

785020

ACC

1000012013479

ME/4

10000/120/3479

ME/43/B

Sitings + Reports

3 BLW

2156
21 75

Aug. - Dec. 1946

Subject: SITREP

REME Branch
HQ 3 British Liaison Unit
MILAN - CMF
Tel: 153845, Ext 126
Ref: ME/SITREP/28
14 Dec 46

To: ADME,
Land Forces Sub-Comm AC,
MILIA

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REME directive No 1, sent under cover of EME/1402, dated 5 Dec 1945:-

1. "LEGNANO" Div Output

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Div figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 30th Nov and 7th Dec:-

	30th NOV	7th Dec
"A" Vehicles	1	3
"B" Vehicles	35	23
M/cycles	-	2
Guns	1	-
Small Arms	53	5
Instruments & Wireless	26	12
Miscellaneous	40	50

2. Personnel Return

Herewith the return of personnel of "LEGNANO" Div wksp and LADs, as requested in your ME/40/2/6, dated 4 Sept 1946:-

Unit	W B	Mil Per held	Mil Per to be released	Civilian Per
				27

Declassified E.O. 12065 Section 3-402/HWDC NO.

785020

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Div figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 30th Nov and 7th Dec:-

	<u>30th Nov</u>	<u>7th Dec</u>
"A" Vehicles	1	3
"B" Vehicles	35	23
M/cycles	-	2
Guns	1	-
Small Arms	53	5
Instruments & Wireless	26	12
Miscellaneous	40	50

2. Personnel Return

Herewith the return of personnel of "LEGNAO"
Div Wksp and LADs, as requested in your ME/40/2/6, dated
4 Sept 1946:-

Unit	W E	Mil Per held	Mil per to be released in Class 1925	Civilian Per held
Mech Eng Wksp	187	139	24	103
Mech Eng Pln	56	28	7	10
LADS	84	26	8	20

135

RECEIVED 19 DEC 1946

Ref 19 Dec

- 2 -

3. Personnel

During Col BLUNT's last visit in this BLU, he requested information regarding personnel in "LEGNANO" Div Wksp who were listed under the heading of "SERVIZI VARI".

This term was used owing to the men having just arrived from 5 CAR at MODENA with little indication as to their capabilities. They were in the following classes:-

4 - '23 cl, 11 - '24 cl, 25 - '25 cl .

25 of these had been posted to the Wksp in error and have now been transferred to 11 Regt Artillery.

The remaining 18 are now in the Wksp and have been allotted various jobs with a view to finding out where they are best suited.

They will be shown amongst the various trade groups in subsequent returns.

4. Small Arms - Maintenance

With reference to the maintenance of Small Arms within units I have to report once more that in every case I have seen, the poor condition of rifles etc., is due to the faults referred to in our last SITREP:- i.e. lack of tools and the few spare parts which would enable correct unit maintenance to be carried out. In fact the inefficiency of arms is mainly due to broken or missing parts- occurred sometimes during training, though frequently units have been issued with incomplete weapons, (sights missing etc.), and not so much to lack of inspections or proper storage.

Ministry of War issued a circular to Terr Comds, stating that units were to carry out all small repairs to their arms, using their armourers and unit spare parts. This circular is No 64666.

The armourer situation is better now, but the spares situation remains very bad. In two cases tools and

25 of these had been posted to the Wksp in error and have now been transferred to 11 Regt Artillery.

The remaining 18 are now in the Wksp and have been allotted various jobs with a view to finding out where they are best suited.

They will be shown amongst the various trade groups in subsequent returns.

4. Small Arms - Maintenance

With reference to the maintenance of Small Arms within units I have to report once more that in every case I have seen, the poor condition of rifles etc., is due to the faults referred to in our last SITREP:- i.e. lack of tools and the few spare parts which would enable correct unit maintenance to be carried out. In fact the inefficiency of arms is mainly due to broken or missing parts- occurred sometimes during training, though frequently units have been issued with uncomplete weapons, (sights missing etc.), and not so much to lack of inspections or proper storage.

Ministry of War issued a circular to Terr Comds, stating that units were to carry out all small repairs to their arms, using their armourers and unit spare parts. This circular is No 64666.

The armourer situation is better now, but the spares situation remains very bad. In two cases tools and testing instruments were assigned to certain armourers workshops in July 46 by Ministry of War order No 57948/M/495, but have not yet arrived.

2174

Presumably Ministry of War did not issue either of these orders if the spares or tools were not then available. Possibly they have neglected to make sure of their delivery.

JA/SA

J. Aldridge
(J. ALDRIDGE)
S/Capt
EME
British Liaison Unit

SUBJECT : SITREP

TO : GSO I 5 BLU

Cppy to A.D.M.E.
HQ AMIA

RECE Branch
3 BRITISH LIAISON UNIT
Tel. 15965 Ext. 126

NE/SITREP/27

25 Nov. 46

1. 8th Alpini Regt.

During the previous week the Regt HQ at Belluno and two of the Battalion headquarters at Belluno and Feltre were visited. The object was chiefly to ascertain the general vehicle state, and the result of a recent course for armourers.

Armourers

The two civilian armourers held by this regiment were the instructors on the course recently held and now completed.

The result of this has been that now every company has its own armourer. Although these unit armourers are obviously not yet very experienced, it is tremendous step towards maintaining in good condition the arms of this Regt.

At the moment these armourers are working under the great handicap of lack of tools. The number of tools held by this Regt is incredibly small and unless these are obtained the usefulness of these armourers will be largely lost.

May the Ministry of War be strongly advised to hasten the supply of armourers tool kits for this regiment as early as possible. If this is not done the obvious keenness shown by those concerned with the course will be in danger of being wasted.

Vehicles

The establishment of vehicles for these battalions in 65 and yet only 5, 4 and 15 are held by the 3 battalions in this area. Nearly all these are of Italian make and thus the spares situation although still bad, is somewhat more easy. It is suggested that any allied "B" vehicles that are held except Jeeps should if possible be exchanged for Italian makes.

Owing to the small number of vehicles held there appears to be no real unit maintenance difficulty. The main trouble is lack of tyres, canopies and superstructures. If this regiment is expected to carry on efficiently with so few vehicles then at least they should receive these items so that the vehs they have got are in order.

