

AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/2/4 Part 3

Title: General Staff, General Headquarters,
British Expeditionary Force

April 1916



AWM4-1/2/4PART3

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1st April,, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
		NIL.

2nd April, 1916.

301
General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
1-45 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies. R.F.C., Q., G.H.Q. Troops. (O.A. 672)	Instructions to govern procedure of R.F.C. in event of hostile air raid threatening G.H.Q., issued.
1-45 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies, A.A., Q. (O.A.N.3/126)	13-pounder H.E. ammunition with "80/44 <u>over</u> 44/80" fuze may be used by anti-aircraft guns.
3 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies, Q., D.G.S. (O.A.673)	Armies informed that a certain number of Blue Star cylinders are available for early use in minor operations. If desired, Armies to state number of cylinders required, and intended operations in which it is proposed to use the cylinders.
4-15 p.m.	Second Army. (O.A.N.3/127)	Further allotment of ammunition approved in special circumstances, but Army should ensure that economy is observed, and that, if possible, some saving in it may be effected.
4-40 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies, D.A.S. (O.A. 675)	Attention called to previous instructions issued regarding the prevention of leakage of information from the use of telephones in the front line; it being definitely ascertained that the enemy makes extensive use of listening apparatus.
10-45 p.m.	I.G.C. Second Army, 2nd Cav. Div. (O.B./1351)	Pending completion of arrangements for a training area for 2nd Cav. Div. in the sand dunes S.W. of CALAIS. I.G.C. to discuss the question of billeting accommodation with Second Army direct.

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3rd April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
6-55 p.m.	Fourth Army, G.H.Q. Troops, Branches concerned.	Canadian Cavalry Brigade will be attached to 3rd Cavalry Division from 10th April.

4th April
....., 1916.

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General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
6.30 p.m.	First and Second Armies. Copies Branches concerned. (O.A.676).	Orders issued for disposal of 1st and 2nd Australian Divisions, 19th and 34th Divisions. Two latter divisions will be withdrawn to training areas and will be additional in G.H.Q. Reserve to present four divisions, giving a total of six divisions. Reliefs to be effected by 20th April.

5th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
10 a.m.	<u>Q.</u> (O.A.N.4/2.)	Conveying sanction for expenditure of ammunition by Second Army for a special operation on the 4th April.
12-35 p.m.	Third Army, Q. <u>A.A.</u> (O.B./376.)	Sidings for heavy guns suggested, approved in principle. Army to consider further the possible employment of heavy guns on railway mountings. There should be at least 12 sidings available in Army area.
2 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies, Res. Corps. <u>(O.A.689.)</u>	Notes on "Training of Cavalry" and "Divisional Cavalry and Cyclists" issued. (Extract from Notes of Army Commanders' conference, 18/3/16.)
2-30 p.m.	<u>Second Army.</u> (O.A.N.4/3.)	Informed that C.-in-C. desires that a stringent control over expenditure of ammunition should be exercised in accordance with G.H.Q. No.O.A.N.3/121, dated 6th March, 1916.
2-45 p.m.	Fourth Army, 2nd Ind.Cav.Div., Res. Corps, D.A.S., <u>O.(b).</u> (O.A.693.)	Ind. Cav. Corps Sig. Squadron to move to H.Q. Reserve Corps at WAILLY by 10th instant.
7-20 p.m.	<u>French Mission</u> (O.A.694.)	Expressing thanks for agreeing to the retention of French heavy guns left in Third Army area by Tenth French Army beyond 15th April.
10-55 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies, M.S., P.S. to C.-in-C., French <u>Mission.</u> (O.A.695.)	Programme of General Joffre's visit to British Armies on the 7th instant.

