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ADMIRALTY FLEET ORDER

INJURY OR DAMAGE FROM ENEMY ACTION— IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OFFICERS AND MEN

ADMIRALTY S.W.1.

19th March, 1942.

The following Order having been approved by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty is hereby promulgated for information and guidance and necessary action.

By Command of their Lordships,

J. V. Markham

To all Commanders-in-Chief, Flag Officers, Senior Naval Officers, Captains and Commanding Officers of H.M. Ships and Vessels, Superintendents or Officers in Charge of H.M. Naval Establishments, and Admiralty Overseers concerned.

NOTE:—The scale of distribution is shown in the revised Admiralty Fleet Order Volume Instructions—A.F.O. 4544/41, paragraph 10.

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F.F.O. 2819/43

***1217.—Injury or Damage from Enemy Action—Important Information for Officers and Men**

(N./D.P.S.163/42/P.—19.3.1942.)

This Fleet Order gives information to all Officers and men as to what should be done by them and their families, and what will be done by the authorities, in the event of injury or damage from enemy action. The information is given as a series of questions and answers.

1. *Question 1.*—How does a man obtain news of what has happened to his wife or his family or his property after an air raid?

Answer 1.—He may obtain news in any of the following ways:—

(a) By means of a letter, telegram or telephone call sent to him by a relative or friend.

A great deal of unnecessary strain on the services of the Post Office, as well as much needless work in making investigations, will be avoided if men understand that:—

(i) It is often impossible for their relatives or friends to communicate with them for a day or two, particularly after a heavy raid.

(ii) In the great majority of cases they will always hear as soon as possible from some relative or friend, or from the Admiralty (see (b) below) if anything has gone wrong at home, and no news is, therefore, nearly always good news.

(b) By means of a telegram sent to his commanding officer by the Admiralty.

The next-of-kin (taken from the Next-of-Kin Form) of every Officer and man has been issued with a card which he or she is requested to carry always on the person inside the National Registration Card. On this card is written the next-of-kin's name and address and also the name of the relative serving in His Majesty's Navy. By arrangement with the Minister of Health, should this next-of-kin unfortunately become a casualty, fatal or otherwise, the Admiralty is immediately communicated with and the available information passed by signal without delay to whom it may concern. Even if this card is not carried, the identity of the casualty being established and the relationship with a member of the Naval Forces ascertained, similar and immediate action follows.

(c) By communicating himself, or preferably with the help of an officer, by letter or reply-paid telegram with one of the following:—

Naval Establishments at home. (i) For enquiries in London and the Metropolitan Police Area:—

London District Welfare Branch,
Donnington House,
Norfolk Street, Strand,
London, W.C.2.

(Telephone: TEMple Bar 0321;

Telegraphic Address: FOLKNOR, ESTRAND,
LONDON.)

(ii) For enquiries in all other parts of England and Wales and Northern Ireland:—

The Town Clerk or Clerk of Urban or Rural District Council.

(iii) For enquiries in Scotland:—

The Town or County Clerk.

If the required information cannot be obtained from any of these sources, application should be made to his Commanding Officer for a message to be sent to the Commodore of the ship's manning port asking that the Family Welfare Section may investigate and report.

H.M. Ships at home and abroad and naval establishments abroad. Commodore of the rating's depôt for investigation and action by the Family Welfare Section.

All enquiries to the above addresses will be passed direct by the recipient to the organisation responsible for dealing with them, and sending replies.

It is essential that the particulars asked for in the enquiry should be clearly and fully stated, as well as the relationship and full address of the enquirer, and of the person about whom the enquiries are to be made.

2. *Question 2.*—What happens to a man's family if his home is made uninhabitable by enemy action?

Answer 2.—The civilian authorities look after the family in the same way as they look after the families of civilians in similar circumstances.

If the family have no relatives or friends to whose house they can go at once they are taken to a Rest Centre in the district, where they are well cared for temporarily until other plans can be made for them. These Rest Centres have been established in every district and are equipped with blankets, food, clothing, etc. As soon as possible after the raid, people are passed from the Rest Centre either to their own relatives or friends or, if that is impossible, to billets found by the civilian authorities, or to alternative dwellings, requisitioned by the local authority. In all cases the travelling expenses to the new home, wherever it is, will be paid by the civilian authorities, and also a billeting allowance of 5s. a week for each adult and for each child over 14 years of age, and 3s. a week for each child under 14 years of age.

Men should impress upon their families the importance of arranging beforehand to go to relatives or friends in the event of their home becoming uninhabitable, and of always leaving their new address with someone with whom the man can easily make contact.

3. *Question 3.*—If a man's wife or family has been passed through a Rest Centre how will he be able to find out where they have gone to?

