  Disapprove _____ Date 07/16/07

Option 2.

Approve _____ Disapprove  Date 07/16/07

Item 2. Phase-in/out of current Corps uniform options.

In February 2003, the Navy formed the Task Force Uniform Board (TFUB) which was tasked with establishing a uniform suitable for all ranks of Sailor from E-1 through O-10. The concept behind this uniform was to alleviate the numerous uniform options in the current Navy sea-bag, and establish a uniform that would meet all of the current uniform requirements of various uniforms for both sea and land based duty. The TFUB, after several years of input and testing, came up with a new uniform called the Navy Working Uniform (NWU).

The NWU will replace several Navy working uniform items, such as utilities, working khaki, coveralls, woodland green, aviation green, winter working blue, and tropical working uniforms. The NWU concept is designed to be a working uniform, not a tactical uniform. When Sailors are working in tactical environments, such as the desert, or in the field, they will still be outfitted with the appropriate tactical uniforms. Part of the working uniform will include a Gore-Tex parka as well as a turtleneck sweater to protect against adverse weather conditions. More than 40,000 Sailors who took part in the fleet-wide survey told TFUB that the current working uniforms are not practical for the Navy working environment, are too costly and difficult to maintain, and do not reflect a professional military appearance. The majority of those surveyed said they preferred a Battle Dress Uniform (BDU)-style uniform.

The NWU is a digitized blue, grey, black and blue BDU which incorporates current BDU wear regulations. Current Navy uniform regulations are being rewritten to incorporate all changes in the wear and appearance of this uniform. The initial phase-in of the NWU is slated to start late fall 2007, with complete phase-in to all commands and to Basic Training Commands by winter 2009 or spring 2010.

Option 1. It is the recommendation of the WIPT to adopt the official uniform policy and regulations in regards to wear and appearance of the NWU. After the complete phase-in by TFUB, the WIPT recommends an 18 month phase-in or a date to be determined by the OSG, of the NWU, with the phase-out of the Corps' working khaki, winter working blue, and tropical working uniforms to match the same time line. It is the understanding of this WIPT that Navy needs may alter or change phase-in/out and the policy revision should be flexible to reflect that need to change as well.

Option 2. Keep current working uniform options and create a memorandum of understanding or agreement with the Defense Supply Center (DSC) for continued creation and distribution of the working khaki, winter working blue, and tropical working uniforms. This option would be very costly to Corps officers for the DSC to maintain specific working uniforms for a small number of customers versus customers from Navy,

Item 3. Alignment of current Corps uniform regulations with regulations of the Navy.

Current Corps policy has a few uniform components that come from several different uniformed services and are incorporated into Corps use. Such items such as the Army pull-over sweater and the olive drab Marine Corps “Wooly-pulley” sweater cause confusion among officers on what and how to wear the uniform correctly. Also, within current Corps policy, various standards are used for placement of insignia on uniforms and covers (garrison caps).

Another Corps uniform policy that does not align with the sea services is the rolling or folding of the BDU sleeves, to create a short sleeve option for wear. Current sea service policies have the inside of the sleeve rolled or folded showing outward when properly done. Corps policy has the outside of the material facing outward. This is consistent with the policy of the Air Force Airmen and with Army Soldiers who still wear the BDUs; not the Army Combat Uniform, in which sleeve rolling is not permitted due to the placement of pockets and Velcro on the sleeves.

Option 1. It is the recommendation of the WIPT to align current Corps policy with that of the Navy to permit only the wear of the Navy pull-over sweater or cardigan and to use the measurements of placements of the rank insignia, Corps devices, ribbons, nametags and other uniform items to that of the Navy. This option will create less confusion among officers who purchase items from the Navy Exchange. It creates a “one-stop-shopping” for all uniform items. This policy will be rewritten to match all uniforms identical to both the Navy and the Corps to one standard, that of the Navy.

A phase-out plan of current wear of the Army pull-over sweater or Marine Corps “Wooly-pulley” sweater would be recommended as 12 months after the implementation of the policy revision, with a final phase-out date of 18 months after implementation of policy.

