BERET AND SUN-SMART POLICY


1. A medical literature review was undertaken as requested in response to the Reference. Several studies have been conducted in Australia and overseas in relation to the capacity of hats to protect the head against solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure. These studies have consistently concluded that only hats with a brim width of at least 7.5cm are effective, with associated UVR protection factors measured at 8 to 10. ADF-issued hats fur felt meet this key criterion. No longitudinal studies detailing skin cancer outcomes linked to wearing or not wearing hats were identified and, in light of the challenges involved, it is unlikely that studies of this nature will be undertaken.

2. Although it is clear that the hat fur felt is useful when routinely worn in the manner for which it was designed, supplementation by the application of sunscreen is required to deliver maximum protection factors.

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AUSTRALIAN ARMY
(Office of the Chief of Army)

MINUTE

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CJHLTH

For information:
DAH (through DGPERS-A)

ARMY BERET AND SUN-SMART POLICY

1. I would appreciate your advice (for Chief of Army) of any evidence that you can find in professional medical journals, or from your counterparts from other countries, or from any other relevant material, of any relationship between the incidence of melanomas in Army, sun smart policies, and the wearing of berets vis-a-vis broad rimmed hats (eg slouch hat).

2. Earlier this year, Army amended its Standing Orders for Dress as follows: "Berets can only be authorised for wearing as headdress with ceremonial orders of dress or with general duty 'DPCU' as specified below. Berets are not to be worn as dress of the day. Berets may only be authorised to be worn on the following occasions:

   a. a Ceremonial parade held in the unit;

   b. when attending as Head of Corps or Regt COL in either General Duty or Ceremonial Order of Dress, where the beret is being worn on parade;

   c. when spectating at specified unit ceremonial activity, in ceremonial order of dress, where the beret is being worn on parade;

   d. attending a Corps gathering that has been designated as a Corp gathering to foster esprit-de-corps and camaraderie (not sporties parade), in either General Duty or Ceremonial Orders of Dress; or

   e. when initially inducting or being inducted into a respective Corps or unit that the beret has direct heritage links with (eg respective Corps or unit lanyard parade) or farewelling a Corps member at a military funeral in either General Duty or Ceremonial Orders of Dress."

3. Exemptions were given in SOCOMD to this policy.

4. It is clearly within the CA's remit to relax, strengthen, or sustain the current policy. As you know, CA takes his duty of care responsibilities very seriously. It is with this in mind that I would like to provide him with useful evidentiary based material to inform any future decision.
5. In the first instance, I would appreciate advice as to when such material could be made available to CA.

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Nov 10