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Defence Council Instructions

Royal Navy

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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Introduction

1. The Admiralty Board has approved the complete amalgamation of the existing RN Cook and Catering sub-branches from 1 Apr 96. The single amalgamated sub-branch will be called the Catering Sub-Branch. This DCI covers the transitional arrangements for the amalgamation and the re-titling of all rates within the Catering sub-branch.

Background

2. The RN Cook and Catering Accountant sub-branches were amalgamated at Junior Rate level in 1986. There is now a need to extend that amalgamation to the Senior Rate level to fulfil the lean-manning requirement in new ships, where there is only one billet for a Senior Rate Cook/Caterer who, as the 'food services manager', needs skill and knowledge both of cookery and of catering accounting. Training at all levels within the sub-branch will support the need to develop the *fully cross-trained food services manager*.

3. Additionally the amalgamation has proved necessary to allow tighter management of the sub-branch structure. Currently, a Leading Cook entering the Service after 1986 can choose the direction of his/her career either as a Petty Officer Cook or Petty Officer Caterer, thereafter under-utilising the bulk of his/her craft or accounting skills in the sub-branch that is rejected; there is no enforcement either way. Increasingly this inability to manage the sub-branch properly is causing significant structural problems as overall numbers decrease and is depriving management of much of its ability to man ships efficiently.

4. By providing complete flexibility of employment, at all levels, the new Catering sub-branch will be a better trained and more professional cadre for the future, with a structure able to survive the rigours of change.

Titles and Badges

5. From 1 Apr 96 Junior Rates will cease to be called Cooks and will become 'Chefs'. This title change is designed to reflect an increased professional knowledge in cooking and catering skills beyond that expected of a cook; it also recognizes that in future the key craft skill in Units will be at the Leading Rate level, rather than the Senior Rate. At the same time all Senior Rates will be called 'Caterers'. Detailed Relative Rate Tables and Sub-Branch Titles are at ANNEX A.

6. From 1 Apr 96 only the following sub-branch badges are to be worn:

- a. *Junior Rates*. Junior Rate Chefs will wear the existing 'C' badge.
- b. *Senior Rates*. Senior Rate Cooks are to remove their 'CK' badge and replace it with the existing 'CA' badge. Senior Rate Caterers in the Service on 1 Apr 96 will retain their existing badges.

- c. *Stars.* The first star will be awarded when rated Chef 1st Class, and the second on successful completion of the PE for LCH.
- d. *Crowns.* The crown will be awarded on successful completion of the POCAQC. Ratings who were awarded the crown on completion of the FE, and have not subsequently taken the PE for POCA, may exceptionally retain the crown.

Employment, Training and Examinations

7. The new sub-branch structures become effective from 1 Apr 96: detailed transitional arrangements for all stages of career development are at ANNEX B and a summary of examination dates is at APPENDIX 1 to ANNEX B. The revised BR 1066 Advancement Flow Diagram is at ANNEX C.

8. Key employment and training features in the new Catering sub-branch will include the following:

- a. *Junior Rates.* At the Junior Rate level there will continue to be a strong bias towards cookery craft skills while retaining involvement in provisions accounting and management of stock. At Leading Rate level there will be a greater involvement with the mechanics of accounting: accordingly, the content of the PE for Leading Rate will remain largely unchanged. Six months cookery experience and six months catering experience, either ashore or at sea, at Able Rate level and again at Leading Rate will become a prerequisite for advancement both to Leading Rate and Petty Officer respectively. The new Catering Employment Record (S1246F(A)), recently distributed to all Units, will record the experience and time gained by a Junior Rate in each discipline. Separate instructions on the use and retention of this form have been forwarded by Command Catering staff. A copy is at APPENDIX 1 to ANNEX C.
- b. *Senior Rates.* Senior Rates will require the expertise to cover the wider aspects of food services management, from procurement, through production, to accounting, endurance and management of statutory requirements.
- c. *Training.* While the Leading Chef Qualifying Course (LCHQC) and the Petty Officer Caterer Qualifying Course (POCAQC) will remain the principle professional advancement courses, some Senior Rates who were Cook specialists before 1 Apr 96, may be required to undertake an additional Senior Rate Catering Acquaint Course (SRCAC). This Acquaint concentrates on accounting, calculating endurances and stock control and is designed for those ex-CK specialists who are about to be drafted to a billet which requires broader catering knowledge (e.g. Type 23s). Only those SRs who have more than three years to serve on completion of the course will be considered for cross-training. It should be noted that the needs of the Service will dictate the number of Senior Rates nominated to attend the SRCAC.