



# **VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE**

## **VDF 103: Military Customs and Courtesies**



# VDF 103 Purpose

***Action: Discuss Virginia Defense Force (VDF)  
Custom and Courtesies***

***Conditions: Interactive classroom***

***Standard: Be able to pass by written and oral  
exam VDF Customs and Courtesies***

- **\*SILENCE CELLPHONES**
- **\*50/10 TIMEKEEPER**
- **\*SIGN IN FOR CREDIT**
- **\*TESTABLE**





# Course Objectives

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**At the completion of this period of instruction, you should be familiar with the following:**

- **Describe the basic customs of the U.S. Army and VDF**
- **Demonstrate and articulate proper reporting and saluting policy**
- **Explain and identify proper military titles, rank insignia, and flag honors**

# MISSION

- **The VDF instills pride in its members because of its history, mission, capabilities, and the respect it has earned in the service of the Commonwealth.**
- **A reflection of that pride is visible in its customs, courtesies, and traditions.**





# Military C&C



- **Definition**

- **A **custom** is an established practice that include positive actions (things you do) and taboos (things you avoid.)**

- **Purpose**

- **Many **customs** complement procedures required by military courtesy. Violations of some customs will bring official censure or disciplinary action. Customs are common law.**



# Military C&C



- **A custom** is an established usage. Customs include positive actions – things you do, and taboos – things you avoid. Customs can change over time or have variants depending on location, like the law codes in relation to civility.
- **Knowing that you are following a course that has been successful for others in a similar circumstance bolsters your confidence and encourages you to adhere to your course.**



# Military C&C



- **Definition**
  - **Military courtesy** means good manners and politeness in dealing with other people. Courteous behavior develops good human relations
- **Purpose**
  - **Military courtesy** is respect shown by members of the same profession



# Military C&C



- **Military courtesy is not a one-way street.**
- **Enlisted personnel are expected to be courteous to officers and likewise officers are expected to return the courtesy.**
- **Mutual respect is a vital part of military courtesy.**





# Military C&C



- **NEVER:**

- **Criticize the VDF or a leader in public.**
- **Go “over the heads” of superiors—don't jump the chain of command.**
- **Offer excuses.**
- **“Wear” a superior's rank by saying something like, “the first sergeant wants this done now,” when in fact the first sergeant said no such thing. Speak with your own voice**



# Military C&C



- **NEVER:**

- **Turn and walk away to avoid giving the hand salute.**
- **Run indoors or pretend you don't hear (while driving, for example) to avoid standing "Reveille" or "Retreat."**
- **Appear in uniform while under the influence of alcohol.**
- **Say only "I don't know." If you don't know the answer to a superior's question, you will never go wrong with the response, "I don't know sir, but I'll find out."**



# Military C&C



- **When a junior walks, rides, or sits with a senior, the junior takes a position to the left of the senior.**
- **Enter automobiles in inverse order of rank; that is, the senior enters the car last and exits first (let the senior decide where to sit)**
- **Do not thank a superior when he does something for you in the course of his official duties.**
- **The “wish” or “desire” of a commander is generally assumed to have the same weight as an order.**



# Military C&C



- **Enlisted personnel should secure permission from the senior enlisted before speaking to the commander.**
- **The words “Sir” and “Ma’am” are used in military conversation in addressing a superior.**
- **Use first person in conversation with senior officers. Avoid “Sir, does the Colonel desire...”**
- **The “open-door” policy permits each person in the VDF, regardless of rank, to appeal to the next higher command.**



# Military C&C



- **It is a strong service tradition that an officer does not fraternize with enlisted soldiers.**
- **Male officers in uniform do not carry an umbrella.**
- **Avoid leaning on or lolling against desks or walls and keep your hands out of your pockets.**
- **Report at once when notified to do so.**
- **NCO's do not perform manual labor while in charge of a work detail.**
- **Officers should remain at a reception or social gathering until the commanding officer departs.**



# Military C&C



- **“Hooah!”** This informal but always understood sound is less a word than an audible affirmation of the warrior ethos. The soldier that utters this sound understands his task and will not quit until it is completed. It also means that the soldier is ready and willing to accomplish the mission at hand.
- **Mottos:** Many units adopt mottos to build moral and instill esprit de corps.
- **The VDF motto is:**

**“Always Ready, Always There!”**



# Hand Salute



# Hand Salute

- **The salute is a privileged gesture of respect and trust among soldiers.**
- **The salute is not only prescribed by regulation but is also recognition of each other's commitment, abilities, and professionalism.**
- **The junior extending the greeting first is a point of etiquette. A salute extended or returned makes the same statement**