200

6th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
12-40 p.m.	French Mission (O.A.697).	Agreeing to proposal for the attachment of one British artillery officer to French artillery Commander's H.Q. and one French artillery officer to R.A., Fourth Army.
"	Second Army (O.A.699).	Informed that no modification of orders issued in O.A.676 of the 4th inst., regarding 35th and 1st Australian Divs. is possible.
3-30 p.m.	First Army. (O.A.702).	Informed that the French have now definitely agreed to our retention of heavy guns left by 10th French Army beyond 15th April.
5-30 p.m.	Fourth Army. R.F.C. (O.A.698).	Action to be taken by 4th Bde. R.F.C. in the event of reports indicating a Zeppelin attack on PARIS by night, detailed.
6-15 p.m.	First Army.) Second Army.) Third Army.) Fourth Army.) Q.) A.A.) (O.A.N.4/1).)	Allotment of ammunition for period of four weeks ending 7th May issued. Special efforts to economise in 6" how. and 9.2" how. should be made.
7-30 p.m.	French Mission Copy E-in-C. (O.A.333 F/60)	Asking for a plan of work done by French troops on B.C.D. line between BIENTQUES and WATTEN. If reconnaissance of the CANGHE - AUTHIE line has been recorded on a map, could a copy be supplied.
"	Fourth Army. (O.B./1323).	Asking for an estimate of number of rounds of 3" Stokes and 2" medium mortar ammunition which should be held in front of railheads. It is proposed to keep on L. of C. 500 rounds per 3" Stokes mortar 100 " " 2" Medium "

6th April, 1916. (Contd.).

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
8-15 p.m.	First Army. Second Army. Third Army. Fourth Army. I., R.F.C., A.G., Q.M.G., Res. Corps. (O.A.704).	Report on operations in MESOPOTAMIA received from C.I.G.S.

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.....7th April....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
11-40 a.m.	Second Army. O.B., A., Q., (O.A.706).	Personnel of all Trench Mortar Batteries and equipment of 3" Stokes and 2" mortars to accompany 34th Division.
6-15 p.m.	C.I.G.S. (O.A.708).	Table showing British and German losses in aeroplanes during March forwarded.

8th April.
....., 1916.

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General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
----- N I L -----		

9th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
7-30 p.m.	Second Army. (O.A.714)	Proposal to release the division held in G.H.Q. Reserve, between 15th- 20th instant, cannot be sanctioned. If not possible to provide at least a composite division with existing programme of reliefs, one relief should be postponed.

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10th April 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
1-45 p.m.	Third Army. (O.A.715).	Informed of French agreement to leave heavy and A.A. guns in late Tenth French Army area until a date to be settled later.
"	First Army. (O.A.719)	Informed that the French have decided to withdraw the two Armoured trains (95 mm.) on the 15th inst.
"	Third Army. (O.A.725)	Informed that shed for a Naval airship will shortly be erected near BOUBERS-sur-CANCHE (Note - Previous intention to erect shed near ARQUES, abandoned).
8 p.m.	All concerned. (O.A.732).	Instructions regarding telephonic communication in the event of an attack by hostile aircraft. Previous instructions issued with O.A.553, of 10th April, cancelled.

11th April 1916.

29
General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
8.45 p.m.	First, Second, Third and Fourth Armies.	Armies to take steps to train personnel of Divisions in G.H.Q. Reserve in the use of 2" and 3" (Stokes) Mortars, irrespective of their present equipment in trench mortars.

12th April
....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
1.15 p.m.	First, Second, Third and Fourth Armies, Branches concern- ed. (O.A.733).	Instructions issued as to procedure to be followed in the transmission of messages connected with meteorology.
"	" (O.A.734).	Distinguishing marks for British aeroplanes, commencing and terminating at dates and hours to be communicated later, with a view to proving supposed use of British markings by the enemy.
7 p.m.	First Army. (O.A.742).	Situation as regards Divisions in G.H.Q. reserve detailed.

13th April 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
12.45 p.m.	French Mission (C.A.743).	Asking that the relief of the five companies of Sapeurs and Mineurs in Third Army area might be delayed until the 15th May.
3 p.m.	Second Army.	Notifying that arrangements have been made for the use of sand dunes S.W. of CALAIS as a training ground for the 2nd Cavalry Division.

14th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
10-45 a.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies Branches concerned. (O.A.746)	Instructions issued regarding the employment of 3" Stokes mortars and 2" Mortars with the Newton fuze.
7-55 p.m.	1st, 3rd, 4th Armies, Branches concerned. (O.A.757)	Orders issued for transfer of 111th, 112th and 113th Heavy Batteries, from First to Fourth Army as early as possible after relief by 117th, 138th and 140th Heavy Batteries.
"	1st & 2nd Armies Branches concerned. (O.A.748)	Orders issued for transfer of 109th, 110th Heavy Batteries, 23rd Siege Battery and 1 Section of 30th Siege Battery on April 20th, and remaining Section of 30th Siege Battery as early as possible after April 19th. All from First to Second Army.
9 p.m.	French Mission. (O.A.762)	Relief of French Avions and Ballons left by the Tenth French Army will be carried out on the 18th instant.
"	1st & 3rd Armies (O.A.763)	Arrangements to be made for R.F.C. to work with the French artillery on relief of the two French Aviation Sections and Balloons, to take place on the 18th instant.

