TEL. No.: VICtoria 443.

Any communication on the subject of this letter should be addressed to:—

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,
HOME OFFICE, (FIRE BRIGADES DIVISION),
CLELAND HOUSE,
PAGE STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1.

and the following number quoted:—

HOME OFFICE,
CLELAND HOUSE,
PAGE STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1.

26th June, 1940.

F.B.Gen.289/1.

Sir,

Professional Firemen blinded as a result of Enemy Action - Facilities for Treatment at St. Dunstan's.

F.B. Circular No. 87/1940.

1. I am directed by the Secretary of State to bring to the notice of the fire authority a generous offer which he has received from St. Dunstan's to extend to any permanent whole-time members of regular fire brigades (i.e. professional firemen) who may be blinded as a result of enemy action the facilities of St. Dunstan's for re-habilitation, re-education and after-care on the same conditions as in the case of blinded members of the fighting services.

2. Under the Emergency Hospital Scheme the Minister of Health has made financial arrangements with St. Dunstan's to undertake the hospital treatment of civilian adults blinded as a result of enemy action; and the welfare of these persons after their discharge from hospital (including re-habilitation and re-education) will be a matter for the County and County Borough Councils to provide for under the Blind Persons Acts either directly or through the agency of the ordinary voluntary organisations.

3. Professional firemen will be dealt with in the same way as other civilians during the period of hospital treatment at St. Dunstan's and the same provision will be available for their welfare after discharge. The offer now made by St. Dunstan's will, however, enable these firemen on the termination of their hospital treatment to avail themselves if they so desire of the facilities provided by that organisation instead of the corresponding ones provided under arrangements of the local authorities.

The Clerk to the London County Council,
The Town Clerk,
The Clerk to the Council.

4. The offer made by St. Dunstan's will apply in all cases of blindness due to enemy action, irrespective of whether the injury causing blindness is incurred on duty. It will not apply to part-time members of regular fire brigades (whether or not they have been temporarily engaged for whole-time paid service during the war) nor to members of the Auxiliary Fire Service: these classes of personnel will be dealt with in the same way as civilians generally.

5. It is important that any case of blindness or where there is any risk of blindness, whatever the circumstances in which the injury was incurred; and in the case both of regular firemen (whether professional firemen or not) and of members of the Auxiliary Fire Service should be reported immediately to the Medical Officer of Health, so that there may be no delay in taking the appropriate measures; and St. Dunstan's have asked that where a professional fireman is sent to them for hospital treatment under the above mentioned arrangements, separate notification should be sent to the Secretary, St. Dunstan's, Portland Place, Brighton 7, of the fact that he is a professional fireman, in order to ensure that he is given the opportunity of taking advantage of their offer.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

R. MacDougall

Issued to all fire authorities in England and Wales.

Copies sent for information to Chief Officers of Fire Brigades, and Chief Constables in England and Wales.