

Flag flying on LFB premises

New policy number: **407**
 Old instruction number: **MAN:D006:a1**
 Issue date: **11 July 2005**
 Reviewed as current: **18 June 2024**
 Owner: **Assistant Commissioner, Fire Stations**
 Responsible work team: **Central Operations**

Contents

- 1 Introduction 2
- 2 When the Union flag shall be flown on LFB premises..... 2
- 3 When the LFB crested flag shall be flown on LFB premises..... 2
- 4 When the Union Flag is to be used on a coffin 2
- 5 Flags at half mast..... 3
- 6 Action required 3
- Appendix 1 – The Union Flag..... 4
- Appendix 2 - LFB crested flag..... 5
- Appendix 3 – Coffin pall..... 6
- Document history..... 8

1 Introduction

- 1.1 **The Union Flag** - The national flag of the United Kingdom, the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories is the Union Flag, which may also be called the Union Jack. The first Union Flag was created in 1606 and combined the flags of England and Scotland. The present Union Flag dates from 1801 when St. Patrick's Cross was added to represent Ireland. It then became possible to display the flag upside down. There is no Flag Act in UK Law, and the Union Flag is the national flag by long established custom and practice, rather than by statute.
- 1.2 **The flag protocol of the United Kingdom** - The national flags of the United Kingdom (i.e., the Union Flag and the flags of England, Scotland, and Wales) should be displayed only in a dignified manner befitting the national emblems. They should not be displayed in a position inferior to any other flag or ensign. It is improper to use the national flags as a table or seat cover or as a masking for boxes, barriers, or the intervening space between a dais or platform and the floor. The use of any of the national flags to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony is discouraged.
- 1.3 The Union Flag and the LFB crested flag will be flown at LFB premises as detailed below.

2 When the Union flag shall be flown on LFB premises

- 2.1 The Union flag shall be flown only at Union Street and London Operations Centre (LOC) at Merton from 08.00 am until sunset on special occasions as considered appropriate and as directed by the Commissioner.

How the flag should be flown:

- 2.2 The Union Flag has a correct way up - in the half of the flag nearest the flagpole, the wider diagonal white stripe must be above the red diagonal stripe, as Scotland's St Andrew's Cross takes precedence over Ireland's St. Patrick's Cross – see Appendix 1. The broader diagonal white stripe should be at the top left-hand side of the flag nearest the flagpole.
- 2.3 The flag shall be flown at full height unless directed to be flown at half-mast by the Commissioner.

3 When the LFB crested flag shall be flown on LFB premises

- 3.1 The LFB crested flag shall be flown permanently at new PFI stations, other new stations, and existing stations where a flagpole exists.

How the flag should be flown:

- 3.2 The flag shall be flown at full height unless directed to be flown at half-mast by the Commissioner, see Appendix 2.

4 When the Union Flag is to be used on a coffin

- 4.1 **As a pall for a coffin** - If a national flag is to be used on a coffin, it should be placed so that the top-left corner of the flag is over the deceased's left shoulder. The flag should be removed before interment or cremation and folded. See Appendix 3.

