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Office of the Fourth Sea Lord,  
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London, S.W.1.

- (1) D.S.D. ~~13~~ 24/5 JW 29/5.  
(2) Head of N.L.  
(3) Head of M.

FLAGS TO BE FLOWN BY R.N. HOSPITALS,  
DOCKYARDS, REPAIR YARDS, ETC.  
N.L. 5334/50, N.L. 326/51.

Fourth Sea Lord's attention has been drawn to this whole question once more by the submission on N.L. 5334/50 regarding the flying of white ensigns by R.N. Hospitals. Fourth Sea Lord wishes the possibility further explored of those Shore Establishments concerned being permitted, if only on special dress-ship occasions, to fly a specifically Naval ensign. The privilege might have to be limited so that the circumstances ensure proper respect, though not necessarily military honours, being paid on hoisting and hauling down these colours.

2. Would D.S.D. please initiate this review.

Assistant Chief of Supplies  
and Transport  
16th May, 1951.

FLAGS TO BE FLOWN BY R.M.HOSPITALS, DOCKYARDS,  
REPAIR YARDS, ETC. N.L. 5334/50, N.L. 326/50.

D.S.D. considers that the daily wearing of the White Ensign should be confined to H.M. Ships and Naval Establishments which are commissioned as one of H.M. Ships. Any departure from this general rule would, it is felt, be bound to have a "snowball" effect, and the privilege at present enjoyed by H.M. Ships and certain shore establishments would be lost. Moreover, D.S.D. feels that if the regulations in this respect are relaxed it could only be a matter of time before requests were received for relaxation in the regulations for the wearing of other special flags, e.g. the wearing of Admirals' Flags by non-executive Admirals.

2. In the new King's Regulations discussed in N.L. 4404/50, it has been approved that the White Ensign may also be worn on appropriate occasions on other buildings used by the Admiralty or for Naval purposes, with the special permission of the Admiralty.

This clause does enable the White Ensign to be worn in dockyards or repair yards, Naval hospitals, etc., and it would appear quite reasonable to grant such permission on occasions when H.M. Ships are dressed over all.

3. In D.S.D.'s view, this permission to wear the White Ensign should be subject to the proviso that the White Ensign is to be worn in addition to the Union Flag and such other flags normally flown in the yard or establishment concerned. In the particular case of Naval hospitals this would appear to be essential as the Geneva Convention lays down that in war the Red Cross Flag must always be accompanied by the national flag of the Power concerned (Librarian's 30.8.50. in N.L. 2628/50).

4. As far as ceremony is concerned, D.S.D. believes that it would not be possible to lay down any hard and fast rules. For example, the White Ensign is worn over Whitehall Entrance, Admiralty Arch and Queen Anne's Mansions, on occasions of ceremony, as laid down by Ministry of Works for all Government buildings. These Ensigns are hoisted and hauled down by Admiralty Messengers instructed by the Office Keeper. There is no ceremony. Similarly, in Portsmouth Dockyard the Union Flag is hoisted and hauled down by the Police at the Main Gate without ceremony conforming to the times of hoisting and hauling down of Colours in H.M. Ships.

5. D.S.D. would therefore suggest for Board approval that the King's Regulations should be amplified to allow the White Ensign to be worn on buildings which are used by the Admiralty or for Naval purposes on occasions when H.M. Ships are dressed over all in addition to the Union Flag normally worn on such buildings, care being taken to ensure that the proper respect is paid.

*R. G. Swallow*

D. S. D.  
24th May, 1951.

N.L. agrees generally with the enclosed observations by D.S.D.

2. D.S.D. suggests that the White Ensign might be allowed to be worn on buildings which are used by the Admiralty or for Naval purposes on occasions when H.M. Ships are dressed overall, in addition to the Union Flag.

3. The dressing of ships overall is dealt with in K.R. & A.I. Article 93 and, in addition to Empire Day, is concerned with the birthdays of the King and members of the Royal Family etc. M.Branch will, however, wish to remark on this aspect.

4. On the question of appropriate buildings, N.L. feels that there may be a case for the "occasional" use of the White Ensign on certain Admiralty or naval buildings, but feels also that it would be necessary to have a somewhat clearer definition than "buildings which are used by the Admiralty or for Naval purposes."

5. The White Ensign is the only "specifically Naval ensign" which can be used.

*J.L. Brown*

for Head of N.L.  
29th. May 1951.

