

SECTION II

## Section II Chapter 1

### THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN OFFICER

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The word 'commission' is so often used as a proper noun that it is easy to forget that the word itself means a great deal. The Queens commission is both the command and the authority to perform certain duties, and commits an officer to take charge of men and to be responsible for their morale, discipline and work. The words used on the commission scroll charge an officer 'to exercise and well discipline in their duties such Officers, Airmen and Airwomen as may be placed under your orders from time to time and use your best endeavours to keep them in good order and discipline'. It continues, 'And we do hereby command you to observe and follow such Orders and Directives as from time to time you shall receive from Us, or from any superior Officer.'

#### PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

2. An Officer needs a high degree of professional competence before he can supervise the work of those placed under his command and before he can hope to properly advise, direct and control. However, before he can manage and lead men he has to possess attributes far beyond trade skills or expertise. These attributes are the qualities that an individual must possess in one form or another before he can be considered for a commission; they are Officer Qualities.

#### OFFICER QUALITIES

3. Gone are the days when an Officer simply had to be a person ready and willing to assume power and to assert authority. An Officer now has to possess personal qualities sufficient to engender respect, skills ranging from diplomacy to dexterity, a flair for planning, directing and controlling and the ability to lead and to inspire. This is the sort of challenge which faces every officer and it is his performance in these fields which decides the pattern of his career in the RAF. To achieve this each officer is measured against a scale of acceptability in all qualities that are considered to be important. The procedure for completing these reports is beyond the scope of this chapter, but the qualities which are assessed are very relevant to an officers responsibilities since they are the qualities that an officer is expected to possess and to foster in himself and in others. A discussion of these qualities follows.

#### 4. Personal Qualities.

a. Sense of Duty. A correct sense of duty consists of knowing what is to be done and doing it regardless of the personal inconvenience it may cause. It does not mean that every minute of every day must be devoted to duty, but occasionally this is necessary, particularly on active service. However, in peace or in war, a consistently willing and conscientious approach to duty is required.

b. Loyalty. Loyalty fosters mutual trust and confidence. It involves allegiance to Crown, country and cause as well as support for superior, subordinate and rival.

c. Integrity. Integrity concerns doing the right thing for the right reason. It calls for a proper sense of right and wrong, honesty

and courage. A man with integrity can be trusted and followed with confidence.

d. Example. An officer sets his standards by his own example. He may try to force subordinates to attain other standards, but as soon as his back is turned, the performance of his subordinates is likely to deteriorate. A good example inspires; a bad example generates slackness and disrespect.

e. Presence. A uniform provides a clear mark of rank and standing. A good officer should be able to convey his status when not wearing his uniform by his manner, deportment and personality. His very presence should command respect. This quality cannot be developed overnight, but has to be fostered over a period of time.

f. Turnout. To uphold the dignity of his commission and rank, an officer must know what to wear and how to wear it. It is not possible to present a consistently fine appearance without due care and diligence. The visual image created by appearance has a considerable and lasting effect and more than justifies the efforts expended in this direction.

g. Fitness. As a member of a fighting Service, an officer must keep himself fit for the most arduous duty. Any person who is reasonably healthy is able to keep him or herself fit; there is no excuse for an officer who does not bother to keep himself in good physical trim.

h. Social Conduct. An officer has to be able to mix with all grades of society and is often required to be able to put others at ease. Social charm is much more than a veneer of friendliness; it is a mixture of good manners, poise, affability, sincerity and interest.

j. Determination. The resolution to complete a task regardless of set-backs is a measure of will power and this can be cultivated. To lack resolution is to lack moral fibre and a person without this is not fit to be an officer in a fighting service.

k. Reliability. Reliability is the root of team spirit. All officers must be able to work without supervision. Good officers can be depended upon to seek out their commitments and can be trusted to meet them thoroughly and regardless of circumstances.

