

**AWM4**

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

Bases & Depots

**Item number:** 33/15/3

**Title:** Australian Base Depot, Weymouth

March 1916



AWM4-33/15/3

Australian Base Depot,

Monte Video Camp,

Weymouth.

2nd April, 1916.

REPORT FOR MARCH 1916.

	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Total.
Strength on 29.3.16.	73	2867	2940
Total Arrivals at Depot.	21	1492	1513
Total "handled" at Depot.	94	4359	4453.
<u>Departures.</u>			
Drafts.	28	1535	1363
Invalided to Australia.	7	969	976
Present Strength on 31.3.16.	59	2003	2062

Deaths.

24/3/16. No. 1608, Private R. Henshaw, 12th Battalion, A.I.F.  
died at Sydney Hall Hospital, at 3.45 A.M., from  
pneumonia.

Accidents etc.

6/3/16. No. 4131, Private J. Palmer, 4th Fld. Ambulance,  
A.A.M.C., was admitted to Hospital on the evening of  
the 6th instant, from a self-inflicted injury.

Under instructions received from Headquarters,  
Australian Imperial Force (United Kingdom), this man  
will be disposed of, on his discharge from hospital.

Accidents etc.

21/3/16. No. 1454, Private D.F. Milnes, 2nd Battalion, A.I.F., had a pass into Weymouth, but went into Dorchester, and boarded a train back to Weymouth at about 11.0 P.M.

Leaning against the door of the carriage, it opened, and he fell out, and the train passed over his left foot, which had to be amputated a few inches above the ankle. Proceedings of a Court of Enquiry are being submitted on the case.

Inspections.

1/3/16. Major Barraclough and Captain Coghill inspected men for the Barrell Straighteners Course, at the Depot, on the 1st instant.

4/3/16. The Sanitary Staff Officer, Southern Command, inspected Monte Video Camp, on the 4th instant.

4/3/16. On Saturday and Sunday, 4th and 5th instants, Surgeon-General Williams inspected the camps at Monte Video and Westham.

11/3/16. The General Officer Commanding, A.I.F. (U.K.), inspected the troops at the Depot, accompanied by Mr. Aladin, a Russian Official representing the Press in that country, and Sir William Robinson, and after the "march past" the troops were addressed by the G.O.C., and Mr. Aladin.

11/3/16. Surgeon-General Williams visited the Depot, in connection with invalid troops who embarked at Portland.

11/3/16. The General i/c. Inspection of Huts, War Office, inspected 2 or 3 huts, butchers' shop, 1 latrine and general drainage of the camp. He recommended Ventilation in the butchers' shop, shelving in all the huts, and that the work of building the water tank be pushed forward.

Inspections.

- 14/3/16. The Assistant Superintendent of Gymnasia, Southern Command, inspected classes in physical training and bayonet fighting at Monte Video Camp, at 10 A.M.
- 16/3/16. The General Officer Commanding, A.I.F. (U.K.), and visited the Depot, on the occasion of the departure
- 17/3/16. of invalid troops to Australia.
- Surgeon-General Williams also visited the Depot on this occasion.
- 18/3/16. The G.O.C.-in-C., Southern Command, paid a flying visit to Monte Video Camp.
- 21/3/16. Mr. Trahair, from London Office, (Postal Department) inspected the Post Office. This visit, and Mr. Trahair's recommendations have formed the subject of a report submitted on the 23rd instant.
- 29/3/16. The Sanitary Officer, Weymouth, inspected the Depot on the 29th instant.

Discipline.Civil.

The following men were dealt with by Civil Tribunals in the district.

No. 585, Private B. Grimes, 3rd Battn. and

No. 993, Trooper E.C. Brewer, 9th A.L.H., charged together at the Guildhall, Weymouth, on the 18th instant Charge. Stealing a 9 gallon cask of Stout, the property of Sidney Loveday, landlord of the "Jersey Hotel" Weymouth.

Sentence. Bound over in the sum of 25, to appear when called upon, and each to pay 10/- costs.

Lieut. A.J. Dayas, 3rd Battn. A.I.F., represented the case.

Discipline.Military.

9/3/16.

