

MAXIMUM HOURS FOR PART-TIME CIVIL DEFENCE WORKERS

In a circular dealing with the "freezing" of part-time members of the Civil Defence (General) Services, issued by the Ministry of Home Security to local authorities, the Minister points out that he

"appreciates that many of those who volunteered for unpaid service (some of them for the equivalent of whole-time service) devote a large amount of time to their Civil Defence duties and that they will want to continue to do so.

"He desires, however, that the recognised standard of compulsory duty should be a maximum of 48 hours in each period of four weeks, and that, in fixing hours and times of duty, full regard should continue to be paid to the employment and other day-to-day obligations of the members, and, where appropriate, to their personal circumstances.

"In particular, account should be taken of the number of hours of fire prevention duties which men concerned are liable to perform under the Fire Prevention Orders, in any prescribed period of four weeks either at business premises or under the local authority in whose area they reside.

"Local authorities are asked to scrutinise their manning arrangements and to ensure that part-time members are not employed on stand-by duties within their hours of work or in numbers in excess of those required for the efficient functioning of the Service, and that a proper roster system, which should provide ordinarily for tours of duty of not less than four hours, is maintained."

With regard to Civil Defence duty under raid conditions, principles to be applied regarding persons in employment have already been laid down, in circulars to local authorities which explain that it should be ascertained whether such persons can be released from work in emergency conditions.

It is essential that arrangements should be made to ensure the release, during or after periods of enemy attack, of those members who have then other essential duties to perform, for example, employees of public utility undertakings who are responsible for work connected with the functioning of the undertaking or of emergency repairs, and others who have specified commitments related to emergency measures.

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