

## **Customs and Courtesies**

### **Part A: General**

#### **1. Introduction**

Customs and courtesies plays an important part in all Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps activities and it contributes to build up the sense of discipline, the 'Esprit de Corps' and mutual respect for every individual in the Corps. There is a fine line separating customs from courtesies but each is rooted from the same source - respect between two individuals for each other. Both customs and courtesies must be observed by all members of the HKACC.

The same courtesies extended by members to HKACC officers are extended to officers of the Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps, the Hong Kong Adventure Corps, officers in the Hong Kong SAR Government Disciplined Services, the armed forces of China (People's Liberation Army and People's Armed Police) and of all allied or friendly nations (e.g. UK, USA).

Acts of courtesies are not marks of inferiority or servility. Rather, they are indications that one person appreciates the position, responsibilities and right of another. Courtesies foster a feeling of pride, respect and comradeship between individuals and they express a high state of unit pride and individual self-respect.

Customs & Courtesies work both ways for juniors and seniors in the HKACC. The courtesy paid to a senior rank is an acknowledgment of the responsibility and authority of his/her position. The courtesy shown to a junior rank is an acknowledgment of his/her essential role as a member of a team. Officers, warrant officers and NCOs are responsible for supervising and directing their subordinate to have proper observance of C&C.

#### **2. Customs and Courtesies**

**RESPONSE** is one of the most important character for the a HKACC member. One must give prompt and proper response or answers to questions from his/her superior. Silence is meaningless. A member should response to a question in three basic

manner: “**Yes Sir/Ma’am/ rank**”, “**No, Sir/Ma’am/ rank**” and “**I don’t know, Sir/Ma’am/rank**” in a loud and clear voice.

When a fault has been pointed out by the superior or unable to perform a task, A member should declare “**No excuse, Sir/Ma’am/rank**” with a loud and clear voice. He/she should not offer any explanation unless requested.

The following points are also very important and should be born in mind:

- (a) A superior's order is ordinarily accepted without question.
- (b) A superior's words like "I wish" or "I desire" has all the force of "I order you".
- (c) The place of honour is at the right. A junior walks or sits to the left. A guest at a dinner party is seated at the right of the host.
- (d) HKACC members should greet a lady with a slight bow or a salute. The uniform cap should not be tipped or raised in greeting.
- (e) HKACC members should escort a lady by walking on her right so that he can salute with his right hand.
- (f) One must learn to **OBEY** before he may **COMMAND**.
- (g) Personal appearance must be exemplary at all times.
- (h) A member with the highest rank in a group have the privilege of being the first to choose the seat, food and drink.
- (i) Official channel of approach and communication is through **CHAIN OF COMMAND**. It should be observed and followed by all members of the Corps.

### 3. Restrictions & Norms

- (a) Do not behave in any way which might defame the Corps.
- (b) Do not use uniform, emblem or name of the Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps for any commercial purposes.
- (c) Do not use the HKACC organization, uniform, emblem or name in political activities.
- (d) Do not impeach the Corps in front of the outsiders. If you feel an improvement can be made, submit a proposal to your superior through proper chain of command.
- (e) Do not criticize your colleagues in front of the others.
- (f) Stand in front of a superior unless invited to sit.
- (g) Do not drink alcoholic beverages in uniform whilst on duty.

- (h) Do not smoke or chew gum in uniform.
- (i) Do not solicit contributions for presents to those in higher positions, or accept a present from anyone who has a subordinate position.
- (j) Do not put your hands in the trousers pockets.
- (k) Be punctual.
- (l) There are no personal friendships in the Air Cadet Corps as far as customs and courtesies are concerned. During official HKACC activities, all cadets, officer cadets, warrant officers and officers will observe the proper customs and courtesies regardless of how well they know one another.
- (m) When an officer enters the room, all persons with lower rank should stand or sit attention immediately until the officer directs **"SEATS"** or **"AT EASE"** or until he/her leaves the room. Normally, the FIRST one who see the officer should call out **"ATTENTION"** loudly and clearly to let other cadets follow. However, when an officer enters a room used as an office, workshop, recreation room or classroom in which activities are in progress, those at work, play or lesson are not required to come to attention unless addressed by that officer.

#### 4. Reporting

When reporting to an officer outdoors, a cadet should come to attention two paces in front of the officer, salute and say **"SIR/MA'AM, Rank & Name REPORTING AS ORDERED, SIR/MA'AM"** in a loud and clear voice. If the officer is engaged, wait until he/she acknowledges you before reporting.

When reporting to an officer indoors, stand at attention outside/beside the door and face to the officer. Knock the door three times and say **"SIR/MA'AM, Rank & Name REQUESTS PERMISSION TO ENTER/LEAVE THE ROOM, SIR/MA'AM"** and remain outside/beside the door until told to enter/leave.