The only fixed anniversaries when all H.M. Ships dress overall are:-

- (i) the actual dates of the birth, accession and coronation of the Sovereign;
- (ii) the day appointed for the official birthday of the Sovereign;
- (iii) the birthday of the consort of the reigning Sovereign;
- (iv) the birthday of Her Majesty Queen Mary;
- (v) Empire Day.

Other occasions when ships may dress overall are laid down in K.R. & A.I. Articles 49, 50 and 93 but are not strictly applicable to the question under review.

2. On the other hand, flags are normally flown from Government Buildings not only on the anniversaries detailed in paragraph 1 but also on:-

31st March	-	Birthday of H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester
21st April	-	" " H.R.H. the Princess Elizabeth Duchess of Edinburgh
25th April	-	" " H.R.H. the Princess Royal
26th April	-	Wedding Day of Their Majesties The King and Queen
21st August	-	Birthday of H.R.H. Princess Margaret
November	-	Remembrance Day.

3. If the principle suggested in paragraph 5 of D.S.D.'s report dated 24th May, 1951, is approved, it is for consideration whether the flying of both the white ensign and union flag should be restricted to the occasions detailed in paragraph 1 and the union flag only flown on the other days listed in paragraph 2, or whether both the white ensign and union flag should be flown on all the occasions specified. In any case, it would seem desirable that the revised procedure, if approved, should also be adopted on special occasions, as directed

by the Admiralty. This would cover Royal Weddings, births, etc. when specific instructions are always issued to the Fleet.

4. With regard to paragraph 4 of N.L.'s report dated 29th May, 1951, presumably the new instructions would be applicable to all Naval, Fleet and Civil Establishments as defined in K.R. & A.I. (page xi).

L. B. Craner

for HEAD OF MILITARY BRANCH

5<sup>th</sup> June, 1951.

LBC/HFL/C.C.B.11

D.S.D. may wish to comment before this paper is submitted. N.L. 2094/51 concerning the flag to be flown over RAF Hospitals is also attached.

J. A. Willis  
Vtd. V.M.  
14/6/51.

D.S.D. recommends that Establishment be authorised to fly the White Ensign on occasions in M Br. para 2 as well as those in para 1.

D.S.D. also concurs in last two sentences of M Br para 3.

~~folded~~  
m333  
19.6.51

With reference to the enclosed letter dated 16th May 1951, from A.C.S.T. about flags to be flown by R.N. Hospitals, Dockyards, Repair Yards, etc. the following is a summary of the recommendations now made:-

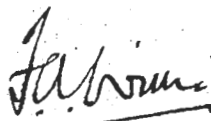
K.R. & A.I. should be amplified to allow the White Ensign to be worn on buildings which are used by the Admiralty or for Naval purposes on occasions when H.M. Ships are dressed overall, in addition to the Union Flag normally worn on such buildings, care being taken to ensure that the proper respect is paid (D.S.D. 24.5.51).

This regulation should apply to all Naval, Fleet and Civil Establishments as defined in K.R. & A.I. (page XI). X/It is for decision whether it should also cover Medical Establishments in peace-time.

The White Ensign to be flown from such Establishments additionally, as in the case of Government Buildings, on the Birthdays of the Duke of Gloucester, Princess Elizabeth, Princess Royal, Princess <sup>Margaret</sup>, the Wedding Day of Their Majesties and Remembrance Day; also on special occasions as directed by the Admiralty (covering Royal Weddings, Births, etc. when specific instructions are issued to the Fleet)- M. 5/6/51 and D.S.D. 19/6/51. N.L. sees no particular objection to these recommendations.

2. It is also proposed, subject to X above, to inform the Air Ministry in reply to their letter of the 29th May, 1951, in N.L. 2094/51, that the Admiralty has no observations on the proposed A.M.O. concerning the flying of flags at R.A.F. Hospitals.

3. Submitted, through M.D.G.



for HEAD OF N.L.  
21 JUNE, 1951.

MRG/CCB.25.

M.D.G. would like Medical establishments, in peace time, to be included.

*C. G. Green*

MEDICAL DIRECTOR-GENERAL.

25th June, 1951.

Letter dated 22nd June 1951  
from Air Ministry inserted  
12  
25/6/51

*No objection.*

*Hansen*

*JEN.*

*27. 6. 51*

Approved. I wish to see the draft order before it is issued. It is important to clear up exactly what flags all Naval Hospitals etc. should fly on non-dress ship days, at the same time.


