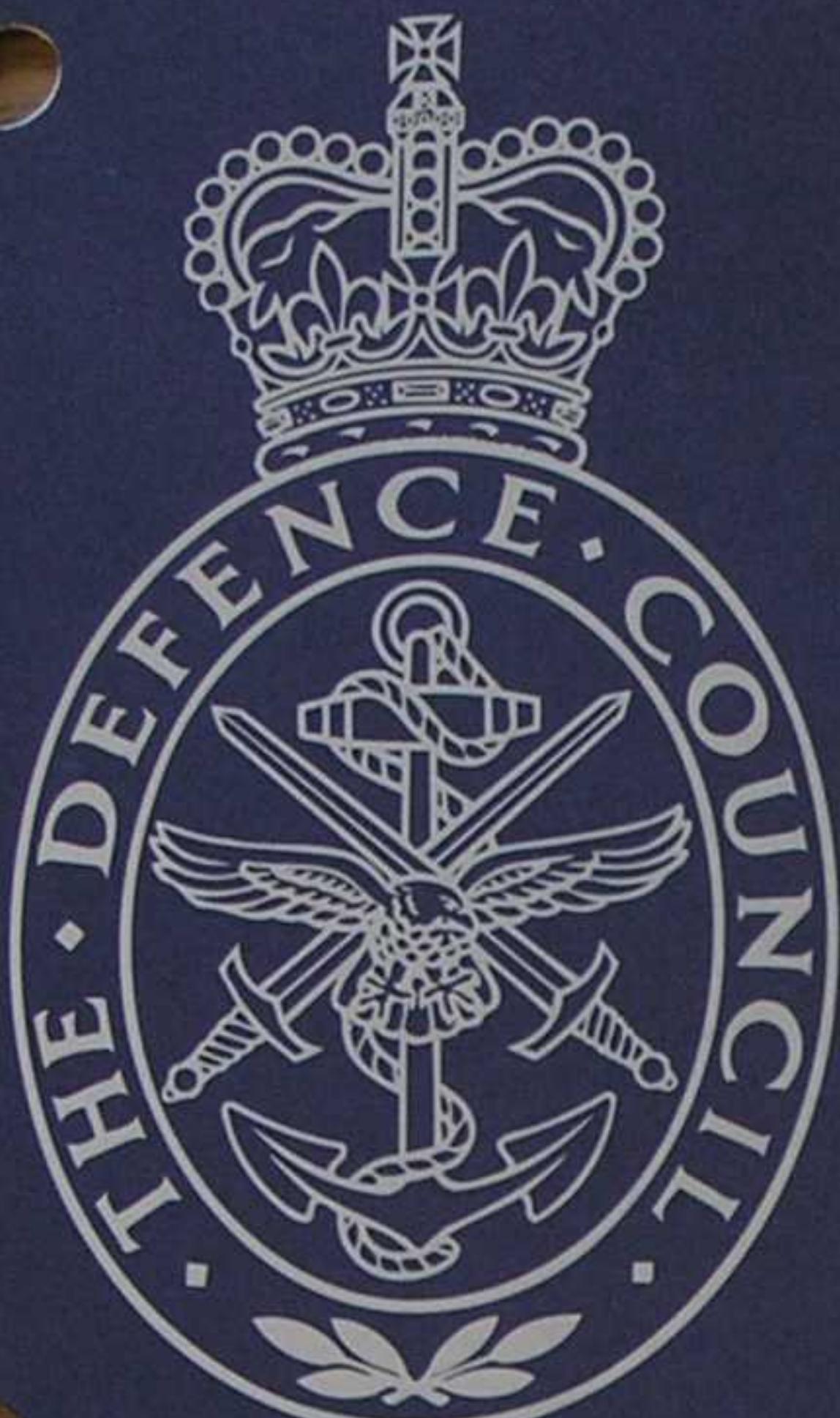


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# Defence Council Instructions Royal Navy

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Reference: RNTM 152/03 - Introduction of the New Warfare Branch Specialisation OM(HM)

## Introduction

1. This DCI announces the creation of a new specialisation within the Warfare Branch (WB), namely the Operator Mechanic (Hydrographic, Meteorological and Oceanographic) (OM(HM)). The new specialisation will eventually subsume the capabilities of the current OM Survey Recorder (OM(SR)) and Naval Airman Meteorological & Oceanographic (NA (METOC)) specialisations (henceforth known as the source specialisations). However, it has been recognised that the source specialisations should co-exist alongside the OM(HM) for some time to come, maintaining individuals' present career patterns and conditions of service. The source specialisations are key in maintaining and delivering Operational Capability over the coming years as the OM(HM) rating cadre grows. The first HM specialisation ratings will join HMS *Raleigh* for Phase I training in March 2004, with their first experience of sea service in September 2004. Recruitment into the source specialisations will cease from January 2004.

