



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000



FEB 9 2006

PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

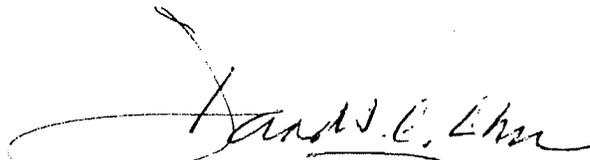
MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Enhanced Honors for Deceased Service Members

Title V of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 Conference Report to accompany H.R.1815 (Report 109-360), copy attached, requested the Department of Defense to review Departmental policy relative to the provision of military honor guards at the arrival airports to render appropriate honors to fallen Service members. As a result of that review, this memorandum establishes Departmental policy that, to the maximum extent possible, small honor guards will render appropriate honors plane-side at the arrival airports for all fallen active duty Service members. Each Military Service will establish procedures to implement this policy and ensure that the appropriate Military Service chain of command is engaged in resolving any obstacle that may occur.

Whenever individuals decide to join the Armed Forces of the United States, they promise to put themselves between the people of the United States and those who would harm us. Sometimes this promise costs these brave men and women their lives. To honor this promise and sacrifice, the Department of Defense is committed to doing all that we can to support our deceased Service members' families. This policy further implements that commitment.

This policy is effective immediately and will be incorporated in the next revision of Department of Defense Instruction 1300.18 "Military Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies, and Procedures" and Department of Defense Directive 1300.22 "Mortuary Affairs Policy".

  
Davis S. C. Chu

Attachment:  
As stated

cc:  
USD(AT&L)





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC

MAR 17 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM/SERVICES DIRECTORS

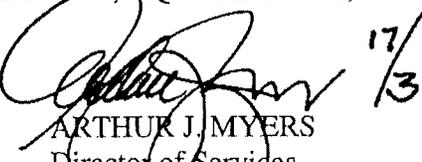
FROM: HQ USAF/A7V  
201 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, Ste 413  
Arlington, VA 22202

SUBJECT: Providing Honors for Deceased Airmen at Final Destination Airports

A provision in the Fiscal Year 2006 National Defense Authorization Act Conference Report directs each Service to provide a "small honor guard" to provide honors for human remains as they arrive at their final destination airport. On 9 February 2006, the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) signed a policy directing us to ensure these honors are provided (Atch 1). Our policy memo provides the guidance and procedures for providing this entitlement. **This policy applies to all active duty deaths.**

- Base Mortuary Officers for the deceased are responsible for arranging for this detail.
- Two military personnel must be provided to render appropriate honors when human remains arrive at the final destination airports. This detail will provide appropriate military honors as the casket is moved from the aircraft to a holding area, and at the holding area while being placed into the receiving funeral director's hearse. Attachment 2 provides detail procedures.
- The escort (if military) may be used as one of the two persons in the detail. The other member may be the assigned Family Liaison Officer, Mortuary Officer, or other representative of the unit. However, any uniformed member may provide this requirement (i.e. recruiters, ROTC, instructors, etc).
- Funding for travel is the responsibility of the unit providing assistance.
- The Operations Directive from the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) authorizes military escorts to be permitted on the civilian airport tarmac (Atch 3).

This information will be added to AFI 34-242, *Mortuary Affairs Program* in the next revision. Please address any questions to the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Office at DSN 487-5806, commercial (210) 652-5806, or to Mr. James Halvorson, HQ USAF/A7VC, at DSN 664-4937, commercial (703) 604-4937.

  
ARTHUR J. MYERS  
Director of Services  
DCS/Logistics, Installations & Mission Support

3 Attachments:

1. USD (P&R) Policy Memo
2. Air Force Honor Guard Detail Procedures at Final Destination Airports
3. Transportation Security Agency (TSA) Operations Directive

cc: AFSVA/CC

## Air Force Honor Guard Detail Procedures at Final Destination Airports

- Current Transportation Security Agency (TSA) policy allows military members providing honors escorted access to the tarmac and secured storage area. However, TSA policy does not authorize family members this same level of access.
- Detail members will follow local TSA procedures for screening prior to admittance to the airport tarmac and will be escorted by a TSA or airline-badged person at all times.
  - Detail members may be the Family Liaison Officer (FLO), Mortuary Officer, or military members from nearby bases or local detachments nearest the final destination airport.
  - Base Mortuary Officers of the deceased are responsible for arranging this detail and ensuring two military representatives are present.
  - Funding for travel is the responsibility of the supporting unit.
- Honors provided while on the airport tarmac include a slow-hand salute when the casket, transported in a protective air tray, is removed from the aircraft and placed into/onto the airline's vehicle for movement to a secured location (typically a hangar or other facility) where the casket is then transferred into the receiving funeral home's hearse for onward movement to the funeral home.
- Once at the secured airport location, the American flag will be draped over the casket, or air tray, depending on the funeral directors decision to remove the air tray at the airport or at the funeral home.
  - The flag should be draped with the blue shield towards the head and left side of the deceased.
- Once the casket/air tray is loaded into the hearse, both military members will execute a slow-hand salute as the hearse door is closed.
- The escort will coordinate with the funeral director, his/her transportation method from the airport to the funeral home (escort typically drives rental car and follows the hearse).



March 29, 2005

Operations Directive

OD-400-8-1: Military Escorts for Human Remains

Deleted:

Expiration: Indefinite

This Operations Directive cancels and supercedes Aviation Operations Directive 400.8.1.10-1 – Military Escorts for Human Remains, dated March 31, 2003.

Summary

Due to ongoing hostilities in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations worldwide, there has been a marked increase in the number of Military Escorts charged with escorting the human remains of deceased service members. Military protocol dictates that a Military Escort must accompany the remains of a U.S. military service member while they are being transported to their final place of rest. The military escort is required to be present during the loading of the casket onto the aircraft, the transfer between flights, and the unloading of the casket from the aircraft.

Procedures

Air carriers are notified by the Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs when a Military Escort will be accompanying human remains. To assist Military Escorts in carrying out their duties, FSDs and their staff are directed to take the following actions:

- A. FSDs and staff shall work closely with affected air carriers and provide any assistance that may be required.
- B. Air carriers have been instructed to provide a SIDA-badged escort to accompany the Military Escort(s) to the aircraft while the casket(s) are loaded and unloaded from the aircraft. In the event that an air carrier cannot provide an escort, FSDs shall provide an authorized TSA staff member to accompany the Military Escort(s).
- C. FSDs shall send TSA screening personnel to the aircraft to screen Military Escorts and their accessible property. The screening may take place in the sterile area, jet way, air carrier's freight facility, or other location. This will help to ensure that Military Escorts can remain with the casket(s) and properly carry out their required duties.
- D. The Military Escort is authorized to enter or exit the sterile area or aircraft after screening or under escort via the jet way stairs or other means after they have overseen the loading or unloading of the human remains.

Point of Contact

Deak Childress, Office of Aviation Programs, (571) 227-2977 (work), (571) 213-8090 (cell), or email to [deak.childress@dhs.gov](mailto:deak.childress@dhs.gov).

/s/

Jonathan J. Fleming  
Chief Operating Officer