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Formation of BLUS

Aug. - Sept. 1944

ALLIED ARMY HEADQUARTERS
G-1 (Br) A10

G1(3)52122/A10c

FILE: PERSIDM A50

SUBJECT: FORMATION OF S.L.U.

27 Sep 44

TO : U.S.O., Major A.A.I. (2)

FROM: O.S.O., A.F.H. Co.
H.Q., M.M.I.A. (for attention of Major Fleming)
O.S.O., 3 District

Reference your 2821XJ dated 21 Sep 44.

1. Your paras 1 to 4 are noted.
2. Reference your para 5, it is confirmed that the Rear Link Signals for "A" S.L.U. have been formed and have proceeded to their Concentration Area.
3. Reference your para 6. Application was made to G.H.Q., 2nd Division to earmark the personnel for Rear Link Signals for "B" S.L.U. at R. Signals T.D. This has been done in so far as numbers are concerned, but they have not yet been all selected by name as some of the personnel are still under Refresher Training. ~~It is anticipated that the detachment will be formed and ready to move by 2 Oct 44.~~
4. It is confirmed that the formation of Rear Link Signals for "C" and "D" S.L.U. (and any subsequent ones) cannot be carried out at present, unless the personnel are found from units disbanding, etc., as those at the R. Signals T.D. are earmarked as replacements for Group "A" trainees.

It is therefore requested that you earmark those personnel from disbanding units and despatch them to the R. Signals T.D. as soon as possible. Nominal rolls should be sent with them and 2477 2nd

COPY TO: C.S.O., A.F.H.C.
H.O., M.M.I.A. (for attention of Major Fleming) — *P10*
S.S.O., 3 District

30

Reference your 28213 dated 21 May 44.

1. Your paras 1 to 4 are noted.
2. Reference your para 5, it is confirmed that the Rear Link Signals for "A" B.L.U. have been formed and have proceeded to their Concentration Area.
3. Reference your para 6. Application was made to G.H.C., 2nd Echelon, to earmark the personnel for Rear Link Signals for "B" B.L.U. at R. Signals T.D. This has been done in so far as numbers are concerned, but they have not yet been all selected by name as some of the personnel are still under Refresher Training. ~~It is anticipated that the detachment will be formed and ready to move by 2 Oct 44.~~

4. It is confirmed that the formation of Rear Link Signals for "C" and "D" B.L.U. (and any subsequent ones) cannot be carried out at present, unless the personnel are found from units disbanding, etc., as those at the R. Signals T.D. are earmarked as replacements for Group "A" trainees.

It is therefore requested that you earmark these personnel from disbanding units and despatch them to the R. Signals T.D. as soon as possible. Nominal rolls should be sent with them and ~~377~~ 2nd Echelon should be requested to post them definitely to them.

Detachments.

5. It is requested that every effort be made to find the personnel in A.A.I., as none would appear to be available outside A.A.I., but if this is not possible, the situation will be re-examined.

[Signature]
S.P. BLANK, Major
for Maj-Gen, DMS
G-1 (Rr)

/ash

SECRET: Rear Link Signals for
 DUE WITH Gruppo di Combattimenti

SEARCHED	Sip
FILED	
Date Recd	24/9/44

SECRET

MAIN HQ ALLIED ARMIES IN ITALY

Tel: MILPOT 70

2821X3

2 | Sep 44

AFHQ, G-1(B) also

Copy to: CSO AFHQ
 HQ MIA (for attention of Maj Fleming)
 CSO 3 District
 G (SD) (For 1701/23/43/G(SD2) of 26 Aug refers)

Hinde - Blake spoke 10 Sep 44.

1. It is considered that the position regarding the formation of Rear Link Signals for the first four Gruppi requires clarification. Set out below is the position as it stands. Will you please confirm that action is being taken to provide the necessary personnel.
2. AFHQ letter CR/1140/G-1(ER) (Ser 0663) of 2 Sep authorized the formation of the following BLUs (incl Rear Link Signals).

UNIT	GRUPPO DI COMBATTIMENTI FOR WHICH DESIGNATED	DATE OF FORMATION	CONCENTRATION AREA FOR FORMATION
"A" BLU	"FRIGOLE"	26 Aug 44	SAN GIORGIO (N 77)
"B" BLU	"CARONNA"	26 Aug 44	
"C" BLU	"LIGNANO"	1 Sep 44	PIEMONTE D'ALTI (North of CASERTA)
"D" BLU	"FOLGORE"	1 Sep 44	

It is understood two further BLUs will be authorized in the near future for attachment to the MAFV, and PIERO Gruppo di Combattimenti respectively. It is anticipated that they will concentrate and form in the SAN GIORGIO area.