In at least one of these Bns the C.O. is obliged to visit his detachments by train etc.

were visited. The object was chiefly to ascertain the general vehicle state, and the result of a recent course for armouers.

Armouers

The two civilian armouers held by this regiment were the instructors on the course recently held and now completed.

The result of this has been that now every company has its own armouer. Although these unit armouers are obviously not yet very experienced, it is tremendous step towards maintaining in good condition the arms of this Regt.

At the moment these armouers are working under the great handicap of lack of tools. The number of tools held by this Regt is incredibly small and unless these are obtained the usefulness of these armouers will be largely lost.

May the Ministry of War be strongly advised to hasten the supply of armouers tool kits for this regiment as early as possible. If this is not done the obvious keenness shown by those concerned with the course will be in danger of being wasted.

Vehicles

The establishment of vehicles for these battalions in 65 and yet only 5, 4 and 15 are held by the 3 battalions in this area. Nearly all these are of Italian make and thus the spares situation although still bad, is somewhat more easy. It is suggested that any allied "B" vehicles that are held except Jeeps should if possible be exchanged for Italian makes.

Owing to the small number of vehicles held there appears to be no real unit maintenance difficulty. The main trouble is lack of tyres, canopies and superstructures. If this regiment is expected to carry on efficiently with so few vehicles then at least they should receive these items so that the vans they have got are in order.

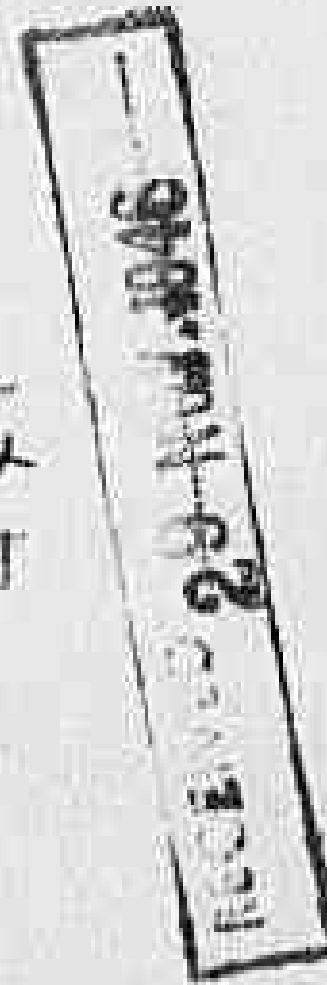
In at least one of these Bns the C.O. is obliged to visit his detachments by train etc.

Repairs of a small nature are carried out by the regimental L.A.D. but the allowance for procuring spares etc. from civilian sources (10,000 per 3 months) is totally inadequate.

Heavier repairs are carried out by the 5th Reparto Riparazioni. Of late it appears that units have not been receiving these back. Possibly 5 Reparto send them back to E.V.P.

May 5 Terr. Comd please be asked to enquire into this.

471



- 2 -

2. 5th Reparto Riparazioni

The O.C. of this shop seems extremely keen and is anxious to enlarge the output which could be easily done if his unit was made up to establishment and better use was made of the space available.

Work is about to start on the reorganisation of the workshops, various sections of which are at present too cramped and seem to be on top of one another. The diesel pump calibrating equipment for instance is being moved to a more separate and dust free spot.

The O.C. appears to be clear in his mind what is needed and there should be a great improvement, but it would greatly facilitate his work if more personnel were allotted. The workshop is at present about 30 under strength.

The clearance of vehicles beyond economical repair and scrap is held up at the moment. Ministry of War have laid down the price that this material will be sold at, but it is more economical for civilian firms to obtain material of this nature from A.R.A.M.R.

Summer grade engine oil is still being issued to this workshop.

The stores section appears satisfactory and well organised. I am told that the most frequently used parts are held in sufficient quantity to allow for any delay in transit from Fiorenza or Turin. A delay of about 3 weeks however is usual for any spares not actually in stock.

MILAN

J. G. G. G.
S/Capt.
REMER

The workshop is at present about 30 under strength.

The clearance of vehicles beyond economical repair and scrap is held up at the moment. Ministry of War have laid down the price that this material will be sold at, but it is more economical for civilian firms to obtain material of this nature from A.R.A.A.R.

Summer grade engine oil is still being issued to this workshop.

The stores section appears satisfactory and well organised. I am told that the most frequently used parts are held in sufficient quantity to allow for any delay in transit from Piacenza or Turin. A delay of about 8 weeks however is usual for any spares not actually in stock.

MILAN

S/Capt.
REHE

2172

2172

785020

SUBJECT : SITREP

REME Branch
HQ. 3 BRITISH LIAISON UNIT
MILAN, CITE

TO : A.D.M.E.
Land Forces Sub-Comm., A.C.
M.M.I.A.

LE/SITREP/26

25 Oct. 46

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REME directive No 1 sent under cover of EME/1402 dated 5 Dec 45:-

1. "LEGNANO" DIV. OUTPOST.

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Div. figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 12 Oct and 19 Oct:-

	12 Oct	19 Oct
"A" Vehicles	2	-
"B" Vehicles	32	29
M/cycles	2	3
Guns	2	-
Small Arms	-	37
Instruments & Wireless	1	-
Miscellaneous	64	72

2. F.A.R.E. - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

Further to our LE/SITREP/25 dated 11 Oct 46, para 2, herewith a copy of a letter from the F.A.R.E. dealing with faults found in barrels of Lee Enfield Rifles and details of the .303 amm used for testing:-

ARMS SECTION - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

Works Office
No 2/10260

Enclosed No 1
Gardone VT 16 Oct 46

SUBJECT : Repair of Lee Enfield Rifles

ARTY HQ OF III TERR COMD
info: ARMS FACTORY FOR THE ARMY
MINISTRY OF WAR
Arty Motor. Gen. Direct. - Tech. Div.
II Sec

MILAN
TERMI

ROME

On a recent visit of Capt ALDRIDGE to the factory, a large number of bulging barrels unfit for use was showed to him. The fact was attributed, in the first instance, to small extraneous matters in the barrel at the moment of shooting.

After repair, the weapons were submitted to a shooting test. Rounds received from the Arty Directorate of Verona as per letter No 51170/DI-55-3 dated 16/8/46 of Ministry of War were used for the testing.

