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UNITED STATES FLEET
DESTROYERS, BATTLE FORCE

File
Pl6-1

U.S.S. DETROIT, FLAGSHIP
At Sea,

Serial 4209

7 Sep 1940

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commander Destroyers, Battle Force.
To : Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : Commander Battle Force.

Subject: Complements of Destroyers.

Reference: (a) Cincus Conf. ltr. Pl6-1/S80 Serial 01048
dated 16 June, 1940.
(b) Standard Organization Bill, 1500-Ton
Destroyers.
(c) Standard Organization Bill, 1850-Ton
Destroyers.

1. Pursuant to the instructions set forth in reference (a) an exhaustive analysis has been made of the complements of the various classes of destroyers included in Destroyers, Battle Force, based upon the consideration that the modern air threat will require an advanced condition of readiness for protracted periods.

2. It is recognized that an advanced condition of readiness of the entire armament over protracted periods, with watches adequate to insure the maintenance of full physical and mental capabilities of personnel, would require complements greatly in excess of the number which could be accommodated by any possible arrangement of berthing and messing facilities. Therefore the increase in complements recommended herein is based on the maximum total number of enlisted men which can be accommodated without sacrifice of reasonable standards of comfort and sanitation.

3. Based upon berthing limitations, the following increases in complement are recommended:-

Class	Present Complement	Increase	Recommended Complement
DD-355	192	28	220
364-379	191	34	225
384-385	191	44	235
382-382, 400, 401	196	34	230
386-393	178	57	235

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<u>Class</u>	<u>Present Complement</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Recommended Complement</u>
DD397-399	187	48	235
402-408	187	43	230
409-416	200	40	240
356-363	243	17	260
381, 383, 394-396	235	15	250
1200-Ton Destroyers	132	8	140

These numbers do not include the use of bunks in relayays, but, only bunk, hammock and cot facilities now existing.

4. Recent intelligence reports indicate that British antiaircraft destroyers keep all guns manned at all times when air attack may be expected and our 1500-ton destroyers may be expected to operate under similar requirements. Minimum of ten men is required to fire each 5"/38 caliber gun provided ready service ammunition only is used. Present complement does not provide sufficient men in ammunition parties to maintain effective rates of fire and probably the rates now established for the 5"/38 caliber guns (both single and double purpose) represent target practice conditions. These rates of fire could not be maintained for lengthy periods unless sufficient men were available in magazines and handling rooms to service the ammunition hoists. There is little doubt that lookout requirements (both surface and air) will require at least ten men per watch and plans are already proposed for lookout instruments which will restrict the operator to full time duty. That destroyers require additional machine guns for antiaircraft offense is an established fact. Each machine gun requires two operators providing ammunition is stowed in ready service boxes close by. The present 1500-ton destroyer operating under protracted advanced conditions of readiness to repel air attack would require two complete director crews since one crew could not be expected to be on the alert for the long periods required. Such a provision would require an additional eleven men. Accordingly, increases recommended above may be justified as follows:-

One additional AA Director Crew - - - - - 11 seaman
Additional gun crews to man all
5"/38 caliber guns continuously - - - - - 28 seaman -
(4-gun ship, add 14 for
5-gun ship)
Additional battle lookouts - - - - - 6 seaman
Additions to ammunition party - - - - - 10 seaman
Crew for ten additional machine guns - - - - - 20 seaman
75

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As stated before, the number of men in the complement of each destroyer is set by the limitation of available berthing facilities. Therefore, the resulting complement must be utilized to the best advantage in effectively accomplishing all that is required of our modern destroyer.

5. During limited emergencies with the advent of undeclared wars and sudden attacks there appears to be no advantage in making a distinction between Complement and Allowance. It is recommended that the use of the term "Allowance" be discontinued.

6. Officer complements of all classes of destroyers are considered adequate.

/s/ H. J. ABETT,
H. J. ABETT,
Chief of Staff.