

RESTRICTED(FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)*Not to be communicated to anyone outside H.M. Service***ADMIRALTY FLEET ORDER**
COMFORTS, AMENITIES, AND WELFARE FUNDSADMIRALTY, S.W.1,
14th October, 1943.

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,

H. 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 Admiralty Fleet Order Volume, 1941, Instructions, paragraph 10.

4905.—Comforts, Amenities, and Welfare Funds

(N./W.C.C. 4998/107.—14 Oct. 1943.)

The following information is promulgated as a comprehensive guide to the Fleet and includes A.F.Os. issued and still in force dealing with the provision of amenities and comforts for personnel serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines during the War.

SECTION I

Port Amenities Liaison Officers

2. *Port Amenities Liaison Officers* have been appointed at all the principal bases in Home Waters and at certain bases abroad.
3. At the headquarters of Commanders-in-Chief, and of Flag Officers-in-Charge, if considered advisable by a Commander-in-Chief, the duties are carried out by the Command Amenities Liaison Officer (short title C.A.L.O.) and at other ports by the Port Amenities Liaison Officer (short title P.A.L.O.).
4. The duties of the P.A.L.O. include :—
 - (a) Distribution of comforts, woollens, games, books, wireless sets, etc.
 - (b) The welfare of all Naval and R.M. personnel, including W.R.N.S., the Allied Naval forces, R.F.A. and M.F.A. and D.E.M.S.
 - (c) Local organisation of entertainments.
 - (d) Close co-operation with the Army and R.A.F. authorities and the various voluntary organisations connected with canteens and welfare of the Forces.

- A.Y.O.
 7161/45
 3052/45
 5436/46
 5883/46
 5889/46
- (e) If applicable, naval representative on E.N.S.A. Area Committees (A.F.O. 3480/41).
- (f) Co-operation with Educational Officers on Educational Schemes, particularly vocational training (A.F.O. 1525/43).
5. The duties of the C.A.L.O. include in addition to those in paragraph 4:—
- (a) Co-ordination of the work in connection with amenities throughout the Command.
- (b) Representation of the Commander-in-Chief or Flag Officer-in-Charge on the E.N.S.A. Headquarters Committees (A.F.O. 3480/41).
6. C.A.L.Os. and P.A.L.Os. may, subject to the concurrence of their senior officers, communicate direct with the Deputy Director of Personal Services (Personnel), Assistant Director of Personal Services (Welfare), R.N. War Comforts Committee, the R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board and the R.N. War Amenities Fund.

SECTION II

Welfare Funds

R.N. War Amenities Fund

7. The purpose of this Fund is to help in the provision to ships and to bases of indoor games, wireless sets, dartboards, playing cards, etc., and of outdoor recreational gear and facilities generally when these cannot be provided through the R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board. The fund also gives assistance in arranging for the furnishing of canteens and similar recreational premises when this cannot be done from Service sources.

8. Personnel of Royal Fleet Auxiliaries and Mercantile Fleet Auxiliaries operating with the Fleet or in service at remote Fleet bases are eligible for assistance from the R.N. War Amenities Fund.

9. The fund offers a central organisation for receiving gifts of monies from private sources for the purpose of providing amenities generally for the Naval service, and has also taken over the administration of a proportion of the balance of the net revenue for the Naval side of the N.A.A.F.I. The fund is administered by a committee at the Admiralty and all claims for grants from this fund or correspondence concerning it should be addressed to the Secretary, R.N. War Amenities Fund, Admiralty, S.W.1.

10. In special cases money grants are made to new Establishments which have not had an opportunity of accumulating Canteen Funds.

11. Ships and Establishments of the Allied Navies benefit equally with H.M. ships from this Fund.

Minesweepers and Coastal Craft Fund

12. This fund was established as the result of an appeal launched by a committee consisting of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Keyes, Mrs. Winston Churchill, Mr. A. V. A. Alexander, M.P., Admiral Sir Edward Evans, Sir Archibald Sinclair, M.P., and Lord Portal, for funds to provide wireless sets, games and other recreational facilities, principally for the crews of the smaller ships such as Patrol Service vessels. The Minesweepers and Coastal Craft Fund is administered by the R.N. War Amenities Fund and correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary of the latter fund at the address given above.

Grant of Public Money (Vote 11 H.H.)

