

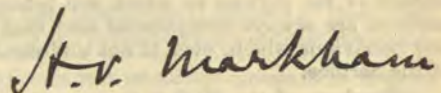
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY*Not to be communicated to anyone outside H.M. Service***ADMIRALTY FLEET ORDER****W.R.N.S.—REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS**

ADMIRALTY, S.W.1,

3rd September, 1942.

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

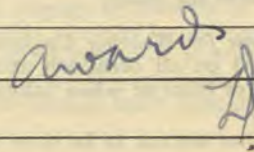
By Command of their Lordships,


Distribution Limited

To Commanders-in-Chief, Flag Officers, Senior Naval Officers Ashore, Superintendents or Officers in Charge of H.M. Naval Establishments, and Admiralty Overseers concerned.

(See A.F.O. 3338/40.)

NOTE:—The scale of supply is that shown in the revised Admiralty Fleet Order Volume Instructions—A.F.O. 4544/41, paragraph 10—for A.F.Os. and in addition that for Notice Board Orders.



4351.—W.R.N.S.—Regulations and Instructions

(N.L. 12233/42.—3.9.1942.)

These regulations are to be posted on the Notice Boards, and it is the duty of responsible W.R.N.S. Officers to ensure that W.R.N.S. ratings in their units are conversant with them and that any new orders are brought to their notice.

1. *Observance and enforcement of Regulations.*—Every W.R.N.S. officer shall make herself acquainted with and shall duly observe, obey, and, so far as she is able, enforce the due execution of the regulations and instructions governing the Women's Royal Naval Service and all other regulations, orders and instructions relating thereto that may be issued by a superior officer or by the Admiralty or with their authority.

Any relevant new orders concerning the ship's company are to be brought to the notice of W.R.N.S. ratings by the responsible W.R.N.S. officer, and copies are to be displayed in some accessible place for at least a week. When such orders affect particular duties, care is to be taken to ensure that the ratings are thoroughly instructed as to their contents.

2. *Conduct to be observed.*—Every person in the Women's Royal Naval Service is to conduct herself with the utmost respect to her superior officer and with strict obedience to his or her orders; she is at all times to discharge every part of her duty with zeal and alacrity and to strive to promote the interest of the Naval Service.

Every member will on all occasions endeavour to uphold the honour of the W.R.N.S. and by the good order and regularity of her conduct prove herself to be worthy of the Service to which she belongs. She will remember that persons in uniform are always conspicuous and that members of the W.R.N.S. must avoid any behaviour which, even if not undesirable in itself, may cause adverse criticism of the Service.

Members of the W.R.N.S. in uniform are not to indulge in noisy or rowdy behaviour in public. They must in every way consider the comfort and convenience of the public and help the local authorities in maintaining good order.

W.R.N.S. ratings must not loiter about the men's quarters, workshops, parade grounds, or dockyard gates. Ratings moving from one part of a Naval Establishment to another should do so in a smart and dignified manner.

No members of the W.R.N.S. shall engage in any money-lending, or betting business, nor shall they act as agents in a Naval Establishment for any commercial undertaking.

It is the duty of all members of the W.R.N.S. to return punctually from their leave, and offences of absence without leave are punishable by deductions from pay in addition to other punishments.

3. *Uniform.*—The officers and ratings of the Women's Royal Naval Service shall wear such uniforms as the Admiralty, in pursuance of His Majesty's pleasure, shall from time to time direct.

The prescribed patterns are to be strictly adhered to. Jewellery (with the exception of wedding, engagement and signet rings), furs, handbags, umbrellas, scent and coloured finger nails are forbidden when uniform is worn. Stockings are not to be transparent. Make-up, if used, is to be discreet. Hair must be neat and must not fall over the collar.

4. *Occasions for Wearing Uniform.*—Officers and ratings must wear uniform within the Port on all occasions except on twenty-four hours leave or more, or when going to or from or when taking part in recreational sporting activities, or when at home.

Plain clothes are not to be worn when proceeding on leave from, or returning to, Service establishments, except in the case of leave to Eire.