## 5. Ability

a. Judgement. An officer requires more than common sense. He must possess the basic ability to be able to come to sound conclusions in complex and trying circumstances. In a crisis he must remain cool, calm and collected and be able to reason rationally and conclusively.

b. Initiative. In day to day work and administration, an officer has to take the initiative. A good officer should be resourceful and original and not be slow to exploit a situation to the advantage of the Service.

c. Self-Confidence. A man who is justifiably confident in his own ability will, by his very manner, draw others to respect and rely on him. Under confidence may arise or result from lack of experience or even a lack of rapport with contemporaries, but whatever the reason timidity or lack of authority is not acceptable in an officer. On the other hand overconfidence is equally unacceptable and can be dangerous since it can affect judgement and even blind the perpetrator of wrong actions or decisions. An Officer is required to know and to act within his own limitations.

d. Presence of Mind. Presence of mind is a combination of Judgement, Initiative and well founded confidence. It should not be confused with basic intelligence which is dependent on heredity rather than environment. Presence of mind can be cultivated in an appropriate environment and in many ways is a function of experience. There is tremendous scope for an officer to develop presence of mind in an active Service career.

e. Level of Knowledge. Every officer has to be well informed about Service and general affairs to ensure that his reasons, his judgement, his advice and his decisions are based on fact rather than feeling.

f. Organising Ability. An officer often has to organise the activities of a group and therefore he must be able to organise efficiently. To do this he must be able to plan soundly, issue clear directions and be able to co-ordinate the different elements of his group. It is undeniable that a person who is able to organise his own affairs systematically, logically and efficiently is likely to be able to organise the activities of a group.

g. Co-operation. All members of the Service, particularly officers, have to be able to work in harmony with others since the efficiency and effectiveness of a fighting unit depends a great deal on co-operation and team spirit.

h. Tact. During an officer's career, he has to deal with superiors, colleagues and subordinates within the RAF and may very probably have to deal with civilians ranging from local people to eminent politicians. He has also to deal with sensitive personal and emotional problems and perhaps sensitive security problems. To meet the demands of these situations he must be discreet, diplomatic and phlegmatic.

j. Intelligence. The ability to think, reason, understand and conclude is obviously required of an officer in a modern, sophisticated and cost effective Air Force.

k. Powers of Expression. A commander has to be able to clearly express his ideas, plans and instructions convincingly and concisely - even under operational pressures. Good communication is an essential tool of management and of leadership.

## 6. Strength of Character

a. Power to Inspire. Not to be confused with power to impress, the power to inspire comes from a mixture of personal qualities and in particular, personality, enthusiasm and confidence.

b. Power to Command. To exercise effective power of command, a man must have firmness and strength of purpose. He must be able to take charge decisively and get things done easily and effectively.

c. Discipline. A group without discipline becomes disorganised or even a rabble whose reaction to orders is quite unpredictable. An officer has to set the right standard of discipline by his own example and also ensure that his subordinates attain the same standards.

d. Attitude to Welfare. The way an officer treats his subordinates and the interest he shows in them and their welfare markedly affects his standing in their eyes. For instance, an unfair commander will not be trusted, a bully will be disliked and a man too aloof to concern himself with the welfare of his subordinates will not be respected. If a man is not trusted and respected by his men he will make a poor leader.

7. Summary. Officer qualities should not be considered as theoretical, formidable or anything other than a challenge. Life for an officer in the RAF is a challenge and much will be demanded of him during his career that would not be asked of ten civilian counterparts. Few men have many exceptional qualities, but this does not prevent each officer from striving to improve every attribute discussed above. In doing this he will be meeting the obligations and responsibilities of his Commission.

## Section II Chapter 2

### MORALE

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Real efficiency cannot be achieved without high morale since without morale as a sustaining force efficiency will not endure. Morale is not only a road to efficiency, however, it is an end in itself as a vital factor in the effectiveness of an armed force. Under modern conditions of warfare and the ever present threat of surprise attack, every serving officer and man must be in the right frame of mind to meet that threat unselfishly and without thought for his own personal and private affairs.

#### DEFINITION

2. Morale is an attitude of satisfaction with, desire to remain a member of, and willingness to strive for the goals of, a particular group or organisation.

#### LEVELS OF MORALE

3. An individual belongs to more than one group. In the RAF the individual is a member of a flight, squadron, station and he is a member of the RAF. Consequently there is such a thing as flight morale, squadron morale and service morale. It does not follow that if morale is high at one level that it is necessarily high at another.

#### FACTORS AFFECTING MORALE

4. The factors affecting morale are many and their inter-relationships are complex; single factor explanations of morale are normally useless. The factors can usefully be grouped into two broad classes:

- a. Material Factors
- b. Intangible Factors

#### MATERIAL FACTORS IN MORALE

5. Material factors include food, accommodation, working conditions, clothing, recreational facilities and pay. While important material factors are less important than intangible ones. The following points are the basis of this statement:

- a. Very high morale is often encountered when material standards of comfort are very low.
- b. Low standards materially, like other adverse conditions, may stimulate morale by binding the group together.
- c. It is difficult to improve morale by improving material standards of comfort since better living is quickly taken for granted.
- d. Complaints about material conditions are often an indication of low morale but do not necessarily point to the true causes.

e. People tend to be more concerned with how well off they are compared to others rather than with absolute standards. Comfort is relative.

f. Men resent adverse conditions most when they feel that they result from a lack of interest in their welfare on the part of their officers. In such cases it is an intangible, not a material factor.

g. What people say they want is not very often what they need.