The following men were dealt with by Court-Martial.  
No. 145, C.Q.M.S., J.B.Sutherland, 5th Battalion,  
was tried by D.C.M. at Weymouth on 9th March.

Charges. (1) When at the offices of the Australian and  
New Zealand Forces, 130, Horseferry Road,  
London, being found in a place prohibited  
by order of the Assistant Provost-Marshal,  
Australian & New Zealand Forces, without a  
pass or written leave from his Commanding  
Officer.

(2) Conduct to the prejudice of good order and  
military discipline.

(3) Disobeying a lawful command given by his  
superior officer.

Finding. Guilty of all the charges.

Sentence. The Court sentenced the accused to be  
reduced to the ranks.

Confirmation. The G.O.C., Portland Garrison, varied the  
sentence to one of reduction to the rank  
of Sergeant.

10/3/16.

No. 615, Private (Lance-Corporal) G. Gale, 15th  
Battn. was tried by R.C.M., at Monte Video Camp, on  
the 10th instant.

Charges. (1) Drunkenness.

(2) Conduct to the prejudice of good order and  
military discipline.

(3) Leaving his guard without orders from his  
superior officer.

Finding. Guilty of all the charges.

Sentence. Revert to his permanent grade, and to  
undergo detention for the period of 28 days.

Discipline.

Military. 10/3/16. No. 122, Private Albert Gordon Lindsay, 1st A.G.H., A.A.M.C., was tried by R.C.M., at Monte Video Camp, on the 10th instant.

Charges. (1) When on Active Service disobeying a lawful command given by his superior officer.  
 (2) Resisting an escort whose duty it was to have him in charge.  
 (3) Striking his superior officer being in the execution of his duty.  
 (4) When in arrest escaping.

Finding. Guilty of the first, second and third charges, but not guilty of the fourth charge.

Sentence. 26 days detention.

18/3/16. No. 1817, C.S.M., H.R. Richardson, 6th Battrn., was tried by D.C.M., at Weymouth on the 18th instant.

Charges. (1) Striking a soldier.  
 (2) Drunkenness.

Finding. Guilty of all the charges.

Sentence. To be reduced to the ranks.

18/3/16. No. 2614, Private James Robinson, 3rd Battrn., was tried by D.C.M., at Weymouth, on the 18th instant.

Charges. (1) Absenting himself without leave.  
 (2) Making wilfully false answers to questions set forth in the attestation papers, which were put to him by direction of the justice before whom he appeared for the purpose of being attested.

Finding. Guilty of all the charges.

Sentence. 42 days detention.

Discipline.Military. 22/3/16.

No. 1326, Private William Fraser, 7th A.A.S.C., was tried by R.C.M., at Monte Video Camp, on the 22nd inst.

Charge. Absenting himself without leave.

Finding. Guilty.

Sentence. 42 days detention.

Orderly Room.

15 men were dealt with for Drunkenness accompanied by one or more of the following offences:-

Obscene language, Striking an N.C.O., Absence, Being in possession of liquor.

2 men were punished for Drunkenness only.

55 men were punished for Absence.

13 men were punished for minor offences against discipline.

The general discipline of the Depot is good.

Drunkenness is on a par with former reports.

Cases usually only occur on pay nights.

Training.

The training has again been irregular owing to weather conditions.

Officers and other ranks were instructed in Bombing, and a report by the Bombing Officer who is away at present in Hospital, has been called for.

31 all ranks were instructed in Machine Gun Course.

11 Officers were instructed in Machine Gun at a short evening Course.

Report of the Instructor is attached.

A Report by the Signalling Officer is attached.

~~From~~ Report on physical training and bayonet fighting attached.

Training.6/3/16. Grenade Course.

4 Officers attended a Grenade Course at the Grenade School, Clapham Common.

Captain	H.C. Buckley	22nd Battn.	) These ) Officers ) had a "pass" ) for instruc ) ing, and a ) "fail" in ) throwing.
Lieut.	E.T. McVea	5th "	
"	V. Stanley	8th "	
"	S.M.F. Pearce	25th "	

20/3/16. Lewis Gun Course.

