B 1637 w 11.6.83

P. W. C. No 8901.

Govt. of {1883} Madras.

MILITARY.

To

THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
&c., &c., &c.

No. 2951 W a/17th Oct/83

Recorded in
Continuation of
G.O. No 1637 W a/11th
June 1883

C/

16/10

10. S. C

Dated October, 10th.

Issued

Recd. 13th Oct/83 *Encl.*

G.O., 10th October 1883, No. 5493.

No 2951 W a/17th Oct/83

OCTOBER.

Nos. 162-163.

Defences—Torpedoes.

Rangoon.—Correspondence showing the state of submarine mining defence work in India, forwarded by the Government of India with a request that a detachment of 30 sappers and 10 lascars may be stationed at —, for instruction.

W Records

Sub'dn Recpt. Regts

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

2nd June 1883, No. 3129.

Defences—Torpedoes.

Read the following:—

No. 36. *Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Military Department, under date Simla, the 18th May* 1883, *No. 457-M.W.*

Defences—Torpedoes.

Position of Royal Engineer officers employed on sub-marine mining duty at ports, and their relations with the Inspector of Sub-Marine Defences and the Officers Commanding Sappers and Miners.

Read—

Letter to the Government of Bombay, No. 1132-M.W., dated 27th November 1882.
Endorsements to the Government of Madras and Inspector-General of Military Works, No. 1132-M.W., dated 27th November 1882.
Endorsement from the Government of Madras, No. 6835, dated 20th December 1882.
Resolution by the Government of Bombay, No. 7556, dated 23rd December 1882.
Letter to the Adjutant-General in India, No. 107-M.W., dated 31st January 1883.
Letter from the Adjutant-General in India, No. 1822-C., dated 19th April 1883.

It has been brought to the notice of the Governor-General in Council that the present arrangements for carrying on the local duties connected with sub-marine mining at the ports of Calcutta, Bombay, Karachi, and Rangoon are not altogether satisfactory in one important point. The officer in immediate charge has hitherto been an officer of the Sappers and Miners belonging to the detachment of the corps for the time being at the port, and has been liable to removal on relief of the detachment, or for duty with the corps elsewhere, without reference to the requirements of the sub-marine mining service. The continuance of this state of things appears hardly compatible with the satisfactory conduct of a service which is specially dependent for its efficiency on the local knowledge and experience of the officer in charge.

2. The Governor-General in Council is therefore pleased to direct that a subaltern officer of the Royal Engineers shall be stationed at each of the ports of Calcutta, Rangoon, Bombay, and Karachi for special duty in connection with sub-marine mining service, and shall not be liable to removal except in communication with the Inspector of Sub-Marine Defences.

3. These officers while employed on sub-marine mining duties at the ports will be borne on the rolls of the Sappers and Miners, all their pay and allowances being a military charge; but they also will be posted to the Military Works Department or the Public Works Department of the Presidency, as the case may be, and graded as Assistant Engineers, 2nd grade.

4. They will command the detachments of Royal Engineers and Sappers stationed at the ports, and in all matters relating to discipline and interior economy

they will be under the Officer Commanding Sappers and Miners. But in regard to practice, experiments, the charge of stores, and all matters directly connected with sub-marine mining, they will be under the direct orders of the Inspector of Sub-Marine Defences.

5. The tenure of these appointments on special duty at the ports shall be limited to three years, unless previously terminated by the promotion of the officer in the Military Works or Public Works Department to the rank of Assistant Engineer, 1st grade. At the end of three years the Sub-marine Mining Officer should be relieved by an officer from the Sappers and Miner Corps of the Presidency who is commencing his tour of Indian service.

No. 457-M.W.

Order,—Ordered that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Military Department.

* * * * *

(True Extract.)

SIMLA,
18*th May* 1883.

(Signed) G. CHESNEY, Colonel,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 37. ORDER THEREON, 2nd June 1883, No. 3129.

Communicated to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and the Inspector-General of Ordnance, with reference to Proceedings of Government, No. 6835, dated 20th December 1882.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) E. L. HANKIN, Colonel,
Secretary to Government.

To the Adjutant-General.
" Inspector-General of Ordnance.
" Controller of Military Accounts.
" Public Works Department, for information.