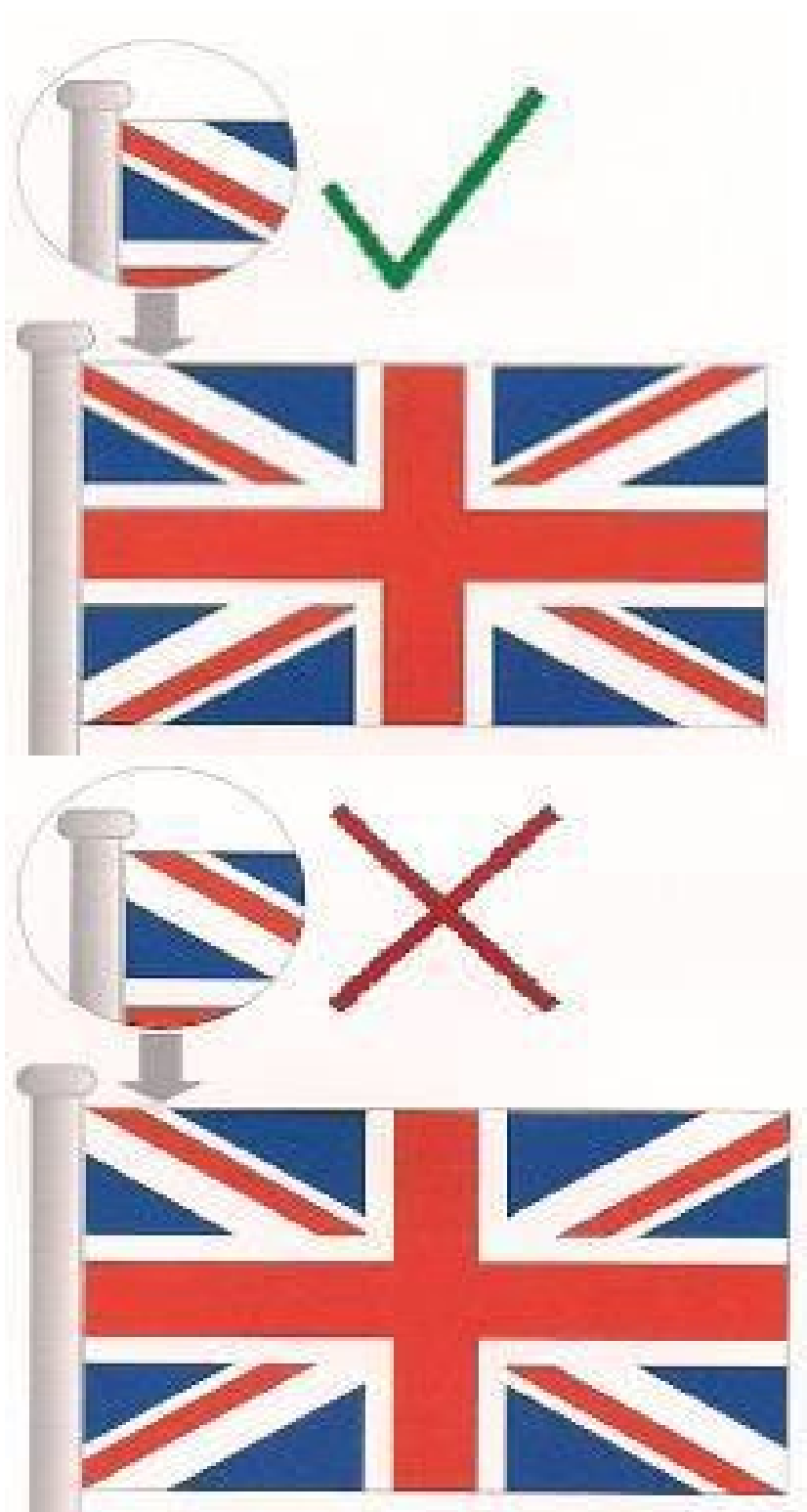
5 Flags at half mast

- 5.1 When a flag is flown at half-mast during a period of Royal or National Mourning, the flag is flown exactly one flag's height down from its normal position. A flag cannot be flown at half-mast on a flagpole that is more than 45° from the vertical so this flag should be draped with a mourning cravat. When a flag is to be flown at half-mast, it should first be raised all the way to the top, allowed to remain there for a second and then be lowered to the half-mast position. When it is being lowered from half-mast, it should again be raised to the top for a second before being fully lowered. When the Union Flag is at half-mast, other flags on the same stand should also be at half-mast or should not be flown at all.
- 5.2 The Union Flag, and all other flags in the same stand including the LFB crested flag, should be flown at half-mast from dawn to dusk. If any of these flags are flown permanently (twenty-four hours a day), they should be lowered to half-mast at 0800 hrs (local) and raised again to full mast at dusk or 2000 hrs (local) which is the earlier.
- 5.3 Union Flags are to be flown at half-mast on the following occasions:
- (a) From the announcement of the death until the funeral of The Sovereign, except on Proclamation Day when flags are flown at full mast following the proclamation.
 - (b) From the announcement of the death until the funeral of a member of the Royal Family styled 'Royal Highness', subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
 - (c) On the day of the announcement of the death and on the day of the funeral of other members of the Royal Family, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
 - (d) The funerals of foreign Rulers, subject to special commands from The Sovereign in each case.
 - (e) The funerals of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, subject to special commands from The Sovereign in each case.
 - (f) Any other occasions where The Sovereign has given a special command.
 - (g) Any other occasions where the Commissioner has given a special command.

6 Action required

- 6.1 The premises manager for HQ premises and the principal control officer at the 999 Control Centre, Merton shall arrange for the Union flag to be flown as directed.
- 6.2 Station commander at stations with flagpoles shall arrange for the LFB crested flag to be flown as detailed above.
- 6.3 The LFB crested flag can be obtained from POMS as 'flag crested ID: C447.
- 6.4 Property Services retain responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of all flag poles. Stations are to report defects with them through the normal Property Portal reporting website.

