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SUNDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 1943  
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CIVIL DEFENCE (GENERAL) SERVICES

OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON STAND-BY DUTY

The following statement on part-time duty in all branches of the Civil Defence (General) Services was issued by the Ministry of Home Security tonight:

The Minister recently asked Regional Commissioners to bear in mind the necessity of economising in manpower and reducing the strain of part-time Warden Service to the utmost, and consequently to emphasise the importance of avoiding unnecessary stand-by duty at the Posts. It is intended that the same principle should be applied so far as may be appropriate to all Civil Defence (General) Services.

The operational requirements of each service must, of course, be the primary consideration, and each local authority should consider carefully how they can best be met without unnecessary manning by day or night and with the least number of hours stand-by duty by part-time personnel beyond those needed for the work of the services, training or exercises.

In deciding upon the number of hours of stand-by duty required of the individual, regard should be paid to his or her normal household and industrial circumstances. In particular, hours should be adjusted so as to avoid undue strain and the loss of productive efficiency through fatigue.

On call arrangements are left to the discretion of the local authority; but whether they place personnel under a general obligation to turn out for duty whenever there is an alert or only during specified periods, they should not operate in any service to restrict ordinary social and other activities so long as personnel can be relied upon to attend at their operational post on an alert without undue delay.

The influx of part-timers, however, and the greater reliance now placed upon them makes it essential that, whatever hours of duty may be required, full use should be made of daylight or evening hours for the work of the services, training and instruction.

Rescue, Ambulance and First Aid Post Services

In many areas, and particularly in the larger cities, the part-time members of these services live at a distance from their depot or post, and, unless sleeping there, cannot be brought on duty quickly to the number necessary in an emergency. In other cases personnel can reach their operational post from their homes without any dangerous delay; but where depots are manned entirely by part-time members, it may be desirable to keep a proportion of the personnel on duty at night to ensure the rapid starting of vehicles, etc. The remainder should report for duty in accordance with the arrangements made by the local authority.

Report and Control Service

Some continuous manning is unavoidable; but, even in this service, it may not be necessary to require all the part-time members of a shift to be on duty at night, if skeleton manning can be made up rapidly by personnel living near at hand who can be relied upon to arrive within a few minutes.

Messenger Service

No stand-by duty will ordinarily be required in the Messenger Service; but there may be exceptional cases where one or two part-time members of this service may be required to stand-by at night in Report and Control Centres. Members of the uniformed Cadet Corps should not be required to do stand-by duty additional to their training.

Decontamination Service

No stand-by duty other than that needed for training and exercises is required of the Decontamination Service as such unless and until gas is used. Where members of this service undertake the duties of another service, the conditions of that service will of course be applicable to them.

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MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY