

## FY 2003 Uniform Questionnaire Results

The following is a summary of all the comments received from the Uniform Questionnaire sent to the field during FY2003. (Note that responses from Question 3 are included in a separate spreadsheet entitled 2003 Comment Matrix Revised.)

Question 1 concerned the UAA Web site. It asked, “**Have you experienced any/many problems with the UAA web site? Were your questions answered to your satisfaction? Is any training necessary? Be specific.**”

The responses that were received were overwhelmingly positive. Most (24 of 35 or 69%) stated they had no problems with the site. Some (8 of 35) said they had only a few problems. These were quickly fixed. The two problems identified dealt with not being able to open the PDF file of Information, and not receiving passwords in a timely manner.

The committee representative is working with the project having trouble with the PDF file to download the necessary information.

Passwords do not come from the UAA website, but from the contractor. This issue has been solved this year. The contractor sends the COTR (Mr. Austin) and the Chair (Mr. Runkles) a download of all accounts and passwords on a weekly basis. They send out emails with the necessary information upon request.

Question 2 concerned the VF Solutions Web site. It said, “**The Contractor experienced many problems with the web site from October through late January. Since then, have you experienced any/many problems with the Contractor’s web site? Were your questions answered to your satisfaction? Be specific. If possible, identify the order number, date, etc.**”

The majority of the comments received were positive (43 of 67 or 64%). Individual comments were “No problems,” “Easily used and user friendly,” “Web site greatly improved. Good Job!” and “Like the improvement in order confirmation.” All comments are condensed in the spreadsheet below.

### **VF Solutions Web Site Comments**

No.	Comment	Freq.	Action	Justification
1	No problems. Good Job! Easily Used and User Friendly. Like improvements in order confirmations. Contractor helpful.	43	No action taken.	No action necessary.
2	Site is slow. Takes too long to order. System hangs up on me. A little slow sometimes.	5	Contractor has increased the speed of the site by 23% this year.	Contractor E-Business Manager making great strides to improve the site.

3	Had a problem ordering nameplates.	2	This continues to be a problem.	Contractor has indicated that this will be one of their highest priorities this year. Goal is to reduce the time from ordering to receiving nameplates by 33%.
4	They filled a rush order for me.	1	No action taken.	No action necessary.
5	Please include additional pictures.	1	Committee requested the contractor to include the uniform poster on the website.	This should aid the employees in to determine which items they need and how they appear.
6	If site is down, there is no other way to order uniforms. There should be a hard copy order form if the web site is down for several days.	2	No action taken.	The contract is specifically written for electronic ordering. The Contracting Officer will only allow hard copy ordering in extremely unusual situations.
7	Website needs greater detail and instructions for made to order items.	1	Committee has asked the contractor to add a Made-to-Measure tab at the top of the page to aid in ordering.	Made-to-Measure and Cut-to-Fit are two separate items. Made-to-Measure items are for those whose measurements do not fit a typical pattern, while Cut-to-Fit items are those who utilize normal patterns, however are at the edges of the bell curve (i.e. female size 2).
8	Unable to get inseam length on trousers.	2	This was a problem during the first part of the ordering year. Contractor has corrected this.	No further action necessary.
9	Descriptions not always accurate, i.e. sweater color. Some pictures not correct, i.e. men's trousers.	2	This was a problem during the first part of the ordering year. Contractor has corrected this.	No further action necessary.
10	Format is cumbersome when there are multiple pages, i.e., you don't always see other pages.	2	Committee requested the contractor to enlarge the buttons for the hidden pages to make it easier to find.	Contractor to work on this item this year.

11	Comment section does not allow more than a few words, so why bother?	1	Comment sent to contractor for rectification.	Contractor to work on this item this year.
12	It is unclear which uniform items are for which purpose.	1	Although this is not a contractor responsibility, the committee asked the contractor to include the uniform poster on the website.	Uniform poster clarifies which items are with which uniform class.
13	Had a couple of isolated problems but both were handled well by the contractor.	1	No action taken.	No action necessary.
14	Had a problem with available funds. The site indicated incorrect information. The only way to correct it was to log out and start over again.	1	This was a problem during the first part of the ordering year. Contractor has corrected this.	No further action necessary.
15	Order History took a couple of months to reflect status and ship date.	1	This was a problem during the first part of the ordering year. Contractor has corrected this.	No further action necessary.
16	Login Cumbersome. Need to be able to select own password.	1	This feature is available now.	No further action necessary.

Question 3 concerned the uniform items themselves. It asked, “**Are there any uniform items currently in the program you feel need improvement or replacement? Are there any items that you would like to add to the program?**” This question, as usual, generated hundreds of comments. These comments covered the gamut of complete satisfaction with the uniform items, to describing it as it as “the most uncomfortable thing in the world.” Separate spreadsheets have been developed to address all these comments. The comments are grouped by categories entitled Shirts, Trousers, Hats, Outerwear, Miscellaneous, and General Comments. The file, entitled **2003 Comment Matrix Revised**, is too big to insert into this document but as mentioned above is attached.

Question 4 concerned the maternity uniform. It stated, “**We have struggled for years to supply a maternity uniform for our rangers. Several factors such as stock levels, costs, and lead-time have led to unsatisfactory results. If you have any ideas, suggestions or comments concerning this issue, we would like to hear them.**” We received numerous comments, with very few discernable trends. While some wanted the uniform in order to continue to do their ranger duties, others wanted to be in professional

civilian attire. The comments are condensed below. The committee's recommendation follows the spreadsheet.

### **Maternity Comments**

No.	Comment	Freq.
1	No solutions but do feel a uniform should be provided.	11
2	Old maternity uniform needs to be brought back. The last design was horrendous but it was better than nothing.	1
3	Have had 2 pregnancies. It is important to provide this item. A ranger needs to be in uniform.	1
4	When the Ranger uniform no longer fits, let the Ranger wear what she feels most comfortable in.	1
5	Instead of trying to make a whole new pair of pants, why not alter the existing stock by adding stretch panels?	1
6	Maternity uniforms need serious help! The guidelines didn't help. They were much too big. The shirts have no pockets, no pen slot, and no place for badge or nameplate. Being pregnant should not mean that I have to look sloppy.	1
7	Use the Twill pants and allow female employees who need the maternity pants to use their maternity allowance to buy the regular pants in a larger size and have them altered by a local tailor who can add a stretch panel. ON the maternity shirt, a reinforced area for the badge needs to be added and pockets, just like the regular shirts.	1
8	I recommend allowing expecting mothers to wear civilian clothes when needed during their pregnancy.	1
9	I think anything the committee can do to improve this area would be great. The shirt does look like something from Dallas Tent and Awning.	1
10	My best suggestion is to discontinue the maternity uniform and instead provide the mother-to-be an allowance through the project office to buy appropriate business attire for the duties of the ranger. (This) would present a much more professional face.	1
11	The pants came un-hemmed. I am not a seamstress. I'm a ranger. They need a stretch panel. They should also have cargo pockets so she can carry all her safety equipment.	1
12	The shirts do not have reinforcement for the badge or nametag...They have no pocket for a pen...and it is huge...My nickname is "Becky under the Big Top".	1
13	Another fun part of pregnancy is your changing foot size. Allowing women to wear appropriate business attire would make finding a good shoe easier.	1
14	I thought the maternity uniform was optional and that you could wear civilian clothes through this time...that is the best solution anyway.	1
15	Have a better-written contract with the maternity uniform having a special section for fast delivery time.	1
16	The maternity shirt is like a tent. Women are better off wearing a regular duty shirt as long as they can.	1
17	Need guidance on this issue	2

18	Have women provide their own maternity trouser in a standard black color. Provide basic maternity shirts but more streamlined to avoid the "tent" look.	1
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While EP 1130-2-550, Chapter 8, Table 1d, does permit the wearing of appropriate civilian attire should the contractor be unable to provide maternity uniforms in a timely manner, the committee did not wish to eliminate the maternity uniform. On the first day of the meeting, Carrie Richardson, Sacramento District, joined the committee to provide details of a maternity loaner program that she started. The concept is very simple. Carrie serves as a clearinghouse for used maternity uniforms. Ladies who no longer need the uniform and wish to participate have contacted Carrie to let her know the uniform items they have available. In some cases, they mail the uniforms to Carrie. When an employee needs these uniforms, they can contact Carrie and Carrie will either ship the items, or have the owner of the uniform ship them to the needy employee. The only stipulation on this program is that the uniform items cannot be cut. They may be altered, but the material must stay in tact. In this way the uniform can be used again. Carrie also made a strong point to the committee that the maternity uniform must be an option for female rangers. Just because they are pregnant, does not make them less of a ranger. They need a uniform.

Other things that guided the committee decision were: 1) Not all female rangers are seamstresses, and may not be comfortable having to alter uniforms. 2) Some of our rangers are in locations where tailors are not available. 3) Army Regulations prohibit the purchase of clothing that may be worn in other than uniform situations, i.e. no project funds for maternity uniforms. 4) The ER does not specify what type of shoe must be worn with the uniform other than be black and polish-able with a plain toe. 5) Shirt pockets on maternity uniforms are often undesirable.

To this end, the committee made the following recommendations. First, the committee will purchase 4 sets of uniform shirts and trousers in all standard sizes. These will then be shipped to Carrie Richardson to utilize for the loaner program. Second, the maternity allowance will still be made available for those individuals who would rather purchase their own uniforms. Third, the committee (along with the National Park Service) recommended several changes be made to the uniform shirt. These include: the addition of reinforcements for badge and nameplate; the elimination of the pleats, and the addition of ties on the side for greater flexibility; and lastly shortening the shirt by 3 to 4 inches. Fourth, the committee recommends that the employee be given the option of wearing the existing maternity trousers, or trousers of their own in either dark green, black or gray. Fifth, and last, the committee recommended the elimination of the maternity jumper from the program. These recommendations are designed to meet the current need and provide options in the future for our rangers.

