



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
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OPNAVINST 1770.2B  
N135  
10 Jun 2013

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1770.2B

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: FLAG OFFICER SUPPORT OF NAVY HONORS FOR COMBAT, COMBAT-RELATED, AND THEATER OF COMBAT CASUALTIES

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1300.15 of 22 October 2007  
(b) DoD Instruction 1300.18 of 8 January 2008  
(c) NAVMEDCOMINST 5360.1

Encl: (1) Instructions for Flag Officers at the Dignified Transfer of Remains

1. Purpose. To update policy and responsibilities for flag officer support of Navy honors for combat, combat-related, and theater of combat casualties, per references (a) and (b).

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 1770.2A.

3. Background. Navy has a long tradition of honoring and recognizing Sailors who are killed in action, die while directly supporting combat operations, or are wounded in action. The rendering of military funeral honors, as a final tribute on behalf of a grateful nation, and the prompt recognition of those who suffer combat or combat-related wounds are paramount.

4. Policy. A Navy flag officer shall represent the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) in support of honors for these casualties. A Navy flag officer shall:

a. Be present at the continental United States (CONUS) port of entry for the arrival of the remains of each Sailor killed in action, or who died directly supporting combat operations.

b. Attend the funeral of each Sailor killed in action, each Sailor who died directly supporting combat operations, and each Sailor who subsequently died as a result of combat or combat-related wounds. This policy does not apply to burial at sea ceremonies when logistical requirements may preclude having a flag officer present, per reference (c).

c. Present posthumous combat or combat-related awards and decorations in conjunction with funeral honors.

d. Present combat or combat-related awards and decorations to each Sailor wounded in action as soon as practicable following medical evacuation to CONUS.

5. Responsibilities

a. Director, Navy Staff (DNS) shall:

(1) Ensure that pending combat or combat-related awards and decorations are processed expeditiously to support:

(a) Presentation to the next of kin during funeral honors. DNS will ensure that the assigned flag officer has all applicable awards and decorations prior to the funeral.

(b) Presentation to Sailors wounded in action as soon as practical following medical evacuation to CONUS. DNS will ensure that combat or combat-related awards are presented by an appropriate flag officer at bedside for hospitalized Sailors.

(2) Direct the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) duty flag officer to be present at each dignified transfer event at Dover Air Force Base (AFB). This event occurs when a Sailor currently engaged in combat or combat support is killed in action, and the remains return from overseas to CONUS.

(3) Direct the OPNAV duty flag officer to be present at a funeral in the National Capital Region (NCR) for a Sailor killed in action, while directly supporting combat operations, or subsequently died as a result of combat or combat-related wounds.

NOTE: NCR is defined by the National Capital Planning Act of 1952 and encompasses: the City of Alexandria; the District of Columbia; and Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Prince William Counties.

(4) Designate a flag officer to attend the funeral or arrival of remains to CONUS outside the NCR of a Sailor killed in action while directly supporting combat operations, or

subsequently died as a result of combat or combat-related wounds. This designation shall be based upon availability, generally following the sequence below:

(a) Flag officer in command of, or who possesses tactical or operational control over, the deceased member's unit;

(b) Type commander, community leader, or designated flag representative; or

(c) Regional commander or other flag officer located near the burial location.

b. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education (N1) shall:

(1) Ensure Navy Casualty, Entitlements and Mortuary Affairs Office (OPNAV (N135C)) coordinates with the applicable regional casualty coordinator and assigned casualty assistance calls officer (CACO) to provide specific funeral information to the designated flag officer, as required.

(2) Ensure OPNAV (N135C) keeps DNS, Naval District Washington (NDW) and other appropriate offices informed about the timeline for the return of remains and medical evacuation of wounded Sailors to CONUS.

c. Commandant, NDW, upon receipt of notification of a dignified transfer event shall:

(1) Notify the Navy Operations Center battle watch, DNS, and the flag aides of the CNO and the Vice Chief of Naval Operations of a scheduled arrival of qualifying remains.

(2) Provide ceremonial, protocol and CACO support to the OPNAV duty flag officer in the execution of dignified transfer event duties.

(3) Serve as the alternate flag representative for dignified transfers if the OPNAV duty flag officer is unavailable.

d. Designated flag officers shall:

(1) Attend funerals as assigned. Obtain specific protocol guidance and information regarding the deceased and family of the deceased from area Commander, Naval Installations Command regional funeral honors coordinator and OPNAV (N135C).

(2) In the event of a dignified transfer event at Dover AFB, review in a timely manner and execute the duties as prescribed in enclosure (1).

(3) In the event of qualifying remains arriving at other ports of entry, observe the transfer of remains from aircraft to designated vehicle.

(4) Be funded by the parent command or other accounting activity as there is no centralized account for funding travel and transportation presentations.

6. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, shall be managed per Secretary of the Navy Manual 5210.1 of January 2012.



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INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLAG OFFICERS AT THE DIGNIFIED TRANSFER OF  
REMAINS

1. Introduction. The flag officer representative is an official ambassador for the U.S. Navy. Their participation in this solemn event demonstrates the Navy cares; the service of the Sailor was important; and that his or her command and the Navy will not forget. Although each family will have a varying level of support for the Navy's overall national policies, to include the commitment of forces in the nation's conflicts, the family will care deeply about the loss of a loved one and will desire a fitting tribute. In the capacity as the CNO's representative, the flag officer representative has the responsibility to ensure that the transfer of Sailors' remains at Dover AFB is executed in a dignified, respectful, and professional manner. With this in mind, the flag officer representative is encouraged to meet with the attending family members before and or after the dignified transfer to extend condolences on behalf of the Navy. This allows the flag officer the opportunity to establish a rapport with the family and send a message about caring early in the family's casualty process. Upon notification of the dignified transfer and repatriation of remains duty, the flag officer representative or their assistant should contact the NDW flag aide at (202) 433-2670 for detailed information regarding missions to Dover AFB.

2. Dignified Transfer Process. Flag officers should arrive at Dover AFB at least 15 minutes prior to the aircraft's estimated time of arrival.

a. Dover AFB Protocol meets the flag officer upon arrival at the Dover AFB gate and escorts the flag officer to the distinguished visitor (DV) lounge at the terminal.

b. The dignified transfer host (a colonel stationed at Dover AFB) and the chaplain meet the flag officer at the DV lounge. The dignified transfer host briefs the flag officer and shows an instructional video (if desired). The carry team is briefed by the dignified transfer officer in charge.

c. After the aircraft lands, the family is transported to the Center for the Friends of the Fallen to receive the chaplain's briefing.

d. When the family is prepared, the Family Support Team informs Dover AFB Protocol, who then transport the admiral to the Center for the Friends of the Fallen.

e. Upon arrival at the Center for the Friends of the Fallen, the flag officer is briefed by the casualty assistance officer and chaplain before entering to meet with the family.

f. After the flag officer has met with the family, Dover AFB Protocol returns the flag officer to the DV lounge.

g. The Family Support Team transports the family to the flight line.

h. Upon receiving word that the dignified transfer is ready to proceed, Dover AFB Protocol will station the carry team and the flag officer.

i. The dignified transfer will then be executed according to standard procedures.

j. Upon completion of the dignified transfers the family is returned to the Fisher House and the flag officer departs.