

## CHAPTER 3

# MESS DRESS

### Introduction

**3.1** Mess Orders of Dress are worn for formal Mess functions and other occasions of a formal nature when the wearing of those Orders of Dress is appropriate. For officers who are attending a dinner in accompaniment with Warrant Officers (WO)/Senior Noncommissioned Officers (SNCO), they are to wear either Mess Dress White Jacket or if applicable Mess Dress White Shirt irrespective of season.

**3.2** Mess Dress or Mess Dress White Jacket are the normal orders of dress for formal occasions. Those occasions are considered to be when the wearing of decorations is appropriate and civilian guests would be expected to wear dinner suit. Mess Dress White Shirt may be worn on informal occasions within barracks areas when guests would not be expected to wear coat and tie.

### Definitions

**3.3** The terminology used for the three orders of Mess Dress is defined as follows:

- a. **Mess Dress.** Mess Dress is the order in which jacket and waistcoat in corps colours are worn by officers with blue trousers, slacks or skirt.
- b. **Mess Dress White Jacket.** This order consists of a white mess jacket worn with blue trousers or skirt and cummerbund by officers, WO and SNCO.
- c. **Mess Dress White Shirt.** This order of dress consists of a white short sleeved shirt worn with blue trousers or skirt and cummerbund by officers, WO and SNCO.

**3.4** Mess Dress is sometimes referred to as 'Mess Dress Winter' and Mess Dress White Jacket as 'Mess Dress Summer'. This terminology is not correct. Mess Dress may be worn throughout the year according to the occasion and climatic conditions. WO and SNCO have no alternative to Mess Dress White Jacket. Mess Dress White Shirt is an option in warm weather in all locations when the formality of an occasion would permit the wearing of this less formal order.

### Senior Officer Mess Dress

**3.5** **Mess Dress.** An officer of the rank of Colonel and above is to wear Staff Corps Mess Dress with the following exceptions:

- a. Initially on promotion to Colonel, an officer may continue to wear the Mess Dress of the officer's previous allotted corps. The uniform is worn without corps collar badges, but with Army buttons, badges of rank, **embellishments and corps** shoulder straps.
- b. A senior General Staff Officer in a corps appointment may wear either a corps Mess Dress with all corps embellishments or Staff Corps Mess Dress which is worn without any corps embellishment.
- c. Special Service Officers of the rank of Colonel and above and Senior Chaplains continue to wear the Mess Dress of their corps or department except that shoulder straps are edged in 1 cm gold lace (staff pattern) and bullion rank insignia. No bullion 'AUSTRALIA' shoulder titles are worn when the Army Badge is worn.

**3.6** **Mess Dress White Jacket.** Officers of all ranks wear metal rank insignia and metal 'AUSTRALIA' shoulder titles.

**3.7** **Mess Dress White Shirt.** Senior officers wear small gorget patches of appropriate colour on the collars of Mess Dress White Shirt. Officers of all ranks wear metal rank insignia and metal 'AUSTRALIA' or corps/regiment shoulder titles as appropriate.

### Procedure on corps transfer

**3.8** If an officer corps transfers, the Mess Dress of the officer's former corps may continue to be worn until the Mess Dress of the new corps is issued. All aspects of the Mess Dress are to be worn as for the former corps; no form of 'hybrid' dress is to be worn.

**3.9** There is no time limit imposed on the wearing of the old corps Mess Dress. Officers are to be encouraged to arrange for issue of the correct Mess Dress for the new corps as soon as possible.

**Black bow tie**

**3.10** The black bow tie is worn with Mess Dress and Mess Dress White Jacket but not with Mess Dress White Shirt. The bow tie is to be made of silk, satin or a similar synthetic material, with square ends not more than 58 mm or less than 25 mm wide.

**Braces**

**3.11** If braces are worn with Mess Dress White Jacket, they are to be white.

**Cufflinks**

**3.12** Cufflinks are worn on the cuffs of white dress shirts worn with Mess Dress and may be worn with white soft shirts worn with Mess Dress White Jacket. They are to be either plain gold or plain silver and they may include motifs such as initials or insignia inscribed in gold or silver appropriate to corps. They are not provided at public expense.

**Cummerbunds**

**3.13** The cummerbund worn with Mess Dress White Jacket and Mess Dress White Shirt is made of silk and is to be the same colour as the colour prescribed for the Mess Waistcoat in [table 3-1](#), column (g), with the following exceptions:

- a. a member of Royal Australian Artillery (RAA) or Royal Australian Corps of Transport (RACT) is to wear a blue-black cummerbund;
- b. a member of Royal Australian Engineers (RAE) is to wear a scarlet cummerbund;
- c. Regimental Sergeant Major—Army (RSM-A) and Level 3 RSM are to wear black cummerbund; and
- d. a member of the Corps of Staff Cadets is to wear a scarlet cummerbund.

**Footwear**

**3.14** Parade boots or shoes may be worn with Mess Orders of Dress.

**Mess Dress Jackets and Waistcoats**

**3.15** The Mess Dress jacket is designed with a roll collar and epaulettes with rounded points attached by line-30 buttons. The waistcoat is worn with line-20 buttons.

**3.16** Excepted as approved in paragraphs [paragraphs 3.8](#) and [3.9](#) the colours and patterns of corps mess jackets and waistcoats are shown in [table 3-1](#).

Serial	Corps	Jacket				
		Body	Collar	Shoulder	Cuffs	Waistcoat and Straps Cummerbund
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
1	Staff Corps	scarlet	black	black <sup>(a)</sup>	black	black
2	RAAC	maroon	blue-black	maroon	blue-black	maroon
3	RAA	blue-black	blue-black	blue-black	blue-black	blue-black
4	RAE	scarlet	blue-black	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet
5	RA Sigs	scarlet	purple	purple	purple	purple

Serial	Corps	Jacket				
		Body	Collar	Shoulder	Cuffs	Waistcoat and Straps Cummerbund
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
6	RA Inf	scarlet	blue-black	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet
7	AA Avn	blue-black	blue-black	blue-black	blue-black <sup>(b)</sup>	light blue
8	Aust Int	scarlet	bottle green	black	black	bottle green
9	RAA Ch D	blue-black	purple	purple	purple	black
10	RACT	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet <sup>(c)</sup>	blue-black
11	RAAMC	blue-black	dull cherry	dull cherry	dull cherry	dull cherry
12	RAADC	blue-black	burnt orange	burnt orange	burnt orange	burnt orange
13	RAAOC	blue-black	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet
14	RAEME	blue-black	scarlet	blue-black	blue-black <sup>(d)</sup>	blue-black
15	RAAEC	scarlet	university blue	scarlet	university blue	scarlet
16	AAPRS	scarlet	bottle green	scarlet	bottle green	scarlet
17	AACC	scarlet	grey	grey	scarlet <sup>(d)</sup>	grey
18	RAAPC	blue-black	gold	blue-black	blue-black	blue-black
19	AALC	scarlet	grey	grey	grey	grey
20	RACMP	blue-black	blue-black <sup>(e)</sup>	scarlet	blue-black <sup>(e)</sup>	scarlet
21	AA Psych	blue-black	maroon	maroon	blue-black	blue-black
22	AABC	scarlet	rifle green	rifle green	rifle green	scarlet
23	RAANC	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet	scarlet

**Notes**

- (a) Edged with 1 cm gold lace (oak leaf pattern for general officers and staff pattern for brigadier and colonel).
- (b) Edged with 3 mm silver bullion braid.
- (c) Edged with blue-black braided knot.
- (d) Edged with 3 mm gold bullion braid.
- (e) Edged with scarlet piping.

