

MINUTE SHEET—

Part No.

The Fleet Chief Petty Officer in Mercury.

Referred to:—

(Officers are requested to make their comments in the form of a suggested AMB or LHM.)

By Mr. Alderson (GT)

1. I was recently invited to make out a Request sheet when asking for a Convert to Cash Basic Warrant. Furthermore, I was led to believe from the Master at Arms, that other MCPO's had made out Request forms and made no comment!

 Gentlemen, I am sure we are all aware that this, ^{is} contrary to normal practice and is of course, a retrograde step.

2. In addition, I have watched the administration in general of MCPO's in Mercury, since joining a month ago - and it leaves much to be desired.

3. Firstly, whilst appreciating that there are wide areas of discontent and indeed, disappointment with the rank, and that volumes of papers have been written (mostly ignored) by ourselves on the subject, it is clear that long term changes and improvements can only come from the MOD. However, I feel there is a need for ME in Mercury to improve our lot, discuss ways and means of doing it, liaising with MCPO Presidents of other establishments and generally beat the drum in order to get a ~~new~~ policy established to improve our lot.

4. During my term as President, the CPO's used to have regular informal discussions (in our lounge) with the Captain, usually once a term at least. During these meetings, we talked over a wide range of subjects, but most of all, about the CPO in Mercury - his functions, perks, privileges and how he projected himself etc.

5. On joining Mercury (during the normal introductory talk with CSM) I again stressed the need for close contact between the CSM and Fleet Chief Petty Officers, and indicated that he should at least have meetings with us, if not the Chief Petty Officer's. - Nothing has happened!

6. My proposals therefore, are:-

- a. Mr. Underwood, the President, arrange a meeting of MCPO's at convenient, inviting items for discussion to be put on the agenda.
- b. As a result of a., our recommendations re Leave, Warrants etc. be discussed with the Master at Arms.
- c. Enquiries be made to other establishments to see if our administrative procedures differ, if so, let us put them to rights.
- d. Depending on c., use these items and discuss them at a "Casual MCPO's meeting", to be held in RMB (there have been similar meetings in RMB, but only those serving in RMB attended!)
- e. At a convenient time, after our own meeting, we seek an audience with the Captain, or, send him the matters arising from our meeting.

7. It is quite clear that nothing will happen to improve our lot, our status, our terms of reference or our ability to reap the maximum benefits from our seagoing privileges, unless WE MAKE IT HAPPEN.

After Action

Mr. Underwood

Dipost

No. 11794-51

STAFF - IN CONFIDENCE

(Continued)

MINUTE SHEET--

Pack No.

Subject--

Referred to --

(Officers are requested to enter their remarks in the form of a suggestion letter or minute)

8. Finally, may I suggest that our proposals take the form of two parts :-
- a. Those long term recommendations, comments, criticisms which only CINCLAVHOM/1103 can answer.
 - and
 - b. Those comments which affect us now in Mercury, and can therefore be approved or commented upon by CSS.
9. My proposals, as items for the agenda are attached at Annex Alfa.

D. L. Alderson

(D.L. Alderson)

PCRS

7 FEB 74

Enclosure

Annex Alfa

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By Mr. Alderson

LONG TERM CONCEPTS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF MERCURY1. Title

Our formal title is "Warrant Officer" which is hardly ever/never used, despite the fact that we have 'Warrants' to serve as Warrant Officers in the Royal Navy, signed by the (then) Defence Secretary, Lord Carrington.

We are still, after nearly 3 years STILL UNKNOWN as Mr's/Warrant Officers by the other two Services, and certainly by all civilians employed by the Ministry, Admiralty Constabulary, D of E, etc. etc. - they still refer to us as 'Chief'.

I am also distressed at seeing numerous official documents (including DCI's), which lump together the titles "FCPO/CPO/PO". Equally, I am concerned about the common term "Senior Rates".

We have all witnessed the gradual erosion of the status and privileges of Chief Petty Officers over that of the Petty Officer, during the past decade. This is partly due to the continued use of the CPO/PO which lead to an almost identical criteria for setting up Messing, accommodation, duties and perks and privileges.

We must surely aim to set the scene NOW and produce the 'Fourth Dimension' (the Warrant Officer) in print on Orders, DCI's and all documentation, in addition to verbal orders. That is - Officers

Warrant Officers
Senior Rates
Junior Rates

(One can hardly get a more 'formal' document than DCI's - yet our formal title is not used)

2. Status and Privileges

Whilst appreciating the difficulties in extending privileges to Warrant Officers without adversely affecting those of Chief Petty Officers, there must be some extension of privileges given to Warrant Officers, in order to widen the gap between them and Chief Petty Officers. Suggested improvements in this area could well be collated after our meeting.

It should also be noted that the progress of the Warrant Officer is closely watched by the Chief Petty Officer, since they that also aspire to become Warrant Officers will naturally take a keen interest to see what attractions the new rank holds. Furthermore, should there be no significant increase in the job satisfaction, status and privileges for Warrant Officers, then we are simply going to lower the status of the Chief Petty Officer by squeezing in, the rank of "Super Chief" - and this must not be allowed to happen.

3. Job Definition

The introduction of the new rank brought its own problems as to the tasks and extra responsibilities that would be undertaken. It is clearly undesirable to build a job around the Warrant Officer, but he has to fit in somewhere.

The problem however, stems from the fact that the Warrant Officer is neither a Commissioned Officer nor a Chief Petty Officer, and yet, by the very nature of his job, he often carries out the functions of both. One gets the impression that we are being treated as 'Rates at all times - and turned on as officers, when required'. It is for this reason I feel, that there have been so many cases of early resignation over the last two years.

