



SECTION 10

AWOL PROCEDURES

ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL CENTRE

AWOL PROCEDURES

General

1. There are three types of absence that can occur in a unit:
 - a. Failing to attend for a parade (lateness)
 - b. Absence Without Leave;
 - (1) Short term absence
 - (2) Long term absence
 - c. Desertion
2. This instruction deals with all the above and act as a guide for unit Commanders and Clerks.

Failing to attended for a Parade

3. Any soldier who fails to attend a parade without reasonable excuse is to be charged under Section 46 of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone Act 1961 as amended.
4. Before charging a soldier with the above offence proof must be obtained that the soldier either knew or should have been expected to know about the parade. Example of proof is as follows:
 - a. Publication of the parade in Part One Orders.
 - b. Daily Morning Muster Parade where a soldier knows this parade takes place every day.
 - c. When given a direct order to attend a parade from a superior officer/soldier.
 - d. When given a message from an officer/soldier of equal or inferior rank stating that he/she is to attend a parade and that message has come from a superior officer/soldier. A soldier can not give as an excuse that he did not believe the message to be genuine. Any soldier who receives such a message and does not believe its authenticity is to take steps to confirm the message is true or false.
5. A soldier who, after being charged, is found to have failed to attend a parade should be punished accordingly. A fine of 1 day's pay or two extra guard duties would be an appropriate award. However, this would depend entirely on the importance of the

parade and circumstances for missing it. Someone who misses the parade by several hours could expect a heavier fine or greater number of extra duties.

Absence Without Leave (AWOL)

6. A soldier shall be deemed AWOL when he/she has not reported for duty within 24-hour period.
7. When the absence of a soldier is reported his Officer Commanding is to ensure that a search of a camp is conducted ensuring that the soldier's accommodation, whether on or off the camp, is included in the search.
8. If the soldier cannot be found an absence report is to be submitted immediately to the unit RSM or Orderly room.
9. On the 3rd day of absence the unit is to signal AFPC in the format at Annex 'A' and a Part Two Order published.
10. If the soldier fails to return to the unit a board of inquiry is to be convened and is to be held after the twenty-first day and before the twenty-eighth day of absence. An example of a convening order is at Annex 'B'.
11. When the board of inquiry is complete the report is to be signed by the president and members and given to the Commanding Officer. An example of the report is at Annex 'C'.
12. Upon conclusion of the Board of Inquiry, notwithstanding the result, a copy of the report is to be entered in the unit service book that records such matters.
13. When the report has been entered in the unit service book it is to be forwarded with a covering letter signed personally by the Commanding Officer to the Brigade Commander and the AFPC. The unit is to then SOS the soldier to the Y1 list.

Return From Absence

14. Immediately a soldier returns from absence the unit is to send a Cancel AWOL signal, an example of which is at Annex 'D' and also publish a cancel AWOL occurrence in Part Two Orders.
15. A soldier returning from a long period of absence (over 7 days) may be remanded in custody until he is dealt with by the Commanding Officer. Nevertheless, a soldier should only be placed in custody if it is decided that it is absolutely necessary in order to prevent the commission of further offences and/or maintain unit discipline.

ANNEX A TO AWOL PROCEDURE
INSTRUCTION

EXAMPLE OF A SIGNAL TO BE SENT TO THE AFPC REPORTING THE
ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE

Date Time Group: 030900 Z JAN 01

Precedence: PRIORITY

Security Classification
U/C

From: 35 Bn

To: AFPC

Info: HQ JFC
8 Bde (Note)
SLMP

SUBJECT: AWOL SIGNAL

1. 19192345 CPL KAMARA (Number, rank and name of absentee)
2. 35 Bn, A Coy, Port Loko (Unit, Sub-Unit and Location)
3. 01 JAN 01 (Date of Absence)
4. 4a Wilkinson Road, Freetown (Known addresses where the soldier)
15 Loko Street, Port Loko (might be located i.e., Family, Friends)

Note:

The unit must send a copy of the signal to the next higher formation.

ANNEX 'B' TO AWOL PROCEDURE
INSTRUCTION

EXAMPLE OF A CONVENING ORDER FOR A BOARD OF ENQUIRY

CONVENING ORDER
BY
LIEUTENANT COLONEL K KAMARA
COMMANDING OFFICER 35 BATTALION
(Note 1)

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| SERIAL No 45(Note 2) | PORT LOKO | 01 JAN 01 |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|

Reference:

- A. AFRSL Act 1961 as amended section 121.
- B. 35 Bn Signal Message dated 121300Z DEC 00. (Note 3)

INTRODUCTION

1. A Board of Inquiry, composed as under will assemble at the Sergeants' Mess on Fri 04 Jan 01 to investigate on the circumstances surrounding the absence without leave on 09 Dec 00 of 18172045 Pte Stupid Z.

COMPOSITION

- 2. President (Note 4) SL 999 Captain P Josiah

- Members (Note 5) SL 996 Lieutenant JJ Pratt
18169054 WO1 Greening T
18164538 WO2 Stump M

- Witnesses (Note 6) 18160017 WO2 Solomon D
(Note 7) 18171985 Sgt Kaloko MH
18176590 Pte Charles

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3. The Terms of Reference are as follows:
 - a. To investigate fully and report on the facts leading to the absence of 18172045 Pte Stupid Z.