2 Officers and 4 N.C.Os attended a Course of Instruction in the Lewis Machine Gun at Chelsea Barracks London.

Lieut.	W. H. Perry	10th Battn.
"	H. H. Young	7th "

The officers and 3 N.C.Os passed, one N.C.O. not showing any aptitude for the work, was not granted a certificate.

It is very desirable that 2 Lewis guns be supplied to this Depot for instructing Machine Gunner N.C.Os and men prior to their return to the firing line.

Ecclesiastical.

18/3/16. 4 Officers and 183 other ranks attended High Mass celebrated at the Westminster Cathedral, on the 18th instant.

Administration.Company.

Adjutants have now been appointed with a clerical staff in Companies, which will decentralise work and facilitate smooth working in the Depot Orderly Room.



Organization.Draft.

A Draft Company has been organized with a Commander and Adjutant.

This Company will consist of all "A" class men fully equipped and ready to move off as soon as a draft is ordered to be in readiness.

Drafts.

- 11/3/16. 1 Officer and 509 Other Ranks left this Depot for Australia per H.M.H.T. "Suevic."
- 17/3/16. 6 Officers and 460 Other Ranks left this Depot for Australia per H.M.H.T. "Aescanius."
- 24/3/16. The 25th Draft of 3 Officers and 242 Other Ranks left at midnight, for France. The balance to make up 250 being supplied by Abbey Wood, and joined up at Victoria Station.
- 25/3/16. The 26th Draft of 16 Officers and 457 Other Ranks left at 5.40 A.M., for Egypt.
- 25/3/16. The 27th Draft of 3 Officers and 497 Other Ranks left at 3 P.M., for Egypt.
- 28/3/16. The 28th Draft of 1 Officer and 100 Other Ranks left at 6.10 P.M., for Egypt.

On each occasion the behaviour of the troops and entraining was good.

Dorchester Picquet.

Under orders received from the Portland Garrison Commander this picquet was discontinued with effect from the 25/3/16.

Health & Sanitation.

Report of Senior Medical Officer attached.

Report of Sanitary Officer attached.

Auxiliary Hospital.

A hut has been converted into an Auxiliary Hospital in which men who are indisposed for a few days and not removed to hospitals are accommodated.

This scheme has worked admirably insomuch as hitherto such men usually lay about the huts, greatly to the inconvenience of themselves and the other occupants of the huts, but now are attended to by a medical staff and have greater comforts than those they would enjoy in their huts under the old conditions.

Hutments.

Stocktaking Boards have already been held, which form the subject of separate communications.

This has resulted in the losses and damage being greatly minimised. A system is now in vogue under which, if the officer in charge of a hut fails to report loss or breakage on completion of his daily inspection, and such loss or breakage cannot be traced to the individual responsible for same, the cost of such breakage or damage is charged against the officer responsible for the hut, with the attendant result that officer display more interest in government property than heretofore. Further, if such breakage or damage is reported by the officer in charge of the hut, but cannot be charged to any individual, the cost of such loss or breakage is either paid from Regimental Institute Funds or struck off charge.

Inspection.

An Inspection and Stocktaking will be made every month by the Quartermaster, and all deficiencies immediately reported and dealt with.

Entertainments.

- 7/3/16. The troops were entertained at a Concert at the Jubilee Hall, on the 7th instant. The expense was borne out of Institute Funds, and the entertainment was much appreciated.
- 16/3/16. Officers' Farewell Afternoon for the departure of Lieut.- Colonel R.E. Courtney, C.B., V.D., was given at the Officers' Mess, Monte Video Camp.  
The troops were afterwards entertained at a Theatre Party at the Pavilion Theatre at 5.45 P.M.
- 23/3/16. Captain H. Jacobs gave an interesting lantern exhibition of views taken at Gallipoli, by himself, in the Gymnasium at 7.30 P.M.
- 28/3/16. A subscription dance was organized by men of the Depot and given in the "Arcadia" Hall, Weymouth.  
Ticket holders were granted a special pass to attend.  
This entertainment was run on very satisfactory lines. The general conduct was excellent.

General.

I should like to mention that since the visit of the General i/c. Hutments, the long felt want of water in the upper portion of Monte Video Camp, will soon be alleviated, as a tank to contain sufficient water for daily requirements is now under construction, and I hope will shortly be ready for use.