**Table 3-1: Patterns of Mess Dress**

**3.17** The Mess Dress White Jacket is similar in design. It is worn without a waistcoat.

**Mess Dress trousers and skirts**

**3.18 Corps or regimental stripes.** Except as otherwise approved in paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9, the colour of stripes worn on blue trousers and blue skirts are as shown in table 3-2.

Serial	Corps or Group	Details of Stripe(s)			
		Colour	Number of Stripes	Width	Distance Apart
1	General officers	scarlet	1	4 cm	
2	Principal Chaplain	purple	1	4 cm	
3	Staff Corps Brigadiers and Colonels	scarlet	1	4 cm	
4	Corps of Staff Cadets	scarlet	1	4 cm	
5	RSM-A and Level 3 RSM	scarlet	1	4 cm	
6	RAAC	gold	2	2 cm	3 mm
7	RAA	scarlet	1	4 cm	
8	RAE	scarlet	1	4 cm	
9	RA Sigs	scarlet	1	4 cm	
10	RA Inf	scarlet	1	1 cm	
11	AA Avn Corps	light blue	2	2 cm	3 mm
12	Aust Int Corps	scarlet		4 cm	
13	RAA Ch D	purple	1	4 cm	
14	RACT	white	2	2 cm	3 mm
15	RAAMC	dull cherry	1	4 cm	
16	RAADC	burnt orange	1	4 cm	
17	RAAOC	scarlet	2	2 cm	3 mm
18	RAEME	scarlet	1	4 cm	
19	RAAEC	university blue	1	4 cm	
20	Army Public Relations Service	bottle green	1	1 cm	
21	AACC	grey	1	4 cm	
22	RMPC	gold	1	4 cm	
23	AALC	scarlet	1	4 cm	

Serial	Corps or Group	Details of Stripe(s)			
		Colour	Number of Stripes	Width	Distance Apart
24	RACMP	white	1	3 cm	
25	AA Psych Corps	maroon	1	3 cm	
26	AABC	scarlet	1	1 cm	
27	RAANC	grey	1	1 cm	
28	Army Cadet Corps	royal blue		4 cm	

**Table 3–2: Colours of stripes on blue trousers and blue skirts**

**3.19 Mess Dress trouser/slacks width.** The trouser bottoms of Mess Dress are not to exceed 25 cm in width and are to be graduated, in proportion for seat and length of leg, from 20 cm minimum width. The cuffs of trousers are to rest on the top of the shoe or boot at the bottom lace.

**3.20 Length of skirt.** The bottom edge of the blue skirt is to rest on the toe of the shoe.

### Shirts

**3.21 Mess Dress.** The Mess Dress shirt is to be white and is to conform with the following description: 'A shirt with a french front requiring studs. The turn down collar, double cuffs and front are to be a marcella-type material. The body and sleeves are to be of polyester and the collar peaks are to be approximately 6 cm in length'. Alternatively a shirt as described above but with a winged collar, may be worn.

**3.22 Mess Dress White Jacket.** The shirt worn with Mess Dress White Jacket is to be white, soft and plain fronted, have soft cuffs and a turn down collar. Shirt studs are not to be worn with this shirt. Shirts purchased privately are to be similar in style to that of the issued item.

**3.23 Mess Dress White Shirt.** The shirt worn with Mess Dress White Shirt is to be white, soft and plain fronted, short sleeved, with pockets (and pocket flaps), shoulder straps and with an attached collar worn open at the neck. Shirt studs are not to be worn.

**3.24 Restrictions.** Pleated or pique-fronted shirts are not to be worn with any form of Mess Dress. Shirts of approved pattern are available through the clothing supply system.

### Shirt studs

**3.25** The dress studs worn with the dress shirt in Mess Dress are to be plain, round and gold or silver in colour. Silver studs are worn by officers of Royal Australian Armoured Corps (RAAC), Australian Army Aviation Corps (AA Avn) and Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps (RAANC); all other officers wear gold studs. Shirt studs are not provided at public expense.