1/9

RECEIVED

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REM directive No 1 sent under cover of EME/1402 dated 5 Dec 45:-

1. "LEGNANO" DIV. OUTPUT.

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Div. figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 12 Oct and 19 Oct:-

	<u>12 Oct</u>	<u>19 Oct</u>
"A" Vehicles	2	-
"B" Vehicles	32	29
M/cycles	2	3
Guns	2	-
Small Arms	-	37
Instruments & Wireless	1	-
Miscellaneous	64	72

2. F.A.R.E. - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

Further to our ME/SITREP/25 dated 11 Oct 46, para 2, herewith a copy of a letter from the F.A.R.E. dealing with faults found in barrels of Lee Enfield Rifles and details of the .303 ammn used for testing:-

ARMS SECTION - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

Works Office
No 2/10260

Enclosed No 1
Gardone VT 16Oct 46

SUBJECT : Repair of Lee Enfield Rifles

ARTY HQ OF III TERR COMD
info: ARMS FACTORY FOR THE ARMY
MINISTRY OF WAR
Arty Motor. Gen.Direct.-Tech.Div.
II Sec

MILAN
TERNI

ROME

On a recent visit of Capt ALDRIDGE to the factory, a large number of bulging barrels unfit for use was showed to him. The fact was attributed, in the first instance, to small extraneous matters in the barrel at the moment of shooting.

After repair, the weapons were submitted to a shooting test. Rounds received from the Arty Directorate of Verona as per letter No 51170/DT-55-3 dated 16/8/46 of Ministry of War were used for the testing.

On completion of the firing and on examination of the barrels it was noted that of 20 weapons tested, 7 showed slight bulges in the barrel in various places.

As the presence of extraneous matters in the barrel before the firing was excluded, attention was given to the cartridges. They have been stripped and for each one, the number on the cap, the weight

...../2

and the nature of the propelling charge with results are noted on the attached report.

Your HQ is requested to forward this report to the a/m British Captain but it is not known which numbers on the cap of the cartridges refer to British or American manufacture.

For further information enquiries were made at the CAR - BRESCIA, who stated that they use cartridges with No D I Z 1943.

Investigations are still being carried out to clear the question, and further communications will be forwarded on completion.

/s/ Il Direttore
Luigi Petrone LtCol.

p.c.c.
/s/ S. Buccheri, Maj.
Ufficiale Superiore Addetto

APUS SECTION CARDONE VAL TROMPIA

K 31 VII	gr. 2,70 square substance	m/m 0,29x1,39x1,39
C 18 F3 VII z	" 2,70 Bored cylinders	Ø=0,77 Ø=0,19 length 2,22
		m/m external & internal
H 26 V	" 2,55 square substance	m/m 0,317x1,04x1,04
(with a ring on the cap)	" 2,43	m/m 0,29x1,27x1,27
41		
(with a diametral line on the base cover)	" 2,57	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
19 SB 28 R		
19 SB 30 R	" 2,48	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
19 SB 32 R	" 2,55	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
19 SB 33 R	" 2,55	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
19 SB 35 R	" 2,62	" 0,29x1,39x1,39

question, and further communications will be forwarded on completion.

/s/ Il Direttore
Luigi Petrone LtCol.

p.c.c.
/s/ S. Buccheri, Maj.
Ufficiale Superiore Addetto

ARMS SECTION GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

K 31 VII	gr. 2,70 square substance	m/m 0,29x1,39x1,39	
C 18 F3 VII z	" 2,70 Bored cylinders	Ø=0,77 Ø=0,19 length 2,22	
H 26 V	" 2,55 square substance	m/m 0,317x1,04x1,04	
(with a ring on the cap)	" 2,43	"	m/m 0,29x1,27x1,27
41			
(with a diametral line on the base cover)			
SB 19 X 28 R	" 2,57	"	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
SB 19 X 30 R	" 2,48	"	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
SB 19 X 32 R	" 2,55	"	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
SB 19 X 33 R	" 2,55	"	" 0,29x1,27x1,27
SB 19 X 35 R	" 2,62	"	" 0,29x1,39x1,39

2170
...../3

- 3 -

3. PIACENZA ARSENAL

Ref. para 2 of your ME/43/B/5 of 3 inst. I approached Legnano Div. on the subject of assisting the Arsenal to further familiarise the workmen with allied eqpt.

The Div. have now contacted the Arsenal and offered to send for a period of 15 days one of each of the following guns:

1	-	6	pounder
1	-	17	"
1	-	25	"
1	-	40	m/m

4. U.M.I.

I was present during part of an inspection by the 2nd Nucleo of 880 U.M.I. of the transport held by 2nd Pln 250 Transport Coy at Lodi.

Capt. Silvagni commanding this team is obviously well up in his job and saw to it that his two NCOs carried out the inspection thoroughly. Nothing was missed and the inspection was carried out quite as efficiently as the last British U.M.I. inspection at which I was present.

Although this unit is probably one of the best transport Coys, every vehicle I saw inspected got a fairly bad report. This was as usual due to many small points being overlooked such as low oil in air filtre or a grease nipple had fallen off and remained unnoticed. There were other more serious points - use of wrong oil in diffs, for instance, but these were relatively few. In any case everything pointed to the fact that in spite of regular maintenance and use of the task system the task were not being carried out thoroughly enough.

The reason given for this was that the latest drivers posted to the unit were not mechanically minded and had little knowledge of MT. I was assured that every effort was being made to bring them up to scratch. The MTO Ten. Casschetti seemed to have fairly good knowledge of the job and should be capable of improving the efficiency of his drivers.

The unit had been released a few Dodge from O.A.R.E. and it was noticed that a high percentage of the new tyres of Dunlop and Goodyear make were cracking badly. This was not due to bad tyre maintenance or from running under-inflated. The cracks were not in any one direction but ran in every direction between the tread of the tyres. In some cases the canvas was visible between these cracks.

Probably the partially synthetic material of which these tyres are made has become hard during use. The life in these tyres may yet be considerable, but there is a definite ~~man~~ danger that should the cracking increase, pieces of tread will break off completely.

