

CHAPTER 1

ORDERS, REGULATIONS, B.Rs., ETC.

The fundamental laws for the government of the Royal Navy are the Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions (1953) (B.R. 31) and the Naval Discipline Act (1922). The latter is, in effect, the criminal code for the Service and embodies the laws which, (in addition to the normal civil laws binding on all the Queen's subjects), are necessary for the maintenance of discipline in an Armed Service, especially a Seagoing Service.

The Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions are issued by the Commissioners for executing the office of the Lord High Admiral of England and comprise all the rules and regulations necessary for the Administration of the Service and its various fleets, squadrons, etc. It might well be said that while the Naval Discipline Act tells you what you must not do the Queen's Regulations tell you what you must on no account neglect to do. The distinction is a loose one but a fair one.

Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions are occasionally amended but since they deal in general with basic matters it is obvious that the amendments should be few and far between. This is achieved by arranging that detailed regulations are contained in Confidential Books, Books of Reference, Admiralty Fleet Orders, Station Orders, Command Orders, etc., which can regularly be amended to deal with changing conditions. For example it would be a mistake to include Rates of Pay in Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions. These are laid down in B.R. 1950 (Naval Pay Regulations), and the Queen's Regulations refer specifically to this book, naming it as the authoritative publication on the matter.

Admiralty Fleet Orders

A.F.Os. are printed Orders and Instructions not in the form of Books of regulations or instructions, and other communications promulgated by the Admiralty, that have general application to ships or Naval Establishments.

They are issued in the following series:-

- (a) A.F.Os. General orders of a non-confidential nature.
- (b) (i) C.A.F.Os. General orders of a CONFIDENTIAL nature that should be seen only by officers. Technical information in C.A.F.Os. is to be communicated to ratings concerned, who are serving in ships not directly affected by the orders to a sufficient extent to ensure that, on transfer to a ship which has been affected by the orders, they shall have an adequate knowledge of recent developments.
- (ii) C.A.F.Os. (Foreign Navy Editions). Orders suitable and desirable for disclosure to Foreign Navies.
- (c) C.A.F.O. "A" Series. Confidential Admiralty decisions on A. & As. (See section on A. & As.)
- (d) Notice Board Editions. Orders of general interest to personnel reprinted for display in messes, etc.
- (e) A.F.O. Diagrams.
- (f) "S" Series. Confidential Orders relevant to signalling.
- (g) "S.C." Series. Corrections to non-confidential signal books.
- (h) "S.P.C." Series. Corrections to Confidential Signal Publications.

- (j) A.F.O. 'P' Series. Corrections to non-confidential handbooks.
- (k) C.A.F.O. 'P' Series. Corrections to confidential handbooks.
- (l) Q.R. amendments.
- (m) Index (Quarterly and Supplementary).

A.F.Os. are not to be divulged to anyone outside the Service.
They are classified under Sections as follows:-

- (1) Administrative and General.
- (2) Personnel.
- (3) Hull, Machinery, Equipment and Stores.
- (4) Dental, Medical and Victualling Stores.
- (5) Books, Correspondence, Forms and Stationery.
- (6) Shore Establishments.

As we have already seen A.F.Os. are intended to bring changes in policy, etc., to the notice of Officers and they are not intended as permanent Standing Orders. In fact A.F.Os. issued since 1st January, 1951, do not remain extant for more than two years and are cancelled on Admiralty Instructions at the end of that period. The constituent Orders of a Cancelled Issue will, by that time, have been integrated with the appropriate Handbook or reissued as current A.F.Os.

Relevant Handbooks and A.F.Os. which are referred to, or affected by, a new A.F.O. are noted at the end of the text.

The Index can be a great help or a confounded nuisance, depending on whether the user understands the principles on which it is prepared or not. It appears in two forms:-

- (a) Quarterly Index.
- (b) Supplementary Index.

The Quarterly Index contains reference to all Orders of the General Series extant on the last day of the quarter. For convenience of handling and printing it is published in three parts. Because it takes time to edit, print and transmit there is a gap of some weeks between the date of the Index and the date of its receipt.

To narrow this gap there is the Supplementary Index whose layout is similar to that of the Quarterly Index. It is issued monthly and contains reference to all A.F.Os. and C.A.F.Os. issued since the date of the current Quarterly Index, and up to and including the date of the previous week's issue of orders.

To find an A.F.O. or C.A.F.O. issued since the receipt of the last Supplementary Issue reference must be made to the Subject List in the front of each issue of A.F.Os. or C.A.F.Os.

As the Quarterly Index may contain reference to an Order since cancelled by a Supplementary Index the hunt for an elusive A.F.O. should always start in the Supplementary Index.

This, then, is the method of search for a particular Order:-

- (a) Consider the subject of the Order and decide on the appropriate Section of the Index.
- (b) Consult the list of Reference Headings for that Section.

- (c) Having found the Reference Heading related to the subject of the Order required turn to the body of the Index for the Heading. (Try Supplementary Index first).
- (d) Search for the Order required among those appearing under the heading. If unsuccessful try a further search of the List of Reference Headings.
- (e) For recently issued Orders consult the Subject Lists.

