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

THE SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY,
HORSEFERRY HOUSE,
THORNEY STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1,

and the following reference quoted:—

H.S.C. 161/40.

J.1.

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY,
HORSEFERRY HOUSE,
THORNEY STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1.

6th July, 1940.

Sir,

Home Security Circular No. 161/1940.

F.F. Circular No. 99/1940.

Scottish Home Department Fire Brigades Division

Circular No. L.117/40.

Provision of Food for Personnel of Civil
Defence Services.

1. I am directed by the Minister of Home Security after consultation with the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Minister of Health to refer to paragraph 14 of Home Security Circular No. 58/1940 of the 18th April, 1940, which promised a further Circular dealing with the question of meals and refreshments for volunteers. Importance is attached to a clear recognition of the two main principles which govern this question as related to paid and unpaid personnel respectively, viz:—

(i) Paid Personnel. Normally it is reasonable to expect personnel to provide their meals at their own expense, but special considerations apply where in order to facilitate the organisation of the Services volunteers are required to undertake spells of duty which entail continuous absence from home for substantially longer periods than occur in ordinary working life. Where a Civil Defence Volunteer is kept on continuous duty for 12 hours or more it is recognised that he may be put to extra difficulty or exceptional expense in connection with meals. The object of the provision of free meals by local authorities is to assist in meeting such difficulty or expense, and not to provide free meals as an emolument attaching to paid membership of the Civil Defence Services in addition to pay.

(ii) Unpaid Personnel. The Minister accepts the principle that in general unpaid volunteers should not, as the result of duties which they are required to undertake, be put to additional expense.

The Clerk of the County Council,
The County Clerk,
The Town Clerk,
The Clerk of the District Council.

2. On the basis of the above general principles, and after consideration of the representations made to him on the subject, the Minister has decided upon the following modifications and extensions of the authorities previously given for the provision of free meals and refreshments by F.B. Circular No. 53/1939 dated 2nd September and A.R.P. Circular No. 228/1939 dated 3rd September 1939. It will remain for each scheme-making authority to determine by reference to local circumstances what arrangements should be approved in particular cases within the general limits indicated by the Department.

A. Paid Personnel.

3. Paragraph 4 of Home Security Circular No. 34/1940 of the 27th February, 1940, stated that free meals were intended to meet the case of personnel who might not be in a position either to bring their own food with them or to go home for it. The Minister understands that some local authorities have read this to mean that free meals should not be supplied except in the event of air raids or other emergency. Discretion in the matter is left to local authorities, but the Minister did not intend that so limited a construction should necessarily be placed upon the paragraph in question, particularly, for example, where personnel cannot conveniently be released from their depots during their duty shift either to go home or to avail themselves of other normal outside facilities, or where there are not adequate facilities available within the depots for personnel who bring food with them. The Minister would not object to an arrangement made by a local authority allowing short breaks within the normal duty spell for the purpose of obtaining meals, provided that the periods of absence are strictly limited in length and properly organized on a rota system, so that an appropriate nucleus staff remains available at all times at the depot.

4. The considerations which apply to the provision of one free meal for volunteers who do a shift of not less than 12 hours continuous duty do not apply to both periods of 12 hours comprising a 24-hour shift and accordingly no provision is made for a second free meal where the services are organized in such shifts. Where, however, it exceptionally happens that personnel are engaged on continuous duty in their home area for periods exceeding one day, and are unable to obtain their meals at home, meals may be provided as necessary at a cost not exceeding 1/6 in each subsequent 24 hours of the continuous duty period. (Note: Arrangements in respect of meals during prolonged spells of duty away from the home area are dealt with in Home Security Circular No. 87/1940 and F.B. Circular No. 56/1940 relating to reinforcement operations).

5. There has been some uncertainty whether the authority to provide a free meal for personnel doing a 12-hour spell of duty was intended to apply to paid wardens as well as to personnel at depots. It is to be expected that wardens will be serving at posts in the vicinity of their homes so that there should be no difficulty about making arrangements to enable them to take their meals at home.

B. Unpaid Personnel.

6. Unpaid volunteers also may by reason of their air raid precautions duty be put to extra expense in obtaining meals and refreshments which they would otherwise take at home. In many instances the volunteers themselves are able and willing to organize their own facilities without expense to public funds and are successfully doing so. It is proper that such endeavours should be encouraged. But this arrangement is not practicable in all cases and the Minister is prepared to recognise for grant expenditure incurred by local authorities in providing:-

- (a) light refreshments for unpaid volunteers whose stand-by duty spell is not less than 4 hours or who report on an air raid warning and are required to remain on duty for a period of not less than two hours - at a cost in either case not exceeding 6d. per head; and
- (b) meals for unpaid volunteers who do a necessary turn of duty of not less than 12 hours, or a complete night's duty of approximately 12 hours -- at a cost not exceeding 1/- per head.

In both cases payment of grant will be conditional upon provision being limited to the numbers of personnel who (i) are required to be on stand-by duty in order to ensure the efficient functioning of the civil defence services, or (ii) report on an air raid warning and are required to remain on duty for the period stated. This arrangement may be extended to members of a local authority's staff who undertake turns of duty as part-time unpaid volunteers in control and report centres.

7. These arrangements will not extend to attendance at training or exercises as distinct from actual stand-by duty. If however, it is necessary exceptionally to retain unpaid volunteers on duty for spells of more than 4 hours in connection with combined exercises the Minister will be prepared to recognize expenditure on a similar scale to cover the provision of light refreshments or haversack rations, as may be appropriate, subject to the prior approval of the Regional Officer in each instance.

C. General.

8. In respect of both paid and unpaid personnel the figures of cost quoted for authorised free meals or refreshments need not include overhead charges. Every possible effort should be made to organise the arrangements by the volunteers themselves or with the assistance of the W.V.S., in order to minimize overhead expenses.

9. The Minister is not prepared to recognize the payment of cash allowances to volunteers in lieu of the free meals and refreshments now authorized, and where it is necessary to adopt a voucher system the requirements of paragraph 4 of Home Security Circular No. 34/1940 must be observed. Subject to this, reasonable expenditure incurred by local authorities in giving effect to this Circular may be included in the claim for grant. Some authorities

have already incurred expenditure in the provision of refreshments for part-time volunteers and Regional Commissioners are authorized to consider in particular cases the possibility of retrospective approval within the limits laid down.

10. An additional copy of this Circular is forwarded to each local authority for the information of the Chief Financial Officer.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

H. E. Emmelsson.

Issued to all general and fire scheme-making authorities in England, Wales and Scotland,

Copies sent for information to all other local authorities and to Chief Officers of Police, in England, Wales and Scotland, to Chief Officers of Fire Brigades in England and Wales, and to Firemasters in Scotland.

GEN.504.