Exd. E. C. Shunker.

C. No. 4855/83

Govt. of {1883} Madras.

MILITARY.

B. No. 1637 W of 11-6-83

To

THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
&c., &c., &c.

Recorded

Initd/ C B
11/6

Dated June, 2nd.

Issued

Recd. *Encl.*

G.O., 2nd June 1883, No. 3129.

JUNE.
Nos. 36-37.

Defences—Torpedoes.

Resolution of the Government of India regarding the position of Royal Engineer Officers employed on sub-marine mining duty at ports, and their relations with the Inspector of Sub-Marine Defences and the Officers Commanding Sappers and Miners, communicated to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and the Inspector-General of Ordnance.

With order

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

10th October 1883, No. 5493.

Defences—Torpedoes.

Read the following paper :—

No. 162. *From Colonel G. CHESNEY, Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, to Colonel E. L. HANKIN, Secretary to the Government of Madras, Military Department ; dated Simla, 8th September* 1883, *No.* 847-*M.W.*

Defences—Torpedoes.

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Governor in Council, a copy of a letter of this date, No. 845-M.W., to the Inspector-General of Military Works, regarding the state of submarine mining defence work in India ; and, with reference to what is said there about the sapper detachments at the different ports, I have also to forward copy of correspondence, in continuation of that forwarded with this office No. 719, dated the 18th July 1881, as per margin, upon this subject, which took place last year, and which, by an unfortunate oversight, was not sent to the Government of Madras. The result of this oversight has been that, while a sapper detachment has been for some time stationed at Calcutta, and is now going through a regular course of training, no corresponding arrangements have been made at Rangoon.

Military Department No. 524-S.C. (*Defences —Torpedoes*), dated the 5th July 1882.
Adjutant-General's No. 3293 (*Defences*), dated the 24th July 1882.
G.O.G.G. (Military Department), No. 444, dated the 18th August 1882.

2. Certain stores and buildings have been provided at these places, and in the correspondence ending with Military Department No. 457-M.W., dated the 18th May 1883, it was arranged that an officer of Engineers should be stationed at each of the ports at which torpedo defences are to be kept up, in charge of the work, under the general superintendence of the Inspector of Submarine Defences.

3. Detachments of ten lascars, to be stationed at each port, were sanctioned in the correspondence forwarded with Military Department No. 719, dated the 18th July 1881, and the Governor-General in Council would request that they may be entertained as soon as possible in communication with the Inspector of Submarine Defences.

4. I am now to request that, under the orders of the Governor in Council, arrangements may be made for stationing detachments of 30 sappers at Rangoon as soon as possible.

5. It will be seen, from the accompanying letter, that Major Featherstonhaugh has been ordered to begin his tour of inspection and instruction at once.

6. The Government of India attach great importance to the submarine defences at the different ports being put in an effective state as quickly as possible ; and I am therefore to ask that the sapper detachments may be brought to these ports, and that the lascars referred to above may be entertained, so that they may at once enter upon the season's course of training.

From Colonel G. CHESNEY, Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, to the Inspector-General of Military Works; dated Simla, 8th September 1883, No. 845-M.W.

Defences—Torpedoes.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 3633, dated the 31st July 1883, enclosing a return prepared by the Inspector of Submarine Defences showing the present state of the submarine defences at the ports of Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi and Rangoon. The Government of India would wish to receive a copy of future returns.

2. From the return now submitted it is to be inferred that the establishment of ten lascars sanctioned for each of the ports of Calcutta, Bombay, Karachi and Rangoon in Military Department No. 106-S.C., dated the 21st April 1881, and whose enlistment was approved of in letter, No. 829-C., dated the 9th February 1882, to the Adjutant-General in India, has not yet been entertained. It is further noticed that apparently no detachments of sappers and miners are stationed at Bombay, Karachi and Rangoon. The Governments of Madras and Bombay will be at once addressed regarding the sapper detachments; but I am to remark that the Government of India should not have been left to find out an important matter of this description through a tabular statement so long after the issue of the orders on the subject. The lascars sanctioned should be entertained at once in communication with the Adjutant-General of India as regards the Bengal detachment, and the Governments of Madras and Bombay as regards the detachments at Rangoon, and Bombay and Karachi, respectively.