*D. G. B.*

3rd July, 1951

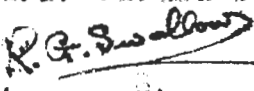
With reference to the Fourth Sea Lord's minute of the 3rd. July 1951, it is presumed that on non-dress ship days (in peacetime) Fleet, Civil and Medical Establishments would fly only the Union Flag.

2. The object of the action taken on N.L.2628/50, herewith, was to achieve, if possible, uniformity in practice at the hospitals of the three Services. The Air Ministry are now introducing an Order providing that in peacetime the R.A.F. Ensign is to be flown only at certain R.A.F. Hospitals entitled under their regulations to fly that Ensign. In wartime, and in operational areas at all times, the Red Cross and Union Flags are to be flown at all R.A.F. medical formations and establishments. The War Office do not propose to alter the practice of flying the Union Flag or the flag of the appropriate formation. In the interests of uniformity, it would therefore seem desirable not to fly the Red Cross flag over ~~any~~ medical establishments in peacetime.

3. A proposed draft Admiralty Fleet Order is enclosed for concurrence or suggested amendment.

  
for Head of N.L.  
5th. July 1951.

D.S.D. concurs with the proposed draft Admiralty Fleet Order; but would suggest the words "the past authorities for" in line 3 of para. I. should be omitted.

  
D. S. D.  
5th July, 1951.

Concur in draft A.F.O., except that it is considered the opportunity should be taken to make clear which flags should be flown by Medical establishments in war time. It is therefore proposed that the following sentence should be added to para.3(a):-

"In war time they are to fly the Union flag at the Masthead and the Geneva flag at the Yard".

*C. G. Green*

MEDICAL DIRECTOR-GENERAL.

10th July, 1951.

It is suggested that the following minor amendments be made to the enclosed draft A.F.O:-

(i) Paragraph 3(a)

After "occasions when H.M. Ships are dressed overall"  
insert "as detailed in K.R. & A.I. Article 93, Clause I".

(ii) Paragraph 3(b)

Amend to read as follows:-

"In addition to those occasions, the White Ensign should be worn by such establishments on the anniversary of the Wedding Day of Their Majesties The King and Queen, on the birthdays of Their Royal Highnesses the Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh, the Princess Margaret, the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Royal, on Remembrance Day and on other special occasions as directed by the Admiralty."

(iii) Paragraph 5

After "must not be worn elsewhere"  
insert "on shore".

*L. B. Gramer*

*for* Head of Military Branch,

18<sup>th</sup> July, 1951.

LEC/EMB.CCB.11.

1/10



After discussion with A.C.S.T., a revised draft "B" has been enclosed for consideration. If approved, paras. 2 to 6 will be incorporated in the new K.R. & A.I.

*[Handwritten signature]*

K.R. & A.I. COMMITTEE,  
24th July 1951

D.S.D. has given careful consideration to the positions at which the Flags should be flown and agrees with the new Draft "B".

*[Handwritten signature: R.G. Seward]*

D. S. D.  
28.7.1951.

The enclosed draft "B" for an Admiralty Fleet Order, with which N.L. agrees, is submitted for covering approval, with reference to the South Sea Lord's minute of the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1951, herein.

*[Handwritten signature: J.A. Willis]*  
J.A. Willis  
2/8/51.

Paragraph 3 is not entirely clear as it stands and should be amended to read:-

"....On occasions when His Majesty's ships are dressed (as in K.R. & A.I., Article 93) and when specially ordered, such establishments...."

"Fly" and "Flown" should be substituted for "wear" and "worn" throughout.

*An officer flies his flag in a ship or shore establishment  
A shore establishment flies a flag but a ship wears it*

*MFB*

15th August, 1951.

*Draft A.F.O. to K.F.O. for issue.*

*J.W. 17/8/51.*

*A.F.O. 2981/51 issued.*

Noted. Will M. Branch please include this with other amendments to draft Chapter 11 of new K.R. & A.I. now under consideration. It is proposed that Article 29 of that draft should now be made up as follows:-

29. FLAGS TO BE FLOWN ON SHORE.-

- Clause 1 ) As paras. 2, 3 4 & 5 of
- 2) A.F.O.2981/51
- 3 )
- 4 )
- 5 ) As clauses 1 & 2 of present Art.29
- 6 ) of draft
- 7 ) As para.6 of A.F.O.2981/51, omitting reference to Art.116a.