Officers and ratings accommodated in official quarters will only be allowed to have such plain clothes as can be contained in a suitcase.

5. *Marks of respect.*—W.R.N.S. Officers are to be addressed by junior W.R.N.S. Officers and ratings as "Ma'am".

Within the W.R.N.S. salutes are to be given as in the Royal Navy (K.R. & A.I. Articles 151-154) except that hats will not be removed. During the playing of the National Anthem indoors, members of the W.R.N.S. will stand to attention without saluting.

Naval salutes as a matter of discipline are to be exchanged as follows :—

(a) W.R.N.S. Officers and ratings in uniform will salute naval officers of Flag Rank and General Officers R.M. and the Commanding Officers of their own establishments at all times. Other Naval and R.M. Officers senior to them only if addressing or being addressed by them on duty.

(b) At inspections, naval salutes will be paid to the Inspecting Officers.

On other occasions the exchange of the naval salute will be governed by the ordinary rules of courtesy.

6. *Senior Ratings.*—W.R.N.S. Officers are to make every effort to keep Chief Wrens and P.O. Wrens distinct from the lower ratings and to instil in them a proper sense of their status and responsibilities. They are to be made to feel that confidence is reposed in them and are to be treated with the consideration which is due to the positions of trust which they hold.

The prefix "Chief Wren" or "Petty Officer" is to be used by all ranks when addressing, or speaking of, women holding those ratings.

Chief and Petty Officer Wrens should work at all times for the well-being and efficiency of the Service as a whole. They should set an example of loyalty and discipline; and must obey the orders of their superiors with the same cheerfulness and alacrity with which they expect to be obeyed by their inferiors. Officers look particularly to their higher ratings for loyal support in maintaining the efficiency and traditions of the Service. Junior ratings look to them for direction and assistance.

Leading Ratings are to be made to feel that confidence is reposed in them, and are to be treated with the consideration which is due to the positions of trust they hold.

7. *Presents.*—Members of the W.R.N.S. are not to accept presents in respect of acts performed in their official capacity, from any private source, unless the permission of the Admiralty has previously been obtained. Nor shall they allow themselves to be complimented by presents or by any collective expressions of opinion from Officers or Ratings.

8. *Civil Power.*—Officers and ratings of the W.R.N.S. are amenable to the law of the land to the same extent as other citizens and are to afford every facility and assistance to the Civil Power whenever they are required to do so.

Every arrest of an officer or rating by the Civil Power is to be reported immediately by the Commanding Officer of the Establishment to the Commander-in-Chief.

When a member of the W.R.N.S. appears in a Civil Court for an offence against the law, the Commanding Officer will take steps to ensure the presence of a W.R.N.S. Officer, and if desirable, of a Naval Officer from the Establishment to which the accused belongs, or upon the books of which she is borne, to watch the trial, and if called upon by the Court, to testify to her character and antecedents.

Conviction by the Civil Power shall entail the stoppage of one day's pay for every 24 hours or part of 24 hours during which the offender is absent from duty. These penalties may, however, be remitted by the Commander-in-Chief or other Flag Officer in cases where the offence brings no discredit on the Service or the uniform.

Should the offence be one that has brought disgrace or discredit on the uniform, the Service or the position which the offender holds, she may be discharged from the Service, disgraced, awarded stoppage of leave or restriction of privileges if recommended by the Commanding Officer and approved by the Admiralty in the case of discharge and disgracing or by the Commander-in-Chief or other Flag Officer in other cases.

9. *Political Activities.*—No member of the W.R.N.S. is permitted to take any active part in the affairs of any political organisation or party, either by acting as a member of a candidate's election committee, or by speaking in public or publishing or distributing literature in furtherance of the political purposes of any such organisation or party or in any other manner. Any form of political activity in Naval Establishments is prohibited.

10. *Representation of Complaints.*—If any rank or rating thinks herself aggrieved she will represent her case to the W.R.N.S. Unit Officer. Any appeal against the decision of the Unit Officer will be made through her to the Commanding Officer of the Establishment. Any further appeal should be made through the latter to his superior officer.

A final appeal lies to the Board of Admiralty.