Answer 3

(i) If the Rest Centre is still open, the warden should have the address to which the family has gone.

(ii) If the Rest Centre has closed, the address should be obtainable at the Town Hall or Local Council Office where a record is kept, or, in London and the Metropolitan Police Area, at the offices of the London District Welfare Branch (address in paragraph 1 (c)). Men should impress on their families the importance of leaving their new address with the warden of the Rest Centre before they leave.

4. *Question 4.*—How will a family be able to replace their immediate needs such as clothes, blankets, essential furniture, household articles and various essential articles of personal use, such as spectacles or dentures, if these have been destroyed?

Answer 4.—A person is entitled to financial help from the Assistance Board for the replacement of the above articles, under the following conditions:—

(i) To qualify for a grant to replace clothes or essential articles of personal use, the claimant's income must not normally exceed £250 a year (or £400 a year, if there are dependants).

(ii) To qualify for a grant to replace essential furniture or household articles, the household income must not normally exceed £400 a year.

These payments are usually made at the local area office of the Assistance Board, or at a special office set up by the Assistance Board for the purpose. The address of the office can be obtained from the Town Hall, Local Council Office or Rest Centre.

5. *Question 5.*—Is a man entitled to any free compensation for his private chattels and furniture that may be destroyed by enemy action?

Answer 5.—Yes. If he is a householder or has been one since the outbreak of the war, i.e. if he lives or lived in a house, flat, or rooms in which he or a member of his household owned most of the staple furniture, he is entitled to free compensation up to £200, with an additional £100 for his wife, ordinarily resident with him, and £25 for each child under 16 years of age ordinarily resident with him. If he is not a householder he and his wife are entitled to £50 each, and children under 16 years of age to £25 each.

The compensation referred to is not in addition to any moneys paid to him for the immediate needs referred to in paragraph 4.

6. *Question 6.*—If the value of a man's private chattels and furniture exceeds the free compensation to which he is entitled, can he insure for the balance?

Answer 6.—Yes. He may, if he desires the cover, make application to one of the principal insurance companies or to Lloyd's underwriters. He can insure the balance less what he is entitled to free up to £2,000 at £1 per cent. a year.

7. *Question 7.*—If a man's private chattels and furniture, whether in his home or in storage, are damaged or destroyed by enemy action, what should he do to claim compensation?

Answer 7.—If he is relying on the free compensation to which he is entitled he should obtain and complete Form PCS4 from the local authority. If he has taken out a policy, he should obtain and complete Form PCS3 from the insurance office, or Lloyd's, with whom he insured. A man's wife or other representative may make a claim on his behalf, if he is on service abroad, or he may ask the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association to deal with the matter for him (see paragraph 18).

8. *Question 8.*—When will payment be made for loss of private chattels and furniture?

Answer 8.—In general, after the war, except for payments for his immediate needs, referred to in paragraph 4.

9. *Question 9.*—If a man is not in immediate need (see paragraph 4) but considers that he would suffer undue hardship by having to wait until after the war for payment, is there anything further he can do?

Answer 9.—Yes. He should apply to the local officer of Customs and Excise for an advance payment of compensation, but he will have to satisfy the officer that his case is one of undue hardship.

10. *Question 10.*—How can a man (a) get compensation for any loss or damage to his house, or (b) get temporary repairs carried out?

Answer 10.

(a) He can claim for compensation under the War Damage Act. Payment will be made after the war in most cases. The claim should be sent in on the official Form C.1, which can be obtained either from the War Damage Regional Office or from the Town Hall or Local Council Office, and should be completed and returned within 30 days, if possible.

A man's wife or other representative may make a claim on his behalf, if he is on service abroad, or he may ask the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association to deal with the matter for him (see paragraph 18).

(b) Temporary repairs to protect a house against the weather will be carried out by the Local Council, or paid for by the War Damage Commission, if made by the owner or occupier on the production of a receipted bill that the work has been done. The War Damage Commission will not pay unless the total bills thus incurred exceed £5.

11. *Question 11.*—Is compensation payable for persons who are injured, and how is it paid?

Answer 11.—Temporary injury allowances are paid to persons rendered incapable of work by enemy action. These allowances are paid, on behalf of the Ministry of Pensions, by the Assistance Board, and application for an injury allowance should be made to the area office of the Board. Payment is made on the production of a medical certificate, and there is no means test.

12. *Question 12.*—How will a man's children be looked after, if his wife is killed or injured?

