

\*120.—Quarters Armourers—Institution as a Specialization in the Seaman Branch and Royal Marines

(N.2/N. 3380/47.—9 Jan. 1948.)

*Formation and Title.*—The greater quantity and complexity of gunnery equipment on board ship has necessitated reconsideration of the personnel needed to maintain this material.

In order to achieve the requisite standard of maintenance it has been decided to introduce a new specialist qualification applicable to seamen and Royal Marines to be known as "Quarters Armourer".

The Quarters Armourers will be specially trained for the maintenance of gunnery equipment and the numbers allowed will be sufficient to carry out this work together with the normal cleaning and working duties at the various quarters.

Qualification as Quarters Armourer 3rd Class, 2nd Class and 1st Class, will be related to advancement in accordance with the pay code.

Quarters Armourers will be eligible to qualify for Gunnery Instructor. Opportunity for promotion to warrant and commissioned rank will be under the same conditions as for other seamen and Royal Marines.

2. *Duties.*—The maintenance duties to be carried out by Quarters Armourers may be summarized as follows:—

- (a) Care and maintenance, including stripping and assembly of machinery which does not require a high degree of fitting skill. Making preparations for, and assisting with, the work carried out by artificers.
- (b) Adjustments of guns, gun mounting machinery and instruments.
- (c) Locating and making good simple defects and breakdowns.
- (d) Minor repair work *in situ*. The preparation for, and assistance with, the stripping of damaged machinery and assistance with workshop repairs.
- (e) Assisting the officer responsible in the custody, accounting and maintenance of gunnery stores and spare gear.
- (f) Cleanliness of equipment in associated quarters.

3. By undertaking these duties the Quarters Armourer will relieve the Ordnance Artificer of certain of the maintenance work he now undertakes. It is intended that comprehensive training, combined with experience should result in a high standard of technical ability. The work should prove congenial to men possessing an aptitude for mechanical work and should provide qualifications which will be of value later in civil life.

4. At action stations, the Quarters Armourers, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Class, will be required to carry out the duties shown for them in Appendix II, Part I, replacing an equal number of the Petty Officers (other), Quarters Ratings, 2nd Class, Quarters Ratings, 3rd Class, and other ratings at present allowed for such duties. As far as practicable, replacement is to be made on a grade for grade basis.

5. *Complements.*—Full details of the amendments to Schemes of Complement resulting from the introduction of the Quarters Armourer will be promulgated in due course. Until higher ratings become available, ratings with lower qualifications must be accepted in their place.

6. *Badges.*—The badge of the Quarters Armourer will be the same as that of other gunnery ratings, but with the letters "Q.A." beneath.

7. *Qualifications and Syllabus.*—The qualifications and training syllabus for Quarters Armourer of all classes are given in the Appendices II and III to this Order.

8. *Introduction of the Branch.*—(a) *Transfer of Q.Os.*—The qualifications of the Q.A.3 to carry out the duties outlined in paragraph 2 are higher than those of the Q.O., and it will not therefore be possible for Q.Os. to transfer direct to Q.A.3.

On the receipt of this Order all Q.Os. may, if recommended, be transferred to the rating of Q.A.3 (U). The suffix "U" will be used to denote that the rating has not undertaken the full qualifying course for Q.A.3 in the gunnery schools and mechanical training establishments.

Any Q.O. not recommended or who does not wish to transfer to Q.A.3 (U) is to be transferred to Q.R.3. The rating of Q.O. is, therefore, to lapse on the promulgation of this Order.

(b) *Training at Sea.*—It has been decided to introduce a system whereby ratings (other than Q.Os.) who are recommended can be partially trained at sea. The syllabus of instruction for these ratings is given in Appendix III. Successful candidates may be rated Q.A.3 (U), but will subsequently be required to undertake the final course for Q.A.3 ashore.

The shortage of manpower will limit the progress which can be made in building up the Quarters Armourer Branch, and it is essential that the training of Q.A.3s (U) should be given a high priority in sea-going ships. Admiralty General Message 598A timed 061920A of October 1947, will be revised accordingly.

(c) *Transfer of Gunnery Ratings, 3rd Class.*—In order to include men with mechanical aptitude who have already obtained 3rd class gunnery qualifications, it has been decided that Q.R.3s, L.R.3s and A.A.3s, may be accepted for training as Q.A.3 ashore or Q.A.3 (U) afloat.

(d) In order to include men with mechanical aptitude who have already obtained 2nd class gunnery qualifications, it has been decided that Q.R.2a and L.R.2a may be accepted for training as Q.A.2.

9. *Reports.*—As soon as possible after the receipt of this Order, Commanding Officers are to furnish reports to the Commodores of Depots and Major General, Royal Marines, Portsmouth, for Royal Marines, stating the names and particulars of existing Q.Os. who have been accepted for transfer to the Q.A. Branch, and have been rated Q.A.3 (U), or have been rated Q.R.3 under the terms of paragraph 8 (a) of this Order.

Forms 8.1303 for Seamen and Royal Marines recommended for the Quarters Armourer Branch are to be rendered in the normal manner.

10. *Selection of Ratings for the Q.A. Branch.*—When recommending ratings and other ranks, R.M., who volunteer for the Quarters Armourer, Commanding Officers are to ensure as far as possible that they possess the necessary mechanical aptitude. Neglect of this point may lead to an unduly high percentage of failures on completion of the training.

#### 11. *List of Appendices.*

- Appendix I. Conditions of Qualification and Training in the Q.A. Branch.
- \*Appendix II. Training Courses carried out in Gunnery Schools and Mechanical Training Establishments.
- \*Appendix III. Training Courses carried out at Sea.

\* Not included in Notice Board issues