#### INTANGIBLE FACTORS IN MORALE

6. Intangible Factors may be subdivided into three kinds:

a. Leadership Factors

b. Group Factors

c. Job Factors

7. Leadership Factors. These are most important since all other factors are to some extent influenced by the quality of leadership. Leaders at different levels exert different kinds of influence. At the top level good leadership promotes a sense of purpose; at the immediate level it stimulates a sense of belonging. The leader is able to promote good morale by:

a. Providing a sense of purpose

b. Providing a sense of belonging

c. Keeping his men informed

d. Concerning himself with the welfare of his men

e. Setting the example himself

8. Group Factors. Group factors affecting the level of morale include:

a. Sense of common aims

b. Sense of belonging - identification

c. Traditions to live up to

d. Prestige

e. Stability of Membership

f. Symbols and badges which emphasise group solidarity

9. Job Factors. Given a high standard of leadership, and strong group ties, morale will be high provided the tasks and activities of group members are rewarding and worthwhile. Job factors conducive to high morale include:

a. Having a task which makes a contribution to the overall purpose of the group.

- b. Knowledge of results and a sense of achievement and progress
- c. Work fitted to the ability and interests of the individual
- d. Work which carries an element of prestige
- e. Work which enables the individual to develop his knowledge and capacity
- f. Being kept busy
- g. Varied rather than repetitive work cycles
- h. Work which carries responsibility or requires the exercise of initiative

#### INDICATORS OF MORALE

- 10. The level of morale on a unit may be indicated by:
  - a. Crime rates - neglect of duty, insubordination, AWOL etc
  - b. Sickness rates - reporting sick with minor ailments bordering on malingering.
  - c. Internal Recruiting rates - difficult to calculate at unit level.

#### SUMMARY

11. The task of fostering high morale is difficult but vital, and it is one of the major responsibilities of an officer. It is essential that plans, policies and decisions should be looked at from the point of view of their impact on morale. To seek short term gains in efficiency at the expense of morale is a futile policy, but one that is too often followed. It is better to plan for high morale rather than have to look for means of restoring morale once it has been damaged. The key to high morale is good leadership.



DISCIPLINE

1. Any group of people living and working together must for reasons of social harmony, productivity, safety etc, conform to a prescribed standard of behaviour. The price that an individual has to pay for the privilege of, and the advantages resulting from, belonging to the group is to conform to group law. This is not peculiar to human activity; highly disciplined societies can be found in nature and examples range from ants to baboons. Society makes its own laws and military society is no exception. Indeed, because the instinct of self preservation is so strong, military society is bound to produce a code of behaviour that insists that members withstand hardships and danger. In simple terms, in a group which is trained to work harmoniously in the face of death, it is vital that individuals do as they are told - even if this means being killed. It is this extraordinary control over impulses and instinct that is what discipline ultimately means in military society.

2. While few people could reject the necessity for such obedience and behaviour in military circles, many people confuse this code of discipline with a code of honour. Perhaps they forget that men die in battle not because it is their privilege but because it is their duty. Similarly, people tend to regard discipline as frustrating restriction involving loss of liberty; this is quite wrong. For instance, a motorist is free to drive his car to a destination of his choice; this is liberty. While so doing, he keeps to one side of the road; this is discipline. Indeed if he does not keep to one side of the road he prejudices the safety of other road users and so curtails their freedom to use the road. This illustrates the connection between liberty and discipline in democratic society - rather than restrict liberty, discipline actually promotes it.

3. Note that the motorist does not drive on one side of the road when he is forced to do so, rather he drives on one side of the road so much that it becomes a habit. This is right because he does not have to take special action when danger threatens on, for example, a blind corner. In fact there are three good reasons why he should drive on one side of the road:

a. It is to his advantage as an individual to get to his destination safely.

b. It is to the advantage of other road users to have confidence that he will stay on one side of the road, particularly on blind corners.

c. If the motorist does not stay on the correct side he could be prosecuted for dangerous driving and subsequently punished.

