

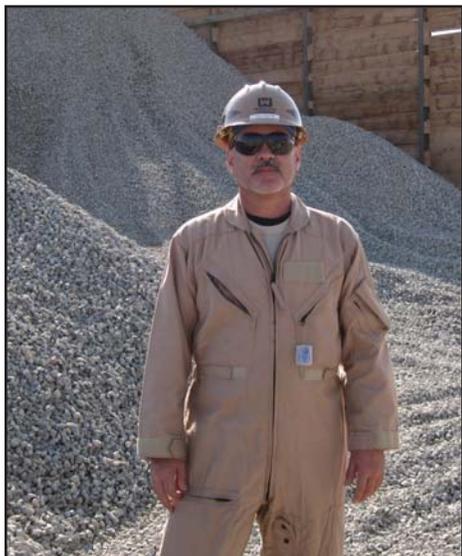
Story behind tan hardhat

Story by Dave Stanton

If you are a Corps employee you know that in the rest of the world we wear a white hardhat with red retro reflective tape and logo. There is even a Corps policy that states hardhats will be white with red. How is it that we wear a tan model here? Well sit down and take a load off of your feet and I will tell you the history.

Seems that I am the inventor of the tan hardhat. Back around five years ago I was the safety manager at Transatlantic Command. One of my roles was to support the Gulf Region Division and Afghanistan Engineer District as the reach-back safety dude. As the dust was settling and the Corps was about to embark on reconstructing Iraq, I was getting ready to order hardhats for GRD. It dawned on me that the white hardhat might not be the best color, considering the hostile environment we were working in.

I contacted Bullard, a major hardhat manufacturer, and asked them if they could make a special hardhat for the Corps in



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camouflage. They said sure, if I ordered 700 of them (they would need to set up their equipment for a special run). I have taken numerous fiscal law classes during my career and knew that me, a lowly safety dude, had no authority to commit the government to ordering 700 of anything.

A couple weeks later a Bullard representative showed up at my office in Winchester with a box full of hardhats in various shades. Normally, when it comes to picking colors I turn to my wife. When I saw the tan one, I said to myself "Self, that one looks a lot like the colors in the DCUs". I had one of the military members at TAC try on the tan model and it "pulled all of the colors of the DCUs together" and we took to calling it the Queer Eye for the Corps Guy hardhat. I asked the fellow from Bullard if they could make me three

sample hardhats with the black retro reflective tape (actually more effective than the red) and black logos. A couple weeks later I got the samples and sent two off to GRD for their opinion. A couple weeks after sending them downrange, I got an e-mail from Brig. Gen. Johnson wearing one of the tan hardhats giving me two thumbs up. I took that as my stamp of approval and started ordering the tan models. You are probably asking "Dave, how did you get around the Corps policy on white hardhats?" Well, I used my Just Do It Card, as it was the right thing for the customer.

Now for a little more trivia: A guy named Bullard was working on the Golden Gate Bridge and noticed that workers were getting injured, and sometimes falling to their death, when hit in the head by falling rivets. He came up with the first hardhat and we have been wearing them on construction sites since. 🇺🇸



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