Question 5 concerned Customer Service. It asked, **“Were your experiences with Customer Service satisfactory? Why or why not? Be specific.”** The clear majority of comments were positive. Of those who chose to respond to this question most (46/60 or 76%) of the comments were satisfactory. All comments are condensed in the spreadsheet below.

### **Customer Service**

No.	Satisfied?	Comment	Freq.
1	Yes	Overall satisfied with services provided. Contractor personnel courteous and helpful. Good service. All issues handled quickly. Customer Service this year was an A+. Nice to talk to someone. The lady went the extra mile for me.	46
2	No	Some difficulties in correcting changes in size requests using email correspondence.	1
3	No	Sent an order for nameplates for two...received only one...called twice and was told they would be shipped...They never arrived...emailed again and was told they never received the second order (on same form as the first) and that the date for ordering nameplates had passed...Very poor service.	1
4	Yes	I spoke with Customer Service this morning; they were very helpful but they need to improve their on-hold music	1
5	No	I did have some problems with whoever originally filled my order this year. Order #661146 (Note: This was referred directly to the Contractor by the committee.)	1
6	Yes	Most items shipped automatically, and no need for customer service.	1
7	Yes	Outstanding - VF folks along with Division representatives were extremely helpful	1
8	No	Contacting VF Solutions via their web site form (under "contact us") doesn't always produce a reply in a timely manner. When they do reply there is no date showing when I originally posted the question. Must do a copy and paste in Windows to keep a copy.	1
9	No	The length of time it takes to receive some items can be a hassle. I have waited anywhere from 6-9 months for some items.	1
10	No	Something needs to be done about the nametag program. When I called to pay for an order on Visa, the agent charged my card wrong. It took 11 calls to correct the receipt.	1
11	No/Yes	Not at first. Had to send a SS shirt back three times. After the third I called Customer Service. They had lost the order but credited my account, which met my satisfaction.	1
12	No	Only problem has been the extended delay/backorder on shorts.	1
13	No	I mailed back a pair of jeans that did not fit. I wrote explicit instructions that I wanted to exchange them for duty trousers. I explained that I understood the price difference and would be charged accordingly. I received another pair of jeans, not what was requested.	1

14	No	Ordered uniforms (#662035) on 5/8/03. Several weeks later 7/2/03 I called and requested a tracer. No response. Called 7/17/03 and requested another tracer. Received partial order 7/23/03. Had to call 7/30/03 to learn that the remainder was shipped 7/28/03. Poor service. (Note: sent directly to contractor by committee.)	1
15	No	Experience with Customer Service is NEVER satisfactory.	1

On the whole, the Customer Service has been very good. The committee would like to remind everyone, that should they have a problem with the contractor and Customer Service is unable to meet their satisfaction, please contact your Division Representative.

Question 6, the last question concerned Success Stories. It asked, “**Do you have any success stories you would like to share?**” This question rarely gets any kind of response. This year was different. The comments are condensed in the spreadsheet below.

### **Success Stories**

No.	Comment	Freq.
1	Received prompt service for all transactions made during 2003	1
2	I think things have improved immeasurably from the old days. Content with program	2
3	I really like the new jacket!	1
4	Adding the rubber inside the waistband of the new pants helps keep the shirt tucked in and was a good improvement.	1
5	Thank you for the fleece jacket. It has proven a perfect mid-weight jacket	1
6	For the most part my uniform items have been satisfactory to date.	1
7	Things went smooth and routine, no problems	1
8	I was 34 cents from total allotment.	1
9	Everything else is great!	1
10	I like several of the new items brought out for wear.	1
11	All personnel at this office got uniforms in a timely manner and the right size.	1
11	One time I received an order in less than two weeks.	1
12	Improvements have been made to the uniform program and they are appreciated but we still have room for improvement for field personnel. This is not intended as a criticism but is just the fact of the matter.	1
13	I like being able to track my orders so I know when to expect them. They usually arrive in a timely manner.	1
14	Fleece jacket A+++++. The uniform continues to get better.	1
15	I returned a uniform for sizing adjustment and had very good success.	1
16	Uniform items sent in timely fashion.	1
17	Good turn around time.	1
18	Ordering name badges through the vendor is much nicer than going to the local stamp shop and getting plastic ones that would always get caught on a seat belt and break. Hope this option continues.	1
19	The Gore Tex wind pants have really improve from the original pairs...belt straps, elastic waist, etc.	1
20	I did not have to return anything.	1

21	People who answer phone always polite and friendly	1
22	Rise option on men's jeans allow you to customize the fit very well	1
23	Last year was the first year that I ordered via the internet. I was amazed at how fast my uniform order arrived.	1
24	I liked the fleece-lined jacket.	1
25	The fleece jacket is the best uniform item EVER added.	1
26	The Corps' Representative at Uniform Solutions (Sonya) was a great help during our 50th year celebration. We ordered dress uniform jackets with a very short notice and received all in time for the event.	1
27	One employee stated that he has received his uniforms promptly and accurately for the past two years.	1

See 2003 Comment Matrix Revised for comments on individual uniform items.