I took over Acting Command of the Depot from  
9. 3. 16 on the departure of Lieut.- Colonel Courtney  
on leave.

The following Reports are attached:-

Westham Camp.

Senior Medical Officer.

Sanitary Officer, on both Camps.

Machine Gun Officer.

Signalling Officer.,

Physical Training and Bayonet Fighting  
Instructor

Officer i/c. Post Office. .

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Lieut.- Colonel.

Commandant, Australian Base Depot.

Australian Camp, Westham.

Weymouth. 31st March 1916.

1.	<u>Arrivals.</u>	Officers	11
		N.C.O's & Men	944
2.	<u>Departures.</u>	Officers	8
		N.C.O's & Men	1161
3.	<u>Invalided to Aust.</u>		
	(Included in Departures).		
		Officers	2
		N.C.O's & Men	971
4.	<u>Deaths.</u>	Nil.	

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Australian Camp, Westham.

Weymouth. 31st March 1916.

I N S P E C T I O N S.

By Officers i/c Huts.

Twice daily.

By Quarter Master.

Daily except Barrack Rooms.

By Orderly Officer.

Daily, including Barrack Rooms, also at Breakfast and  
Dinner.

By District Sanitary Inspector.

Occasionally.

By O.C., Westham Camp.

Weekly on Saturdays, Men Barrack Rooms, Institutions  
and Outbuildings.

By Commandant, Australian Base Depot.

Occasionally.

The Medical Officer and Lieutenant Scarr also render reports.

O.C.? Westham Camp.

Captain.

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11/

Australian Camp, Westham.

Weymouth. 31st March 1916.

D I S C I P L I N E.

I am glad to be able to report that there has been a further improvement in the discipline of the Camp.

The number of men absenting themselves has been greatly reduced.

Minor Offences are still sometimes committed in ignorance.

There have been no cases of Civil convictions during the past month. One man has been tried by R.C.M., and on the whole the discipline of the Camp is "Good"

Captain.

O.C.? Westham Camp.

Australian Camp, Westham.

Weymouth. 31st March 1916.

T R A I N I N G.

The unfavourable weather has again interfered with the training. Owing to the bad condition of the ground available for drilling on, the exercises have been almost solely confined to Route Marching. With the return of the better weather, I hope I shall soon be able to carry out a more varied programme so far as drill without arms will permit.

All O's C. Coys attend Orderly Room daily at Office Hour, and receive instructions in Office work. They also attend weekly for Comparing Crimes.

There have been several lectures indoors on various subjects during the past month.

A good deal of slackness still exists in "Paying Compliments".

Captain.  
O.C. Westham Camp.



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Australian Camp, Westham.

Post Office.

Monthly Report for March.

The working of the Post Office for the past month is satisfactory we having no complaints to record.

We are at present dealing with between two and three thousand letters weekly, and about one hundred registered packages, exclusive of parcels.

All mails for men who ~~have~~ leave this Depot for Australia or elsewhere, are sorted and sent to Monte Video Post Office.

The present staff consists of 1 N.C.O. and 3 men.

31/3/16.

(Signed) W.P. Watkins L/C. i/c  
Westham Post Office.

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Australian Camp, Westham.

Weymouth. 31st March 1916.

GENERAL.

There is a general improvement in the condition of the Camp, due mostly to the now somewhat drier weather.

The repair of huts is being carried out.

A faulty stove in the Guard Room causes considerable discomfort, the delay in this fault being remedied is, I am informed, owing to a shortage of workmen.

The water supply has not been efficient of late, owing to an unserviceable meter. This matter is now in the hands of the Barrack Department.

Officer's Mess administration might be improved on the lines suggested to you yesterday.

O.C., Westham Camp. Captain.

Australian Base Depot,

Monte Video Camp,

W e y m o u t h.

1st April, 1916.

From: Senior Medical Officer.  
Australian Base Depot.

To: Commandant,  
Australian Base Depot.

SUBJECT:- Sanitary Report for month of March.

I have the honour to forward attached reports on the sanitation of Monte Video and Westham Camps for the month of March.