Except as laid down above, no member of the W.R.N.S. shall make remarks or pass criticisms on the conduct or orders of her superiors which may tend to bring them into contempt; and no officer shall say or do anything which, if heard or seen by or reported to those under her, might discourage them or render them dissatisfied with their condition or with the service on which they are or may be employed.

Meetings are not to be held by the members of the Women's Royal Naval Service for the purpose of expressing an opinion upon the acts of an officer, or of recommending her to take a particular course of action; nor are memorials to be drawn up to the same effect; and no meetings, except those called together by, or under the authority of the W.R.N.S. Unit Officer, or of the Commanding Officer, who will be responsible for so doing, will be recognised.

It is an offence against discipline to seek redress or to ventilate a grievance by any other means than those thus authorised; for example, it is an offence to solicit the influence of persons in positions of authority, or to write to newspapers or other periodicals on such matters.

11. *Publications, Lectures, etc., relating to Naval Service.*—All members of the Women's Royal Naval Service are forbidden to write for publication, or to publish or cause to be published, either directly or indirectly, any matter or information relating to the Naval Service unless the permission of the Admiralty has been first obtained.

They are further forbidden to deliver any lectures or read any paper at a public meeting, or to broadcast, on any subject connected with the Naval Service, unless a copy of such lecture or paper has been previously submitted to the Admiralty and permission granted.

12. *Communications with other Services.*—No member of the W.R.N.S. is to enter into direct communication with any Service or Department of the State or with any subordinate officer of such Service or Department at home or abroad, on subjects connected with the Naval Service or with her particular duties or present or future employment, unless authorised to do so by the Regulations of the Service or superior authority; but all communications on such matters are to be made through the proper channels to the Admiralty, in order that such steps may be taken therein as may be necessary.

13. *Official Documents.*—Official reports, correspondence and documents of whatever description, whether confidential or not, are the property of the Crown and their contents are not to be disclosed without special authority to any person not officially entitled to receive them.

14. *Confidential Information.*—It is an offence against the Official Secrets Act for a person, whether still belonging to any Service of the Crown or not, to divulge any confidential information unless authorised by the Admiralty to do so. When instruction is given in confidential matters, members of the Women's Royal Naval Service should be reminded of this and warned that the provisions of the Official Secrets Act will still apply to them after they have left the Service.

In war time, the following information in particular must always be regarded as secret:—

- (1) The nature of the employment of H.M. Ships.
- (2) All movements or projected movements of H.M. Ships or of ships of the Merchant Navy.
- (3) The nature of the work carried on in Naval Establishments.
- (4) Information concerning drafts or movements of naval personnel and all movements of troops, etc.
- (5) The location of all Naval Establishments or Bases.

15. *Concealment of Disease.*—The concealment of disease is a serious offence. Any form of ill-health is to be reported immediately either to the Naval Sick Bay or to the responsible W.R.N.S. Officer.

16. *Marriage with Aliens.*—It is not necessary to ask for permission to marry with an alien but any officer or rating W.R.N.S. who has married a man of alien birth or nationality is to report the fact immediately through the proper channels to the Admiralty stating the man's present nationality and his nationality at birth.

17. *Divine Service.*—In so far as possible, the orders regarding Divine Service for the Royal Navy will apply to W.R.N.S.

The Instructions laid down in K.R. & A.I., Article 494 are to be observed by all Mobile Officers and ratings of the Women's Royal Naval Service living in official quarters or approved lodgings where circumstances permit. Those belonging to the Church of England who are serving in Establishments where a Chaplain is borne are generally expected to attend the service held in the Establishment; where no Chaplain is borne but an Officiating Minister has been appointed, W.R.N.S. Officers and ratings are generally expected to attend the parade service held for naval personnel.

Non-Anglicans are to have full liberty to absent themselves from these services and are to be afforded every opportunity for attending the service of their denominations.

Organised Church Parties are to be arranged wherever possible.

A nominal list of Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and other denominations is to be kept in every Unit, and will be open at any time to the inspection of the respective Chaplain or Officiating Minister.

Non-Anglicans are to be fallen out before prayers.

