



OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER
CIVIL AIR PATROL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA 36112-5937

4 May 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL CAP MEMBERS

FROM: CAP/CC

SUBJECT: CAP Transition to the Airman Battle Uniform (ABU)

1. I am pleased to announce that the Air Force has approved Civil Air Patrol's request to transition to the Airman Battle Uniform. As the official auxiliary of the Air Force CAP has a long history of wearing a USAF style uniform and our transition to the ABU once again brings us in line with our parent service.
2. As a result of negotiations with the Army & Air Force Exchange Services (AAFES), CAP has also been approved to receive a significant number of excess ABUs. This will allow many CAP members to receive the basic ABU shirt and pants at no cost. We are currently working with AAFES to take possession of the excess uniforms and each Wing is establishing a distribution plan. We expect these uniforms to be available to members in the field this summer.
3. The phase in period for wear of the ABU will begin on 15 June 2016. Members will wear the ABU with the dark blue tapes and insignia as outlined in the attached wear instructions. Vanguard will begin accepting orders for the new devices on 15 June 2016. The Battle Dress Uniform (BDU) may continue to be worn until the mandatory phase out date of 15 June 2021. CAP will also begin to transition to dark blue tapes on the Corporate field uniform and BDUs with a mandatory wear date of 15 June 2021. Members are not required to change the tapes on existing uniforms until the mandatory wear date; however, all devices on the uniform must match. The attached wear instructions will constitute regulatory guidance on the wear of the ABU until a revision to CAP Manual 39-1 is released.
3. If you have any comments or concerns, contact Ms Susan Parker, CAP/DP at (334) 953-7748, extension 212 or email sparker@capnhq.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph R. Vazquez".

JOSEPH R. VAZQUEZ
Major General, CAP
Commander

Atch
ABU Wear instructions

Wear Instructions for the CAP Airman Battle Uniform (ABU)

These instructions will be incorporated into the next revision of CAPM 39-1

Airman Battle Uniform (ABU), Men's and Women's. ABUs may be worn off base for short convenience stops and when eating at restaurants where people wear comparable civilian attire. Do not wear ABUs off base to eat in restaurants where most diners wear business attire or at establishments that operate primarily to serve alcohol. ABUs purchased through Army Air Force Exchange Stores (AAFES) Military Clothing Sales Stores (MCSS), or issued through Individual Equipment Elements or contract equivalent, are certified as fully compliant with all specifications. If personnel choose to use personal funds to purchase from non-AAFES suppliers, the uniform must be fully compliant. Females may wear the male version of the ABU. CAP members may wear either the 50% cotton/50% nylon ABU or the 100% cotton ABU.

ABU Coat (Shirt). The ABU coat with button fastenings and an Air Force digitized tiger stripe print. The bottom of the ABU coat will rest at the hips. Pockets will be secured and items stowed in pockets will not be visible except pens stowed in the pen pocket on the sleeve. The top button of the ABU coat will not be fastened; however, all other buttons will be secured at all times. Commanders may authorize sleeves to be rolled up on the ABU coat; however, the cuffs will remain visible and the sleeve will rest at, or within 1 inch of, the forearm when the arm is bent at a 90-degree angle. Regardless as to whether the sleeves are rolled up or unrolled, the cuffs will remain visible at all times. The ABU coat may be removed in immediate work area as determined appropriate by local leadership, however, the ABU coat will be worn while interacting with customers/clients. When ABU coat is removed, t-shirt (as outlined below) will be worn.

Rank Insignia.

Officer Rank Insignia. Officers will wear light silver, or for 2nd Lt and Majors gold, embroidered rank insignia on dark blue cloth. General Officer rank will be centered, perpendicular to, and begin 1 inch from the bottom of the collar. General officers will wear 1 inch stars; General Officers unable to wear 1 inch stars will wear ¾ inch stars. Colonel rank will be centered, perpendicular to, and 1 inch from the bottom of the collar. Lieutenant Colonel and Major's rank will be centered 1 inch from the bottom of the collar with the stem parallel to the ground and pointing away from the wearer's neck. The long end of the Lieutenant and Captain bars will be centered 1 inch from the bottom of the collar.

NCO Rank Insignia. NCOs will wear rank on the sleeves, 4-inch full color light silver on dark blue CAP chevrons for men; 3 ½ inch or 4-inch full color, light silver on dark blue CAP chevrons for women. Chevrons will be centered on the outer arm halfway between the elbow and shoulder seam, when bent at a 90-degree angle. If sleeves are rolled up, chevrons do not need to be fully visible; however, rank must be distinguishable.

Cadet Officer Rank Insignia. Cadet Officers center regular size, full color insignia light silver on dark blue embroidered cloth sewn on the collar one inch from the front of the collar and centered. All light silver on dark blue insignia will have 1/8 inch of blue showing at the widest and tallest point of the insignia. Cadet Colonels and cadet Captains may wear miniature, embroidered insignia.

Cadet Enlisted Rank Insignia: Cadet NCOs and Airmen wear metal chevrons on both sides of the collar. Insignia is 1 inch from and parallel to the front of the collar and centered. Cadet Airmen Basic wear no collar insignia.