The health of both Camps has been good and there have been very few cases of Infectious Diseases. 1800 men have attended for Medical treatment during the month, the percentage of daily sick being 1.9 % of the total strength.

The following cases of Infectious Disease have occurred during the month:-

Venereal Disease.....	109
Scabies.....	37
Measles.....	3
Mumps.....	2

and one case of suspected Cerebro-spinal Meningitis. A definite diagnosis has not yet been made of this suspected case, but all precautions such as Isolation and treatment of contacts have been taken.

Venereal Disease.

In view of the large number of venereal cases, the following routine will in future be adopted at both Camps:-

All men undergoing risk of venereal infection will be urged to attend at the dispensaries in the camps within 24 hours of running the risk to undergo preventative treatment.

This treatment will be given under the supervision of trained orderlies.

A lecture will be given to all N.C.Os and men during the first week of each month in which it will be pointed out that in the vast majority of cases, preventative treatment will prevent venereal disease if

11/ if carried out effectively and early enough, and men will be urged to attend for this treatment.

Also Venereal Inspection of all N.C.Os and men in the Camps will be held once a month.

Innoculation against Cerebro-spinal Meningitis.

During the month innoculation was carried out at Monte Video Camp against Cerebro-spinal Meningitis, and two injections were given with one week interval between each.

(Signed) DPM. McWhae, Major.

S.M.O. AUSTRALIAN BASE DEPOT.

SANITARY & PIONEER REPORT.

Report of Monte Video Camp, Weymouth, for the month ending March  
31st 1916.

Roads & Paths. New paths have been formed from Offices to Horse shelter and from top of A.S.C. Hut to Horse Shelter.

The completion of re-building and metalling all paths from Hut No. 1. to Hut No. 25 has been executed. A new pathway has been formed from Hut No. 83 to Lower Incinerator in Upper Field.

The quagmire around Horse Shelter has been removed and good paths have been formed all round shelter with large rubble-shingle and top dressing making a very satisfactory and solid work.

The paths round M.I. Hut, Q.M.Stores, Hut 26 have been thoroughly repaired.

All paths and roads have received reparation from time to time and as necessary, this work was slightly delayed in the earlier part of month owing to shortage of shingle. This has now been remedied as about 130 tons of shingle have now been delivered.

Surface Water Drainage.

Old and existing open rubble channels have been cleared and reformed to proper falls as necessary--the system is now doing its work as satisfactorily as required.

Sewerage.

All sewers are disinfected twice weekly, entrances to sewer from latrines etc. scrubbed out daily, no trouble of any description has occurred in any part of system during the month.

Latrine<sup>s</sup> and ablutions.

The contractor for night soil removal is fullfilling his work in a proper manner.

The latrines are in a perfectly sanitary and good condition. The Ablution houses are clean and in good working order.

Water Supply.

Work has commenced with regard to improvement put forward for building tank or reservoir storage supply from point on Hill 60, and should be completed in 2 or 3 weeks.

### Water Supply.

The supply otherwise is as usual and reports of shortage at Top Cookhouse and Upper Field still occur.

### Huts.

The Huts, otherwise from many leaks in various roofs, as already reported, are in good habitable condition.

### Glazier.

The Glazier has put in 194 panes of glass during the month majority being put into living huts.

### Bath Houses.

The mens' half of the Lower Bath House is now solely used as an isolation bath house. The buildings are in a clean and proper condition. The H. & C. supplies are satisfactory.

### Carpenter & Joiner.

New shelving has been fixed in Cook Houses.

Officers Mess.- Framing has been fixed over entrance and a screen made and fixed in lavatory.

Dental Surgery.- 3 partitions, with opening and 2 doors have been fixed also shelving and cupboard.

H.Q. Office.- 1 draft card cabinet has been made.

Six shelves have been fixed in Officers quarters, locks, boxes, bolts, window catches, step, floors etc., have been repaired or renewed as necessary throughout the camp.

### Cook Houses.

4 New 100 gallon coppers have been supplied and fixed to cook houses, the cost of same being defrayed by Depot Regimental Institute Funds.

### Ironmongers.

The stoves of huts are dilapidated in some cases and parts missing in various cases- full list of same has been submitted to DORE.