Lists of A.F.Os. of interest should be inserted in the appropriate part of the Electrical Log and Progress Book. When the weekly issues of A.F.Os. are received you should first carefully read through them noting those of interest and then circulate them to the heads of sections drawing their attention to the Orders that directly affect them. After circulation they should be bound in the covers provided and stowed in an easily accessible position, preferably in the Electrical Office. NEVER let anyone take the bound volumes away without good cause or without signing for them.

C.A.F.Os. should be similarly bound and locked away. Only those portions which directly concern them should be shown to ratings.

These are Books of Reference and Confidential Books. They may contain Regulations, (e.g. B.R. 1950 - Naval Pay Regulations), of a quasi-permanent nature, or advice, (e.g. B.R. 1916 - Guard Book for Notes for Electrical Officers), or Technical Information, (e.g. B.R. 1917 - Minor Modifications to Radio Equipment), but where they direct as opposed to advising they are mandatory in exactly the same way as are the Queen's Regulations.

Confidential Books are to be treated in the same way as C.A.F.Os. They contain Confidential Regulations, advice and information and may only be held on charge by Officers from the Confidential Book Officer. Secret and Top Secret Books, pamphlets and documents are also obtained from him. All such documents will have a Copy Number and before accepting them from the C.B. Officer you should muster them page by page finally signing for the number of pages received.

The greatest care must be taken to ensure the safety of C.Bs., etc. When not in use they are to be locked in a Patt. 1477 Steel Chest, (minimum permitted degree of safety), the key of which you should keep on your person or hand to the O.O.W. when going ashore.

Detailed instructions on Security are to be found in B.R. Form U2D (5) which you are strongly advised to read.

B.Rs. are treated in much the same way as Naval Stores. They should be listed in Form S.1099, (Permanent Loan List), which is explained later in this book, mustered at the prescribed intervals and issued against signature in the Temporary Loan List (Form S.1092).

You should lean over backwards to ensure that your team has easy and immediate access to Publications giving Technical Information. Check your list of Publications and their amendment state at frequent intervals, demand the necessary handbooks before, or as soon as possible after new types of equipment are fitted in the ship, and take care to see that the books are not merely stowed in cupboards but are frequently read and widely used throughout the Department.

LIST OF USEFUL B.Rs.

- B.R. 4 Naval Storekeeping Manual.
- B.R. 1950 Naval Pay Regulations.
- B.R. 1916 Guard Book for Notes for Electrical Officers.
- B.R. 1917 Handbook of Minor Modifications to Radio Equipment.
- B.R. 1941 Alphabetical and Numerical List of B.Rs. and non-confidential Publications on General Electrical and Radio subjects.
- B.R. 810 Rate Book of Naval Stores.
- B.R. 1844 Electrical Training Manual.
- B.R. 333 Summary of Data of Radio Equipments.
- B.R. 1992 Divisional Officer's Handbook.
- B.R. 1066 Advancement Regulations.
- B.R. 2071 Home Dockyard Regulations.
- B.R. 14 Drafting Regulations.
- B.R. 1294 Damage Control Handbook.
- B.R. 157 Naval Electrical Pocket Book.
- B.R. 158 Examples in Electrical Calculation.
- B.R. 67
(1/51) Seamanship Manual Vol. I.
Sailor's Pocket Book.

Station, Command and Captain's Orders

In addition to the orders we have already dealt with which affect the Service as a whole, Commanders-in-Chief, Flag Officers and Captains are all empowered and instructed to produce orders which concern and affect the Stations, Commands and Ships.

For example the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean produces Standing Orders for the Mediterranean Station and unless the Admiralty specifically state to the contrary these orders are binding on all Fleets, Squadrons and Ships within the geographical limits of the Mediterranean Station.

Similarly in, say, the Nore Command a set of Command Orders (known as the Nore Standing Order Book), are produced by the Commander-in-Chief Nore and the Captain of every ship or establishment will write Standing Orders for his own officers and men.

The greatest care is taken, in writing these orders, to ensure that they do not conflict with the standing regulations or that, where they do so, there is a good and sufficient reason for so doing. Where they appear to conflict with, say, Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions there is usually time to ask for a ruling but where the matter is one of urgency you should use your own discretion and act as you think best for the good of the Service, taking care to report your action as early as possible. You may make your Captain cross if you act wrongly; you will certainly render him speechless with fury if you do not act at all.

In addition to Standing Orders, senior officers frequently issue orders of a temporary nature, (e.g. a special routine for Trafalgar Day), which are self-cancelling. These are usually issued as Temporary Memoranda and an occasional list of all Temporary Memoranda still current will be promulgated.

One final set of orders which are binding on you and we have done. You must already have met them. They are the Ship's Standing Orders, and are produced by the Executive Officer (Commander in a big ship; First Lieutenant in a small one). They deal with routine matters concerning the running of the ship and certain simplified and condensed versions of the more important and frequently met Regulations as well as matters peculiar to the ship as a ship.

If by now you are beginning to feel that there are a great multiplicity of directives, requirements, instructions regulations and orders pressing on your innocent skull remember -

"Big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em,
Little fleas have lesser fleas and so ad infinitum."