### Spurs

**3.26** Box spurs may only be worn by RAAC, and RACT officers when wearing boots in Mess Dress. Spurs are not provided at public expense.

## EMBELLISHMENT OF MESS DRESS

### General

**3.27** The types of embellishment worn on the various orders of Mess Dress are described in the following paragraphs. The positioning of those items is shown in the annexes to this chapter.

### Mess Dress

**3.28** Mess Dress is embellished as follows:

- a. **National/Army identification.** A bullion Army Badge (Rising Sun) is worn on the top of the left sleeve by senior officers (Colonel and above). All other officers wear Army Badge (embroidered on appropriate colour background). Metal 'AUSTRALIA' titles are worn by officers LTCOL and below. No Army Badge is worn when Bullion 'AUSTRALIA' insignia are worn.
- b. **Badges of rank.** Metal badges of rank are worn on shoulder straps by officers up to and including the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Senior officers of the rank of Colonel and above wear bullion badges of rank.
- c. **Collar badges.** Officers up to and including the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and senior officers wearing Corps Mess Dress wear Corps/Regiment collar badges on the jacket lapels. Collar badges are not worn by senior officers wearing the Staff Corps Mess Dress.
- d. **Orders, decorations and medals.** Miniature insignia of orders, decorations and medals are worn on the left lapel. Neck decorations are worn with Mess Dress. Miniature medals of unofficial awards are worn on the right lapel.
- e. **Emblems of unit citations, individual commendations and Infantry Combat Badge (ICB).** Miniature emblems of unit citations and individual commendations are worn on the right lapel. The miniature form of the ICB is worn on the left lapel.
- f. **Aircrew badges.** Miniature bullion aircrew badges (including Parachute Jump Instructor (PJI)) may be worn on the left lapel by qualified officers.
- g. **Parachute badges.** Miniature bullion parachute qualification badges may be worn by eligible officers on the top of the right sleeve. If a trade badge is also worn parachute badges are worn below the trade badge.
- h. **Trade badges.** Miniature bullion trade qualification badges may be worn by eligible officers on the top of the right sleeve. The trade badge is worn above a parachute badge if both are worn.
- i. **Military skills badges.** Miniature bullion military skills badges may be worn on Mess Dress by eligible officers on the top of the left sleeve, below the Army Badge.

**3.29** All miniature bullion badges are to be on blue background. They are not provided at public expense.

### Mess Dress White Jacket

**3.30** Mess Dress White Jacket is embellished as follows:

- a. **National/Army identification.** An embroidered Army Badge (Rising Sun) on white background is worn on the top of the left sleeve. Metal 'AUSTRALIA' titles are worn on shoulder straps.
- b. **Rank insignia and badges of rank.** Metal rank insignia are worn by Officers and embroidered badges of rank on white background are worn by WO and Non-commissioned Officers on the sleeves.
- c. **Collar Badges.** Collar badges appropriate to Corps/Regiment or appointment are worn on the lapels of the white jacket.

- d. **Orders, decorations and medals.** Miniature insignia of orders, decorations and medals are worn on the left lapel. Neck decorations are worn with Mess Dress White Jacket. Miniature medals of unofficial awards are worn on the right lapel.
- e. **Emblems of unit citations, individual commendations and ICB.** Miniature emblems of unit citations and individual commendations are worn on the right lapel. The miniature form of the ICB is worn on the left lapel.
- f. **Aircrew badges.** Miniature embroidered aircrew badges (including Parachute Jump Instructor) are worn on the left lapel by qualified personnel.
- g. **Parachute badges.** Full size embroidered parachute qualification badges on white or base colour background are worn by eligible personnel on the right sleeve.
- h. **Trade badges.** Full size embroidered trade qualification badges on white or base colour background are worn by eligible personnel on the top of the right sleeve.
- i. **Military skills badges.** Full size military skills badges on white background are worn by eligible personnel on the left sleeve, below the Army Badge.