13. To ensure that the work of the kind now carried out by R.N. War Amenities Fund shall not suffer through lack of funds, it was decided to supplement private contributions by a grant of public money under a new subhead (H.H.) of Vote 11, which is administered under the Admiralty by the committee of the R.N.W.A.F. The grant is expended on the following services:—

- (a) Horticulture (for Home Shore Establishments).
- (b) Books and magazines (the amount under this head will be expended through R.N. War Libraries).
- (c) General grants.
- (d) Entertainment and musical instruments.
- (e) Wireless sets.
- (f) Wool (the amount under this head will be expended through the depot for knitted garments for the Royal Navy).
- (g) Miscellaneous service.

14. Commands in Home Waters will continue to apply to the Admiralty for assistance when this is required, communicating direct with R.N. War Amenities Fund on routine matters or on requests where no new principle is involved. It is desired that personnel of Allied Naval forces should benefit from this grant.

15. Sums will be allocated to Commands abroad to meet their requirements on these services. All expenditure authorised from these sums should be brought to account through Cash Accounts of ships and establishments as a charge to Vote 11 H.H.

R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board

16. The R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board continues to function as in peace time. The Board makes grants and, if necessary, loans without interest, to submarines and above. Commanding Officers should make application direct. Full details of its activities will be found in the R.N. and R.M. Sports Handbook, 1940, which can be supplied free of charge on demand.

Nuffield Trust for the Armed Forces of the Crown

17. This trust was established by Lord Nuffield for the benefit of the three fighting services in the provision of recreational gear and facilities of all kinds, other than those provided from public funds, with the proviso that the first care of the trustees should be—for the Naval Service—the R.N.V.R., the R.N.S.R. and H.O. ratings: the Women's Royal Naval Service is included.

18. The share of the fund allocated to the Navy is administered by the Finance Committee of the R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board.

19. Correspondence concerning this fund should be addressed to The Secretary, R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board, Admiralty, S.W.1.

Royal Naval War Comforts Committee

20. This committee was set up by the Admiralty and entrusted with the task of co-ordinating the activities of a large number of voluntary organisations both at home and abroad, and to organise the distribution of gifts in kind where there is a field for private enterprise to supplement the regulation allowance.

21. These gifts take the form of woollen winter clothing, books, games, magazines, tobacco, fruit and vegetables.

22. All enquiries concerning this organisation and all applications for assistance should be made to The Secretary, Royal Naval War Comforts Committee, Admiralty, S.W.1.

SECTION III

Books and Gramophone Records

Royal Naval War Libraries

23. R.N. War Libraries were instituted to provide books and magazines to small craft which do not carry Service libraries, and to Shore Establishments. The library is divided into three sections:—

- (1) *Sacks for ships*.—Made up in units of 20 books—16 fiction and 4 non-fiction—with a selection of magazines. The small number of 20 books is chosen for easy transport and to enable a ship of any size to obtain the number of books required, e.g., one sack for a drifter or a trawler, two for a corvette, three or four for a destroyer.
- (2) *Shore libraries*.—For bases, R.N. Air Stations, R.M. Camps, and Shore Establishments.
- (3) *Special loan library*.—The R.N.W.L. can loan books on technical, scientific or specialised subjects to men studying for examinations or interested in any special subject. Books are sent post free. Application should be made to The Hon. Organising Secretary, R.N. War Libraries, 40, William IVth Street, London, W.C.2. When finished with, the books should be returned to R.N.W.L.

24. Applications for libraries under sections 1 and 2 should be made through P.A.L.Os. to the R.N. War Comforts Committee, Admiralty, S.W.1.

Books and Gramophone Records obtainable at reduced rates

25. Books other than paper-backed books of the "Penguin" type may be purchased at wholesale prices by ships, establishments, messes, libraries and other recognised centres through :—

The Officer-in-Charge,
Services Central Book Depot,
Finsbury Barracks,
City Road, London, E.C.1.

26. The procedure is as follows :—

- (a) The Officer-in-Charge, Services Central Book Depot, is to be informed of the title, publisher, price (if known) and number of copies of the books required, and whether second-hand copies are required if new copies are not available.
- (b) The Officer-in-Charge, Services Central Book Depot, will report if the books are available and the price to be paid.
- (c) The ship, establishment, etc., will then forward a crossed cheque for this amount payable to the Officer-in-Charge, Services Central Book Depot. Cheques must be payable through a bank in Great Britain.

27. Books will not be supplied to individuals under these arrangements, nor must they be obtained for or resold to individuals.