Departmental Orders

We have saved the best until last! Not only are you required to read and obey orders, you must produce them yourself and see that they are obeyed.

There are two schools of thought about Departmental Orders. One school insists that they should be detailed in the extreme, leaving nothing to chance and capable of dealing with any emergency or happening. Such orders generally run to five or six ponderous volumes two thirds of which are never read and the other third never used.

The other school is the "cut 'em to the bone" school. Its devotees attempt to deal with the regulation and control of large quantities of machinery and small bodies of men on one half sheet of foolscap paper. This invariably gets lost in the first week and would have been better lost in the first twenty four hours.

Both schools, of course, are wrong. Orders should be kept down to a reasonable number without being cut to a point where important and vital points are neglected. Whenever you are wondering whether to include a particular order ask yourself these questions:-

- (a) Is there any danger to men or machinery which will be reduced by this order?
- (b) Will this order avoid any annoying hiatus in the routine or running of the ship?
- (c) Will this order really help me or my staff in the carrying out of our duties?

If the answer to any or all of these questions is "Yes" then bung it in, if not leave it out.

The orders should be made up on a loose leaf principle for simplifications of amendment. There should be an index and each order should be numbered. Leave plenty of spare numbers at the end of each section of the index so that any order which, in the light of experience, you decide to add can be easily put in. When you decide to make an amendment to any order have the whole page reprinted and issue the new page complete with a separate instruction to destroy the old one.

It is recommended in B.R. 1916 that the orders should be divided into the following sections:-

- (a) General Organisation (sea and harbour).
- (b) War Organisation (sea and harbour).
- (c) Action Organisation (including damage control and A.B.C.D. organisation).
- (d) Cruising and Defence Organisation.
- (e) Miscellaneous.

Part (a) should include a clear statement of the duties of Heads of Sections, routines for switchboard and other watchkeeping personnel, orders as to dress where the Ship's Standing Orders give no guidance for men employed on particular duties, orders for the testing of communications prior to leaving harbour and orders for Special Sea Dutymen, (where considered necessary), and Fire fighting.

It will frequently be necessary to excuse certain men from routine musters of the hands and a complete excused list should be shown in tabular form. When making out this list remember that your division is a small one and that only men genuinely required for important duty should be excused.

Orders as to the reserves of power supply to be kept in hand should be written in consultation with the Engineer Officer. More and more domestic services are electrically operated in these days and a nice balance between the comfort of the Ship's Company and the running hours, (particularly of diesels), machinery will have to be struck. On the other hand do not let Chief browbeat you in the matter, he probably won't try but just in case

The orders for night duty ratings should also be written into Part (a) and in this connection it is as well to remember that the average junior radio rating is quite capable after he has been in the ship for some little time of carrying out the Duty E.Ms. stint. Aside from sharing out duty more evenly this all helps to make everyone more familiar with the ship's idiosyncrasies.

A study of a couple of hundred Forms S.239A, (see Chapter 3), will very quickly convince you that the junior electrical rating who gets through his first years at sea without falling foul of the rules for switching on or off ceremonial lighting is fortunate. Much of this kind of trouble is avoidable. Get together with the Navigating Officer and the Communications Officer, (usually the same man in a small ship), decide who will deal with what, get your share written into your orders, ensure the orders are read and then if a member of your staff fails to switch on some subtle piece of ceremonial lighting you may give him a couple of hours extra work with a light heart and a clear conscience. Be firm about these orders; nothing looks quite so sloppy as a ship whose stern, backbone and jackstaff lights come on at five minute intervals.

The preparation of Part (b) of your orders deserves a book to itself. These orders should be extremely carefully written and should not be attempted until you are thoroughly familiar with the role of the ship in war and with Damage Control and A.B.C.D. (see B.R. 1294). In the early stages of a war these orders will be used in anger. Any set of notes on such others would of necessity be hopelessly inadequate but the following points should be borne in mind when writing them:-

- (i) Damage Control Parties and Action Parties should be closely integrated.
- (ii) Greater reserves of power should be available both in harbour and at sea.
- (iii) In lower degrees of readiness for action, etc., keep the minimum number of men at their posts.
- (iv) Operation Awkward will probably be a continuous requirement in harbour during war.
- (v) The wartime complement will be larger than its peacetime equivalent. Agree with the First Lieutenant on additional slinging billets etc., and write them into the preamble.
- (vi) "Closing Down" is a peculiar operation to each ship. Give a detailed and comprehensive table on the drill for reaching the various states naming the various flaps etc., in the code laid down for the 1950 Damage Control Markings.
- (vii) Remember that you will probably be the Assistant Damage Control Officer in action - think a little less electrically and a little more generally.
- (viii) Check the Engineer Officer's orders. Have him check yours.

Except for cruising stations Parts (c) and (d) should, in the writer's view, only differ from Part (b) in the numbers of men involved. When all is said and done Action Stations and Action Organisation in time of peace should be realistic and it is recommended that you either leave out these sections entirely or merely scale down Part (b) to allow for a reduced complement whilst preserving the same basic system of control and organisation.