

## INFORMATION PAPER

**SUBJECT:** *America's Army–Our Profession* Education and Training program, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Calendar Year 2013 Theme: Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions

1. **Purpose.** To provide information and resources on Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions to facilitate dialog, educate, train and inspire compliance with customs, courtesies and traditions in individuals and organizations.

### 2. Background.

a. The CSA approved the *America's Army–Our Profession* Education and Training program to inform and inspire the force on doctrine in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 1, *The Army*, Chapter 2 and in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1, *The Army Profession*. These capstone documents define and describe the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession, membership and certification criteria of Army professionals, and the Army Ethic.

b. Why are we doing this? The *America's Army–Our Profession* Education and Training program is designed to teach and inspire understanding of the Army Profession and to enhance commitment to our professional obligations – to ourselves, others, and the Army.

### 3. Discussion.

a. The focus of effort for 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr, CY13 is on "Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions," fundamental aspects of Army culture.

(1) What are Military Customs? The Army has its own customs, both official and social. Some have been handed down from the distant past while others are of comparatively recent origin. A custom is an established practice. All established arts, trades, and professions, all races of people, all nations, and even different sections of the same nation have their own practices and customs by which they govern a part of their lives (FM 7-21.13, *The Soldier's Guide*, pp. 4-1 and 4-2).

(2) What are Military Courtesies? Courtesy among members of the Armed Forces is vital to maintain discipline. Military courtesy means good manners and politeness in dealing with other people. Courteous behavior provides a basis for developing good human relations. The distinction between civilian and military courtesy is that military courtesy was developed in a military atmosphere and has become an integral part of serving in uniform (FM 7-21.13, *The Soldier's Guide*, p. 4-2).

(3) What are Army Traditions? Tradition is a customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior held by an identifiable group of people. It is information, beliefs, and customs handed down by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction. Our military traditions are really the "Army Way" of doing and thinking.

b. Esprit de Corps is an essential characteristic of the Army Profession, demonstrated by the winning spirit of our Soldiers and Army Civilians. Our esprit de corps is rooted in tradition and history. Very few American institutions have a history as rich or long as ours. We emphasize this through the practice of customs, traditions, and ceremonies. Units and organizations preserve their unit histories and display them in unit distinctive insignia (such as unit crests, patches, and mottos). These practices and symbols give us a sense of commitment, identify the cause we serve, and unite us to those who have gone before and sacrificed so much (ADP 1, *The Army*, p. 2-7).

c. Esprit de Corps is developed and strengthened through our shared bonds arising from teamwork, our performance of duty, and our disciplined practice of the essential characteristics of the Army Profession, all reflected in our time-honored customs, courtesies, and traditions. Esprit de Corps, within units and organizations, and the morale of each Army professional are essential to effective teamwork. Military history confirms that units and organizations embracing tradition, achieving high standards, and performing duty with discipline accomplish the mission in the right way.

d. We foster an enduring commitment to the Army, its mission and its people, and the continued practice of the fundamental aspects of our Army culture. Our commitment to the Army mission today is shared with those who preceded us, recalling their storied legacy of honorable service to the Nation. Furthermore, as stewards of the Army Profession, we will ensure that these fundamental aspects are carried forward to future generations.

e. Traditions bind us across more than two centuries of the Army Profession. They reflect the Army way of accomplishing the mission with discipline and to standard. Traditions may be generic to the Army Profession (e.g., Change of Command Ceremony), specific to a Branch (e.g., St. Barbara, Patron Saint of the Field Artillery) or unique to an organization (e.g., Dining In). Traditions connect us to our heritage. These connections remind us of the proud history of our Army and inspire us to uphold the tradition of excellence. Army traditions are practiced by everyone in the Army. Unit traditions are unique to your unit or organization.

f. Thus, our Army's customs, courtesies, and traditions provide a vital connection with exemplary generations of citizen-soldiers of the past, inspiring and motivating us to be Army professionals, defending our Nation.

#### **4. What Can You Do?**

a. Include Army Customs, Courtesies and Traditions as a topic in professional development sessions.

b. Capitalize on iconic events such as promotions, retirements, and hails and farewells to reinforce the importance of Army Customs, Courtesies and Traditions.

c. Emphasize the Army's History and traditions that link your unit's/organization's contribution to history. Review and update organizational histories in accordance with AR 870-5.

d. Maximize opportunities for unit reviews and parades to emphasize unit/organization history and traditions.

e. Visit <http://cape.army.mil> for resources to assist in the planning and execution of professional development.

#### **5. How CAPE Can Help**

a. A lesson plan is included to assist you in facilitating a professional development session.

b. A video is available to enhance the understanding of Army Customs, Courtesies and Traditions.

- c. A poster to assist you in focusing attention and communicating the theme.
  - d. Senior Leader Guide and talking points are included to help communicate Army themes.
  - e. The enclosed CAPE Research Fact Sheet provides analysis of recent Army-wide survey findings to assist you in identifying potential areas to focus on in your organization.
6. For additional information visit the CAPE Website at <http://cape.army.mil>.

Encl  
Suggested Reading List  
CAPE Research Fact Sheet

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Suggested Reading – Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions**

***Centuries of Service: The United States Army 1775 to 2005*** by David W. Hogan, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office; 2005). ISBN-13: 978-0160724640.

An easy-to-read and informative pamphlet that describes the many missions the U.S. Army has performed over the course of its history. The booklet covers America's wars as well as the Army's many operations other than war, including occupation, peacekeeping, nation building, exploration, civil administration, scientific research, and humanitarian relief. This pamphlet is a valuable introduction to American military history for all Army professionals.

