

FAMILYGRAMS ADVICE TO NOMINEES

BACKGROUND

Arrangements have been made for you to send FAMILYGRAMS to you husband, son or friend onboard while he is away on patrol.

The FAMILYGRAM is a one-way only means of communicating a short message from you to the submarine. It cannot be replied to. They should ideally be sent either twice a week and should consist of no more than sixty words each, or once a week consisting of no more than 120 words. The words permitted are inclusive of the person, rank or rate and name. If you mislay your forms and envelopes, you may send your message on a normal piece of paper obeying the guidelines above to:

**BUSINESS REPLY SERVICE
LICENCE NO PHQ3
MAIL OFFICE
HMS NEPTUNE (FOR HMS)
FASLANE
HELENSBURGH
DUNBARTONSHIRE
G84 9HL**

FAMILYGRAM forms are not private and should be treated along the lines of a postcard. Once they are received in Faslane they will be read by an officer to ensure no codes or bad news are enclosed (see below). On completion, they will be typed up by a radio operator for transmission to the submarine. Once onboard they will be checked again by the Commanding Officer before distribution to the individuals. This means your message may be seen by up to half a dozen people prior to reaching its recipient onboard, although strict confidentiality will at all times be maintained.

The person to whom you are sending FAMILYGRAMS to will have filled out a questionnaire stating how often he expects to be receiving messages, from whom, and whether any good or bad news is expected whilst he is away. You should discuss this questionnaire. You will receive a reminder if no FAMILYGRAMS are received for a certain length of time (normally 10 days). No FAMILYGRAM will be sent if it is suspected of containing a coded message or any bad news.

GOOD AND BAD NEWS

The aim of the FAMILYGRAM scheme is to provide a means where a very short message of reassurance can be sent to someone who has no method of returning home should something be wrong. Because of its length it is not the ideal method of explaining complicated scenarios of good and bad news. Thus, in urgent situations, it is possible to send other, longer signals to the submarine. Such messages might include news of births, deaths, serious injury or marital problems that might cause concern both for you and the person onboard. Messages of such a private nature will be seen in the base only by nominated personnel and onboard the submarine by the Captain, before reaching their recipient. Due to the existence of this procedure please note that any FAMILYGRAMS received which contain bad news will be held until further enquiries can be made.

It must be made clear that this procedure should be used only in urgent situations and the sending of any bad news should be discussed with your next of kin/nominee before he goes to sea. If there is a major problem and you need help, or you think an urgent message to the submarine is required, please phone the contact details on the V-Boat Forum.

NEWS AND SPORT

News is regularly sent to the submarine by the Headquarters at Northwood and by ourselves. We do try to send news of a local flavour. If you notice an item in your local newspaper, be it serious or amusing, then enclose it with your FAMILYGRAM and we will do our best to include it on the next news signal.

FAMILYGRAMS VIA EMAIL

If you wish to pass your FAMILYGRAM via email, the procedure that should be followed is:

Download either the 60 word or 120 word FAMILYGRAM from the V-Boat homepage on RNcom. This is in the form of a Microsoft word document. You should fill in the document with the required information and send the word document attached to the email putting the name, rank, service number and HMS V.....in the subject field. On receipt of the email and the attached document the duty communicator will acknowledge the email and the message will be typed up and put onto the next FAMILYGRAM signal that will be sent to the submarine. Please note this procedure must be followed. If you have any problems with this or have any questions please email the relevant address below or contact the duty communications operator and we will try our best to resolve the problem. Please note that emails will not be replied to until the next working day.

HMS VANGUARD HMSVANG-FAMILYGRAMS@mod.uk

HMS VENGEANCE HMSVENG-FAMILYGRAMS@mod.uk

HMS VICTORIOUS HMSVICT-FAMILYGRAMS@mod.uk

ADVICE TO NON PARTICIPANTS IN THE FAMILYGRAM SCHEME

If your next of kin onboard HMS V..... has opted not to take part in the FAMILYGRAM scheme, the purpose of this letter is to let you know how you may inform him of any important news (e.g. births /deaths within the family or financial/domestic crises). It is emphasised that it will be a one way only communication and will in no way hasten his return.

Even though you have opted out of this scheme, it is highly recommended that you discuss with your Next of Kin whether he wishes to be informed of any bad news whilst at sea or on his return. If there is a major problem and you need help, or think an urgent message needs to be passed, you too may contact the submarine or support organisation by the procedure described above.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT NUMBERS

SUPPORT CREW DUTY OFFICE

The support crew have a duty organisation providing 24 hours a day cover may be contacted as above.

PERSONAL FAMILY COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Royal Navy Royal Marines Welfare (RNRMW) can be found in Churchill Square Helensburgh. The Office is open from 0830 – 1630 Mondays to Thursdays and 0830 – 1600 on Fridays for personal visits. Telephone contact is on 01436 672798. When unmanned a message may be left on the answer phone machine. In an EMERGENCY the DUTY NAVAL BASE OFFICER (DNBO) (Telephone contact No 01436 674321 ext 4005) staff are available to contact the NPFS Duty Worker on your behalf

RNRMW can do the following:

Receive and deal with urgent messages of a compassionate nature for any member of the submarine.

When appropriate arrange a home visit, by a Naval Social Worker or a representative of the Soldiers, Sailors and Airman's Families Association (SSAFA) can visit on their behalf.

Advise families on a multitude of problems. There are many resources available to help you, so do not hesitate to contact RNRMW.

OTHE USEFULL CONTACTS

HMS NEPTUNE Duty Naval Base Officer (DNBO) telephone 01436 674321 ext 4005. This number should be used out of working hours if neither the Support Crew Duty Officer nor NPFS can be contacted.

The HIVE organisation is a tri-service information network available to all serving personnel, their families and dependants. HIVE information centres offer an extensive range of information on many subjects such as local facilities, schools, housing, healthcare and relocation. Contact details are as follows:

FASLANE HIVE

Families Centre, Churchill Square, Helensburgh
Telephone Number: 01436 678029
Email: NAVYPERS-RNRMWHIVEFASLANE@MOD.UK

PORTSMOUTH HIVE

Room 6 Orion Block, HMS Nelson, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth
Telephone Number: 02392 722151
Email: NAVYPERS-RNRMWHIVEPORTSMOUTH@MOD.UK

PLYMOUTH HIVE

Fenner Block Annex, BO 64, HMS Drake, HMNB Devonport, Plymouth
Telephone Number: 01752 286138
Email: NAVYPERS-RNRMWHIVEPLYMOUTH@MOD.UK