A phase-in plan for authorization to wear the Navy pull-over sweater would begin immediately upon the implementation of the uniform policy revision.

Allow rolling of the BDU sleeves to match the other sea services by having the inside of the BDU material show when the sleeve is folded properly.

This option would also allow for the wear of Nomex® Flight Suits and Nomex® Jackets for officers in Aviation Medical billets, as is current regulation with other uniformed services.

This option would also allow for wear of the N2-B or N3-B sage green Extreme Cold Weather Parka for officers assigned in extreme cold weather duty stations. This optional clothing item will only be for officers in billets which require extended periods of

Item 4. Uniform Allowance

Title 37 United States Code (USC) 415(c) authorizes a one time uniform allowance for Corps officers of \$250. In the same title, 37 USC 415(a) authorizes members of the Armed Forces to receive a one time uniform allowance of \$400. The Armed Forces are also authorized, under 37 USC 416, an additional \$200 for specific criteria, as specified in 10 USC 2106 and 2107.

In 1952, when this was passed, the Corps and NOAA, were excluded from this allowance. Also, at the same time, daily wear of the uniform by Corps officers was not mandatory, therefore questions arose from how much of a uniform allowance to provide.


Option 1. The WIPT unanimously agreed to recommend increasing the amount of the uniform allowance to match that of the Armed Forces. This option would require the Corps to follow the uniform wear specifications of the other services of daily wear while on duty. Also, this change to the USC would require concurrence from the Assistant Secretary of Legislation and perhaps Office of Management and Budget to allow for the packet to be presented.

Option 2. Keep the current uniform allowance of \$250 for a one time authorization. This option is beginning to become cost prohibitive to new and junior officers in meeting the uniform requirements of a daily wear service uniform, a complete Service Dress Blue uniform and all necessary rank, insignia and devices. The costs of the uniforms continue to rise, but the allowance stays the same.


Recommendation

OCCFM and the OIPT recommend approval of Option 1.
OSG supports Option 1.

Option 1.

Approve  Disapprove _____ Date 07/16/07

Option 2.

Approve _____ Disapprove  Date 07/16/07

Item 5. Wear of Ribbons and Medals (PHS and non-PHS)

Current CCIS CC26.3.3, Wearing of Medals and Ribbons, dated 15 July 1993, Manual Circular (MC) 372, dated 21 April 2003, and CC27.9.1, Authorization to Wear Non-PHS Awards, dated 24 August 1992, establishes an order of precedence for wearing of medals and ribbons from both PHS and non-PHS entities.

The policy does not permit the wear of many ribbons and medals awarded to members of other uniformed services since the beginning of the Global War on Terror on 11 September 2001 and for other humanitarian missions surrounding the 2005 hurricane season.

Corps officers are a blend of many prior service members and sole service members of the Corps. Officers who transfer or seek a commission in the Corps after serving with another uniformed service bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and skills to the enhancement of the Corps. By looking at an officer's ribbon rack, immediate recognition is afforded for prior individual honor, unit cohesiveness, service, and training in other services or within the Corps.

Option 1. It is the proposal of the WIPT to allow for wear and display of all ribbons and medals earned by an officer in the Corps, in another uniformed service, and in another Federal agency or department.

This proposal would continue to disallow for State specific ribbons and medals earned in the National Guard, ribbons and medals from State militias, Civil Air Patrol, USCG Auxiliary, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and Junior ROTC (JROTC). This is consistent with all other uniformed services on restricting wear of these awards on active duty uniforms.

Along with this option, a formalized order of precedence will be established for placement of ribbons and medals. The order of precedence will follow guidance set forth by the Institute of Heraldry in stating that Corps awards of equal weight and honor will take precedence over other uniformed service awards; other awards of lesser weight or honor will follow the sea service order of precedence: Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, NOAA, Army and Air Force.