***The Centurions (Les Centurions)*** by Jean Lartéguy (translated by Xan Fielding). (New York, NY: E.P. Dutton; 1962). ASIN: B000NTNDFW.

The novel follows Lt. Col. Pierre Raspeguy, who must transform a military unit accustomed to conventional warfare into one that can handle the more complex, dynamic challenge of defeating an insurgency. The centurions of the title refer to Raspeguy's band of French soldiers, but the term harkens back to the Roman officers who fought at the periphery while the Empire crumbled internally, paralyzed by intense political infighting.

***The Soldier's Guide*** (FM 7-21.13) by Department of the Army. (2004).

[http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/fm7\\_21x13.pdf](http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/fm7_21x13.pdf)

Chapter 4 of this publication focuses on Army Customs, Courtesies and Traditions. *The Soldier's Guide*, is a pocket reference for subjects in which all soldiers must maintain proficiency, regardless of rank, component or military occupational specialty (MOS). It condenses information from other field manuals, training circulars, soldier training publications, Army regulations, and other sources. It addresses both general subjects and selected combat tasks. While not all-inclusive or intended as a stand-alone document, the guide offers Soldiers a ready reference in many subjects. *The Soldier's Guide* provides information critical to the success of Soldiers in the operational environment. Reading this manual will help prepare Soldiers for full spectrum operations and is a valuable resource for professional self-development.

***The Noncommissioned Officer Guide*** (FM 7-22.7) by Department of the Army. (2002).

[http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/fm7\\_22x7.pdf](http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/fm7_22x7.pdf)

FM 7-22.7 provides the Army's noncommissioned officers a guide for leading supervising and caring for soldiers. While not all-inclusive or intended as a stand-alone document, the guide offers NCOs a ready reference for most situations. The Army NCO Guide describes typical duties, responsibilities, and authority, and how these relate to those of warrant and commissioned officers. It also discusses NCO leadership, counseling, and mentorship and the NCO role in training. Of particular use are the additional sources of information and assistance described in the manual.

***The Armed Forces Officer*** by U.S. Department of Defense (1988)

[http://www.apd.army.mil/pdf/files/p600\\_2.pdf](http://www.apd.army.mil/pdf/files/p600_2.pdf)

This manual for leadership has been prepared for use by the Departments of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. This book is based on the firm conviction that our nation is worth whatever it takes to uphold and defend our ideals. It is about the love of duty and the knowledge that there is no higher calling than that of an Armed Forces officer. Traditional concepts of service, loyalty, and duty are emphasized because they remain essential in today's complex and volatile world.



# RESEARCH FACT SHEET



Army Profession Survey I & II Customs, Courtesies, Traditions • September 2012

## Perceptions of Army Professionals

- ✓ Believe the Army is a Profession
- ✓ Have a strong Professional identity
- ✓ Are proud to serve in the Army
- Defending the Nation is primary
- ✓ Believe customs and traditions are important
- ✓ Embrace Army Values
- ✓ Are committed to Professional Development
- ✓ Are committed to Stewardship
- ✓ Respect Civilian authority
- ✓ Believe the Army has a strong culture for service
- ✓ Have a "Winning Spirit"
- ✓ Believe the Army develops character
- ✓ Believe they can achieve life's goals in the Army
- ✓ Are committed to development in competence, character, and commitment
- ✓ Are committed to preserving the Army Ethic
- ✓ Believe Professional Education strengthens knowledge of and appreciation for customs, courtesies, and traditions
- ✓ Are loyal to the Constitution
- ✓ Trust the Army
- ✓ Trust the American people and believe society trusts the Army
- ✓ Believe that being a "Leader of Character" is the hallmark of an Army professional

## Army Profession Survey I & II Customs, Courtesies, Traditions

One of the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession is Esprit de Corps, which is demonstrated in the "Winning Spirit" of our Soldiers in the Profession of Arms and our Army Civilian Corps. This characteristic is developed and strengthened through the disciplined practice of our duty and reflected in our time-honored customs, courtesies, and traditions. By adhering to and practicing fundamental attributes of our Army culture we foster an enduring commitment to the Army mission today and grip hands with those who preceded us, recalling their storied legacy of honorable service to the Nation. And, as stewards of the Army Profession we will ensure that our traditions are practiced by future generations. During CY 11 two surveys informed the state of the Army Profession. This fact sheet summarizes the key findings reflecting the effects of the past decade of continuous conflict on our customs, courtesies, and traditions within our Army culture.

## Summary Findings

- Identify themselves as *Professionals* and they believe the *Army is a Profession*.
- Welcome the responsibility to exercise Stewardship within the Profession.
- Express a desire to be of Service to the Nation and to be loyal to the Constitution.
- Agree that their personal and professional values are in harmony.
- Value Professional Development and life-long learning.
- Accept responsibility to demonstrate discipline and uphold standards.
- Believe that discipline and standards within their units are important.
- Take pride in exceeding standards and want to improve their organizations.
- Value transformational leaders who are trustworthy and set the example.
- Embrace the Army Ethos; profess a winning spirit and believe they will prevail.
- Express a positive Ethos for service and a winning spirit.
- Agree that trust is essential to the mission and requires moral courage.
- Respect the bond of trust between the Army Profession and the American people.
- Embrace the Army Values and believe trust with society will be sustained by members of the Army Profession.

## Discussion Points

- Why are Army customs, courtesies, and traditions important?
- How do they influence and reinforce Army culture?
- How do they enhance Esprit de Corps?
- Does your organization practice them and teach them to new members?
- Which ones are most important to you? Why?
- Do you know the history and accomplishments of your organization?
- What can you do to renew appreciation for and enhance Army traditions in your unit?