28. Ships and Establishments may purchase "Penguin" and similar paper-backed books at reduced prices under the following arrangements :—

- (a) There are two separate selections of 70 different books. Complete sets of 70 books must be ordered.
- (b) The price is £1 15s. for 70 books carriage free to the ship.
- (c) Orders must be sent to :—

The Officer-in-Charge,
Services Central Book Depot,
Finsbury Barracks,
City Road, London, E.C.1,

accompanied by a crossed cheque made payable to the Officer-in-Charge, Services Central Book Depot. The cheque must be payable through a bank in Great Britain.

29. These arrangements do not apply to N.A.A.F.I. bookstalls. Canteen managers requiring "Penguin," etc., books for their bookstalls will obtain them from N.A.A.F.I. in the ordinary manner.

Gramophone Records—Supply through Royal Naval Film Corporation

30. Arrangements have been made whereby gramophone records published by His Master's Voice, Columbia, Parlophone and Regal-Zonophone may be purchased for use on board H.M. ships only, at a special discount of 33½ per cent. This concession does not extend to H.M. Naval Establishments ashore, nor to the purchase of records by individual officers and men for their own personal use. Detailed instructions are contained in A.F.O. 3413/43.

O.R.B.S. Programmes (Overseas Recorded Broadcasting Service)

31. Programmes of music (popular, classical, variety and swing) are being regularly recorded by Naval and Royal Marine personnel on gramophone records for despatch to overseas broadcasting stations for diffusion to the Forces.

32. Sets of these programmes are available for use in H.M. ships through their S.R.E. and can be obtained from P.A.L.Os. at the following ports and bases :—

Home : Lyness, Rosyth, Liverpool, Milford Haven.
Abroad : Gibraltar, Kilindini and Capetown.

33. These records should be used as complete programmes when radio programmes are not available, and should be returned or circulated, as complete sets with scripts enclosed, to other ships, as soon as possible after playing. They are not intended to be used as incidental music during film shows.

SECTION IV

Gift Woollen Clothing

34. *Comforts Issue Book.*—For the purpose of regulating supplies of woollen comforts, books, games and wireless sets to destroyers and smaller ships, P.A.L.Os. issue to such ships a Comforts Issue Book in which details of supplies are recorded. In the case of woollen comforts supplies can only be made by the P.A.L.Os. on production of this book.

35. *Woollen comforts.*—The supply of woollen comforts is governed by the following instructions, which have been rendered necessary by the pressing need for economy in wool :—

- (a) No issue is to be made in shore establishments, except that Commanding Officers may apply for a special issue to personnel employed on fire-watching duties or manning anti-aircraft guns or searchlights, or on watch or sentry duty in exposed positions during the winter. These supplies will not be available for Scottish Bases where personnel employed ashore in exposed positions are given a gratuitous issue of warm clothing—vide (c) below.
- (b) When stocks of gift woollen socks and seaboot stockings are exhausted, no further issues of these articles will be made.
- (c) Personnel employed in Northern waters who receive the official gratuitous issue of gloves, mittens, comforters, and balaclava helmets provided for in A.F.O. 4883/41 are not to be supplied with these articles from gift woollen clothing. When, however, ships which are serving in English waters have been supplied with gift woollen clothing are ordered to Northern waters, the gift clothing need not be withdrawn although the ships' companies will receive a gratuitous issue under the terms of A.F.O. 4883/41.
- (d) Particulars of garments issued on board H.M. ships and the date of the issue are to be entered on page 20 of the recipient's Sailors' Pay and Identity Book, Form S.43A, and this page is to be headed "Gift Clothing Issues." The entry is to be made by the person actually making the issue and is to be initialled by the Commanding Officer or other officer responsible for distribution of gift clothing, care being taken to avoid confusion between entries of gift clothing and the record of official gratuitous issues of warm clothing also made in Form S.43A in accordance with A.F.O. 4883/41.
- (e) As a general rule, an individual is not to be supplied with a garment from the comforts supply if his pay book shows that he has already received a similar garment from the same source within the last 12 months.
- (f) Ratings who join after a bulk issue has been made to their ship and who have not in the previous 12 months been supplied with gift clothing may be given a chit from the Commanding Officer, or other officer, and should take the chit with the Ship's Comforts Issue Book to the P.A.L.O. In such cases the additional issue is to be recorded by the P.A.L.O. on page 20 of S.43A as well as in the Comforts Issue Book.

36. Any ships which are in need of gift clothing and are not in touch with a P.A.L.O. should apply direct to The Secretary, R.N. War Comforts Committee, Admiralty, London, S.W.1.