1 - 6 pounder
1 - 17 "
1 - 25 "
1 - 40 m/m

4. U.M.I.

I was present during part of an inspection by the 2nd Nucleo of 880 U.M.I. of the transport held by 2nd Pln 250 Transport Coy at Lodi.

Capt. Silvagni commanding this team is obviously well up in his job and saw to it that his two NCOs carried out the inspection thoroughly. Nothing was missed and the inspection was carried out quite as efficiently as the last British U.M.I. inspection at which I was present.

Although this unit is probably one of the best transport Coys, every vehicle I saw inspected got a fairly bad report. This was as usual due to many small points being overlooked such as low oil in air filter or a grease nipple had fallen off and remained unnoticed. There were other more serious points - use of wrong oil in diffs, for instance, but these were relatively few. In any case everything pointed to the fact that in spite of regular maintenance and use of the task system the task were not being carried out thoroughly enough.

The reason given for this was that the latest drivers posted to the unit were not mechanically minded and had little knowledge of MT. I was assured that every effort was being made to bring them up to scratch. The MTO Ten. Caschetti seemed to have fairly good knowledge of the job and should be capable of improving the efficiency of his drivers.

The unit had been released a few Dodge from O.A.R.E. and it was noticed that a high percentage of the new tyres of Dunlop and Goodyear make were cracking badly. This was not due to bad tyre maintenance or from running under-inflated. The cracks were not in any one direction but ran in every direction between the thread of the tyres. In some cases the canvas was visible between these cracks.

Probably the partially synthetic material of which these tyres are made has become hard during use. The life in these tyres may yet be considerable, but there is a definite ~~shar~~ danger that should the cracking increase, pieces of tread will break off completely.

5. VISITS

2169

Wednesday 23rd Oct was spent in Udine with Capt Rutter of 5 B.L.U., in order that I may have some idea of the commitments there in the event of Capt Rutter being called away on release before Capt Thundercliffe takes over in Milan.

...../4

- 4 -

6. R.E.M.E. OFFICE STAFF

The civilian clerk employed here since Jan 46 has now left and has been replaced by another of the E.L.U. civ. employees.

L/Cpl Williams, the R.E.M.E clerk, is due for release with group 44 and in consequence a replacement will be required here.

J. J. Williams
S/Capt.
R.E.M.E.

J. J. Holmby
S/Capt.
REME

2168

2168

be required here.

Subject: SITREP

REME Branch
HQ: 3 British Liaison Unit
Milan, CMF

ME/SITREP/25
11 October 1946

A.D.M.E.
Land Forces Sub-Comm., A.C.
M.M.I.A.

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REME directive No 1 sent under cover of EME/1402 dated 5 Dec 1945:-

1. - "LEGNANO" DIV. OUTPUT.

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Division figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 28th September and 5th October:-

"A" Vehicles	2
"B" Vehicles	54
M/cycles	1
Guns	1
Small Arms	2
Instruments & Wireless	11
Miscellaneous	26

28 Sept 5 Oct

2. - F.A.R.E. - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

Ref para 3 of your ME/43/B/5 of 3 Oct '46 I have not visited here since my last Sitrep, but have sent a request for further information concerning the .303 ammunition and if possible some of the cases. Incidentally I was shown an empty case of the alleged inefficient ammunition and noted there was no date stamped on the base. I was of the opinion that all ammunition of British manufacture was stamped with a date.

3. - U.M.I.

I have had a talk with Col. Ricci lately which quickly centred around a letter he sent me regarding the impending cuts to be made in his personnel and vehs and giving his opinion of what is necessary.

Actually I think his views on the numbers of both personnel and vehs which should be allotted to him are somewhat exaggerated, although I do think that at

1. - "LEGNANO" DIV. OUTPUT.

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Division figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 26th September and 5th October:-

	28 Sept	5 Oct
"A" Vehicles	-	2
"B" Vehicles	56	54
M/cycles	10	1
Guns	-	1
Small Arms	15	2
Instruments & Wireless	29	11
Miscellaneous	4	26

2. - F.A.R.E. - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA

Ref para 3 of your L13/43/B/5 of 3 Oct '46 I have not visited here since my last Sitrep, but have sent a request for further information concerning the .303 ammunition and if possible some of the cases. Incidentally I was shown an empty case of the alleged inefficient ammunition and noted there was no date stamped on the base. I was of the opinion that all ammunition of British manufacture was stamped with a date.

3. - U.M.I.

I have had a talk with Col. Ricci lately which quickly centred around a letter he sent me regarding the impending cuts to be made in his personnel and vehs and giving his opinion of what is necessary.

Actually I think his views on the numbers of both personnel and vehs which should be allotted to him are somewhat exaggerated, although I do think that at least 3 teams be kept up to strength:- i.e. 1 Capt., 2 N.C.Os. and driver per team, together with a vehicle for each team of course.

2167
Recently the 67 Inf Regt, which has not long been in "Legnano" Div, was visited with the idea of finding out what sort of attitude they take towards maintaining their vehs.

146
RECEIVED - 146 OCT 1946

.....2

-2-

I was surprised to find that this question was uppermost in their minds. The fact that a high percentage of their vehicles were off the road due to lack of spares did not affect the keenness of all concerned to see that maintenance was carried out on both efficient and inefficient vehicles.

Probably the keenest of all is the C.O., Col. De Micheli, who goes a long way towards instilling the necessity of good maintenance throughout the Unit. The M.T.O. is also good - insisting on the task system being carried out daily, before the vehicles start their normal duties. Drivers are allotted to every vehicle and receive maintenance instruction as often as possible. A room is allotted specially for this and equipped with the necessary charts etc.

The attached L.A.D. is also a very neat and efficient organization and although short of some men I was told that those present were first class.

Some vehicle documents, #106 and 412, were inspected and it is apparent that these are put to their proper use. Here is a Unit which, when eventually it obtains really good vehicles, can be trusted to look after them.

4. - POSTINGS-IN.

Both vehicle mech and armourer have now arrived and should prove useful, although neither have any experience apart from Command W/S at home. Actually I am at present negotiating with the Caproni project in the hope of being able to obtain one of their more experienced Sgt Veh Mechs with some length of service left.

5. - PERSONNEL RETURN.