- b. To investigate whether or not he has self-deployed himself to another unit
- c. To investigate whether or not his salary has been signed for during his absence
- d. To investigate whether or not he has a weapon signed out from the armory and list any other military kit that he is in possession of.
- f. To investigate whether or not he has been admitted to any medical facility and too ill to report to a military unit.
- g. To investigate whether or not he was subjected to any form of harassment or intimidation.
- h. Any relevant information that that may be useful to the board.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE

- 4. The following books and manuals will be required for the Board.
 - a. Manual of Military Law.
 - b. Queens Regulations.
 - c. Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone Act 1961 as amended.
 - d. Bible and Quran.

MISCELLANEOUS

- 5. All evidence is to be taken on oath.
- 6. The Chief Clerk is to ensure all stationery, manuals and documents are provided.

FINDINGS, OPINIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7. The Board is to determine its findings, express opinions and where relevant make recommendations. Three copies of the board of Inquiry report are to be submitted to the Commanding Officer on Mon 7 Jan 01.

KK KAMARA
Lt Col
CO

Distribution:

Action:

All Board of Inquire Members and witness
Chief Clerk
Sergeant Mess Manager

Information:

HQ JFC
File

Notes

1. The Commanding Officer is to convene all Boards of Inquiry.
2. The Serial number of the convening order is to be the next Part One Order serial number.
3. Reference 'B' is the unit AWOL signal sent by this unit.
4. Whilst the President OF THE Board is normally to be of captain rank or above it can be an Officer of Lieutenant rank; in the case of Officers must be of one higher rank than the accused.
5. There must be at least 3 members on each Board. Members must be a minimum of WO2 rank.
6. The following witnesses are mandatory for every AWLO Board of Inquiry:
 - a. RQMS or representative who can give evidence as to the weapons and kits the accuse may be in possession of.
 - b. The soldier's Platoon Sgt who can most appropriately give evidence as to when the soldier was last seen and what steps have taken to discover where he may now be.
 - c. A known friend or colleague of the soldier so that he may give evidence as to the soldiers state of mind or of anything that may have been said prior to his absence.
7. Other witnesses may be as follows:
 - a. Medical Officer when the soldier has failed to report back to the unit after a period of sick leave.
 - b. Provost Sgt when the soldier has escaped from custody.

ANNEX 'C' TO AWOL PROCEDURE
INSTRUCTION

AN EXAMPLE OF A REPORT OF A BOARD OF INQUIRY

35 Battalion
Port Loko

Reference:

Date: 4 Jan 02

See Distribution:

REPORT OF A BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO THE ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE OF
18161919 PTE MUMU J

Reference: (Note 1)

- A. 35 Bn Convening Order Serial No 45 dated 1 Jan 01. (Copy attached)
- B. AFRSL Act 1961 as amended section 121.
- C. 35 Bn Signal Message dated 121300Z Dec 00. (Copy attached)

INTRODUCTION

1. A Board of Inquiry was convened on Fri. 4 Jan 01 at 35 Bn Sergeants' Mess, Port Loko to investigate the circumstances into the absence without leave of 18161919 Pte Mumu.

STATEMENTS FROM WITNESSES (Note 2)

2. Statements obtained from the witnesses below and are attached to this report:
 - a. 19191515 WO2 (RQMS) Burns B
 - b. 19191414 Sgt Jackson J
 - c. 19191313 Pte Hughes D

FINDINGS AND OPINION OF THE BOARD

3. The Board found that 18161919 Pte Mumu was admitted to 34 Fd Hospital on 1 Nov 00 and release on sick leave on the 10 Nov 00 and failed to return either the hospital or his parent unit.
4. The Board also discovered that 18161919 Pte Mumu was in possession of military kit, which is listed in the witness report of WO2 Burns. He is not in possession of a weapon.

5. The Board also discovered that 18161919 Pte Mumu J had been for sometime planning to join his family who had immigrated to the Gambia.

6. It is the opinion of the Board that 18161919 Pte Mumu J been planning to absent himself without leave to join his family in the Gambia and he therefore has no intention to returning to Sierra Leone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. That the Military Police be empowered to search 18161919 Pte Mumu J last known address in order to retrieve any military kit he may have left behind.

8. That 18161919 Pte Mumu J be Struck Off Strength to the Y List.

K SMITH
Capt
President

J JOHNSON
Lt
Member

D BROWN
WO1
Member

S MURPHY
WO2
Member

Notes:

1. The Convening Order and AWOL signal should always be quoted in the reference. A copy both of both those references should be attached to the report.

2. Each witness statement is to be on separate pieces of paper and are to be signed and dated by each individual.

ANNEX 'D' TO AWOL PROCEDURE
INSTRUCTION

EXAMPLE OF A REJAB SIGNAL TO BE SENT TO THE AFPC REPORTING THE
RETURN FROM ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE OF A SOLDIER

Date Time Group: 250900 Z JAN 01

Precedence: PRIORITY

Security Classification
U/C

From: 35 Bn

To: AFPC

Info: HQ JFC
8 Bde
SLMP

SUBJECT: REJAB SIGNAL

1. 19192345 CPL KAMARA K (Number, rank and name of absentee)
2. 35 Bn, A Coy, Port Loko (Unit, Sub-Unit and Location)
3. 01 JAN 01 (Date of Absence)
4. 24 JAN 01 (Date returned from absence)
5. Apprehended by the civil police (Reason why the soldier returned)