



## Oak Creek Police Department

### Ceremonial Honor Guard

## S.O.P. 5

### CEREMONIAL FLAG FOLDING

*The following S.O.P will assist in the detail of Ceremonial Flag Folding. S.O.P #7 can be consulted regarding Ceremonial Flag Folding Grave Side where the vault mechanism is blocking one side of the casket. In this S.O.P, casket positions are referred to by number. With a flag draped casket, the "Canton" field is the "Odd" side of the casket, with the Honcho in the #1 position, to their right is position #3 and to their right is #5. On the opposite side, #2 is across from the Honcho, #4 in the middle and the Pullman is position #6.*

#### I. Orientation to the Casket

A. The casket team will orient to the casket, or position on the casket. The casket team members on the ends of the casket will position themselves aligning the buttons of their uniform parallel with the end of the casket. If a facing movement is needed to face in-ward to the casket, **"READY-FACE"**.

B. Once in position, Honcho gives the command, **"READY-DOWN"**. Detail members bow their heads looking down and begin to grasp the flag. Members on the even side of the casket, (Opposite the Honcho) begin to prepare the "Bite".

*The "Bite" is a method of making the flag narrower as when you lift the flag from the casket, it doesn't sag.*

*The Bite is obtained by folding over the bottom red stripe so it covers the second red stripe. The next step is folding under presenting the second white stripe as the current edge present.*

#### II. Flag Folding

- Once the bite is achieved, and the Honcho sees all hand movement stop, **"READY-UP"**. Team members slowly raise their heads while simultaneously pulling up the flag taut over the casket. Then, **"READY-BACK"**. (Bite is still maintained)
- Detail members #5 & #6 may then be required to lift up the Canton end of the flag for the Blessing and/or sprinkling of Holy Water. When this is done, the flag is brought level again.

- The command to start the actual folding is accomplished by the Honcho snapping or tugging with their left hand. After the tug, #1 & #5 slide their hand together at the corner of the flag. #2 and #6 slide their hand to meet as well, but then slide their left hand to the middle of the flag.
- Even side of the casket team then folds over the flag to the odd side. The fold is just short of completely over, the bottom ring should just touch the bottom of the top ring, (leaves about 1.5 inch short across the top. This leaves greater possibility for no Red color showing on final folds) The “Bite” is released at this initial fold over.
- After the first fold over, the Honcho again signals in the same manner by giving a tug, hand movement is the same as above, the even side then folds over the flag, this time flush with the edge the odd side is holding. Middle team members keep the flag from sagging or touching the casket. Upon this fold over, Casket team members step in as the flag narrows over the casket.
  - #2 and #6 (Pullman) uses a finger in the fold to keep the flag tight
- The flag is now ready to start the triangle folds.
  - The first triangle fold is toward the Honcho, signaled by a nod
  - When making folds, release flag so hands don’t cross each other
  - #1 (Honcho) and #2 then fold the flag in the triangle manner.
  - The edge of the fold stays in line with the end of the casket
  - The bottom edge of the flag needs to be taut by #1 and #5
  - Team members #5 & #6 “Cut” their outside arms on a signaled nod. They continue to hold the flag tight with their inside hands, they let go simultaneously “Cutting” their inside arms.
  - Middle team members continue to hold onto the flag with both hands
- When triangle folds begin to enter the canton field
  - Cheat in the tip of the triangle from the edge to assist in covering/hiding white and red colors
  - Middle team members tuck the end of the flag into the crease being held open by #1 & #2. The white seam end can be folded over, as well as part of the remaining flag to ease in the tucking as well as a corner of the remaining flag consistent with the shape of the triangle.
  - Once the tuck is complete, all four team members hold and press/flatten the folds, all (#1, #2, #3 & #4) keeping both hands on the flag when done

*If for some reason the flag is not folded tightly and too much flag remains for tucking, at the direction of the Honcho, the flag can be unfolded to a point and tightly re-folded. A flag that has been properly folded, held taut during the folding process should end with sufficient flag to tuck without excess.*

- Inspection & Presentation
  - After the flag has been pressed, the four team members orient their hands so their thumbs are on top and fingers on the bottom of the flag
  - If the Honcho is satisfied with the folding, the Honcho signals by raising and lowering their thumbs twice.
  - Honcho retains sole possession of the flag, all other team members simultaneously remove their hands and “Cut” ending with the arms at the position of Attention.

- As the Honcho retains sole position, the flag is brought up to chest level, point down
  - The flag is presented with the flat side to #2, #2 reaches over, grasps the flag on the slanted sides down from the point, spins the flag 90 degrees, so that the flag is centered over the end of the casket with the flat side facing toward the middle of the casket
  - Flag “Flys” down the center of the casket, with #4 grasping the flag in the same over hand manner on the sides of the point, to #6 (Pullman)
  - Once in the hands of #6, flag is brought to chest level, point down where the “Inspection” begins
    - #5 begins to exam the flag with their eyes. If there is red showing, of a part of the flag that needs attention, #5 stares at that spot, signaling #6 to attend to that area.
    - This extra attention to detail stops when #5 stares into the eyes of #6, signaling that the inspection is complete.
  - Once the inspection is complete, #6 the Pullman orients to the Chief or OIC. The Chief renders a hand salute, and then is presented the flag flat end first.
  - The Chief or OIC accepts the flag by placing his/her left hand on top and right hand on the bottom.
  - Once the flag has been accepted, the Pullman renders a hand salute, orients back to their position on the casket.
  - The OIC then rotates the flag point down while bringing to chest level, orients to the survivor to present the flag
  - OIC goes to a knee, presents the flag flat side first, with the left hand on top and right and on the bottom.
  - OIC stands up and renders a hand salute. If the OIC/Chief is in plain clothes, the Pullman will accompany the OIC/Chief and render the hand salute for the OIC after the flag is presented to the survivor.
- Once the Pullman (#6) orients back to the casket, the Honcho will give the appropriate commands to move-out the casket team.