When leaving an officer outdoors, salute and say **"SIR/MA'AM"**, in a loud and clear voice. When the officer has returned your salute, make an about turn and leave.

When reporting to an officer/warrant officer/NCO/cadet leader in charge of a formation, stand two paces in front of him/her and say **"SIR/MA'AM/RANK/LEADER, Rank & Name REQUESTS PERMISSION TO JOIN THE TEAM, SIR/MA'AM/RANK/LEADER."**

Cadets and officer cadets should address officers and warrant officers as **"Sir/Ma'am"**. Warrant officers should address officers likewise. Cadets should address cadet warrant officers and NCOs by his/her name with full rank title, such as Warrant Officer Lee, Flight Sergeant Chan, Corporal Cheung, etc, and officer cadets as **Mr/Ms Name**.

When reporting to or being addressed by another cadet of superior rank, the cadet should come to attention.

## **5. The Cadet Pledge**

*"SIR/MA'AM, I pledge that I will serve faithfully in the Air Cadet Corps, and that I will attend meetings regularly, participate in unit activities, obey my officers, wear my uniform properly and advance my training rapidly so that I may be of service to my community and my fellow men, SIR/MA'AM."*

## **6. Definition of Discipline**

*"SIR/MA'AM, discipline is that mental attitude and state of training which renders willing obedience and proper conduct instinctive under all conditions. It is founded on respect for and loyalty to all properly constituted authorities, SIR/MA'AM."*

## **Part B: Saluting and Compliments**

### **1. Introduction**

A salute is a sign of loyalty to the Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps. Saluting by cadets, officer cadets and warrant officers to officers is a recognition of the Executive Board's Commission, being indirectly a salute to the HKACC.

It is the responsibility of all members to maintain that saluting is carried out correctly and smartly.

### **2. Whom to Salute**

All cadets, officer cadets and warrant officers should salute commissioned officers of HKACC (Pilot Officer and above), as well as officers of equivalent or superior rank in the Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps (Acting Sub-Lieutenant and above), the Hong Kong Adventure Corps (Second Lieutenant and above), Hong Kong SAR Government Disciplined Services (Probationary Inspector of Police, Station Officer on probation of the Fire Services, Officer on probation of the Correctional Services, Inspector on probation of the Customs and Excise Service, Immigration Officer on probation, GFS officers with one pip as rank insignia, and above), the armed forces of the People's Republic of China (Second Lieutenant/Ensign and above) and of friendly nations (e.g. UK, US). Officers cadets and warrant officers should never be saluted.

Junior officers (i.e. Flight Lieutenants, Flying Officers and Pilot Officers) should not normally salute other junior officers, irrespective of any appointments they may hold. They salute only on the following occasions:

- (a) A junior salutes to a superior officer in acknowledgment of an order given personally on parade.
- (b) A junior salutes to an officer senior to him in rank on entering and leaving his office.

Notwithstanding the above, junior officers are required to stand at attention or pay appropriate compliment (e.g. "eyes right" or "eyes left") to other junior officers who are superior in rank.

Officers under the rank of Squadron Leader are to salute officers of and above that rank, as well as officers of equivalent rank in the Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps (Lieutenant Commander and above), the Hong Kong Adventure Corps (Major and above), Hong Kong Government Disciplined Services (Superintendent of Police, Divisional Officer of the Fire Services, Superintendent of the Correctional Services, Superintendent of the Customs and Excise Service, Assistant Principal Immigration Officer, GFS Pilot I/Air Crewman Officer/Aircraft Engineer with a HKSAR Emblem as rank insignia, and above), the armed forces of the People's Republic of China (Major/Lieutenant Commander and above) and of friendly nations (e.g. UK, US). Officers of the rank of Squadron Leader and above are to salute their superior officers.

### 3. How to Salute - Officers

Officers are to salute with the right hand, longest way up, shortest way down, unless physically unable to do so, in which case they are to salute with left hand. Officers are to return salutes made to them. In returning salutes, officers should look in the direction of the persons saluting to them.

When a number of officers are together, it is the responsibility of the senior officer present to return the salute. If the senior officer fails to see the salute, it is the duty of the next senior officer in the party to acknowledge it.

### 4. General Salute

If a band is in attendance, on the command **“GENERAL SALUTE”**, all officers are to salute on the word of command **“SALUTE”** and the band is to play the appropriate salute. The salute is to be discontinued on the last note of music. Warrant officers, officer cadets and cadets are to stand at attention.

If no band is present and the cadets are not armed, then when the command **“GENERAL SALUTE”** is given all officers are to salute on the word of command **“SALUTE”** and the salute is to be maintained for a period of five seconds before the right hand is returned to the position of attention.

### 5. How to Salute - Cadets

Cadets are to salute with the right hand, longest way up, shortest way down, unless physically unable to do so, in which case they are to salute with the left hand.