## Background

2. The new OM(HM) specialisation has been created to reflect the evolving nature of environmental support required by the Command. Modern Expeditionary Warfare, with the emphasis on joint operations needing a broader range of environmental advice, is already drawing SR and METOC skills together. The use of Digital Technology and Information Systems will further increase in the future and, with some of the skill sets of the source specialisations, will adapt and evolve accordingly. As the prime customer, FLEET N7HM has drawn up a new set of skills which could be held by one individual. A Maritime Warfare School (MWS) led Extraordinary Course Changes Working Group (ECCWG), and latterly an HM Implementation Steering Group (HMISG), have taken this work forward and developed the new specialisation, together with the training solution based on the modified customer requirement. The new HM specialisation will take time to grow through the rank structure but is expected to be fully integrated by 2014, by which time new technology will be embedded into the Royal Navy. Source specialisations will continue to deliver an important role, noting their long term employment will be more localised along their extant areas of expertise; importantly their future is secure alongside the OM(HM) and they will be fundamental in the delivery of overall HM Operational Capability as the new specialisation grows.

## Way Ahead

3. HM ratings will be part of the Warfare Branch (WB), wearing the standard WB badge with the lettering HM underneath. Recruitment will be by direct entry. MWS HM Training Group (HMTG) at HMS *Drake* will conduct all professional Phase II HM training and manage the HM training pipeline. Following Phase II training, the ratings will join the Fleet as OM(HM)2s to achieve their Operational Performance Statement (OPS). These OM(HM)2 billets will be transferred from existing OM(SR)2 Scheme of Complement (SOC) lines<sup>1</sup>, with a modified Job Description (JD) reflecting the newly acquired meteorological observer capability. The length of this First Sea Draft (FSD) will vary, typically 6- 12 months, to be followed by task specific training delivered as a Targeted Employment Module (TEM) prior to their next job.

4. FLEET N7 has initiated a JD review of all current OM(SR)1 and NA(METOC) billets. In parallel with the modification of these JDs, their respective SOC lines will be changed to OM(HM) 1 billets in three phases<sup>2</sup>, in each instance with a second line of either OM(SR)1 or NA(METOC). OM(HM)1s, with a short TEM in most cases, will be capable of filling the entire range of current SR and METOC billets and therefore will enjoy a much more flexible and varied career.

5. The framework for the Leading Operator Mechanic HM (LOM(HM)) has been developed (including a provisional OPS and a probable training solution) but further refinement is required. FLEET N7HM will be reviewing all LOM(SR) and Leading Airmen METOC (LA(METOC)) billets over the next two years<sup>3</sup>. This Review will take account of the changing emphasis on environmental issues and the installation of new technology. All billets will then change to LOM(HM)<sup>4</sup>, with a second SOC line stating either LOM(SR) or LA(METOC). However, second and subsequent LOM drafts may stream the LOM either towards the role of a forecaster or surveyor, with the recognised skills of LOM(SR)s and LA(METOC)s remaining fully

<sup>1</sup> A small number of additional OM(HM)2 billets are being sourced from organic OM(W) SOC lines.

<sup>2</sup> Phase I - April 2004; Phase 2 - January 2005; Phase 3 - January 2006.

<sup>3</sup> At least one year in advance of the first OM(HM) being ready for promotion to LOM.

<sup>4</sup> An incremental SOC progression is expected, similar to the OM(HM) I SOC amendment.

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employed during this period. The training packages for LOM(HM) are under development and being steered by the LOM Review, with all training conducted at HMTG. It is expected that there will be a generic LOM(HM) course of about four weeks supplemented by TEMs of variable length depending on the first LOM billet, reflecting meteorological or hydrographic skill sets respectively. A further oceanographic TEM will be offered to those ratings drafted to platforms with an Anti Submarine Warfare capability. Completion of these TEMs will be determined by requirement but it is likely that only a small number of the brightest ratings will complete both TEM pipelines, providing a potential mechanism for future Senior Upper Yardman extraction.

6. An abbreviated time line for new OM(HM) entrants is as follows:

- March 2004. Commence Phase I training at HMS *Raleigh*.
- May 2004. Commence Phase II training, comprising two-week Seamanship training (HMS *Raleigh*), 3-week Mechanic module (basic electrical safety, fault diagnosis and key skills) (MWS *Collingwood*), 8-week generic HM module (HMTG - HMS *Drake*), finally 2-week common FSD training (Basic Sea Survival Course, Small Arms/Ship Protection Course).
- September 2004. Join either the Ice Patrol Vessel or a Survey Vessel for FSD, when all their skills will be consolidated by the platform, using a task book to achieve OPS as OM(HM)2.
- March 2005. First OM(HM)2s should achieve OPS and be rated OM(HM) 1. They will then move to HM1 billets (completing a TEM at HMTG as required) in either Hydrographic Survey Squadron (HSS) pools or Typed Air Station (TAS) or Fleet Weather & Oceanographic Centre (FWOC).
- From April 2005. The ratings will move among the OM(HM) 1 billets to build experience prior to selection LOM(HM).
- April 2007. Commence LOM(HM) training pipeline (end of LA(METOC)/LOM(SR) training pipelines).