3. I am further to request that you will obtain from the Inspector of Submarine Defences a statement of the way in which he proposes to employ the approaching cold season, showing the order of his visiting the different ports, and the time he proposes to stay at each port, and submit it for the information of the Government of India. I am to say that Major Featherstonhaugh should begin his tour at once, and should remain at each port sufficiently long to give the torpedo detachment there a course of training in submarine mining under his personal supervision. I am further to request that you will impress upon Major Featherstonhaugh the necessity of bringing the establishments required for submarine mining into a state of efficiency with as little further delay as possible.

From Colonel G. CHESNEY, Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, to the Adjutant-General in India; dated Simla, 5th July 1882, No. 524-S.C. (*Defences—Torpedoes*).

The Government of India have recently had under consideration the existing arrangements in connection with the submarine mining service in India, which service appears susceptible of being placed upon a better and more systematic footing. I am accordingly to request that the Government of India may be favored with the Commander-in-Chief's opinion on the following points.

2. The first point for consideration is the position of the officer in charge of the torpedo defences. When sanctioning, on the application of the Government of India, the appointment of an officer of the Royal Engineers for this duty, the Secretary of State for India decided that he should have the status of an Assistant Adjutant-General of the Army. The reason for this was probably because there was, at that time, no alternative between making him a military staff officer or placing him under the Public Works Department, and it was prescribed by the Secretary of State in the correspondence that the business connected with the torpedo service should be dealt with in the Military Department of the Government of India.

3. But now that all military works are dealt with in the Military Department, the necessity for the officer in charge of the torpedo service being nominally on the staff of the army no longer exists, while the position is clearly an incongruous one, and inconvenient for the disposal of business. The torpedo officer, after making proposals for the construction of torpedo works, has no means of following them up. The works suggested by him are carried out by another department; the officer who designs the works is not responsible for their execution or cost; and there is thus a want of continuity and definite responsibility throughout the business.

4. This difficulty would be got over by placing the chief torpedo officer under the Inspector-General of Military Works. Estimates for torpedo works would then come up to the Government after they had been subjected to that professional check as to cost and design, which they now receive only at a later stage, while the execution of the works would be carried out under the direct supervision and advice of the chief torpedo officer, who, at present, has no direct share in this important part of the business.

5. This would be in accordance with the practice in England, where the Inspector of Submarine Defences is directly under the Inspector-General of Fortifications; and the Government of India, with the concurrence of the Commander-in-Chief, would propose now to adopt a

similar arrangement here. All matters connected with torpedo defences would still come fully under His Excellency's consideration, in the same way as those connected with other military works, but in the department of the Quartermaster-General, instead of that of the Adjutant-General.

6. The next point calling for notice is the training of the torpedo establishment. It seems desirable that a complete course should be laid down and put on record as to the duties that are to be performed by the sappers who are detailed for submarine mining.

7. It is also suggested that the companies of sappers detailed for submarine mining purposes should not be changed. As regards Bengal, one company might be specially told off for this work, furnishing a detachment of about 30 men for employment at Calcutta, to be relieved every year or two years after going through a complete course; whereby in time the whole company would be trained, and the portion of it at head-quarters would be available on emergency to reinforce the detachment at Calcutta.

8. The company might be kept up to its strength in European soldiers by men sent out direct from England who have gone through the course of submarine mining at Chatham. It seems desirable that these men should remain permanently on this duty without going to head-quarters, and that the establishment should comprise a due proportion of non-commissioned officers, so as to give the men the same prospects of promotion as they would have with the other companies.

9. The service at Rangoon might be taken in a similar way by a detachment from a company of Madras sappers to be relieved from time to time, and that at Bombay and Karachi by two detachments, it being left to the Government of Bombay to settle whether the men should be furnished from one company or from different companies.