4. This puts punishment in the right perspective; it may be necessary on occasion, but it is a final resort. As retribution it has little merit although as a deterrent it has value. If it is corrective, however, it is of great value. Certainly it must not be indiscriminate - it must be fair and be seen to be fair.

5. Initial training in discipline in the RAF is provided on a drill square by an NCO with a strong character and a stronger voice. This training originated through the necessity to mould a rabble into a unified group by teaching members to perform particular actions and manoeuvres when commanded to do so. It is still used to do the same thing and this is of course teaching far more than obedience.

Drill generates alertness, smart appearance, upright bearing, and subsequently pride and self confidence. It also fosters group spirit, loyalty and a sense of co-operation. As a first lesson in discipline it is unparalleled. The second lesson is less straight forward in that it results from an individual living and working in a controlled, supervised and ordered environment. In this process the individual becomes accustomed to doing as he is told and to seeing his fellows do as they are told. He may learn that if he does not act promptly, he will be corrected or punished by his supervisors, but it is much better if he does as he is told because he wants to associate his efforts with the work of his group. This will depend on the individual, the group and the leadership, but responsibility for generating such a state rests with the leader.

6. The supervisors and the leaders in the Royal Air Force are the officers - commissioned and non commissioned. Officers at all levels have to set the standards by example and maintain these standards by careful, (not necessarily close) supervision, guidance and correction. When necessary they must issue clear directives and whenever the situation allows they must give reasons for demanding action. This ensures that the individual is properly motivated towards the goal and it encourages sensible interpretation rather than blind obedience. It also encourages a sense of responsibility that leads to the state of mind whereby discipline becomes self sustaining.

7. On occasion it will be necessary to punish a recalcitrant man and provided this punishment is fair and deserved, it will be respected. However, if insubordination and disobedience becomes widespread it will be a sign of low morale and poor leadership. It is up to the officers to ensure that this does not happen.

8. The Royal Air Force has a fine reputation for discipline and will only continue to hold these standards if all personnel play their part in upholding the dignity of rank and authority. A good example of discipline may be found in a formation aerobatic display. Each member has to rely on the other members and in particular the leader. If one person behaves unpredictably, the lives of the other members may be jeopardised. Indeed for a successful display, it is vital that individuals involved understand their role and duty and carry it out, that as a group they trust their leader and understand what manoeuvres are to be flown, and that the display itself is properly planned and led.

#### SUMMARY

9. Good discipline in the Royal Air Force is essential in order to:

- a. Promote ready obedience and an instinct for duty suitable for all conditions of active service.
- b. Enable men to withstand fear, fatigue and other demoralising influences.
- c. Produce the most efficient and effective unit possible.

10. All officers are responsible for maintaining good order and discipline. This involves:

- a. Setting an exemplary example of the standards required, reinforced if necessary with clear statements as to what is required.
- b. Maintaining standards of behaviour and conduct through supervision, guidance and correction.

c. Enforcing standards when necessary by resorting to corrective and fair punishment.

d. Engendering respect for authority by only issuing orders and instructions which are necessary and rational.

e. Fostering a sense of responsibility in others by explaining the reasons for action demanded whenever it is possible.

11. If a junior officer is to perform his role in promoting good order and discipline, he will need to develop powers of leadership. He must make it his business to support his own leaders and also ensure that his subordinates attain the right standards of bearing, behaviour and duty.

#### HINTS FOR THE APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE

1. Rules, orders and regulations should be kept to a minimum. Unnecessary, petty and irritating restrictions can undermine discipline and bring authority into disrepute.

2. The application of rules, regulations and punishment must be fair, impartial and consistent and be seen to be so by those concerned.

3. Subordinates should be told clearly the standards expected of them and they should be informed of the consequences of failing to meet these standards.

4. Orders should be given and rules enforced in a reasonable and courteous manner. Rudeness, bullying or bad temper demean the superior.

5. Compliance with orders or rules must be practicable and reasonable. In some contexts it is reasonable to order a man to risk his life, but in others it is not reasonable to expect him to work one hour over time.

6. Punishment should be reformatory as well as a deterrent. It should concern an individual with a specific offence. Indiscriminate punishment tends to align the whole group in opposition to authority whereas fair punishment promotes respect for authority.

7. Whenever possible the reason and justification for demanding action must be explained. If security or time precludes this, then at least these reasons can be given.

8. The example set by an officer must be the right example.