Herewith the return of personnel of "Legnano" Div Wksps and LADS as requested in your ME/40/2/6 of 4 Sept '46:-

Unit	W.E.	Mil.Per. held	Mil.Per. to be rel- eased in Class 1925	Civilian Per. held
Mech Eng Wksp	167	85	7	101

A room is allotted specially for maps and equipped with the necessary charts etc.

The attached L.A.D. is also a very neat and efficient organization and although short of some men I was told that those present were first class.

Some vehicle documents, #106 and 412, were inspected and it is apparent that these are put to their proper use. Here is a Unit which, when eventually it obtains really good vehicles, can be trusted to look after them.

4. - POSTINGS-IN.

Both vehicle mech and armourer have now arrived and should prove useful, although neither have any experience apart from Command W/S at home. Actually I am at present negotiating with the Caproni project in the hope of being able to obtain one of their more experienced Sgt Veh Mechs with some length of service left.

5. - PERSONNEL RETURN.

Herewith the return of personnel of "Legnano" Div Wksp and LADS as requested in your ME/40/2/6 of 4 Sept '46:-

Unit	W.E.	Mil.Per. held	Mil.Per. to be rel- eased in Class 1925	Civilian Per. held
Mech Eng Wksp	167	85	7	101
Mech Eng Pln	44	8	3	9
LADS	72	21	4	25

J. Aldridge
2168

S/Capt
(J. Aldridge).
EME

CME.

Copy dispatched to EME 3 BLU - 4/10/46

(5)

SUBJECT :- Sitrep.

Land Forces Sub Comm. A.C.

M.S.I.A.

R O M E.

AB/43/B/5

3 Oct. '46

TO :- M.S.A. 3 B.D.U.

Ref. your Sitrep for 16 Sep.

1. 3 B.V.P. is normally more of an SF commitment than M.S.A., but you should concern yourself with the maintenance (and minor repairs) carried out there.

Ref. your Sitrep for 27 Sep.

2. Please discuss with "Legnano" Division the possibility of assisting Piacenza Arsenal in gun repairs. It is understood that a fresh CME may be appointed there soon.

Min. of War advise that financial reasons are delaying completion of constructional work at Piacenza Arsenal, and until the workshop is ready it is not wise to press for guns to be sent there for overhaul.

This office will discuss with Min. of War the arranging of an overhaul programme for artillery.

3. Can you please confirm that the .303 ammunition from Brescia was of British manufacture.

4. A copy of a letter to the Min. of War is attached referring to progress made at GARDONE VAL TROMPIA.

It is hoped to hold a M.S.A.E. conference towards the end of October.

See 6

AB

AB/ob

A. BLUME, Lt. Col.
Assistant Director of Mechanical Engineering.

M.S.I.A.

Ry 3/9/46

File

Subject: SITREP

REME Branch
HQ: 3 British Liaison Unit

ME/SITREP/22
27 Sept 1946

A.D.M.E.
Land Forces Sub-Comm., A.C.
M.M.I.A.

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with
your REME directive No 1 sent under cover of EME/1402
dated 5 Dec 1945:-

1. - LEGNANO DIV. OUTPUT.

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Division
figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending
14th and 21st September:-

"A" Vehicles	1	8
"B" Vehicles	40	54
M/cycles	3	4
Guns	-	2
Small Arms	-	4
Instruments & Wireless	3	17
Miscellaneous	34	177

2. - ARSENAL - PIACENZA.

That part of the main Artillery Shop which it
was agreed would be used for the repairs of allied weapons
of the Italian Divisions has now been closed. The
machinery has been moved to the far end of the building.
Other machines have been left round the floor space for use
when necessary in the repair of "our" equipment.

The building laid aside for the reconditioning
of buffers and recuperators has been divided into two parts,
one for dismantling and the other which eventually should
be dust proof for assembly work. This dust proofing etc.
has not been completed, but I am assured that it will be
finished in two or three days after the arrival of any
equipment for overhaul. This includes the wooden floor
which can be put down very quickly. What is required is
for the jobs to be given them and they will complete the
outstanding constructional work immediately. The same
applies to the cleaning and scouring room and paint shop.

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "LEGNANO" Division figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 14th and 21st September:-

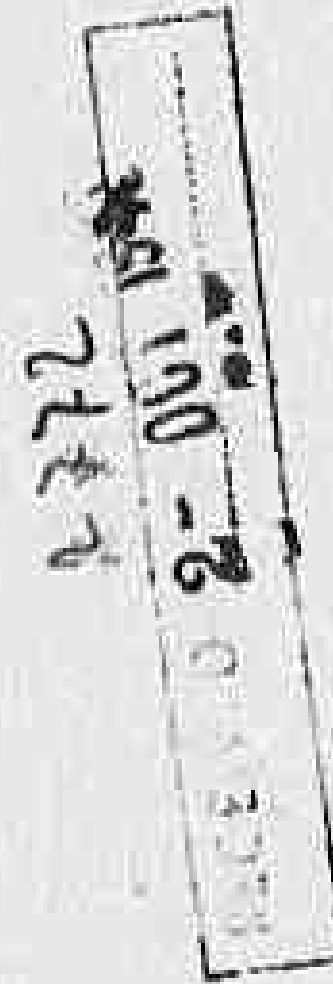
	14 SEPT	21 SEPT
"A" Vehicles	1	8
"B" Vehicles	40	54
M/cycles	3	4
Guns	-	2
Small Arms	-	4
Instruments & Wireless	3	17
Miscellaneous	34	177

2.-ARSENAL - PIACENZA.

That part of the main Artillery Shop which it was agreed would be used for the repairs of allied weapons of the Italian Divisions has now been closed. The machinery has been moved to the far end of the building. Other machines have been left round the floor space for use when necessary in the repair of "our" equipment.

The building laid aside for the reconditioning of buffers and recuperators has been divided into two parts, one for dismantling and the other which eventually should be dust proof for assembly work. This dust proofing etc. has not been completed, but I am assured that it will be finished in two or three days after the arrival of any equipment for overhaul. This includes the wooden floor which can be put down very quickly. What is required is for the jobs to be given them and they will complete the outstanding constructional work immediately. The same applies to the cleaning and scouring room and paint shop.