Finally, I believe it is important that the status of Warrant Officers should not be enhanced at the expense of the officers, especially those on the (SD) list. Norain I consider lies the root of the whole problem. The evolution of the Warrant Officer must be co-ordinated with an overhaul of the whole officer structure - the 2 problems cannot be considered in isolation.

4. Uniform

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Enough comments have been on this during the last 3 years, sufficient to say therefore - that it is still A DISASTER.

Despite the minor modification of the removal of cuff buttons (and the long awaited second Coat of Arms cuff badge !) it is still a dismal picture. One has only to see the Warrant Officer 1 in the Army, or the Warrant Officer in the RAF to see just how far we lag behind.

It is most disheartening to see their officer styled No.1 uniform, its excellent quality of material and styling and compare it to ours; the Senior Service, who can do no better than produce a "bodge up" of an existing uniform ! One would think that we are still suffering the constraints of wartime utility clothing.

5. Ceremonial/Military Command

We are all familiar with the sight of a Master-at-arms attending ceremonial divisions and carrying his sword. This custom was introduced, quite rightly, in order to show his unique position of lawful command. However, now that we are in an era of Warrant Officers who have Military Command over all other Chief Petty Officers (except the CPO MAA in his Regulating capacity), would it not be prudent to enhance the status of the Warrant Officers, especially on so formal an occasion as divisions, by allowing them the option of having a similar sword, particularly as they are often employed as Platoon Officers, or fallen in alongside the unattached officers ?

6. Pay differential

Why were those, who, on promotion to ECPO have taken from them, the 5p per day they were receiving as qualified Instructors ? This was not the case with other branches who did not have the Instructor rate. e.g. The Mechanics on promotion to ECPO, still retained their extra pay for those extra skills acquired as CPO's. Why does the ex CPO GL, RCI, TCI lose theirs on promotion ?

7. Administrative Documentation

Why are our leave record cards still administered by the Regulating Staff ? Although DCI 923/70 stated that we were subject to normal Administrative rules, it also stated that we no longer used Request Forms. It is desirable therefore, that the whole business of leave recording, addresses on leave, notification for travel warrants etc. be looked into. Is there any reason why the Mess President (presuming he is a Warrant Officer) cannot keep all the records ?

Warrant Officers should not appear on major lists (Platoon assignments, Edge Lists etc.). All such requirements should be built into directly between the sponsor and the Committee.

4. Administrative Requirements:

Warrant Officers should be given every opportunity of having separate areas for general administrative requirements in their Office quarters, Clothing Store etc..

5. Divisions:

I am appalled at the last two Mercury Temporary Hero's Divisions List. They list a Platoon as P/CPD's. This is contrary to normal practice. One would find a more formal occasion than ceremonial divisions. The list should indicate "Warrant Officers, not employed as Platoon or Section Officers, are to fall in separately, but alongside the unattached officers". Warrant Officers should never be fallen in with Chief Petty Officers.

6. List of Officers:

He used to appear in this list, but not now. Why? It is impossible for anyone to know who W2, W3, W2's, W2's, W2's, W2's, the COB in etc. etc. Furthermore, apart from ones Management Guide, no other ~~no other~~ does what, and yet we are part of the "Warrant Officers", but do not appear on my list.

Propose this be amended to include W2, together with an alphabetical list of Warrant Officers and that we appear in our right Sections within the list.

7. Use of Officers' Heads

This may sound rather trivial, but I do feel that we should be permitted the use of officers' heads and entrances. (as is the case in the majority of Naval Commands, and most Army bases.)

As an illustration - Dreadnought Block Heads. I recently had occasion to take off courses an LCDR. On completion of the usual unpleasant Divisional Officer/student talk, as to why he had failed etc. etc. I went to the heads; he was already in there and was actually in the process of repeating our conversation to his oppo's! Obviously, he immediately stopped when I entered, but I had heard enough and he knew it. The result? The two of us standing in embarrassed silence, having a Pee. I might also add, that had he been somewhat less mature, he could easily have taken it out on me - by Peeing over my left shoe!

It really boils down to 'should we, the Management, have to suffer the likely embarrassment of relicking a student one minute and sharing a piddill with him the next'?

Finally, I note that the IDO's Assistant (nice fellow that he is!) uses the Dreadnought officers heads. If a civilian Assistant can - why can't a Warrant Officer who is Divisional Officer and Course Officer for career courses, also use those?

8. The Mess.

None of the previous comments and suggestions in any way impair our own relationship with the Chief Petty Officers Mess. We are, and must, remain very much a part of it.

Donna Alderson

FROM: STAFF TITLE (if any)
(FULL NAME) (For return purposes only)

DATE:

TO: The CPO Writer, Captain's Office

REQUIREMENT FOR TRAVEL WARRANT/EXPENSE CLAIM:

- (a) * Leave Warrant
- (b) * Convertible Travel Form (Complete and attach form C28 obtainable from W/R Hall Porter)
- (c) * Duty Warrant
- (d) Expenses Claim Form (S.542)
- (e) * Converted Warrant to Family (see note 3)
(* Delete as necessary)

Method of Travel:

From:

To:

Date Warrant Required by (see note 2):

Full Reason for Journey

(Duty Warrant only)

(Vague Statements such as "DUTY"
are insufficient)

- NOTES:
1. All applications for Leave Warrants and/or convertible travel forms must be accompanied by the applicant's pay book.
 2. This form should be handed to the CPO Writer, Captain's Office at least 48 hours before the Warrant/Claim is required.
(Captain's TM 33/72 refers)
 3. If converted to family give full details of Wife/and/or Children (age of children to be stated).