

"Message from the Acting Surgeon General on the PHS BDU, March 2009"

Commissioned Corps Officers

As you know, the Commissioned Corps currently deploys wearing two standard uniforms, either the Service Khaki (poly/ wool, no ribbons) or the Woodland Green Battle Dress Uniform (BDU). You may also be aware that across the Services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard) new versions of working uniforms (such as the Navy Working Uniform (NWU)) are being adopted and worn. In July 2007, then Admiral Agwunobi, Assistant Secretary for Health, determined that the NWU would be the next working uniform for the Corps, ultimately replacing the Woodland Green BDU. In making that decision, it was understood that Navy needs could dictate changes in the uniform or its distribution that would alter the PHS approach. I am re-examining whether the NWU meets the needs of the PHS and re-evaluating all available alternatives that may satisfy our requirements as the supply of the BDU diminishes.

**At this time, the Woodland Green BDU remains one of the PHS authorized deployment uniforms.** The Woodland Green BDU will continue to be authorized while other options are being explored. Though changing circumstances may dictate otherwise, we currently anticipate using the Woodland Green BDU for about two years - however, please note that supplies are expected to diminish during this period. Officers who are now being called to active duty, and those on active duty who anticipate deployment, are required by policy to own the Woodland Green BDU. Officers should continue to purchase the Woodland Green BDU at this time.

When a decision is made as to what uniform will replace the Woodland Green BDU, adequate time will be provided for the Corps to make the transition.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust this offers clarification and helps to keep you informed.

Steven K. Galson, M.D., M.P.H.  
RADM, USPHS  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Health  
Acting Surgeon General