### Incinerators.

The incinerators are doing all work required and are

Incinerators.

now being renovated with fire bricks and fire clay as deemed necessary.

Painter.

In the Surgery in Dental Hut, the walls have had distemper 1 coat  
The posts of fence round garden have received twice distempered.

Gardiner.

The garden in front of Officers' mess has received much attention  
the beds having been well stocked with herbaceous roots and annuals and seeds.  
The drive has been recovered with thin top dressing.  
Gaps in front hedge have been blocked up<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

(Signed) F.S. Scarr, Lieut. A.E.

Sanitary Officer.

SANITARY & PIONEER REPORT of Westham Camp, Weymouth, for the month  
ending 31st March, 1916.

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Roads and Paths.

The paths have been picked up and reformed where sufficient old metal was available, but paths need further attention which they can now receive owing to the delivery of shingle at the end of the month.

Surface Water Drainage.

All existing open surface channel drains have been opened up and rubble removed and channels cleaned.

New channels have been cut where found to be necessary.

Sewers.

All sewers are disinfected twice weekly and gullies to sewers cleaned daily.

There have been no reports of trouble during the month in connection with general sewerage.

Latrines & Ablution.

The latrines generally are in good sanitary condition and working order though in many cases the back doors, for removing pans, are off, these should have new garnets fixed to rectify same, requisitions have been put in for this work.

In the ablution houses all leaky and broken taps have been repaired and houses now are in good condition.

Night soil contractor has properly fulfilled his contract with one case of lateness only, and in which case arrived immediately after telephone complaint.

Water Supply.

The water supply is undoubtedly unsatisfactory, the water has at times been "off" twice in one day. the duration for which it has been cut off is in many cases for hours.

This lack of proper supply is liable to create dissatisfaction and complaints in the work necessary regarding cleaning



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latrines, ablution houses and cook house working.

Huts.

The huts leak in roofs very badly, this work of repair is in the hands of Contractors who to date have completed in proper fashion 9 huts.

Bath Houses.

Satisfactory as last report.

Carpenter.

The carpenters have been engaged on Q.M's work only, no constructional work executed.

Cook Houses.

There is no report of complaints from Cook Houses, with the exception of one instance in which case the drain was choked and the R.E's were called in to rectify the trouble.

Incinerator.

The incinerators are all proved to be satisfactory.

(Signed) F.S. Scarr, Lieut. Engrs.

Australian Base Depot,  
Monte Video Camp,  
Weymouth.



1st April, 1916.

From  
Officer in charge Post Office.

To  
Adjutant.

Sir,

Herewith I beg to submit a Report on the working of the Depot Post Office for the Month Ending 31st March, 1916.

During the month, we have dealt with 206 bags of mail matter. This comprises Letters, Parcels and Papers; Registered matter being separate. With Parcels, a very good clearance has been effected. On March 1st, our records showed a total of 378 names. We have delivered 2063 for the month, and now show only 286 on hand.

In Registered matter we have received 1004: 76 have been delivered through the window and 73 have been forwarded for men who have left on Draft.

Mr. Trahair of the Military Post Office, Horseferry Road, paid this Office a visit last week and gave valuable assistance in the way of suggestions for clearance of old mails, which had accumulated here. His suggestions were adopted and I can report a very appreciable clearance.

I have frequently visited Westham Post Office, and report that it is working satisfactorily in conjunction with Monte Video Post Office.

As regards the inner working of the Post Office, I can report that everything is satisfactory.

I have the Honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) A. F. Sydenham .....Lieut.  
Officer in Charge Post Office.

MONTHLY REPORT.

MARCH 1916.

S I G N A L L I N G.

Monte Video Camp,

22 Officers were instructed in Playfair and Aldershot Ciphers.

At a subsequent test all showed a thorough knowledge of both ciphers.

16 N.C.Os and men, Regimental Signallers, have been practiced in Morse and Semaphore (Flags only.)

30 men of Draft are undergoing instruction in Semaphore.

44 men of draft are receiving refresher course in Semaphore.

(Signed) G.W. Rickwood, Lieut.

Signalling Officer.