



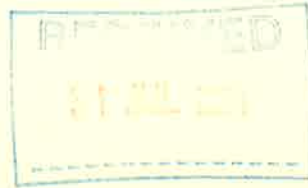
Ministry  
of Defence

THE RT HON MARK FRANCOIS MP  
MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
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MSU/4/4/3/1/is



27 July 2014

*Dear Mr Ridley,*

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 2 June 2014 following the inquest into the tragic deaths of Private Dean Hutchinson and Private Robert Wood. The Ministry of Defence takes its relationship with HM Coroners extremely seriously and we fully recognise how important it is that we learn all possible lessons to ensure that deaths in similar circumstances in the future are prevented.

In response to your first two concerns, the Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation (DFRMO) Fire Diary has been amended to make it clear that the advice of a competent fire risk assessor must be sought before any changes take place within a premise or if there is a suspicion that the fire risk assessment is no longer valid; and to provide additional guidance and advice on the risks of electrical overloading including the need to contact a competent electrician if there are concerns. The revised Fire Diary is enclosed for your information. The Fire Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) course content has also been amended and now allocates more time and emphasis on the fire risks associated with electrical overloading. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation delivered on this course is also enclosed for your information.

Your third concern has been addressed as part of the ongoing review of the DFRMO Fire Risk Assessment template. The template has been updated to further emphasise the need to record if any sleeping is taking place on the premises regardless of its primary purpose. The review is not yet complete but I have attached the latest draft with the changes highlighted for your information. The revised version is planned to be implemented by the end of October 2014.

In response to your fourth concern, the Army plans to use this incident as an example of what happens when 'duties' are not conducted in the correct way. This will include, as part of the biannual command, leadership and management (CLM) training update, an amendment to the training documentation related to the duties of a sub-unit duty NCO to incorporate this incident as an example. The revised documentation will be used by training deliverers from 30 September 2014 onwards.

Mr D Ridley  
H M Senior Coroner for Wiltshire and Swindon  
26 Endless Street  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire  
SP1 1 DP

You should note that while the above action in relation to the fire risk assessment template is applicable across Defence, the matters relating to the Fire Diary only apply to the Army. The other Services do not use the DFRMO Fire Diary; all fire safety related information is contained in Unit Stations Standing Orders, Fire Orders, Standard operating Procedures and Fire Notices. DFRMO has written to all Top Level Budget<sup>1</sup> Chief Environment and Safety Officers to inform them of actions DFRMO has taken in response to your concerns and to make them aware of the need to implement any necessary changes and update the relevant documentation.

A Defence Instruction or Notice<sup>2</sup> has also been published covering these issues and the action that is required to address them, to ensure that the matters receive the widest distribution and any gaps in distribution are covered. This was published earlier this month; I enclose a copy for your information.

I hope this letter provides the assurance you were seeking and I am content for you to copy it to other Interested Persons and the Chief Coroner.

*yours ever,*



**THE RT HON MARK FRANCOIS MP**

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<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Defence is organised into six Top Level Budget areas: Head Office and Corporate Services, the four commands (Navy Command, Army Command, Air Command, and Joint Forces Command) and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

<sup>2</sup> A Defence Instruction or Notice (DIN) is an official document that tells people in the Services or MOD about important instructions, guidance or other information that they need to know to do their job properly. DINs are distributed widely, electronically and on paper, throughout the Defence establishment including to MOD buildings, military bases and ships at sea. They are also published on the Ministry of Defence Intranet.