2. A reference to Article 29 should be added to clause 1 of Art. 37.

3. The following articles of the draft chapter need amendment in view of the decision above about flying and wearing :- 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15(2), 23(2), 37 (5), 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 54, 70, 95, 99, 112, 113.

*[Signature]*

K.R. & A.I. COMMITTEE,  
12th September 1951

*Noted. Necessary amendments will be made to the draft Chapter II of the new K.R. & A.I. J.B. Branch for H.A. 8 1951*

TERMS REFERRING TO FLAGS

- - - - -

A person flies his or her standard, distinguishing flag or pendant in a ship or boat, on an aircraft or car, or on shore.

A ship &c. is said to be flying the flag &c. of.....

A ship wears her colours, i.e. ensign, jack and masthead pendant. She may fly or hoist a foreign ensign on certain occasions.

A boat wears a boat's ensign.

An officer flies a masthead pendant in a boat.

A naval establishment (if so entitled) flies a masthead pendant and an ensign and/or other flags.

A flag plate or disc is displayed in a boat or on an aircraft.

The term hoisted is used:-

- (i) To denote the act of hoisting a flag, e.g. "When the Sovereign embarks the Royal Standard is to be hoisted."
- (ii) In referring to a flag flown temporarily for a special purpose, e.g. "The Union Flag is to be hoisted whenever a court-martial is sitting or about to sit", and "When dressing ship the ensign of the country concerned is to be hoisted as follows: "

- - - - -

## 844 Regulations.

If the Captain of the Fleet be a Flag Officer, he shall take precedence, and shall command according to his proper rank as a Flag Officer: but if he be a Commodore only and shall meet with a senior Captain who may not be a First Class Commodore, he shall rank only as First Captain of the Ship in which the Commander-in-Chief's flag shall be flying.

A Commodore of the Second Class is a Captain of one of H.M. Ships authorized to hoist a distinguishing Broad Pendant on board such ship: but it is only in such ship, and whilst he continues to Command her as Captain, that his Second Class Broad Pendant is to fly.

If a Commodore of the Second Class shall meet with a senior Captain, not a Commodore, he shall immediately strike his Broad Pendant, and shall wear only a common Pendant.

If any other Flag Officer ... be killed in battle, his Flag.. is also to be continued flying until the Battle be ended.

... whenever any Ship or vessel passes bearing the Royal Standard...

Upon occasion of the celebration of the birthday of the King or the Queen of a foreign nation... the flag of such nation shall be displayed.....

In the event of the Flag of the Lord High Admiral being hoisted on board one of H.M.Ships, it is to be saluted.....: likewise on any ship or vessel carrying the said Flag being met at sea by any of H.M.Ships, similar salutes are to be fired

Whenever an Admiral... shall hoist his Flag.... on his appointment... the ship bearing the Flag of the officer next in seniority to him shall salute....

A British Ship or Vessel of war meeting at sea a foreign ship of war bearing the Flag of a Flag Officer

The Lord High Admiral's Flag is to be worn on board....  
Lord

The Flag of the/Lieutenant of Ireland is to be worn on board..

The Union Flag is to be worn by an Admiral of the Fleet....

A plain Red Flag is to be worn by Admirals, .....

When Flag Officers shall think fit to carry their flags at the head of their boats... they shall wear the following flags...

All H.M.Ships and Vessels in commission, when not distinguished by a Flag or Broad Pendant, are to wear a Long Pendant

The following Ensigns are to be worn by H.M.Ships.....

No Flag Officer nor Captain shall carry any other flag or pendant than that which belongs to his rank.....

When two Flag Officers, carrying the same Flag at the mast-head, shall serve together, the Admiralty... may order either of them temporarily to wear such other Flag....

All Ships and Vessels belonging to H.M.subjects shall wear a Red Ensign... and shall use a British Union Jack, with a border of white, as a pilot flag: except such Yachts or other vessels as may have warrants from the Admiralty to display other Ensigns, Colours or Pendants.

Ships having Letters of Marque or Reprisal may carry the said Red Ensign....

Revenue Cruizers shall wear the said Red Ensign....

Other Ships and Vessels, employed in the service of any public office, shall carry the same Ensigns and Jacks....

With the foregoing exceptions, the Flags, Pendants and Jacks appointed to be worn by the Ships and Vessels of the R.N., shall not be hoisted or worn on board any other Ships or Vessels whatsoever.

