

ACC

10000/120/2240

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Q/504 Italian Army Strengths

Nov. 1945 - Aug 1946

SUBJECT : Strength of Units - ITALIAN

LAND FORCES SUB COM AC (MMA)

(489081 Ext 401) SD/92/3

30 Aug 46

TO : 10 BRITISH LIAISON UNIT

Ref para 7(b) of your Monthly Report No 13.

1. The reason why units of the ITALIAN Army have been ordered by the War Ministry to be at 67% of WE is because the total WE of all units, establishments etc of the ITALIAN Army, (adding up to 140,000 which is the maximum allowed by Armistice Terms) makes now allowance for recruits at GAR. As long as there are 40,000 recruits at GAR the units of the Army will be under establishment to that extent. With an Army totalling 140,000 and with 40,000 permanently composed of recruits under training, the only way to keep units at full WE would be to have fewer units, which the War Ministry do not want.

2. We have made two recommendations to the War Ministry to obviate some of the disadvantages of units being below strength :-

(a) Short Term Policy

(See Appx 'A' attached).

(b) Long Term Policy

(See Appx 'B' attached).

M W Habe 3747

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MCH/ell

Copy to :- 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11, & 12 BRITISH LIAISON UNIT

Internal Distribution

C(Trg)
 'A' ✓
 'B' ✓
 SD/103
 SD/109

TO S/L	
A/Q	
Q	RAC
Q.1	
Q.2	
ORH	
REMH	
ST	B. J. M.

M. W. Hope 3747

Brigadier G.S.
 M. M. I. A.

504
 10/4/46

COPY

Appx 'A' to
MMLIA letter SD/92/3
Dated 30 Aug 46

SUBJECT : Maintenance of BRITISH Equipment

LAND FORCES SUB COM AC (MMLIA)
(439081 Ext 401) SD/109

10 Aug 46

TO : MINISTRY OF WAR

1. Considerable quantities of Small Arms, Arty and other BRITISH Equipment have recently been or are about to be made available to the ITALIAN Army.

2. At the same time actual strengths of units are in many cases far below War Establishments.

If therefore a mass of new equipment is issued down to sub-units e.g., to platoons, company or equivalent level, there is a grave risk that for lack of manpower this equipment will either not be properly cleaned and maintained or else that all available men will be employed on its maintenance to the detriment of training or other duties.

3. It is consequently recommended by this HQ that all weapons and equipment in excess of that normally handled by the actual number of men available be held in centralised stores at not lower than battalion or equivalent level and there kept either "greased up" or regularly cleaned. For instance where only enough men are actually available to form one 25 pdr troop in a battery the remaining guns should be held centralised under Regimental or even Divisional arrangements and NOT issued and held by the battery.

4. Your consideration and views are requested.

3748

(sgd) M.W. HOFF.

10 Aug 46

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3746

(sgt) M. W. HOPE.,
Brigadier GS
for Major-General,
R. M. I. A.

ARCS/
Internal
G(Gr)
10:
OND
SD/109/2

COPY

Appx 'B' to
MIAA letter
SD/103 Dated 20 Aug 46

SUBJECT : War and Peace Establishment

LAND FORCES SUB COM AC (MIAA)

(469081 Ext 401) SD/103

29 Aug 46

TO : MINISTRY OF WAR

1. War Establishments have now been prepared and passed for the majority of Units in the Italian Interim Army. Considerations of man power and finance and the fact that at any time a proportion of the army consists of recruits at CAR prevent the full implementation of WE.

2. While we realise that under present circumstances it is inevitable that units will have to remain continuously at well below their WE strength we recognise that there are certain serious disadvantages in this of which possibly the most serious are :-

- (a) The fact that Commanders of units feel a sense of frustration at having their unit permanently below authorised strength and use this as an excuse for neglect of training.
- (b) The lack of uniformity that is apt to prevail through each Commander adopting different means to deal with the problem of short numbers.

3. In order to avoid these difficulties it is suggested that you might like to consider the adoption of the system, used in the British Army in Peace time of "Peace Establishment" in addition to "War Establishment".

4. Under this system Peace establishments are layed down for all units in a similar manner to War Establishment but based on a considerably lower strength. They are worked out in such a way

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Under this system Peace establishments are layed down for all units in a similar manner to War Establishment but based on a considerably lower strength. They are worked out in such a way as to ensure that units carry out the most realistic training with the depleted numbers and also to ensure that units could on being completed to WE be efficient in the shortest possible time.

For this reason Officers and Senior NCO's were included at very nearly full WE scale on peace establishment and it was largely in the rank and file that large reductions were made.

By this means uniformity was ensured and Commanders, knowing that their units were fully up to strength on Peace Establishment and realising that they could not expect to be made up to full WE until mobilised for War, would not suffer from the permanent feeling of frustration and dissatisfaction that is unavoidable when commanding a unit that is well below its authorised strength.

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- 2 -

6. Units organised on a Peace Establishment maintained a "Mobilisation Store" which held all the weapons and equipment clothing etc required for use by the unit when expanded from a Peace to a War Establishment. An important responsibility for a unit commander in peace time was to ensure that such equipment was maintained in a serviceable condition and was listed and stored in such a way as to allow of speedy issue and distribution on mobilisation.

7. It is appreciated that Great Britain, having no land frontiers, did not require to have any troops in peace time at instant readiness to protect the frontier.

Should your Ministry consider the adoption of the Peace Establishment principle it is pointed out that it would be perfectly feasible to maintain some portions of the Army permanently on War Establishment while other portions were organised on a Peace Establishment.

ATH/er

Internal Distribution

G(Trg)

1A

SD/92/3

(sgt) E.H. GOULBURN, DSO.
Major-General,
M. M. I. A.

3744

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUMSUBJECT : Strength of the Italian Army

FILE A 016

24 Nov. 1945

FROM : "A" Branch

TO : G (SD)

Q

1. Below for information are details of the strength of the Italian Army as at 1 November.

	<u>Office</u>	<u>Off's</u>	<u>Total</u>
US-ITI	536	9753	10,289
BR-ITI	1313	31554	32,867
ITI-ITI (Interim Army)	11070	114323	125,393
TOTAL	12919	159630	168,549
OG. BR.	1344	65383	66,724

2. The division between BR-ITI and ITI-ITI is on the basis of the instructions for the compilation of the Order of Battle on the handover of the Interim Army given in BR/92/2 of 8 November.

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ITI-ITI (Interim Army)	11070	114323	125,393
TOTAL	12919	156630	168,549
CG.RR.	1341	65383	66,724

2. The division between RR-ITI and ITI-ITI is on the basis of the instructions for the compilation of the Order of Battle in the handover of the Interim Army given in ES/92/2 of 8 November.

3743

3. It is estimated that strength of the Army (excl. CG.RR.) on the date of the handover (15 Nov.) was 160,000. When all the 1920 class has been demobilised it will be about 145,000.

26/11

H. G. G. G.

Lt Col.
A.A.G.

G 504

maf.

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