

MEMORANDUM FOR D.C.N.P.

Subject: The position of Leading Seamen
H.S.D's in Escorts.

With reference to your minute, I would like to have been in on the discussions. The past history in this connection is as follows:

The A/S school under White and Russell recommended H.S.D's be left clear of encumbrances to tend to asdic requirements in escorts, which are:

- (a) Supervision of operators (instruction).
- (b) Supervision of equipment (maintenance routines, emergency repairs).
- (c) Daily operation to keep his hand and ear in.
- (d) Asdic operator when in contact with the enemy.

2. It is not considered desirable that the H.S.D. of an escort be made to fill two key positions taking into consideration that the whole purpose of an escort being in existence is to kill submarines.

3. It is appreciated that during a ship's existence the percentage of time in contact with the enemy is very small, but nevertheless the following factors must be considered:

- (a) The majority of attacks have occurred at night.
- (b) H.S.D's are frequently closed up for periods as long as four hours or more.
- (c) Asdic sets do break down and will continue to do so.
- (d) Escorts will continue to be given a percentage of new operators.

4. I am strongly in favour of organizing on the basis of leaving H.S.D's free to carry out their duties as such and not making a routine of his job as a leading seaman, i.e. being placed in charge of a watch. There is no reason why he should not carry out leading hand's duties under circumstances which would leave him free to carry out his A/S duties.

5. Special emphasis must be placed on the headaches awaiting the ships in the new Asdic equipment that is being given them. This equipment will entail very much closer watch on new operators as well as more time being taken up in maintenance.

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