3. Capt J.N. Grepo and ... M. ... were selected as the R Signals Staff Officers within the BLU WE for "A" and "B" BLUs. They were despatched to the Signals School and Depot to supervise the formation of the first two Rear Link Signals. By arrangement with you Capt R.J.M. Gould-Adams has been made available as the SO for Signals for "C" BLU. We have initiated MS action at this HQ in respect of all three officers. The remaining three Staff Officers

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2. AMHQ letter CR/1100/G-1(ER)(Ser 0603) of 2 Sep authorised the formation of the following BLUs (incl Rear Link Signals).

UNIT	GRUPPO DI COMBATTIMENTO MORFION DESIGNATED	DATE OF FORMATION	CONCENTRATION AREA FOR FORMATION
'A' BLU	"TRIULI"	26 Aug 44	S.N. GIORGIO (N 77)
'B' BLU	"CARONA"	26 Aug 44	
'C' BLU	"LEGNANO"	1 Sep 44	PIEMONTE D'ALTI (North of CASERTA)
'D' BLU	"TOLIORE"	1 Sep 44	

It is understood two further BLUs will be authorised in the near future for attachment to the LAMOV. and PICEVO Gruppi di Combattimenti respectively. It is anticipated that they will concentrate and form in the S.N. GIORGIO area.

3. Capt J.H. Grepe and M.N. Loxton were selected as the R Signals Staff Officers within the BLU WE for 'A' and 'B' BLUs. They were detached to the R Signals School and Depot to supervise the formation of the first two Rear Link Signals. By arrangement with you Capt R.J.M. Gould-Adams has been made available as the SO 3 R Signals for 'C' BLU. We have initiated MS action at this HQ in respect of all three officers. The remaining three Staff Officers are being earmarked and you will be notified when the selections are made.

4. It was agreed that the School of Signals would be a convenient location for all the formations to be carried out and that 3 District should be the Supervising Authority.

5. The personnel for 'A' BLU were provided from L-I resources, the OWLs being posted from L of C Signals. These were replaced, by arrangement with you, by personnel of low medical category. It is understood that the Rear Link Signals for 'A' BLU was formed up to strength and has joined its formation. BLU are being asked to confirm that this is correct.

6. We are unable to provide the personnel for 'B' BLU and our 4503X1 of 25 Aug 44 requested you to do so. We are not clear what progress has been made with this matter how the formation is proceeding. It is anticipated that we may be in a position to contribute personnel for the formation of 'C' and 'D'

/Rear Links...

-2-

Rear Links from certain disbandments of units which are imminent. This is being investigated and you will be notified the exact figure in the near future.

7. It is understood that a proposal is being considered to post personnel, who are theatre replacements for 'A' trades trainees to form Rear Link Signals. This is not considered to be a practicable solution since a definite assurance was given to C3Os when asked to nominate personnel for trg in 'A' trades that replacements would be provided for all personnel taken for such trg.

8. The Group is however required in the field on a high operational priority and it will be necessary to form this Rear Link Sigs from Rfts and other existing resources within the theatre. Your observations are requested as to how this can be done.

RL Murray

W Major-General,
Chief Signal Officer.

JML/BC

3470

COPI

Subject:- Training of Italian Gruppi.

Main Headquarters,
Allied Armies in Italy

282213

14 Aug 44

030 AFH

1. If the formation and training of six Italian Gruppi which is at present under review is agreed, it will be necessary to commence the training of Italian Signal Instructors in the use of British Equipment at short notice. It is understood that the proposed concentration date of the first Italian Gruppo is 1 Sept.

2. In order to clarify the position as at present the proposals discussed during the visit of my G II (Trg) to your HQ on 8-10 Aug are enumerated below.

- (a) It was agreed that the first batch of Italian instructors must be available to commence training in their units by the first week in Sept.
- (b) In view of the problem it would be necessary for the training to be carried out at the School of Signals and in order that the necessary instructors and accommodation can be made available at least one PSI course would have to be cancelled.
- (c) It was suggested that No 4 Inf PSI course due to commence on 21 Aug should be cancelled and that IIT be asked to do this now.
- (d) Three courses of two weeks duration each for forty students should be held at the School of Signals. Training thereafter would be carried out either in units or at the Italian Signal School.
- (e) In addition, a British Training team consisting of three British NCOs should be attached to the Italian Gruppi during their initial training. These training teams would work under the SO III (Signals) whom it has been proposed should be on the staff of RLJ with each Gruppo.
- (f) It would be necessary for the adm of the Italian students while at the School to be carried out by Italian personnel.
- (g) It would be essential for Italian students attending the course to possess translated versions of British training pamphlets. These pamphlets should be made available for use within the Gruppi for their own training.

3. These proposals have now been discussed with MIA with the following results.

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3. These proposals have now been discussed with ~~MEILA~~ with the following results.