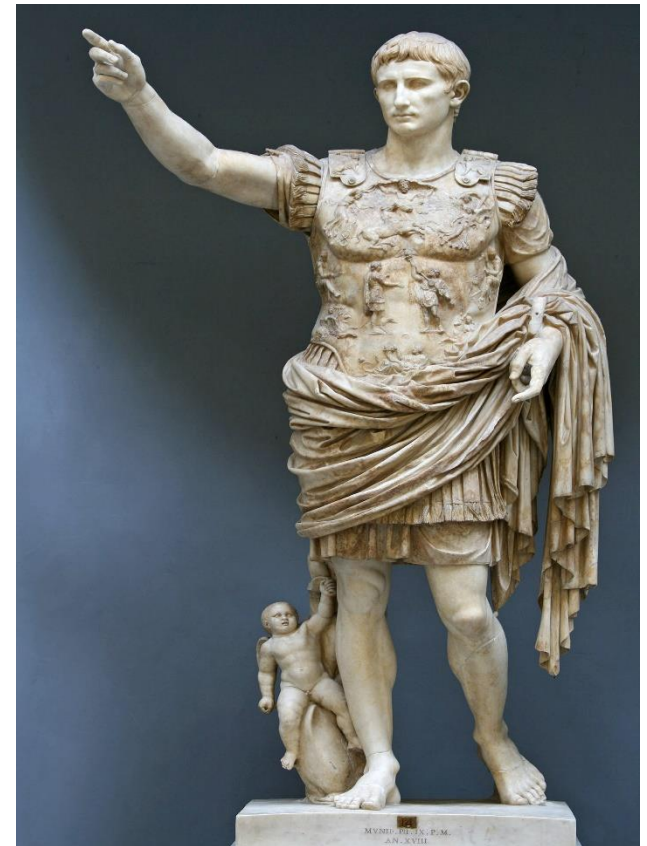




# Hand Salute



- **The hand salute may have begun in Roman times when assassinations were common. A citizen approached a public official with his right hand raised to show that he did not hold a weapon.**
- **Knights in armor raised visors with the right hand when meeting a comrade.**
- **In early American history, the salute sometimes involved removing the hat.**
- **By 1820, the motion was modified to touching the hat, and since then it has become the Hand Salute used today.**





# Hand Salute



- **All soldiers in uniform are required to salute when they meet and recognize persons entitled (by grade) to a salute except when it is inappropriate or impractical (in public conveyances such as planes and buses, in public places such as inside theaters, or when driving a vehicle).**
- **Salutes are not required when:**
  - **Indoors, unless reporting to an officer or when on duty as a guard.**
  - **A prisoner**
  - **Saluting is obviously inappropriate. In any case not covered by specific instructions, render the salute**
  - **Either the senior or the subordinate is wearing civilian clothes**



# Hand Salute



- **Salutes will be exchanged between officers (commissioned and warrant) and enlisted personnel, and with personnel of the Armed Forces of the United States (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard), the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service entitled to the salute.**



# Hand Salute



- **U.S. National Anthem, "To the Color," "Hail to the Chief," or foreign national anthems**
- **To uncased National Color outdoors**
- **On ceremonial occasions**
- **At reveille and retreat ceremonies**
- **During the sounding of honors**
- **When pledging allegiance outdoors**
- **When turning over control of formations.**
- **When rendering reports**
- **To officers of friendly foreign countries**





# Other Courtesies



# React to an Officer



- **When an officer of superior rank enters an office, barracks, building, or room:**
  - **The first person observing the officer will call the personnel in the room to attention but does not salute.**
  - **Everyone will remain at attention until otherwise ordered.**



# React to an Officer



- **When an officer enters a dining facility:**
  - **The first person observing the officer will give the order “AT EASE,” unless a more senior officer is already present.**
  - **Soldiers in the dining facility will remain seated, silent and continue eating unless directed otherwise.**



# Reporting







# Reporting



## **When reporting to an officer in his/her office:**

- 1. Knock and enter when told to do so.**
  - 2. Move toward the center of the desk and halt at the position of attention two steps in front of the desk.**
  - 3. Render proper hand salute and, while holding the salute, state, "Ma'am, (RANK) (NAME) reports".**
  - 4. When salute is returned execute "Order Arms."**
  - 5. When dismissed, come to attention and render salute.**
  - 6. Execute the appropriate facing movement and depart the room.**
- The only time that you do not remove your headgear when reporting to an officer indoors is while you are under arms**



# Reporting



## **When reporting outdoors:**

- 1. Move rapidly toward the officer and halt at the position of attention two steps in front of the officer.**
- 2. Render proper hand salute and, while holding the salute, state, “Sir, (RANK) (NAME) reports”.**
- 3. When salute is returned execute “Order Arms.”**
- 4. When dismissed, come to attention, render salute, execute facing movement and depart.**



# Rendering Honor to the Flag



- **Reveille:** When the flag is raised in the morning, stand at attention on the first note of "Reveille" and salute.
- **Retreat:** In the evening "Retreat" is played before "To the Colors." At the first note of "Retreat," come to attention and face the flag (or the direction of the music.) Salute at the first note of "To the Colors."



# Rendering Honor to the Flag



- **When you are passing or being passed by colors that are being presented, paraded, or displayed, salute when the colors are six paces from you.**
- **Hold the salute until the colors are six paces beyond you.**



# Misc. Courtesies



- **When talking to an officer of superior rank, stand at attention until ordered otherwise.**
- **When you are dismissed, or when the officer departs, come to attention and salute.**
- **When speaking to or being addressed a noncommissioned officer of superior rank, stand at parade rest until ordered otherwise.**





# Misc. Courtesies



- **When an officer of superior rank enters a room, the first soldier to recognize the officer calls personnel in the room to attention**
- **When an NCO of superior rank enters the room, the first soldier to recognize the NCO calls the room to “At ease”**
- **Walk on the left of an officer or NCO of superior rank**





# Misc. Courtesies



- **The junior ranking soldier is the first to enter a vehicle and the senior in rank is first to exit**
- **When outdoors, greet the NCO by rank, e.g., “Good morning, Sergeant”**
- **First person seeing an officer enter a dining facility gives the order “At ease,” unless a more senior officer is already present**
- **When command “At ease” is given in a dining facility, remain seated, silent and continue eating unless directed otherwise.**





**Questions?**