When a Flag Officer with his Flag hoisted in his boat or tender, may be passing by a ship, the Guard shall turn out...

When a Flag Officer shall have his Flag flying in any port or roadstead... he may fire from his Ship a Morning and an Evening gun....

A Flag Officer having a Commission as Commander-in-Chief shall, during the time his Flag shall be actually flying within the limits of his Station, be entitled to £3 a day Table Money.

.. the Captain of a ship bearing the Flag of a Flag Officer, may be removed to another ship...

Every Flag Officer, when at Sea, is to be particularly attentive in observing that the Ship which carries his Flag, and all the Division or Squadron under his orders, preserve very correctly their station.....

Whenever any of H.M. Ships meet, pass or are passed by any vessel flying the standard of a foreign Royal Family....

(Note. "Bearing" in 1844 Regulations)

Whenever the Viceroy shall be embarked... his distinguishing flag is to be hoisted at the main, and kept flying while the Viceroy is on board in Indian waters.

In the event of Governors of Indian Provinces being detached on a foreign mission, a special intimation will be given as to the flag being carried by the man-of-war in which he may be embarked.

The following regulations.... in reference to the interchange of salutes between H.M. Ships and foreign ships of war which bear the flag of a flag officer.....

If one or more of H.M. Ships of war should meet a foreign ship of war bearing the flag of a Flag Officer....

The Admiralty Flag does not return salutes from any of H.M. ships, whether bearing Admiral's flags or the ordinary pendant

(Note. "Wearing" in 1946 Regulations)

The Lord High Admiral's flag is to be worn in ships....

The Union Flag is to be worn at the main by an Admiral of the Fleet...

The following flags are to be worn by Flag Officers.....

When two Flag Officers of the same rank shall be serving together, either of them may be ordered by superior authority to wear temporarily some other distinguishing flag...

The Admiralty may order an officer entitled to wear a flag, broad pendant or pendant afloat to fly the same flag.. ashore.

The flag of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is to be hoisted on board....

(Note. "Worn" in 1844 Regulations)

Other functionaries. The flags authorised by H.M. to be displayed afloat are.....

No other distinguishing flags are authorised to be worn afloat by any of these functionaries.

All H.M. Ships of war in commission shall wear a white ensign.... and... they may display the Union Jack at the jackstaff.

All H.M. Ships in commission, when not bearing a flag or broad pendant, are to wear at the main masthead a pendant...

No Flag Officer... shall carry in any ship or boat any other flag or pendant than that which belongs to his rank....

The following are the regulations as to the flags to be worn by any vessel maintained by any Colony....

Ships and vessels employed in the service of any public office shall carry a blue ensign....

Hired transports are to wear the blue ensign

British merchant ships commanded by R.N.R. officers will be allowed to wear the blue ensign

British merchant ships in receipt of Admiralty subvention will be allowed to fly the blue ensign

Application for permission to wear the blue ensign on board British merchant ships in receipt of Admiralty subvention should be made to....

All other ships which belong to H.M. subjects shall wear a red ensign

When a Flag Officer with his flag hoisted in his boat or tender is passing a ship

When a Flag Officer shall have his flag flying in any port or roadstead... he may fire from his ship a morning and an evening gun

Whenever H.M. the King is on board... with his standard flying....

A Captain, when authorised to wear a broad pendant, shall have the temporary title and rank of Commodore

If any other Flag Officer should be killed in battle, his flag is to be continued flying until the battle is ended

During the day on which a C-in-C at home transfers the command to his successor, the flags of both officers will remain flying

Honorary Admirals of the Fleet or Honorary Admirals, when afloat and in naval uniform, may fly the distinguishing flag...

When at sea he (i.e. a junior Flag Officer) is to be particularly attentive in observing that the ship which carries his flag.....

No person is to be deprived of his good conduct medal... without the approval of the C-in-C, or Flag Officer whose flag is flying....

Officers shall be entitled to table money for the periods during which their flags are actually flying within the limits of such stations....

Flag Allowances will be granted.... in ships carrying the flags or broad pendants of Flag Officers or Commodores...

These allowances shall only be payable during such periods as the flag or broad pendant shall be flying..... and shall not be granted to officers serving in... stationary ships bearing a flag or broad pendant on a foreign station

Explanation of terms. Flag Ship. A ship bearing the flag of a Flag Officer or the broad pendant of a Commodore of the 1st Class.