### Mess Dress White Shirt

**3.31** Mess Dress White Shirt is embellished as follows:

- a. **National/Army identification.** An embroidered Army Badge (Rising Sun) on white background is worn on the top of the left sleeve. Metal Corps/regiment shoulder titles or metal 'AUSTRALIA' titles as appropriate are worn on shoulder straps.
- b. **Badges of rank.** Officers wear metal rank insignia on the shoulder straps. WO and noncommissioned officers wear embroidered badges of rank on white background on the sleeves. Warrant officer insignia on rectangular backing are worn.
- c. **Orders, decorations and medals.** Ribbons of orders, decorations and medals are worn on the left side. Neck decorations are worn with Mess Dress White Shirt. Ribbons of unofficial awards are worn on the right side.
- d. **Emblems of unit citations, individual commendations and ICB.** Full size emblems of unit citations and individual commendations are worn on the right side. The full size ICB is worn on the left side.
- e. **Aircrew badges.** Full size metal aircrew badges (including Parachute Jump Instructor) are worn on the left side by qualified personnel.
- f. **Parachute badges.** Full size embroidered parachute qualification badges on white or base colour background are worn by eligible personnel on the right sleeve.
- g. **Trade badges.** Full size embroidered trade qualification badges on white or base colour background are worn by eligible personnel on the top of the right sleeve.
- h. **Military skills badges.** Full size embroidered military skills badges on white background are worn on the left sleeve.
- i. **Army Individual Readiness Notification Badge (AIRN).** The AIRN Badge is worn on Mess Dress White Shirt.
- j. **Soldiers Medallions Badge.** The Soldiers Medallion Badge is worn on Mess Dress White Shirt.

## Positioning of embellishments

**3.32** Annexes A, B, C, D and E show the positioning of all embellishments worn on the various forms of mess dress.

**3.33 Positioning of embellishments on jacket lapels.** Embellishments are positioned on the lapels of Mess Dress and Mess Dress White Jacket as shown in annexes A, B, C and D. Embellishments are worn in ascending sequence as follows:

- a. left lapel:
  - (1) Corps/Regiment collar badge;
  - (2) miniature medals;
  - (3) aircrew badge; and
  - (4) ICB.
- b. right lapel:
  - (1) corps/regiment collar badge;
  - (2) miniature medals of unofficial awards;
  - (3) emblems of unit citations; and
  - (4) emblems of individual commendations.

**3.34** Unlike embellishments worn on sleeves, embellishments worn on the lapels do not have defined positions. Embellishments are placed 1 cm above the embellishment below. The position of embellishments is determined from the collar badge or, if collar badges are not worn, the bottom of the lowest embellishment is located 18 cm below the shoulder seam.

**3.35 National/Army identification.** The bullion or embroidered Army Badge, as appropriate, is worn on the top of the left sleeve, 2 cm below the shoulder seam of jackets and 1 cm below the shoulder seam of shirts. Metal shoulder titles when worn are positioned on the shoulder strap with the lowest point of the title 5 mm from the outer end of the shoulder strap.

**3.36 Rank insignia.** Rank insignia are positioned as shown in annexes A, B, C, D and E to this chapter.

**3.37 Collar badges.** Corps/Regiment or Special Appointment collar badges are worn in pairs on the lapels of Mess Dress and Mess White Jackets. The badges are positioned with the highest point of the badges positioned 18 cm below the shoulder seam.

**3.38 Aircrew badges.** On Mess Dress and Mess Dress White Jacket, miniature aircrew and PJI badges are worn on the left lapel, positioned 1 cm above any miniature medals worn or 1 cm above the left collar badge.

**3.39 Parachute badges.** Miniature bullion parachute badges worn on Mess Dress by officers are worn on the top of the right sleeve, 2 cm below the shoulder seam, or 1 cm below a miniature trade badge if both are worn. Full size badges worn on Mess Dress White Jacket and Mess Dress White Shirt are positioned as shown in annexes D and E. The full size basic parachute qualification badge is embroidered on a white background. Other parachute badges are embroidered on their particular background colours.

