



Ministry
of Defence

Army Secretariat
Army Headquarters
IDL 24 Blenheim Building
Marlborough Lines
Andover
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2017/01853/10/4/78402

E-mail: ArmySec-&group@mod.uk

Website: www.army.mod.uk

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

15 February 2017

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX,

Thank you for your email of 3 February 2017 in which you requested the following information:

'Copies of:

- *Army Briefing Note 165/16: The Army flag.*
- *Army Briefing Note 156/16: Wearing of female headdress in consecrated buildings.'*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. Some information contained within the Army Briefing Notes (ABNs) is exempt from release under Section 40 (Personal Information) of the Freedom of Information Act. This is an absolute exemption and therefore there is no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information. Copies of the ABNs which can be released are attached.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <https://ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXX
Army Secretariat



Army Briefing Note

Serial No: 156/16

Source: APSG Ceremonial Policy & Plans

Date: 18 Nov 16

WEARING OF FEMALE HEADDRESS IN CONSECRATED BUILDINGS

ISSUE

1. To publicise a recent change in Army policy concerning female personnel wearing headdress inside consecrated buildings.

TARGET AUDIENCE

2. All Regular and Army Reserve personnel and Army Cadet Forces.

KEY POINTS

- Female personnel may remove their headdress when entering a consecrated building if they wish, providing this is in accordance with the customs of the religious denomination of the building.
- Male personnel are to remove headdress unless their own religion or that of the denomination of the consecrated building concerned requires the head to be covered.
- There is no change to other regulations, customs or guidance on occasions when or where female headdress is to be worn or removed.

BACKGROUND

3. Previous direction on the wearing of headdress by Army female personnel inside consecrated buildings was contained in AGAI 59. In short it stated that female personnel were to retain their headdress at all times.

4. The Army Dress Committee has agreed that it is no longer appropriate to require female personnel to retain their headdress when inside a consecrated building. Those that wish to remove their headdress may do so provided it is in keeping with the religious denomination concerned. AGAI 59 has been amended and now states:

59.014. Consecrated Buildings. All male and female personnel are to observe the custom of the religious denomination concerned in regard to wearing headdress in a consecrated building. While males will, in general, nearly always remove headdress, females may retain or remove their headdress according to their personal or religious preference. Headdress is to be worn by both male and female personnel when on duty as a member of the vigil during the lying in state of a deceased dignitary, or as a member of a colour party when depositing or receiving Colours.

5. This policy change is in force now.

6. It is to be noted that this change in policy only refers to females in uniform inside consecrated buildings, there is no change to existing regulations and customs concerning female dress for

investitures, garden parties or church parades in the field and the like or any change to guidance on social practise when in civilian clothes.

7. **Point of Contact.** Further information is available from [REDACTED] Army Personnel Services Group - Ceremonial Policy and Plans. DII: [REDACTED] Tel Mil: [REDACTED] Tel Civ: [REDACTED]



Army Briefing Note

Serial No: 165/16

Source: APSG Ceremonial Policy & Plans

Date: 6 Dec 2016

THE ARMY FLAG

ISSUE

1. The provision of an Army Flag for ceremonial events.

TARGET AUDIENCE

2. All Commanders and Commanding Officers of Regular and Army Reserve Units.

KEY POINTS

- The Army Flag is the Union Flag. A parade Union Flag has been made for use by the Army and by extension the UK Armed Forces when the deployment of a Regimental Standard, Guidon or Colour(s) would be inappropriate or impractical.
- The Army Flag is a blessed emblem and not a Consecrated one.
- The Army Flag is held by APSG Cer Pol&Plans in the MOD and was blessed by the Chaplain General in front of the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) on Friday 14 October 2016.

BACKGROUND

3. A parade flag has been made for use by the Army and by extension the UK Armed Forces when an Army or Tri-Service presence is required and when the use of a Regimental Standard, Guidon or Colour(s) is impractical or inappropriate.
4. The Army Flag should be carried by an armed Ensign or a Warrant Officer, escorted in either case by 2 armed SNCOs. However, an armed escort may be dispensed with if impractical or forbidden for security reasons; when deployed overseas for example. An escort is not necessary for a Church Parade.
5. The Army Flag is not to be paraded when there are Consecrated Emblems on parade unless they are from either of the other two Services and the Flag is representing the Army. The Army Flag may be paraded with the CCF and ACF Banners as they too are blessed not consecrated.
6. MOD APSG Cer Pol&Plans advice is to be sought in the planning for events using the Army Flag. The Army Flag is to be signed for and the user will be responsible for its collection, return and any damage caused.
7. **Point of Contact.** Requests for the use of the Army Flag are to be addressed to [REDACTED] Mil: [REDACTED] Civ [REDACTED].