The Colonel told me that some of his men had already been on a course designed to make them familiar with British Artillery, but even so they would like to have a specimen of each piece of equipment to work on. Shall I get "Legnano" Div. to supply these and also get them to send some of their stuff in for repair to see how it goes?



.....2

Ry 2/10/46

-2-

Some vehicles are still being repaired by this organisation - Fords & Spas. - In fact they have recently started another shop near the old ammunition place down the Casteggio Road. This is a bit of a shambles now, but obviously can be made pretty effective. The Colonel seems pretty keen on getting this going but as usual wants more spare parts especially pistons and bearings for the Ford engines.

3. - SMALL ARMS SHOP - GARDONE VAL TROMPIA.

During a recent visit here both the shop dealing with allied weapons and also part of the Beretta Factory were inspected. The work turned out by the allied section is extremely good. I saw cases where recovered weapons, which originally appeared to be complete write-offs, had been repaired as new. There appears to be an adequate stock of reconditioned bolts and efficient barrels for this purpose. At the present moment there are 23 T.S.M.'s and 136 Enfield rifles in for repair, all from 68 Inf. Rgt. of "Legnano" Div. The workmanship in making new butts and forewoods is also excellent.

A few defects in the barrels of Mk.IV rifles have been discovered in the nature of slight bulges. No defects in this respect have been reported in the older Mk.III rifles. Col. Petrone seemed disappointed in that he was not allowed to have new barrels manufactured for these few cases.

It was also stated that some of the .303" ammunition received from Brescia for testing purposes had been found to vary in muzzle velocity as much as 80 ft/sec.

We were present at the Beretta Factory when some pistols and carbines were undergoing firing tests. The carbines all came through alright, but there were 7 in 20 pistols rejected at this stage. This is an extremely high figure although I believe usually is more like 4-5%. Col. Petrone is not exactly enthusiastic about the quality of these Beretta arms and consequently his staff check them very carefully before and after assembly. They are then taken down to the allied weapon shop and checked again. In this respect a good job is being done. We saw a quantity of weapons returned for extremely small defect. Even pistols with slight marks on the butts were not accepted.

Two complaints seemed to be troubling the otherwise extremely smooth running concern:-

(a) - Recently the new M.E. has been fired and in consequence the Colonel finds himself with only 4 office

3

-3-

3. - SMALL ARMS SHOP - CARDONE VAL TROMPIA (Contd.)

yet been shifted. As you probably know these people still have some of the arms factory machinery and have also sold some of it. The main argument put forward by O.M. is that if they move out then approx. 1000 employees will have to be sacked.

Col. Petrone expressed his desire to see you if you have time during your next visit up this way.

J. Aldridge
S/Capt.
(J. Aldridge)
E.M.E.

785020

J. Aldridge
S/Capt.
(J. Aldridge)
E.M.E.

2162

785020

43/B

3

Subject:- SITREP

REME Branch
HQ 3 British
Liaison Unit

ADME
MILA

ME/STRP/23
16 Sept 46

RECEIVED 20 SEP 1946
2444

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REME directive No 1 sent under cover of ME/I402 dated 5 Dec 1945:-

I. WKSP Output

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "IEGNANO" Division figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 31st Aug and 7th Sept:-

	31 AUG	7 SEPT
"A" Vehicles	44	38
"B" Vehicles	3	4
M/cycles	-	-
Guns	6	64
Small Arms	14	27
Instruments and W/less	39	81
Misc		

2. 3rd EFFICIENT VEH PARK

Further to our ME/STRP/21 Comd were contacted with a view to initiating improvements.

The following letter has been received by this HQ, and the unit will be visited in the near future in order to ascertain the extent of the proposed improvements. It will be noted that it has been decided to replace the present commander 2nd/Lt Cassinelli by a captain. It is hoped however that this does not prejudice Cassinelli's chances of promotion because he was obviously fully capable of commanding the park himself.

COPY

From 3 Terr Comd
Stato Maggiore
Ufficio Servizi

Milan
1 Sept 46

06/7050

To 3 EDU

785020

Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "IEGNANO"
Division figures covering repairs completed
during weeks ending 31st Aug and 7th Sept:-

	31 AUG	7 SEPT
"A" Vehicles	-	-
"B" Vehicles	44	38
M/cycles	3	4
Guns	-	-
Small Arms	6	64
Instruments and W/less	14	27
Misc	39	81

2. 3rd EFFICIENT VEH PARK

regarding a visit last month to 3 EVP Piacenza, 3 Terr Comd were contacted with a view to initiating improvements.

The following letter has been received by this HQ, and the unit will be visited in the near future in order to ascertain the extent of the proposed improvements. It will be notified that it has been decided to replace the present commander 2nd/Lt Cassinelli by a captain. It is hoped however that this does not prejudice Cassinelli's chances of promotion because he was obviously fully capable of commanding the park himself.

COPY

From 3 Terr Comd
Stato Maggiore
Ufficio Servizi

Milan
1 Sept 46

06/7050

To 3 BLU

Subject:- Inspection of 3 EVP

Ref your Q/37/29 dated 16 Aug 46.

This HQ has taken note of the report forwarded and has already given orders that:-

I. The proper maint of vehs; 406 Insp, and the use of the right forms be carried out.

2161

19/9/462

-2-

2. An NCO capable of helping the Officer i/c of the mech branch, be sent to the Veh Park, and that the less efficient dvr's be substituted (the present deficiency of these personnel is noted, and when trained personnel from the Scuola di Motorizzazione arrive, it will be possible to improve the situation).

3. Personnel for guard duty at the Park be increased.

Further details will be forwarded as soon as the matter has been dealt with.

Furthermore this HQ will take into consideration the question of the Park Commander; although Lt Cassinelli is a diligent and efficient commander he will be replaced by a captain, as soon as possible.

by order
The Chief of Staff

/s/ Col Fernando Moech

3 - 3° REPARTO RIPARAZIONE

From Friday last, 6 Sept virtually no work has been turned out by this unit owing to the strike of civil government employees. Work is expected to start today Friday 13th, but obviously will not become fully operative again before Monday, which means that eight or nine days have been lost.

The Divisional Wksp's owing to their employees being on a different footing were of course unaffected by this strike.

