



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY ARMOR CENTER AND FORT KNOX
FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY 40121-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

ATZK-CSM (670)

18 October 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR

Commanders, All Units Reporting Directly to This Headquarters
Directors and Chiefs, Staff Offices/Departments, This Headquarters

SUBJECT: Thunderbolt Six Policy Memo No. 38-45 – Armor Center Policy on the Wear and Appearance of the Black Beret

1. References.

- a. Army Regulation 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia, 1 July 2002.
- b. Directive, Chief of Staff of The Army, 3 November 2000, Subject: The Army Black Beret.
- c. Information Paper, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Department of The Army, DAPE-HR-PR, 4 June 2001, Subject: Black Beret.
- d. Department of The Army Web Site: <http://www.army.mil/beret>
- e. Warning Order 14-01, G3/DPTM, 7 June 2001, Subject: Black Beret Issue.

2. General.

a. The Army transitioned to the black beret as the standard headgear to symbolize the Army's commitment to transformation. USAARMC soldiers began wearing the black beret in June 2001. This policy establishes standards for the proper preparation, care, and wear of the black beret for soldiers assigned to the Armor Center. Commanders will ensure all soldiers comply with the standards outlined in this document.

b. All assigned soldiers, Noncommissioned Officers, and Officers who are members of the Active, Reserve, and National Guard Components of the Army, who have completed branch qualifying or MOS qualifying schools, are authorized to wear the beret.

ATZK-CSM

SUBJECT: Thunderbolt Six Policy Memo No. 38-45 – Armor Center Policy on the Wear and Appearance of the Black Beret

c. Soldiers in initial training categories – Basic Training, Advanced Individual Training, One-Station Unit Training, Cadets, Officer/Warrant Candidates, or Armor Officer Basic Course are not authorized to wear the beret. They will continue to wear the Garrison Cap with Class A and B uniforms and the Patrol Cap (formerly known as the BDU Cap) with the battle dress uniform. The Garrison Cap and Patrol Cap with associated insignia will be worn as currently described in AR 670-1.

d. Soldiers will be issued the black beret upon assignment to their first permanent duty assignment after the completion of initial entry training or officer/warrant officer basic courses. Split-option soldiers or soldiers in the Simultaneous Membership Program will wear the black beret only when performing duties with their units; otherwise, they will wear headgear as indicated when in a cadet or trainee status.

e. Soldiers may wear the service cap/hat or beret for ceremonial or official duties, as prescribed by the commander. The service cap/hat and associated insignia are worn as currently described in AR 670-1.

f. Soldiers on a TDY status will comply with the policy of their parent installation on whether or not to wear the beret.

3. Wear of the Beret.

a. The beret is black in color, with a wool-knitted outer shell, lined or unlined, with a sweatband. An adjusting ribbon is threaded through the binding. The beret is equipped with a stiffener on the left front. A flash is sewn on the beret's outer shell, centered on the stiffener. Berets will be issued with a universal Army flash, light blue in color and outlined by 13 five-pointed stars. The universal Army flash is the only authorized flash to be worn on the black beret.

b. Soldiers will wear the beret with utility and service (class A and B) uniforms in a garrison environment. With the class A and B uniform, only personnel assigned to Airborne, Ranger, or Special Forces units may wear bloused trousers or slacks with black combat boots. Soldiers will wear the patrol cap or kevlar in field training environments. Headgear for work details is at subordinate commander's discretion.

c. When properly worn, the beret is form fitting on the head. The beret is worn so that the headband (edge binding) is straight across the forehead, 1 inch above the eyebrows. No hair may be visible on the forehead beneath the headband. The flash is positioned over the left eye, and the excess material is draped over to the right ear, to at least the top of the ear, and no lower than the middle of the ear. A dip is formed in the wool directly behind the flash stiffener, and a slight fold is formed to the right front, next to the flash. Personnel will tie the adjusting ribbons into a nonslip

ATZK-PTO

SUBJECT: Thunderbolt Six Policy Memo No. 38-45 – Armor Center Policy on the Wear and Appearance of the Black Beret

knot, cut off the ends of the ribbon as close to the knot as possible, and secure the ribbon knot inside the edge binding at the back of the beret. When worn properly, the beret is form fitting to the head; therefore, soldiers may not wear hairstyles that cause distortion of the beret.

d. When not worn, the beret will be carried. The beret will not be placed in any pocket.

e. Officer and warrant officers will wear nonsubdued grade insignia, chaplains will wear their branch insignia, and enlisted personnel will wear their distinctive unit insignia (DUI) centered on the beret flash. General officers may wear full, medium, or miniature-size stars on the beret. Stars are worn point-to-point and may be mounted on a bar as an option.

4. Accountability. The beret is a retainable, nonrecoverable organizational issue item. DA Pam 710-2-1 governs procedures for the turn-in and re-issue of the beret. The soldier will replace lost or damaged berets. Units are responsible to ensure all soldiers sign an issue document or roster acknowledging receipt of their beret. Additionally, units are responsible to ensure that berets are annotated on the soldier's individual DA Form 3645, Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment Record. A complete audit trail must be in place.

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R. STEVEN WHITCOMB
Major General, US Army
Commanding

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