

## **TASK FORCE UNIFORM**

### **SERVICE UNIFORM – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Why are we doing this? Why a new service uniform?**

One of the four main objectives in the Task Force Uniform (TFU) charter, which was signed out by the Vice Chief of Naval Operations in February 2003, was to develop a service uniform for year-round wear for E-6 and below. The more than 40,000 Sailors who took part in the fleetwide survey told us that their seabag was too cluttered, the current service uniforms were too difficult to maintain, and there was a strong desire for a year-round uniform.

#### **What is the plan for wear-testing the service uniform concepts? (where and how long)**

The fleetwide wear test scheduled to begin this winter will be conducted at commands around the world and across the spectrum of different installations. Approximately 50 participants, both male and female, will wear-test these concept uniforms at each of the following commands/locations:

Center for Naval Leadership, Little Creek, Va.  
Center for Naval Leadership, Coronado, Calif.  
Commander, Fleet Activity Yokosuka, Yokosuka, Japan  
Commander, Fleet Air Mediterranean, Naples, Italy  
Commander, Naval Forces Japan, Yokosuka, Japan  
Commander, Pacific Fleet, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii  
Naval Air Technical Training Center, Pensacola, Fla.  
Naval Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.  
Naval Submarine School, New London, Conn.  
OPNAV, Washington, D.C.  
Training Support Center, Great Lakes, Ill.  
U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Va.

#### **When will we see this new uniform implemented?**

After the completion of the approximately six-month wear test beginning this winter, the data will be collected from the fleetwide survey, and results and recommendations will be brought to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). If a decision to change is made by CNO, the goal will be to begin phasing in the new uniform for Sailors in the fleet within 18-24 months from that point.

#### **If these new uniforms were chosen, would we be required to immediately replace our old uniforms?**

No. There would be an implementation phase so that Sailors could use their yearly uniform allowance to replace their old uniforms. Our expectations would be for current uniforms to live out their intended wear-life before being replaced with a new service uniform.

#### **Why these colors?**

We wanted to choose colors that would be distinguishable to our naval service, to give our Sailors a recognizable uniform apart from other services. The colors we chose were bluish gray and khaki. By using colors that are traditional Navy colors, we continue to uphold our naval heritage, while giving our Sailors a uniform that is much more practical for our working environment.

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#### **Are we trying to look like Marines?**

While trying to find a functional year-round service uniform for Sailors E-6 and below, our intent was not to try and make us look like any of the other services. However, the concept we are testing is in line with other services (i.e., a non-vertical match (tops and bottoms are different colors)).

#### **What about maintenance/care of these uniforms?**

Included in the wear test will be uniforms with fabrics that are “dry clean only,” as well as “wash and wear.” Feedback from the fleet will be required on which style fabric they believe holds up best under average maintenance, which is most cost effective, and what offers the best appearance for their working environment. The fabrics for the shirts being tested will be made of different blends of poly/wool. One is a lighter blend (wash and wear), the other a little heavier (dry clean only).

#### **What about the wear test survey?**

Sailors will be asked for their opinions of the concept uniforms approximately 45-60 days after the wear test begins this winter. This survey will be available electronically, and all Sailors will be allowed to participate, regardless if they have worn or seen the actual concept uniforms firsthand.

Task Force Uniform will take into account feedback from our Sailors to help design the best possible uniforms for the present and future needs of our Navy. The manner of wear issues will be developed and evaluated throughout the wear test process. All of the wear policies are yet to be determined, and some will be driven by the outcome of the wear test.

#### **What about those of us who work in cooler environments? Will we be in short sleeves all year?**

The concept uniforms are short-sleeved uniforms. Because the type of work done in a service uniform is typically in a climate-controlled environment, there is not as much of a need for a long-sleeve uniform. However, the Navy is also wear testing a jacket to be worn with the service uniform, and there is also an optional sweater currently in the seabag that can be worn if necessary. This is consistent with the manner of wear currently used for E-7 and above in service khakis in all climates.

#### **Will we still have tropical uniforms for those of us in the warmer climates?**

Tropical uniforms will be phased out if one of the service uniform concepts are chosen. Because the type of work done in a service uniform is typically in a climate-controlled environment, there is no longer a need for a tropical uniform.

#### **Will a tie be an optional component to the new service uniform?**

Not at this time. E-7 and above service uniforms are subject to review in the next Phase of Task Force Uniform. Before we decide to extend the components of the E-6 and below service uniforms, we want to determine what the E-7 and above will be wearing. TFU is trying to eliminate the number of disparate uniform component requirements between E-6 and below, and E-7 and above.

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#### **Will ribbons be optional, similar to the winter working blue?**

No, not at this time. We will be developing the final wear-test requirements throughout the wear test, and once the final decision has been made. Navy service uniforms are all currently worn with ribbons. Within the scope of the wear test, there may be a limited test where the uniforms are worn without ribbons.

#### **Why is the Navy testing only one trouser color?**

The navy blue trouser was not identified as an issue by the fleet in the last uniform survey. In fact, a darker trouser was said to be more functional and practical. So we went with what we have in our uniform inventory, but upgraded the quality of the material to be equal to E-7 and above trousers/slacks.

#### **Will the white hat be authorized to wear with it? What will be the required cover for the new service uniforms?**

No, the white hat is not authorized to be worn with this uniform. The required cover will be the black garrison cap for males, and the black garrison cap or beret for females. It's a matter of practicality.

#### **How will the new concept uniforms be affected by the recent uniform changes with purses, cell phones, backpacks, etc.?**

The concept uniforms were designed to include the recent changes. Purses will still be required to match the shoe color, official cell phones may still be worn (provided the uniform has a belt), and backpacks will still be required to be black or dark blue in color.

#### **Why would we want to take the rating badge off the service uniform?**

According to data taken from the survey results, Sailors from the fleet said it would be more cost effective to replace the rating badge with a collar device that could be taken on and off a uniform, and easily updated upon promotion. During the wear-test, we will attempt to gather more data to determine which of the two options Sailors prefer and which works the best to meet the needs of our Sailors.

#### **Why doesn't the rating badge on the concept uniforms have a specialty mark?**

Because of the diverse cross section of the Sailors who will be wear testing the concept uniforms, it was not cost effective for the Navy to develop a test uniform rating badge containing a specialty mark for every rating in the Navy. If the wear-test determines that the new service uniforms will feature a rating badge, the future uniforms will contain specialty marks for every rating.

#### **Will female CPOs have the opportunity to wear the khaki overblouse?**

Currently, the wear test is only for E-6 and below. However, because of the repeated request by E-7 and above to participate in the service uniform wear test, there is discussion of a possible wear test of the khaki female overblouse in a future phase of Task Force Uniform.