Accoutrements. The total number of badges and patches worn will not exceed five. The Commander Insignia, rank insignia, cloth name tape, and "Civil Air Patrol" tape do not count against this total.

Nametapes. Nametapes will be light silver on dark blue block lettering. The nametapes will be worn immediately above the upper ABU coat pockets. Cut off or fold tapes to match pocket width. The "Civil Air Patrol" nametape will be worn above the upper ABU pocket on the wearer's left. The last name nametape will be worn above the upper ABU pocket on the wearer's right.

Left Sleeve. One full color, wing/region/national patch may be sewn to the coat on the left sleeve ½ inch below the shoulder seam reflecting the individual’s current unit of assignment. Wing Commanders may make wear of the wing patch mandatory for members of their wings.

Left Breast Pocket. One full color patch may be worn as authorized by Attachment 6 sewn to the shirt centered on the lower portion of the left breast pocket between left and right edges and bottom of flap and pocket of ABU shirt.

Right Breast Pocket. One full color patch may be worn as authorized by Attachment 6 sewn to the shirt centered on the lower portion of the right breast pocket between left and right edges and bottom of flap and pocket of ABU shirt.

Aviation and Occupational Badges. Two Aviation or Occupational badges embroidered in silver on dark blue may be worn sewn to the shirt ½ inch above the “Civil Air Patrol tape over the left breast pocket. The second badge will be centered ½ inch above the first badge. Chaplain and CAP aviation badges are mandatory and will always be worn in the highest position. Not more than a combined total of two of these badges will be worn on the wearer’s left. When more than one CAP aviation badge is authorized, only one will be worn. If a military aviation badge (aeronautical, space or cyberspace) is worn, it will be worn in the second position. If chaplain badge is worn, it is worn in the higher position. Parachutist wings are optional; however, when worn will be placed above an occupational badge or below a chaplain, aeronautical, space or cyberspace badge. Occupational badges (excluding chaplain) are optional. All light silver on dark blue insignia will have 1/8 inch of blue showing at the widest and tallest point of the insignia.

CAP Command Insignia. Wear of this badge is optional for members holding the grade of Lieutenant Colonel and below. If worn, current commanders will wear the embroidered light silver on dark blue insignia sewn to the shirt ½ inch above the name tape over the right pocket. Past commanders will wear the same insignia sewn ½ inch below the name tape on the flap of the right breast pocket. All light silver on dark blue insignia will have 1/8 inch of blue showing at the widest and tallest point of the insignia

T-Shirt – A standard Desert Tan short or long sleeved t-shirt will be worn under the ABU coat. Unit commanders may prescribe unit designation emblems, subject to the approval of the wing commander, not to exceed 5 inches in diameter, in cloth or silk screen, worn on the left side of chest. Neither unit designation emblems or commercial logos will be visible when wearing the ABU coat (shirt). Tan turtlenecks may also be authorized; thermal undergarments may be desert sand, white or cream colored and are authorized for wear as weather conditions warrant. T-shirts and turtlenecks will not have pockets and all must be tucked into the trousers

Trousers. Trousers will be with button fastenings and an Air Force digitized tiger stripe print. The trouser waistband will rest on the member’s waist. Pockets will be secured and items stowed in pockets will not be visible except pens stowed in the pen pocket. Tucking the ABU trouser into the boot is optional. Whether tucked in or bloused, the trouser must be evenly bloused (gathered in and draped loosely) over the top of the combat boot and must present a bloused appearance.

Belt. A standard Desert Tan belt will be worn.

Footwear. Black combat boots.

Headgear. The ABU cap is the only authorized headgear with this uniform. Headgear will be worn outdoors at all times, unless in a designated “no hat” area. Senior member officers will wear light silver, or for 2nd Lt and Majors gold, embroidered rank insignia on dark blue cloth centered on the front of the cap. Cadet officers will wear embroidered grade insignia on dark blue cloth centered on the front of the cap.

Optional Undergarments. Optional undergarments are worn in addition to the t-shirt/turtleneck.

Sleep Shirt. The sleep shirt may be worn under the ABU coat. The sleep shirt will not be worn as an outer garment. The sleep shirt will not be visible under the ABU coat except at the neck. The sleep shirt will be a solid color; colors authorized are green or sand.

Thermal Underwear. Desert sand, cream, or white thermal underwear may be worn under the ABU. Thermal underwear will not be worn as an outer garment. Thermal underwear will not be visible under the ABU trouser and coat except at the neck.

Outer Garments. Authorized outer garments are the AF green fleece jacket or the ABU gortex parka. Outer garments will only be worn outdoors.

Cold Weather Accessories. Cold weather accessories will only be worn when wearing authorized outer garments (Exception: gloves worn solely with ABUs). With the exception of functional items, cold weather accessories are only worn while outdoors.



OFFICER



NCO



CADET OFFICER



ABU GORTEX PARKA

CADET NCO & AIRMEN



CAP ABU GREEN FLEECE