**3.40 Trade qualification badges.** Miniature bullion trade qualification badges worn by officers on Mess Dress are positioned on the top of the right sleeve, 2 cm below the shoulder seam. If both a parachute badge and a trade badge are worn, the parachute badge is positioned 1 cm below the trade badge. Full size trade qualification badges worn on Mess Dress White Jacket and on Mess Dress White Shirt, are positioned on the right sleeve, 2 cm below the shoulder seam of the jacket and 1 cm below the seam of the shirt. Unless a badge has a particular background colour, eg Explosive Ordnance Disposal, RAE, badges embroidered on white backing are worn on Mess Dress White Jacket and Mess Dress White Shirt.

**3.41 Military skills badges.** Miniature bullion military skills qualification badges worn by officers on Mess Dress are positioned on the left sleeve, 1 cm below the Army Badge. Full size military skills qualification badges worn on Mess Dress White Jacket and on Mess Dress White Shirt, are positioned on the left sleeve, 7.5 cm below the shoulder seam of the jacket and 6.5 cm below the seam of the shirt. Full size military skills badges embroidered on white backing are worn on Mess Dress White Jacket and Mess Dress White Shirt.

**3.42 Orders, decorations and medals.** On Mess Dress and Mess Dress White Jacket, the miniatures of official orders, decorations and medals are worn horizontally on the left lapel with the bottom of the medals 1 cm above the collar badge. For senior officers who do not wear collar badges, the miniature medals are positioned with the lowest edge of medals 18 cm below the shoulder seam. Miniatures of approved unofficial awards are worn in the same position on the right lapel. Neck decorations, when worn with Mess Dress and Mess Dress White Jacket, are suspended from the miniature ribbon of the order. On Mess Dress White Shirt, ribbons of orders, decorations and medals are worn in the same manner as the khaki polyester shirt.

**3.43 Emblems of unit awards and individual commendations.** On Mess Dress and Mess Dress White Jacket, miniature emblems of unit awards and individual commendations are worn on the right lapel. If only unit awards or individual commendation emblems are worn, they are positioned 1 cm above the collar badge. If a miniature unofficial medal is worn, the medal is positioned 1 cm above the top of the right collar badge. If both unit award and individual commendation emblems are worn, the individual commendation emblem is positioned 1 cm above the unit award emblem. For senior officers who do not wear collar badges, the bottom edge of the lowest emblem/badge is to be 18 cm below the shoulder seam. On Mess Dress White Shirt, full size badges are worn in the same positions as on the khaki polyester shirt.

**3.44 ICB.** The miniature ICB is worn on the left lapel, 1 cm above the top of miniature medals. If an aircrew badge is worn, the ICB is positioned 1 cm above that badge. On Mess Dress White Shirt a full size badge is worn in the same position as on the khaki polyester shirt.

**3.45 AIRN Badge.** The AIRN Badge is positioned on Mess Dress White Shirt as for the khaki polyester shirt.

#### **Soldiers Medallion Badge**

**3.46** The Soldiers Medallion Badge is positioned on Mess Dress White Shirt as for the khaki polyester shirt.

#### **Recruit Instructor Badge**

**3.47** The Recruit Instructor Badge is positioned on Mess Dress White Shirt as for the khaki polyester shirt.

#### **Annexes:**

- A. [Positioning of embellishments on Mess Dress \(Senior Officers\)](#)
- B. [Positioning of embellishments on Mess Dress \(Officers—Lieutenant Colonel and below\)](#)
- C. [Positioning of embellishments on Mess Dress White Jacket \(Commissioned Officers\)](#)
- D. [Positioning of embellishments on Mess Dress White Jacket \(Warrant Officers and Senior Noncommissioned Officers\)](#)
- E. [Positioning of embellishments on Mess Dress White Shirt](#)