15th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
5 p.m.	Second & Fourth Armies, Branches concerned. (O.A.765)	Pioneer Battalion of 34th Division will be transferred by rail from Second to Fourth Army, as early as possible after 17th April, and will be temporarily attached to 8th Division.

16th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
9-0 a.m.	First, Second, Third & Fourth Armies., Q., & R.F.C.	Notes and Instructions in connection with the movement of R.F.C. Squadrons between Armies, issued.
2-0 p.m.	First Army.	Sanction, under special circumstances, for use of one 240 m/m Mortar opposite DOUBLE CRASSIER, given. 100 rounds allotted.

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17th April
....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
11-0 p.m.	I.G.C., Q. (O.A.768)	Copy of a report of air reconnaissance by night of ST. OMER, WATTEN, AUDRUICQ and ARCQUES forwarded for information.

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18th April 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
8 p.m.	First, Second, Third and Fourth Armies. (O.A.777).	Daily reports to be despatched by Armies not later than 7.15 a.m. and 7 p.m. marked "Priority".
8.15 p.m.	First Army. (O.A.772)	Forwarding copies of letters from French Mission re importance of Coal mines about NOEUX. In event of hostile bombardment taking place, active retaliatory measures to be taken against sensitive points within hostile lines.
10.45 p.m.	Second Army., Q. D. of Rys. (O.B./503).	Amended procedure for destruction of ARMENTIERES railway bridge, consequent upon the French company of Engineers having been withdrawn.

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19th April, 1916.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
10-55 a.m.	R. F. G. (O.A.780)	Forwarding copy of correspondence with French Mission on the subject of liaison duties between French and British Flying Services.
4 p.m.	French Mission. (O.A.783)	To notify General Foch that Searchlights referred to in O.A.533, of 6th March, have arrived and will be allotted :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Section (2 lights) to BOULOGNE. 1 " (3 ") CALAIS. 1 " (3 ") ROUEN.
5 p.m.	I.G.C., G.H.Q. Trps., (Branches concerned.) (O.A.782)	Orders for move of 50th Field Searchlight Company, R.E., as above.
6 p.m.	I.G.C., Q., Res. Corps, Second Army. (O.B.1351)	Proposed training area for 2nd Cavalry Division on Sand Dunes near CALAIS not now required. Training of other arms just S.W. of CALAIS will continue for the present.

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.....20th April....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
2-15 p.m.	French Mission.	Proposals re dates for relief of five French Tunnelling Companies, at present working in Third Army Area.
3-0 p.m.	First, Fourth Armies. (Branches concerned).	Two Heavy Artillery Group Hd-Qrs. from Nos. 2, 7 and 25 to be selected by First Army and transferred forthwith to Fourth Army.

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21st April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
4-30 p.m.	2nd, 4th, 1st & 3rd Armies. (Branches concerned). (O.A.788)	123rd Heavy Battery to be transferred from Second to Fourth Army after relief by 1/1st Wessex Heavy Battery.
4-40 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies. I.G.C., (Branches concerned) (O.A.789)	Reallotment of anti-aircraft zones among Armies. Revised statement of Anti-aircraft Units on L. of C.
7-35 p.m.	2nd & 3rd Armies. (Branches concerned). (O.A.786)	Withdrawal of five French Tunnelling Companies: 2 by 30th April, 1 by 7th May and 2 by 15th May decided upon. Second Army to transfer one Tunnelling Company to Third Army, $\frac{1}{2}$ Company by 30th April, remainder later.