4 - Personnel Return

Herewith the return of personnel of "IEGNANO" Div Wksp's and LADS as requested in your ME/40/2/6/ of 4 Sept 46:-

Unit	W.E.	Mil Per. held	Mil Per to be released in Class 1925	Civilian Per. held
Mech Eng Wksp	167	85	7	101
Mech Eng Pln	44	5	-	14
LADS	72	19	2	25

he will be replaced by a captain, as soon as possible.

by order
The Chief of Staff

/s/ Col Fernando Moech

3 - 3° REPARTO RIPARAZIONE

From Friday last, 6 Sept
virtually no work has been turned out by this unit
owing to the strike of civil government employees.
Work is expected to start today Friday 13th, but
obviously will not become fully operative again before
Monday, which means that eight or nine days have
been lost.

The Divisional Wksp's owing to their employees
being on a different footing were of course unaffected
by this strike.

4 - Personnel Return

Herewith the return of personnel
of "IEGNANO" Div Wksp's and LADS as requested in
your ME/40/2/6/ of 4 Sept 46:-

Unit	W.E.	Mil Per. held	Mil Per to be rel- eased in Class 1925	Civilian Per.held
Mech Eng Wksp	167	85	7	101
Mech Eng Pln	44	5	-	14
LADS	72	19	2	25

J. Aldridge
S/Capt
(J Aldridge)
EME.

22360

43
RECEIVED
Subject:- SITREP

REME Branch,
3 British Liaison Unit.

A.D.M.E.,
Land Forces Sub-Comm., A.C.
M.M.I.A.

ME/STRP/22
30 Aug 46

RECEIVED 3- SEP 1946

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REME directive No I sent under cover of REME/I402 dated 5 Dec 1945:-

I. - WORKSHOP OUTPUT - Herewith 2nd Line Wksp "Legnano" Div figures covering repairs completed during weeks ending 17th and 24th Aug:-

"A" Vehicles	17th Aug	24th Aug
"B" Vehicles	52	48
M/Cycles	3	3
Guns	10	-
Small Arms	-	12
Inst and W/less	6	16
Misc.	43	129

2. - LEGNANO DIV

Owing to some slight disorganisation between the units concerned the engine changing competition referred to in our Sitrep No 20 has not yet been able to take place.

However another one concerning the same six units has now been organised and is to take place next month. Meanwhile the opportunity has been taken to make the competition somewhat more complicated. More time is allowed of course but I think this will be of more practicable value, although the general scheme of things is much as in the previous effort.

3. - 3 REPARTO RIPARAZIONE

The standard of work being turned out by this shop is still of very good standard, particularly on the heavy vehicle side, on which there is inevitably more organisation than in the car and small vehicle section, although this too seems to be doing alright. A short while ago this section was so blocked up with vehicles that it was difficult to make out from the confusion exactly which vehicles were in hand. Some order is now apparent once more.

The policy is still being maintained for the repair of some of the really bad vehicles as before - i.e. say half a dozen wrecks are sent to firms who return perhaps half this number as fit vehicles keeping what is left as payment for the work. In view of the fact that most of the vehicles repaired in this manner are in a really shocking state this policy still seems to be sound enough.

"A" Vehicles
 "B" Vehicles
 M/Cycles
 Guns
 Small Arms
 Inst and W/less
 Misc.

	17th Aug	24th Aug
"A" Vehicles	-	-
"B" Vehicles	52	48
M/Cycles	3	3
Guns	10	-
Small Arms	-	12
Inst and W/less	6	16
Misc.	43	129

2. - LEGHANO DIV

Owing to some slight disorganisation between the units concerned the engine changing competition referred to in our Sitrep No 20 has not yet been able to take place. However another one concerning the same six units has now been organised and is to take place next month. Meanwhile the opportunity has been taken to make the competition somewhat more complicated. More time is allowed of course but I think this will be of more practicable value, although the general scheme of things is much as in the previous effort.

3. - REPARTO RIPARAZIONE

The standard of work being turned out by this shop is still of a very good standard, particularly on the heavy vehicle side, on which there is inevitably more organisation than in the car and small vehicle section, although this too seems to be doing alright. A short while ago this section was so blocked up with vehicles that it was difficult to make out from the confusion exactly which vehicles were in hand. Some order is now apparent once more.

The policy is still being maintained for the repair of some of the really bad vehicles as before - i.e. say half a dozen wrecks are sent to firms who return perhaps half this number as fit vehicles keeping what is left as payment for the work. In view of the fact that most of the vehicles repaired in this manner are in a really shocking state this policy still seems to be sound enough.

Last month the work being carried out on the installation of test beds was at last completed. Also a portable air brake and pitch of vanes the load can be adjusted to suit every type of engine dealt with here and the apparatus should be ideal for this shop. The only snag is that I'm not sure if they are fully conversant with the testing of ^{of} reconditioned engines, because as you know even at large British overhauls shops Italians have been known to ruin engines during the first hour of its life. We will however watch this.

A number of Ford and Bedford vehicles has been received recently from ambulance units but these are being transferred to RVP, San Felice.

2159

.....2 Aug 5/9/46

-2-

3.- REPARTO RIPARAZ (contd)

There are now two Lieutenants and two 2/Lts under
Capt Grassi.

Ten. GALDI DIEGO
Ten. RUSSO PERICLE
2/Ten. ARU DOMINICO
2/Ten. BERETTA UBALDO

The first named is on leave pending release. Berretta has not functioned yet as he is ill, but is O.C. Stores Section, while 2/Ten Aru Dominico is in charge of a vehicle section. Ten Russo Pericle, O.C., ancillary trades is the opposite of Grassi in temperament and has nothing like the energy. I am afraid that Grassi is still the man who keeps things going. Incidentally he has recently lost most of one finger, but this does not seem to curtail his activities at all.

4. - Unit Serial No

Will you please inform me of the serial no.

of:-

3rd Camp Parco Campale of Legnano Div

CMF.

J. H. H. H.
S/Capt.,
(E Aldridge)
E.M.F.

afraid that Grassi is still the man who keeps things going. Incidentally he has recently lost most of one finger, but this does not seem to curtail his activities at all.

4. - Unit Serial No

Will you please inform me of the serial no.

of:-

3rd Camp Parco Campale of Legnano Div

C.M.F.