Under current Corps policy, service awards and awards from other agencies or departments are placed on the ribbon rack in the order of chronological receipt. This does not match other uniformed services, and does not create uniformity within our own service. This proposal would also include formalizing a complete order of precedence to be uniform with all other officers in the Corps.

Finally, this option would place the association ribbons and medals of the Commissioned Officers Association, Association of Military Surgeons of the United States, Reserve Officers Association and the Society of American Military Engineers, at the end of the ribbon rack behind Foreign Service awards. In the other uniformed services, wear of these ribbons are not authorized except for when actually attending a meeting or conference. Foreign Service awards (i.e., Kuwait Liberation Medal from both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait or Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal) are recognized uniformed service awards and therefore have more weight than association ribbons that have no weight.

Option 2. Keep current policy CCIS CC26.3.3, Wearing of Medals and Ribbons, dated 15 July 1993, MC 372, dated 21 April 2003, and CC27.9.1, Authorization to Wear Non-PHS Awards, dated 24 August 1992 as written.

Authorize new uniformed services ribbons and medals to be included in order of precedence of uniformed service awarding the ribbon or medal.

Option 3. A minority option was proposed by a WIPT member of aligning ribbon and medal wear to the policies of the Navy, and authorizing only those that are allowed for wear on the Navy uniform. This would alleviate some currently authorized ribbons from wear on the Corps uniform.

Recommendation

OCCFM and the OIPT recommend approval of Option 1.
OSG supports Option 1.

Option 1. *- modify to have association ribbons handled exactly the same way as they are in the Navy*
Approve *JAR* Disapprove _____ Date 07/16/07 *JAR*

Option 2.
Approve _____ Disapprove *JAR* Date 07/16/07

Option 3.
Approve _____ Disapprove *JAR* Date 07/16/07

Item 6. Badges (Skill, Qualification, Identification)

Current CCIS CC26.3.6, Insignia and Devices, dated 15 July 1993, CC26.3.3, Wearing of Medals and Ribbons, dated 15 July 1993, MC 372, dated 21 April 2003, and CC27.9.1, Authorization to Wear Non-PHS Awards, dated 24 August 1992, deal with the authorization to wear badges from the Corps and other uniformed services.

As stated in Item 5, Corps officers from other services and within the Corps bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to the Corps. The skills earned as a uniformed service member are unmatched by any other profession.

Option 1: It is the proposal of this WIPT to include authorization for wear of any skill, qualification or identification badge earned in another uniformed service or in the Corps.

Exceptions to wear on the PHS uniform will be enlisted badges that are not permitted for wear on that specific uniformed service officer's uniform (e.g., Army marksmanship badges, Army truck driver badge). Also, Special Forces tabs (e.g., Ranger, Airborne) will not be authorized to be worn on the pocket flap or anywhere on the Corps uniform.

Corps officers will be permitted to wear a maximum of two breast badges (e.g., Department of Health and Human (HHS) Services ID Badge, Recruiter Badge, Officer in Charge Badge) and two skill or qualification badges (e.g., Field Medical Readiness Badge (FMRB), Flight Nurse, Parachutist). Revisions to the current policy will allow male officers to wear the Recruiter/Associate Recruiter Badge along with another breast badge. Male officers will wear the badge on the pockets or under the name tag and ribbons, and females will continue to wear the badges above the ribbons and name tag.

The revision of this policy will also include review of other uniformed services regulations on wear of foreign skill badges (e.g., Canadian Jump Wings, German Armed Forces Efficiency Badge) and incorporate to coincide with other service policies. There is no current rationale on how or why a foreign skill badge is authorized on the PHS uniform.

Option 2. Continuation of CCIS CC26.3.6, Insignia and Devices, CC26.3.3, dated 15 July 1993, Wearing of Medals and Ribbons, dated 15 July 1993, MC 372, dated 21 April 2003, and CC27.9.1, Authorization to Wear Non-PHS Awards, dated 24 Aug 1992.

This will not permit most skill or identification badges earned in other services. Male officers will not be permitted to wear two breast badges at the same time.