37. The prevention of waste of gift clothing, especially during the summer months, is a matter of importance and worn or damaged articles which are no longer required by their owners are to be collected and returned to the P.A.L.O. at the nearest base in the U.K. Arrangements exist at most bases for sorting and repairing these garments. Where such arrangements do not exist, garments are to be sorted and the quantity suitable for repair reported to The Secretary, R.N. War Comforts Committee, Admiralty, London, S.W.1, who will send directions as to their disposal. Before sending consignments to the address provided by the R.N. War Comforts Committee, arrangements should be made for any dirty garments to be washed at a local laundry, the account for this, after certification by the Flag Officer or Naval Officer-in-Charge, being forwarded to the R.N. War Amenities Fund, Admiralty, London, S.W.1, for payment.

38. Clothing and comforts donated by organisations or private individuals and issued to personnel are the property of the rating to whom they are issued, but are not to be sold or given away.

39. There is evidence that gifts received by Naval personnel are in some cases being given away, or even sold to civilians. This particularly applies to woollen comforts since the introduction of the wool rationing scheme.

40. Such trafficking is highly dishonest. It is against the war effort in that it evades rationing. It will in the end deprive other men of their fair share of the gifts. It is betrayal of the trust placed in the Royal Navy by those who knit the garments and pay for the wool.

41. Other reports disclose hoarding in certain ships, and the despatch by individuals of begging letters asking for comforts when sufficient are already held on board. Such unwarranted appeals lower the prestige of the service and mislead the public. The Port Amenities Liaison Officers at bases in Home Waters are the proper distributing authorities for comforts and all requests must be made to these officers.

SECTION V

Disposal of Amenities Gear on paying off

42. *Through the generosity of the Nuffield Trust for the Forces of the Crown, and of the subscribers to the Royal Naval War Amenities Fund, it has been possible to issue several thousand wireless sets to small craft in Home waters.*

43. It should be clearly understood that these sets are a gift to the ship, not to individual members of the crew, and when a ship pays off the Commanding Officer is responsible that these gift sets are returned to the Port Amenities Liaison Officer. When there is no Port Amenities Liaison Officers at a paying-off port, sets should be handed to the Naval Officer-in-Charge, or Resident Naval Officer. In these cases the sets may be retained for re-issue to the ship when she recommissions, or to other ships commissioning at the port. If it is inconvenient to store these sets, the Royal Naval War Amenities Fund, Admiralty, should be asked to make arrangements for their disposal.

44. F.O.I.Cs. and N.O.I.Cs. of Bases; C.Os. of Training establishments, R.N. Air Stations, and R.M. Depots and Training Camps are requested to keep a list of any valuable property such as radios, pianos, and billiard tables, which has been presented to their canteens, sports grounds, concert halls, etc., so that at the end of the war these items may be utilised or realised on behalf of the Funds mentioned above.

SECTION VI

Donations from Ships and Establishments to the general funds

45. *Since the early part of the war, organisations such as the R.N. War Amenities Fund and its associated Fund, the Minesweepers and Coastal Craft Fund, and the Royal Naval and Royal Marines Sports Control Board (with its own funds and as administrator of the Navy's share of the Nuffield Trust) have spent approximately £300,000 in helping ships and Naval bases, especially in Home waters, in the furnishing of recreation rooms, canteens, concert halls, theatres, and the provision of sports gear. In some cases an actual grant of cash has been made; in other cases furniture, radio equipment, billiard tables, pianos, table tennis and other games have been purchased and supplied to the ships, bases or establishments concerned.*

46. The income of the Funds in the main comes from donations and naturally tends to diminish as the war progresses; but on the other hand canteens and clubs in ships and at the bases are becoming more firmly established, and are themselves able to accumulate funds. In some cases already canteen funds which have benefited earlier by grants, have made handsome donations to the above Funds from their profits, and it is hoped that all committees in charge of canteen funds, clubs, etc., will consider the allocation of a proportion of their profits to these Funds. This will enable the organisations to keep up a supply of amenities to new bases and to ships commissioning.

(A.F.Os. 2038/40, 3480/41, 4883/41, 1525/43, 3413/43.)

(A.F.Os. 1799/40, 1861/40, 744/41, 1591/41, 4475/41, 5099/41, 5332/41, 5513/41, 3571/42, 3989/42, 4611/42 and 6023/42 are cancelled.)