When a member of W.R.N.S. is seriously sick the appropriate Chaplain is to be notified.

18. *Service Certificates.*—The assessments of character on Service Certificates of W.R.N.S. ratings are to be read to them annually in accordance with the procedure laid down for naval ratings (K.R. & A.I. Article 605, Clause 11).

19. *Conduct Sheets.*—A Conduct Sheet S.1523 is to be prepared on enrolment for each rating, whether mobile or immobile. It will be kept in the custody of the W.R.N.S. Officer in Charge of each Unit.

The Conduct Sheet is to be regarded as confidential. *Entries should include:—*

- (a) Particulars of all leave, advancement, disrating, etc.
- (b) Offences and punishments.

It is to form a continuous record of leave, offence, punishments, etc., so as to afford the data upon which the record of her character is founded and to guide the Commanding Officer (and the W.R.N.S. Officer) in awarding punishments and making assessments on the Service Certificate.

On a rating's transfer to another Establishment, the entries on the Conduct Sheet relating to her service up to that date are to be signed and dated by the W.R.N.S. and Commanding Officers and the document is to accompany the Certificate of Service to the Establishment to which she is drafted.

Where a rating deserts, her character and efficiency are to be assessed on her Conduct Sheet up to and inclusive of the date when her absence began.

Conduct Sheets are to be retained in use as long as practicable. When it is necessary to start a new sheet, this is to be attached to the former one, but K.R. & A.I., Article 603 (3), Clause 1, as amended by A.F.O. 2701/42, is to apply.

20. *Compensation for Losses.*—Members of the W.R.N.S. who sustain, as a result of a casualty of the Service, loss of or damage to necessary articles of uniform clothing and equipment, or books, instruments or tools necessary for the proper performance of their duties will be compensated for such loss or damage, provided that a certificate is furnished that the following conditions have been fulfilled, namely:—

- (a) that the claimants are acquitted of all blame for the cause of the loss or damage.
- (b) that the loss or damage occurred in circumstances altogether unavoidable by them.
- (c) that it was not by the neglect or default of the claimants; and
- (d) that every exertion was used by them to prevent the loss or damage.

Applications for such compensation are to be made by the Commanding Officer through the usual Service channels.

21. *Mess and Wine Debts.*—The individual wine bills of Second and Third Officers W.R.N.S. are never to exceed £2 for each complete calendar month.

All mess and wine bills are to be settled monthly by each member.

Any pay or other allowances payable to a W.R.N.S. Officer are liable to be abated in order to meet mess debts or other liabilities in respect of her mess.

22. *Losses and Improper Expenditure.*—Officers and ratings of the W.R.N.S. are held liable to make good the whole or part value of Government property that may be lost or damaged as the result of negligence on their part.

23. *Interest in Contracts and Purchases.*—No member of the W.R.N.S. is permitted to have any pecuniary interest or personal advantage in any Admiralty contract, or in the purchase of provisions or stores of any kind for the use of His Majesty's Service, unless the extent of her interest has been fully disclosed and Admiralty approval given for the contract or purchase to proceed notwithstanding such interest.

24. *Movements on Leave.*—All W.R.N.S. personnel on leave are to keep their Commanding Officers informed of their movements in case the exigencies of the Service should require their recall by telegram or letter.

25. *Sickness on Leave.*—If a W.R.N.S. officer falls sick or meets with an accident whilst on leave she should inform her Commanding Officer, if holding an appointment to an establishment, or the Medical Director General of the Navy, as soon as practicable and, if possible, before treatment, stating whether she wishes to receive service treatment. W.R.N.S. officers would be well advised to make themselves acquainted with the name and address of their nearest Surgeon and Agent.

If ratings are taken ill on leave and require medical attention they should take action in accordance with the instructions on the back of their Leave Tickets which instructions should be carefully read.

Before proceeding on leave they should consult Poster S.582 which is exhibited on Ship's Notice Boards to find out the name and address of the Naval Surgeon and Agent nearest to their address or otherwise make themselves acquainted with this information.

(A.F.O. 2701/42.)

(K.R. & A.I., Articles 151-4, 494, 603 (3), 605 (11).)