7. The current LOM(SR) and LA(METOC) courses will continue in their present format and frequency until April 2007, thereafter being replaced by the new LOM(HM) courses. In the event that Leading Hands of either source specialisation have not completed their predetermined career courses in this rate, they will be dovetailed onto the new courses in accordance with their original skill sets. The option to complete the generic module will be determined by Service requirement and limited by resources at HMTG. This will constitute the preferred way ahead, although it will not result in any rebadging of any such individuals

8. Initially, there is no requirement to cross-train those in the source specialisations and it is anticipated this will remain the situation.<sup>5</sup> Individuals employed in source specialisations will continue to enjoy their current promotional aspirations and service conditions and their employment will be unaffected for at least the first five years, probably longer, depending on their rate and seniority. Senior ratings will be unaffected; the expectation is that junior ratings will progress within their source rate structures towards higher rate. One of the key targets of the ECCWG and the HMISG was to remain retention positive; as such, the ratings' terms and conditions of service (TCOS) will be preserved, thereby avoiding any negative impact.

9. Whilst the ECCWG was tasked with developing a solution for junior ratings, it was recognised as impractical to consider this in isolation. One of the early conclusions (based on assumptions of current tasking) is that a degree of specialisation is inevitable and most likely at the senior rate level. Whilst only the junior rating billets will be changed to OM(HM) initially, new initiatives from the Equipment Capability area are expected to increase HM employment at the senior rate level within ten years. Until that time, the skills of the source specialisations will be essential to meet the needs of FLEET. It is likely that the new Petty Officer (HM) will need to bias towards experience in either meteorology or surveying if he is to build the skills required for the Chief Petty Officer (HM) and Warrant Officer (HM) billets, strongly suggesting that the new specialisation will develop along separate career paths at and above this level. This will allow the source specialisations secure employment and assist with retaining the essential deeper skills in the medium term.

**OM(HM) Career Structure**

10. The career structure of the OM(HM) will be laid out in BR1066 Chapter 15 (Change 16 onwards). In outline, ratings will join by direct entry into the specialisation and be designated OM(HM)2 at the commencement of their Phase I training at HMS *Raleigh*. Advancement to OM(HM)1 will follow on completion of their Task Books and a minimum of one year as an OM(HM)2. This will be around the period when their FSD is completed and they return to HMTG for additional TEM training, prior to moving into more specialised areas of employment, including service at the TAS, returning to the HSS or service at FWOC. Follow on drafts will then be part of larger TopMast pools which will also contain the source specialisation. There will be no enforcement to ensure that each OM(HM) completes the extremes of employment, with some individuals inevitably gaining a limited degree of specialisation even at this junior stage, whilst others receive a more balanced spectrum of employment. Importantly, however, at this junior level, exposure to a wide range of employment is less important with most of the tasks being under some form of supervision.

11. In branch management terms, the new specialisation will see a steady migration of NA (METOC) manpower from the current Fleet Air Arm plot into the General Arm of the WB. Such ratings are currently managed by DNLM/BMXAV and drafted by CND/D3A. BMXAVs will continue to manage the diminishing METOC plot and D3A will retain drafting responsibility although, in the case of Leading Hands, this will be reviewed in 2007 with the advent of the LOM(HM). SR ratings, who are already part of the WB, are managed by DNLM/BMXR and drafted by CND/D1A; these desks will continue to administer this group together with the evolving OM(HM) plot. For coherence, D1A will assume NA(METOC) drafting responsibility from April 2004, with D3A retaining an advisory function. One aspect of the multi-skilled OM(HM) that will require careful consideration is the drafting process; this will need to take account of the developing skill mix (both professional HM and mechanical) and be more akin to appointing.

12. This is a forward looking initiative to develop a new specialisation for future evolution, adding to the respective skill sets of two well established specialisations. The framework has been developed based on TopMast principles and will be adaptable to future change in the WB. The OM(HM) will be more versatile and employable in a far wider range of drafts than either of the source specialisations and will continue to provide both generic and specific warfare support to FLEET across the whole environmental field.

**Publications and Documentation**

13. A copy of this DCI is to be kept inside the front cover of BR1066 until the next formal amendment to the publication.