

256. INTRODUCTION OF A NEW COMPLEMENT FOR THE BUGLER SECTION.

General

1. The complement of the Buglers Section is being reorganised to bring it into line with the future requirements of the Band Service, with which the Section is primarily associated. In doing so, it has been decided that the Section must be reduced in strength with the rest of the Corps and the most effective use made of its remaining strength. Bugler ranks will in future be complemented to serve mainly with RM Bands, thus ensuring that their value is concentrated to the best effect.

Buglers in Ships, Commandos and Establishments

2. Buglers will be withdrawn gradually from all commandos and ships, except aircraft carriers, which are due to phase out by 1973. Thereafter Buglers required for specific occasions or periods in ships or commandos will be loaned from the bands of C-in-C Western Fleet, 3rd Commando Brigade or the appropriate Flag Officer or Group in UK. The temporary overbearings at present authorised will be progressively reduced.

3. Buglers in RN and RM training establishments will also be withdrawn, except that buglers complemented with RM Bands will remain, as will the Bugler Instructors at RMSM and HMS GANGES.

Bugler Complements with Bands

4. In order to provide the most effective and balanced Corps of Drums with each band, particularly those with the new standard size of 25 Band Ranks, bugler complements are being adjusted as the Band Redeployment Plan is implemented. These will allow about thirteen bugler ranks for the larger bands and seven for the standard bands, both figures including provision for Drum Majors.

Drum Majors

5. In order that all Drum Majors may in future be properly complemented, they will be included amongst the complement of bugler ranks in bands. However, the present practice of also selecting Drum Majors from among General Duty and Band Service NCOs may be continued; when this occurs, a Bugler NCO of equivalent rank will be drafted to a general administrative post elsewhere in the Corps.

6. There will be a Bugler QMS and a Bugler Colour Sergeant on the complement of each of the bands of C-in-C Western Fleet and Portsmouth Group. One will be appointed Drum Major and the other Bugle Major, depending on suitability. The RMSM Staff Band's complement will include a Bugler Colour Sergeant as Drum Major in addition to the Corps Bugle Major at RMSM. There will be a Bugler Sergeant and a Bugler Corporal complemented to each of the standard bands, one of whom will act as Drum Major, when so required, but he will not hold the full appointment of Drum Major.

7. Although provision has been made for GD or Band Service NCOs filling these appointments on an exchange basis with the Bugler Section, it is anticipated that the majority of Drum Majors, including those in standard bands, will come from the Bugler Section. Therefore the B2's course will in future include a large element of instruction in Drum Major's duties. Results of this course will be the basis on which initial selection for Drum Major's duties will be decided in the standard bands.

8. The appointment of Drum Majors to the large bands will continue as in RMI Appendix 8/4 except that promotion to QMS will not be held to bar a SNCO from holding the appointment. On the contrary, for Drum Majors of large bands, who also act as Band Company Sergeant Major, this is held to be a suitable rank for the appointment.

9. It is probable that the Drum Majors Course as laid down in RMI Appendix 8/5 will need revising in due course, to take into account the experience which Bugler NCOs, as the main source of Drum Majors, will have acquired on the B2 Course and in standard bands.

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Badges of Rank

10. The badges of rank of SNCOs holding the appointments of Drum Major and Bugle Major will be as at present. Bugler QMSs and Bugler Colour Sergeants not holding either of these appointments will wear the normal badge for that rank with, in the case of Bugler Colour Sergeants only, the Bugler Branch Badge on the lower right sleeve in the appropriate orders of dress.

Promotion Prospects

11. The effect of the above changes will be to improve greatly the promotion prospects within the Bugler Section. The new complement will give a NCO structure similar to those of most other Sections of the Technical Branch and certainly more in line with the rest of the Corps.

Command Courses

12. Although the Bugler Section will serve more with bands than before, they will still perform Corps duties elsewhere. Therefore the present arrangements, by which buglers attend the Junior Command Course and Senior Command Course (Technical) to qualify for promotion, will continue.

Amendments of Regulations

13. RMIs will be amended in due course.