A cadet when addressing an officer is to halt two paces from the officer. He is then to salute, address the officer and salute again before withdrawing.

When two or more cadets are sitting or standing together the cadet with the highest rank present is to face the officer and call the whole party to attention before saluting. It is the responsibility of the highest rank cadet to salute. If he fails to see the salute, it is the duty of the next senior cadet in the party to acknowledge it.

When a number of cadets are walking together, they are all to salute when passing or overtaking an officer, except when they are being marched as a party.

When cadets recognise officers who are dressed in civilian clothes, they are to salute.

When headdress is not worn or when a cadet is carrying anything preventing him from saluting, he is to stand to attention when an officer passes. If a cadet is walking, he is to turn his head smartly towards the officer when passing him.

When a cadet sees an officer approaching, he will stand at attention, face the officer and salute when the officer is about three paces away. They will be brought down after the salute has been returned or about five paces after the officer has passed.

Members not in uniform do not salute but will render an appropriate greeting instead. However, when a member in uniform recognises an officer in civilian clothes he will salute to that officer.

## **6. During the playing of the National Anthem**

When the National Anthem or a foreign anthem is played, all members in uniform, not under the orders of an officer commanding a parade will stand at attention, face the direction of the music and salute. If wearing civilian clothes they are to remove headdress.

If the anthem is played during a ceremonial parade, those officers on a parade in Review order, acting under the orders of the Officer Commanding the parade, will salute.

When the anthem is played within a building, individual members wearing uniform are to stand to attention and remove headdress.

When a party of cadets is on the march and the anthem is played the commander of the party is to halt them and he is to salute.

When a party is halted, the commander of the party is to call them to attention, and he is to salute during the playing of the anthem.

On other occasions when there is no parade, or on occasions which are not of a service nature, officers will face the band and if in uniform wearing headdress, will salute.

#### **7. During the Hoisting or Hauling Down of the HKACC Ensign**

On occasions when the HKACC Ensign is being hoisted or hauled down, all ranks within view of the ensign or within hearing of the trumpet calls or whistle blasts, are to stand to attention and face the flagstaff. Officers will face the flagstaff and salute.

#### **8. Funerals**

Individual officers and cadets passing or being passed by a service or civil funeral will salute the coffin or urn containing the remains of the deceased. A commander in charge of a party will give the “eyes right (or left)” and salute.

#### **9. Colours, Standards, Guidons, Banners**

Individual members passing or being passed an uncased standard, colour, guidon or banner are to salute it. They are to halt and face the colour/standard/guidon/banner. before saluting. Cased colours/standards/guidons/banners are not saluted. (Examples of *colours/standards/guidons/banners* are: The HKACC Colour, the Unit Colours of the HKSCC and HKAC, Air Force Squadron Standards, Guildons or Colours of Army regiments, and HKACC Squadron Banners. A HKACC Ensign flying from a flagstaff or a national flag is NOT a colour)

Note: EXCEPTION - Units, parties of individuals paraded on a service funeral, whilst in attendance upon the deceased will not pay any compliments to any colours, standards or guidons forming part of the escort included in the procession.

#### **10. Boarding or leaving naval vessels**

When boarding or leaving any of naval vessels, all ranks are to salute the quarter deck.

## **11. Mechanical Vehicles**

The rider of a pedal cycle (or motor) or a mechanical vehicle, is not to salute when the vehicle is in motion. On no account must the hands be removed from the handle bars or steering wheel. When the vehicle is stationary, the driver is to turn his head smartly towards the officer and the passenger will seat at attention.

All members are to salute the occupant of a vehicle flying a distinguishing flag and also, if no flag is being flown, when the vehicle carries star plates exposed, or when they recognise the occupant as being entitled to a salute.

Officers are to salute the occupant of a vehicle flying a distinguishing flag or carrying star plates exposed when these denote that the officer travelling in the vehicle is entitled to a salute as directed in paragraph 2.

## **12. Parties on the March**

An officer, warrant officer or cadet in command of a party on the march is to pay compliments by giving the command EYES-RIGHT (or LEFT) at the same time saluting with his right hand. When a party passes an armed sentry, compliments are to be paid as stated above, but if the sentry is unarmed, no compliments are to be paid.

## **13. On Parade**

Officers, when ordered to “fall in” at the forming up of a parade, are to salute before falling in. When order to “fall out” they are to march up to the parade commander, halt 5 paces from him, salute and fall out. If more than one officer is fallen out, all form up in a semi-circle, facing the parade commander, then taking the time from the senior officer on the right flank, then salute.

## **14. Compliments when in plain clothes**

Officers when wearing plain clothes and returning a salute, should return it in the proper manner by raising the hat.

## **15. Cenotaph**

When passing the cenotaph in Central, it is courteous to salute the cenotaph as a tribute to the fallen heroes of the two world wars.