- (a) Forty Italian students have been earmarked for the first course. Thirty of these students will come from the first Italian Gruppo to be formed. The other ten students will be potential instructors from the Italian Signal School and it is proposed that they remain at the school for a further two weeks to increase their general signal knowledge. Students have been selected from all arms as follows:-

/.... Offrs OEs

Italian School instructors
Engineer Signals
RA
Inf

Offrs	ORs
2	8
5	9
5	5
2	2
<u>14</u>	<u>26</u>

- (b) Provision will be made for Italian Adm Personnel to be attached to the School during these courses. It will not be possible at the moment to provide tents or other equipment from Italian resources.
- (c) The translation of the necessary Signal pamphlets is now in hand. It is doubtful if all pamphlets will be completed by 20 Aug as there are commitments from other arms. Priority has been given to the pamphlets on the 18, 22 and 19 sets and these should be completed by the required date.
- (d) The establishment which has been drawn up for the Italian Engineer Signal Company includes eighteen wireless maintenance personnel. It is requested that a course be arranged for trg these personnel in the maintenance of British equipment. It is agreed that a total of six which is the maximum the School of Signals could instruct at one time will fill immediate needs.
- (e) A minimum of four interpreters will be available for trg at the Signal School. It may be possible to provide extra interpreters when all commitments are known.
4. Two officers have been selected from within AAI to fill the appointment of SO III in the RUs with the first two Italian Gruppi. It is intended that these officers should, after a short attachment to MIA, here, go to the School of Signals to assist with the training.
5. The Comdt of the School of Signals has no suitable HCOs available from Rfts to make up the trg teams. These will therefore have to be found from AAI and steps are now being taken to select suitable personnel.
6. It will be necessary to form a Rear Link Detachment R Signals for each of the six Gruppi. A copy of the proposed establishment for these deta is attached at Appendix 'A'. The first of these should be formed and available by 1 Sept, the second by 15 Sept and the remainder about a month later.

Since this is an entirely new commitment which cannot be met from existing resources, it will be essential for the R. Signals ceiling to be increased accordingly. Since the employment of these Italian forces will

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4. Two officers have been selected from within AAI to fill the appointment of SO III in the BLIs with the first two Italian Gruppi. It is intended that these officers should, after a short attachment to MMIA, here, go to the School of Signals to assist with the training.

5. The Comdt of the School of Signals has no suitable NCOs available from RLts to make up the trg teams. These will therefore have to be found from AAI and steps are now being taken to select suitable personnel.

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Since this is an entirely new commitment which cannot be met from existing resources, it will be essential for the R Signals ceiling to be increased accordingly. Since the employment of these Italian formations will presumably permit an overall decrease in British formations, this small increase would appear amply justified.

This aspect of the matter is being pressed also through staff channels at this HQ.

7. As it seems probable that little time will be available to arrange training when the final decision to form and train these Gruppi is made, it is requested that the necessary action be now initiated in order that training may commence at the School of Signals on 20 Aug 44.

8/.....

- 3 -

8. On receipt of your approval MMIA will be asked to despatch the students and necessary Adm personnel to report to the School of Signals by the 19 Aug 44.

(Sgd) E.L.L. VULLIAMY, Lt. Col. GS
for Major-General,
Chief Signal Officer.

copy to: G (Trg) AAI
DPT AFHQ
MMIA
Comdt School of Signals CMT

3467

HEAR LINK DET R SIGNALS FOR GRUPO HQ

(i) Personnel

[illegible]

Driver-Mechanics (Driver Class)

Driver-operators	2
Electrician (Signals)	1
Operators (W & L)	11

Drivers IC for duty as drivers

Cipher Operators (3 Cols)

Truck, 15 cwt 4 x 2 GS

Truck 15 cnt 4 x 2 wireless house
 Lorries 3 ton 4 x 2 CS

Cpls	7
L/Cpls	2
Signalmen	9
Drivers	1
Total, Rank and file	19
Total, Other Ranks	20

(ii) Tradesmen

Driver-Mechanics (Driver Class)

Driver-operators

Electrician (Signals)

Operators (W & L)

Non-Tradesmen

Drivers IC for duty as drivers

Cipher Operators (3 Cpls)

(iii) Transport

Truck, 15 cwt 4 x 2 GS

Truck 15 cwt 4 x 2 wireless house

Lorries 3 ton 4 x 2 GS

(iv) Organisation

Det consists of 2 wireless Rear Links and a small superintending staff. The Signal Office will be manned by Italians. The British ORs will assist on queries.

15 cwt Wireless house

15 cwt Wireless house

3 ton GS 4 x 2

15 cwt GS 4 x 2 (Charging)

(1) 2 OWLS
1 Dvr Op

(2) 2 OWLS
1 Dvr Op

(1) Signal and Cipher Office
1 Sjt
6 OWLS
3 Cipher Ops
Driver IC

(1) Driver Mech
Electrician
Op1 OWL
1260 watt charging set

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