10. The third point for consideration is the necessity for the preparation of definitive schemes of defence by means of torpedoes for Calcutta, Rangoon, Bombay and Karachi; these plans to be based on the existing land defences and what might be improvised at the positions selected by the Defence Committee, as shown in the accompanying report by the committee on the general scheme of coast defence for India. This is a matter of importance which should not be postponed, particularly as, on financial grounds, the complete projects prepared by the Defence Committee cannot, for a considerable time, be undertaken and carried out. The Government of India have no doubt that much of this preparatory work has already been undertaken; they would, however, desire to have full information showing the progress that has been made, and how far reliance could be placed on the submarine mining service if a sudden call were made for the practical defence of Indian ports.

11. The next point relates to the material for the torpedo service. A requisition for stores, for the four places above named, prepared by Major Featherstonhaugh, was sent home in September 1881; and, with certain exceptions and modifications, compliance therewith has been promised by the Secretary of State. When these stores are received, it is presumed that there will be sufficient material in India for the defence of the ports in question; but on this point definite information is necessary.

12. The establishment of steamers and boats is now nearly complete. In accordance with the late decision of the Government of India, the whole of the boat equipment and establishments required for manning and navigating the steamers, launches, lighters and boats will be entirely under the Marine Department, but obtained on requisition by the officer in charge of the submarine defences or the local officers in charge of the torpedo operations at the various ports. It is not necessary that these vessels and their crews should be lying idle all the year round, except for the short time when they are required for the annual practice. With the proviso that they should not be taken away from the ports, and that the Inspector must have access to them at any time to see that they are kept in order, everything connected with their crews, their service, and repair might be under the Marine Department, and the expenditure under these heads be accounted for by that department.

13. In regard to the buildings and works for the torpedo service, orders have already been given for the provision of those which were reported by Major Featherstonhaugh to be necessary at the different ports, from funds specially provided from time to time by the Government of India. On the transfer of the business to the Inspector-General of Military Works as now proposed, the duty would devolve on that officer of providing the needful sums for the repairs and maintenance of the works and buildings in his annual estimates, and the expenditure connected therewith would be charged to the Military Works grant.

14. The cost of the sapper detachments employed on torpedo service would of course continue to be charged to the army estimates.

15. The Government of India would wish that a brief annual report should be received from the Inspector of Submarine Defences through the Inspector-General of Military Works, for the information of the Commander-in-Chief and the Defence Committee. This report should show the state of the defences under the various heads, and what is ready for sudden emergency; also the training which the Royal Engineer and sapper detachments are undergoing.

From Major-General Sir G. R. GREAVES, K.C.M.G., &c, Adjutant-General in India, to Colonel G. CHESNEY, Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, Simla; dated Simla, 24th July 1882, No. 3293 (*Defences*).

Having submitted to the Commander-in-Chief your letter, No. 524-S.C. (*Defences—Torpedoes*), dated 5th July 1882, I am directed to state that His Excellency concurs in the opinion therein expressed that the time has arrived when the officer in charge of the torpedo work should be directly under the Inspector-General of Military Works. The services of Major Featherstonhaugh are therefore at the disposal of the Government of India for this purpose.

2. Major Featherstonhaugh has been requested to prepare a special report on the subjects treated of in your letter.

General Order by His Excellency the Most Honorable the Governor-General of India in Council, Military Department; dated Simla, 18th August 1882, No. 444 (Military Works Department).

The services of Major A. Featherstonhaugh, R.E., Assistant Adjutant-General, on special duty, have been transferred from the Adjutant-General's Department to the Military Works Department, and the appointment held by that officer will henceforward be styled that of Inspector of Submarine Defences.

No. 163. ORDER THEREON, 10th October 1883, No. 5493.

Communicated to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, with reference to the correspondence marginally cited, with the request that the instructions of the Government of India, in paras. 3 and 4, may have early attention.

Procs. of Govt., No. 4014, dated 27th July 1881.
" " 3129, " 2nd June 1883.

(True Extract.)

Colonel,
Secretary to Government.

To the Adjutant-General.
" Quartermaster-General, with a copy of the previous papers.
" Public Works Department, for information.

Exd. P. L. Pereira.

B 1637 w 11.6.83

P. W. C. No 8901.

Govt. of {1883} Madras.

MILITARY.

To

THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
&c., &c., &c.

10. S. C

Dated October, 10th.

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C.J.

16/10

W. Thomson
Sutlej Recpt. Rolls