Appendix 1 – The Union Flag



Appendix 2 - LFB crested flag



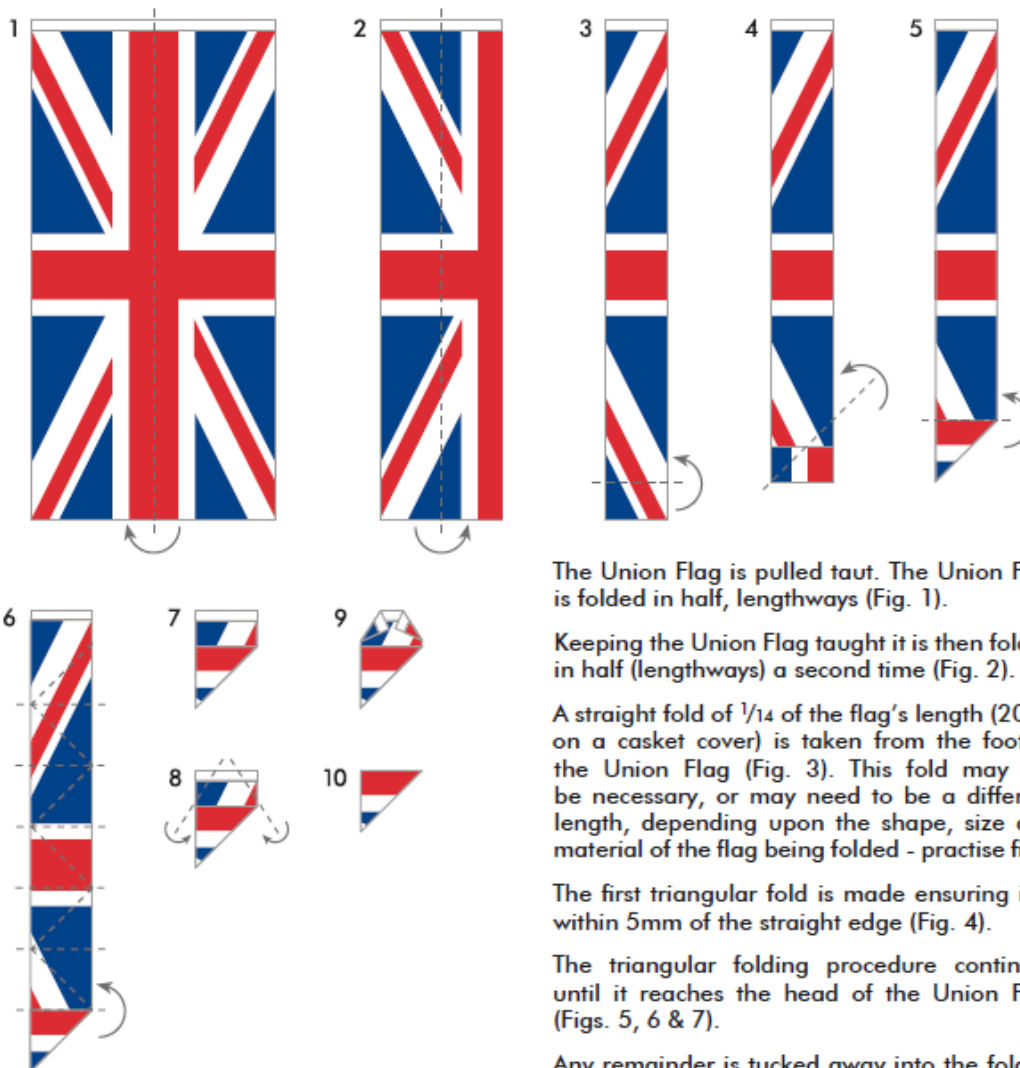
Appendix 3 – Coffin pall



A Coffin with a Fitted Cover

(if a flag is used, 1:2 proportions fit the shape of the coffin better)

If the flag is to be retained by the next of kin it can be folded using the Royal Navy's method shown here, based on a 1:2 flag (138cm X 276cm) with no fittings (i.e., no ropes toggles or clips).



The Union Flag is pulled taut. The Union Flag is folded in half, lengthways (Fig. 1).

Keeping the Union Flag taut it is then folded in half (lengthways) a second time (Fig. 2).

A straight fold of $\frac{1}{14}$ of the flag's length (20cm on a casket cover) is taken from the foot of the Union Flag (Fig. 3). This fold may not be necessary, or may need to be a different length, depending upon the shape, size and material of the flag being folded - practise first!

The first triangular fold is made ensuring it is within 5mm of the straight edge (Fig. 4).

The triangular folding procedure continues until it reaches the head of the Union Flag (Figs. 5, 6 & 7).

Any remainder is tucked away into the fold of the triangular shape (Fig. 8 & 9).

The Union Flag ready for presentation (Fig. 10).

References

See Hansard – House of Lords Debate 14 July 1908 vol 192 cc579-80

Flying flags in the United Kingdom - A guide to Britain's flag protocol

First published in the United Kingdom in 2010 by the Flag Institute in association with the Flags and Heraldry Committee of the UK Parliament and with support from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Copyright © The Flag Institute 2010

Copyright permission has been granted for use of images and text where required.

Document history

Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	20/05/24	SDIA	L - 27/04/15	HSWIA	16/07/18	RA	
-----	----------	------	--------------	-------	----------	----	--

Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Pg 2, para 2	Dates on which the Union Flag will be flown will be as directed by the Commissioner.	16/04/2009
All	Reviewed as current; no changes made.	17/04/2012
Page 3	Subject list and FOIA exemptions tables updated.	22/12/2014
Throughout	References to LFB crested flag added.	15/04/2015
Page 1	This policy has been reviewed as current with minor changes made to the owner title to reflect the replacement of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority with The London Fire Commissioner.	18/07/2018
Throughout	Reviewed as current with no changes.	07/06/2021
Throughout	Reviewed and updated policy extensively. Ownership changed to Central Operations.	18/06/2024

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Premises	Union flag
Flag flying	

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been protectively marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Protective marking descriptor