Answer 12.—It will be the responsibility of the civilian authorities to take immediate care of the children where no relatives or friends are at hand to do this, and to see that they are put in the charge of people who will look after them properly. Where no relatives or friends are willing to take the children permanently, they will either be placed in Children's Homes, or boarded with carefully selected people. The man's wishes will, of course, be fully observed in the matter as soon as possible, and no final action will be taken until this has been done.

13. *Question 13.*—How can a man get help in filling up his compensation forms and advice about any legal or personal problems to do with responsibility for repairs to his house, rent obligations, care of children, funerals, etc., in addition to the help given him by the local authorities in these matters?

Answer 13.—In London and the Metropolitan Police Area he should apply direct to the offices of the London District Welfare Branch, Donnington House, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.2.

In every other town or area, he should enquire from any of the following:—

- (i) Railway Transport Officer;
- (ii) Town Hall or Local Council Office;
- (iii) Main Police Station, or
- (iv) Office of the Local Assistance Board

for the address of the voluntary organization which is responsible in that locality for dealing with these problems.

After a heavy air raid, a representative of this voluntary organization will usually be at the Town Hall, or wherever the local authority establishes the information bureau and casualty centre.

Men serving abroad may ask the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association to help them (see paragraph 18).

14. *Question 14.*—If a man goes home on compassionate leave as a result of enemy action and finds that he needs more money than he has in his possession in order to pay his own personal expenses, what can he do?

Answer 14.—He can do any one of the following things according to circumstances:—

- (a) He should apply to the local Naval Authority, if any, taking his Pay and Identity Book, leave ticket and any other relevant documents. (In London, the appropriate Naval Authority is at Rex House, Lower Regent Street, S.W.1.)
- (b) If there is no Naval Authority in the neighbourhood of his home, he should apply to the Military Assistance Officer who is authorised to advance an amount not exceeding £2, which will be recovered from the rating's account.

The amount advanced will be communicated by the Military Assistance Officers, via the Army Paymaster, to the Accountant Officer of the ship in which the rating is borne for pay, if known, enclosing a receipt from the rating quoting his full Christian names and Official number. If the name of the ship to which the rating is borne for pay is not known the receipt will be forwarded by the Military Assistance Officer to the D.N.A. (Branch 3) for disposal.

- (c) If time permits, send a telegram to his Commanding Officer requesting an advance of pay.

15. *Question 15.*—What can a man do now, in case his home is bombed?

Answer 15.—He can and should:—

- (1) Satisfy himself that his next of kin has received from his Depot, and carries a card with his name and particulars filled in.
- (2) Arrange for his wife or family to go to some relative or friend's house if his home is bombed (see Answer 2).
- (3) Arrange with his wife with whom she will leave an address wherever she may go (see Answer 2).
- (4) Carry out any necessary insurance of his chattels and furniture (see Answer 6).

(Paragraphs 16 and 17 are applicable only to men serving at home.)

16. *Question 16.*—Is a man entitled to a free railway warrant on compassionate grounds, to enable him to visit his home and family in the event of injury or damage from enemy action?

Answer 16.—Yes, if compassionate leave can be granted.

17. *Question 17.*—If a rating on leave finds that he is compelled to ask for an extension of leave so as to arrange for the temporary settlement of his family on account of enemy action, what should he do ?

Answer 17.

(a) If time permits, he should wire to his Commanding Officer asking for the necessary extension of leave.

(b) If time or conditions, owing to the raid, do not permit of this, he should apply to the local Naval Authority. (*See Answer 14a.*)

(c) If there is no local Naval Authority, he should apply to the Military Assistance Officer who is authorised to communicate with the rating's ship or the nearest Naval Authority for advice as to what extension of leave (if any) is to be granted.

(Paragraph 18 is applicable only to men serving abroad.)

18. *Question 18.*—What arrangements have been made to help men serving abroad ?

Answer 18.—The Family Welfare Sections at the depôts will carry out any investigations and pass such messages as the Commodore thinks fit to the ratings concerned.

In addition to the forms of assistance mentioned, the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust wishes it to be known that, in the event of damage by enemy action to the homes of Naval ratings and Marines, it is ready to give immediate assistance to the dependants of such personnel whenever and wherever need may arise.

According to the circumstances of each applicant, this assistance may take such forms as provision of clothing, maintenance and food, rent for temporary accommodation, care of children, supply of beds and bedding or purchase of furniture.

Applications should be made to the local Secretary of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust at Portsmouth, Chatham, or Devonport, or to the General Secretary, Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, 10, New Road, Rochester.

19. In view of the importance of those concerned having up-to-date knowledge in this matter additional copies of this order are available. Demands for further supply should be addressed to the Editor of Fleet Orders, c/o H.M.S.O. Press, Wealdstone, Middlesex.

(*A.F.Os. 3785/41 and 327/42 are cancelled.*)