...22nd...April....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
1-15 p.m.	First Army Second Army Third Army Fourth Army R.F.C., A.A. (O.A.792)	Times and dates during which special distinguishing marks on aeroplanes will be in force. Instructions to be observed by Anti-aircraft sections.
1-25 p.m.	First Army Second Army Third Army Fourth Army Branches concerned (O.A.791)	Nos 3, 30 and 16 Heavy Artillery Group Headquarters will be transferred from First, Second and Third Armies respectively, to Fourth Army.
2-0 p.m.	I.G.C. R.F.C. A.A. (O.A.793)	To issue confidential warning to certain A.A. Sections on the L. of C. re aeroplanes carrying certain <u>additional</u> black markings.
4-0 p.m.	First Army. (O.A.795)	19th Division will be held at 24 hours notice for entrainment while in G.H.Q. Reserve instead of at the usual 9 hours notice.
11-15 p.m.	French Mission (O.A.797).	The tunnelling companies to be relieved by 30th April, are Nos. 15/3 and 7/1.

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....., 1916.
23rd April

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
		----- N I L -----

24th April, 1916.

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General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
10 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies. Reserve Corps, A.A., R.F.C. (O.A.802)	Forwarding copy of answers to certain questions relating to the fighting at VERDUN, obtained by the British Mission at French G.H.Q. from investigations on the spot.

25th April....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
7 p.m.	First Army. Second Army. Fourth Army. Branches concerned. (O.A.803).	Orders issued for transfer of 34th Division from Second to Fourth Army (III A.C.) on 4th/6th May, and 19th Division from First to Fourth Army (III A.C.) on 7th/9th May.

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26th April
....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
11-45 a.m.	C.I.G.S. (O.A.814).	Asking for information re maximum and minimum numbers of ^{heavy} guns (by natures) that may be expected by end of May, also for probable dates of arrival of additional Anti-aircraft guns.
12-50p.m.	R. F. C. (O.A.815)	Forwarding copy of W.O. letter 121/Stores/4937 (S.D.2) of 24/4, re S.S. airship for service in France.

27th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
12-30 p.m.	First & Second Armies, Branches concerned. (O.A.818)	Orders issued for transfer of one Cable Section from each of First and Second Armies to Fourth Army (III Army Corps).
6-45 p.m.	Secretary, W.O., R.F.C. (O.A.820)	Notifying provisional arrangements made in regard to Naval airship for service in France.
10-35 p.m.	I.G.C., Branches concerned, (O.A.821)	Instructions to I.G.C. relative to A.A. defences of ROUEN.
"	First Army, I.G.C. Branches concerned. (O.A.822)	Orders issued for transfer of No.69 A.A. Section from ROUEN to First Army.

28th April,
....., 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
4-0 p.m.	First Army, Second Army, Third Army, Fourth Army, Reserve Corps, Q, D. of Rlys. (O.B.1590)	From midnight, 28th/29th April, the first and second tactical trains (for personnel) will be available, as before, at three to six hours' notice. The third train (for Machine Gun Company, transport, etc.) will not be kept constituted, except when specially ordered, but a "type parc" train can be made available at ten hours' notice, at any station.
8-50 p.m.	First & Fourth Armies, O.B., A, Q. (O.A.824)	Personnel of all Trench Mortar Batteries, and equipment of 3 inch Stokes and 2 inch Mortars, will accompany 19th Division on transfer to Fourth Army.
"	Second & Fourth Armies, O.B., A., Q. (O.A.825.)	Personnel of all Trench Mortar Batteries, and equipment of 3 inch Stokes and 2 inch Mortars, will accompany 34th Division on transfer to Fourth Army.

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29th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
10-35 a.m.	French Mission. (O.A.826)	Remaining Companies of Engineers (in Third Army area) will be relieved as follows:- No. M/6 on 7th May. Nos. 15/6 and 4/8 on 15th May.
2-15 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies, Res. Corps, Branches concerned. (O.A.827)	Preliminary report on the hostile gas attack East of VERMELLES, on the 27th instant, issued for information.
10-35 p.m.	All concerned. (O.A.830)	G.O.C., XV Army Corps assumed command of the 7th and 21st Divisions at 10 a.m., 29th April.

24/2

30th April, 1916.

General Staff (Operations), G.H.Q.

Time.	To.	Action taken.
1-45 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies. Q., A.A. (O.A.N.4/4)	Allotment of ammunition for each Army, period ending May 7th increased by 100 rounds 6 inch Mk.VII Shrapnel.
9-15 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Armies.	Units to be warned at once of importance of supplementing training in use of anti-gas appliances of all new drafts before putting them into the line.