

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD

A.S.R.E'S DRIVE ON V/S EQUIPMENT

However complex future systems of radio communication may become, the possibility of interception by ship or shore station remains. It is as inevitable in the future as in the past that V.S. must be used extensively to clear tactical and manoeuvring signals, as it is the only completely secure communication system at sea.

Revised allowances of flags for all classes of ships have recently been published in A.F.O. 1128/55. Where possible, spurs have been added to Coastal Minesweepers and Seaward Defence Boats to improve their flag hoisting facilities. Trials have been made with flags manufactured from bunting, bunting nylon mixture and nylon, and investigation is now being made into the production cost of these materials. Flags made from a mixture of bunting and nylon have recently flown for 20 weeks at Chatham with promising results.

Trials have recently been carried out at sea and in H.M.S. *Mercury* to determine the relative merits of the British and American type flag locker. From these trials it appears that the U.S. locker wins the day for speedy hoisting of groups up to three flags in one hoist; for longer hoists the English type is slightly quicker. Future trials will concentrate on using the British flag lockers and American type snap clips and rings.

A new lightweight daylight signalling lantern has been developed by Admiralty to replace the existing Aldis pattern 443 D.S.L. The new lantern is rather more powerful than its predecessor but has no shutter. Trials at sea and in *Mercury* show that it should prove a worthy successor to the old D.S.L. and since its weight is less than half that of the old one, it should be possible to fit a D.S.L. in all ships down to and including frigates in future. (Fig. C).

The redesigned 5-inch hand signalling lantern now in production will supersede the existing 4-inch Aldis and the 6-inch H.S.L. The new H.S.L. is similar in appearance to the Aldis but of improved performance. (Fig. B).

A redesigned lantern embodying the features of the box lantern 1038 and the Boats Lantern Pattern W1020 has been tried; it is considered to be an improvement on both the lanterns it replaces and will come into service shortly. The Hether lantern too has been redesigned, and will be known as the Hether Mark II. It is considered an improvement on the existing Hether and can be fitted to the bar of any type of binoculars. (Fig. A).

Reports from sea indicate that a better type of binocular is required. An improved type of binocular made by Brausch and Lomb in America is in use in the U.S.N. These American binoculars are alleged to be superior to the British Pattern 1000A. Arrangements are being made for the Home Fleet to carry out trials with these American binoculars which are mounted on a pedestal and cost about £800 each.

They should help considerably to increase the range at which visual signals can be read.

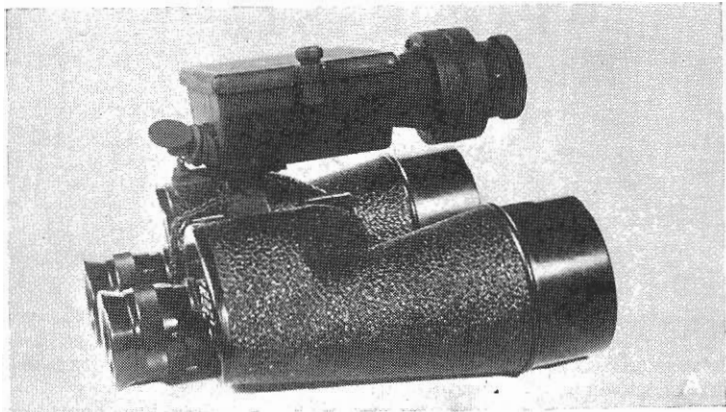
The advent of jet aircraft and their high pitched screech has called for an improved intercom system between the bridge and flagdeck in carriers. Silent cabinets for the Yeoman of the Watch, additional speakers and more powerful amplifiers are being considered.

Due to the multiplicity of wireless and radar aerials and other obstructions it is becoming increasingly difficult to get a clear run for dressing lines; in the case of some new construction frigates it has become virtually impossible to find clear "runs" and Admiralty approval to dress with masthead flags only has been given.

Visual Signalling reports (B.R.1971) are most useful and are carefully vetted upon receipt; ships are informed through the normal channels if their allowances of equipment are not up to date or if obsolete equipment is due for return or exchange. It is on reports from sea, founded on practical

experience, that improvements to equipment and layout are based.

Visual Signalmen are renowned for their powers of observation, and many of you may see ways of improving message handling or signalling equipment. You do not have to be a “boffin” to invent a modification to existing equipment to make it easier to operate, or to be more efficient. Apart from the benefit to the Service and the branch you may win a monetary award from the Herbert Lott Trust Fund for your ideas—so see what you can think up and let your Signal Officer know about it.



A. The Hether Mark II lantern

B. The new H.S.L.

C. The new daylight signaling lantern.

Official photographs