J. Helms
1st/Capt.
(J. Aldridge)
E.M.E.

Subject: SITREP

REME BRANCH
HQ: 3 British Liaison Unit

A.D.M.E.
Land Forces Sub-Comm. A.C.
E.M.I.A.

ME/SITREP/21
16 August 1946

RECEIVED

19 AUG 1946

Herewith fortnightly SITREP in accordance with your REME directive No 1 sent under cover of REME/1402 dated 5 December 1945:-

1. - WORKSHOP OUTPUT - Herewith 2nd Line Workshop "LEGNAVO" Division figures covering REPAIRS completed during weeks ending 3rd and 10th August:-

	3rd Aug	10 Aug
"A" Vehicles	-	-
"B" Vehicles	34	41
M/cycles	1	4
Guns	1	1
Small Arms	63	23
Instruments & W/less	9	3
Miscellaneous	81	54

2. - 3. EFFICIENT VEHICLE PARK - PIACENZA. -

A visit was paid during the last week to the E. E.V.P.- On arrival it was found that the Unit was in the final stages of moving to a new location, only a few hundred yards from the previous site. In our opinion it has been every bit worth the move, because unless the quantities of vehicles held increase very considerably, this new site is excellent.

Accommodation for vehicles is in commodious buildings having doors, roofs and concrete floors in fine condition. Trucks were drawn up in orderly rows and I was able to find only one tyre anything like soft.

The establishment is as follows:-

W.E.

1 Capt.
1 N.C.O. Clerk
1 N.C.O. for Q duties

Actually held

1 2/Lt.
2 Senior N.C.O.s

1. WORKSHOP OUTPUT - Herewith 2nd Line Workshop
 "LEGNANO" Division figures covering REPAIRS completed
 during weeks ending 3rd and 10th August:-

	<u>3rd AUG</u>	<u>10 AUG</u>
"A" Vehicles	-	-
"B" Vehicles	34	41
M/cycles	1	4
Guns	1	1
Small Arms	63	23
Instruments & W/less	9	3
Miscellaneous	81	54

2. - 3. EFFICIENT VEHICLE PARK - PIACENZA. -

A visit was paid during the last week to the
 E. E.V.P.- On arrival it was found that the Unit was
 in the final stages of moving to a new location, only
 a few hundred yards from the previous site. In our
 opinion it has been every bit worth the move, because
 unless the quantities of vehicles held increase very
 considerably, this new site is excellent.

Accommodation for vehicles is in commodious
 buildings having doors, roofs and concrete floors in
 fine condition. Trucks were drawn up in orderly rows
 and I was able to find only one tyre anything like soft.

The establishment is as follows:-

<u>W.E.</u>	<u>Actually held</u>
1 Capt.	1 2/Lt.
1 N.C.O. Clerk	2 Senior N.C.O.s
1 N.C.O. for Q duties	
1 N.C.O. Mechanic	
1 Clerk	
1 Cook	
12 Drivers	10 Drivers
3 D.R.s	

The main difficulty is that all the drivers
 have little or no knowledge of mechanic work, in fact
 only one is capable of driving.

.....2

-2-

2. - 3. EFFICIENT VEH PARK - PIACENZA (Contd.)

Consequently no actual maintenance squads are used in a routine manner. The only drill adhered to is that the batteries are removed and kept in order by use of a charging plant which was due to be installed from the old location. Also a keen eye is kept by the two N.C.O.s and the O.C. on tyres.

The O.C. incidentally, 2/Lt CASSINELLI, appeared to be working very well and energetically. He is overcoming difficulties in spite of the drivers deficiency, even though much of movement of vehicles etc. is carried out by himself.

This Unit is then far from inefficient and as far as I can tell, no vehicle has ever left the park with any deterioration faults due to storage in the Park. Maximum number of vehicles held is about 50, with up to 20 m/cs. Usually vehicles are allocated to Units within a month of receipt.

Conveniently near is the 15. Reparto Riparazioni which the O.C. was advised to contact if in need of any odd repair work, the temporary loan of a fitter etc.

We suggest that :

- a) - Drivers with some knowledge of veh mech work be posted.
- b) - 2/Lt CASSINELLI, who is doing a Captain's job well under difficulties, be promoted.

3. - BACKLOADING TO O.A.R.E.

There have been many discussions with Maj. CATALANO following the receipt of my letter ME/MT/116 of 6 July 1946. He eventually agreed to send a few vehicles and engines at regular intervals, and to increase the quantities backloaded as the output of O.A.R.E. increased. Copies of written orders to backload 13 vehicles were sent to me, but these are the only trucks sent to O.A.R.E. since the 10th July. Nine I know were backloaded and I think the other four will have arrived by now. Twenty m/cs were sent, but I am afraid no engines so far.

The matter will be taken up again very shortly, but if you require vehicles in really large quantities

etc. is carried out by himself.

This Unit is then far from inefficient and as far as I can tell, no vehicle has ever left the park with any deterioration faults due to storage in the Park. Maximum number of vehicles held is about 50, with up to 20 m/cs. Usually vehicles are allocated to Units within a month of receipt.

Conveniently near is the 15. Reparto Riparazioni which the O.C. was advised to contact if in need of any odd repair work, the temporary loan of a fitter etc.

We suggest that :

- a) - Drivers with some knowledge of veh mech work be posted.
- b) - 2/Lt CASSINELLI, who is doing a Captain's job well under difficulties, be promoted.

3. - BACKLOADING TO O.A.R.E.

There have been many discussions with Maj. CATALANO following the receipt of my letter ME/MT/116 of 6 July 1946. He eventually agreed to send a few vehicles and engines at regular intervals, and to increase the quantities backloaded as the output of O.A.R.E. increased. Copies of written orders to backload 13 vehicles were sent to me, but these are the only trucks sent to O.A.R.E. since the 10th July. Nine I know were backloaded and I think the other four will have arrived by now. Twenty m/cs were sent, but I am afraid no engines so far.

The matter will be taken up again very shortly, but if you require vehicles in really large quantities at O.A.R.E., which I feel is unlikely owing to the naturally present low output, the odd push from Ministry of War might be a good thing

Reference the possible cutting down of ²¹⁵⁶2156s which was discussed at the Bologna Conference. "Legnano" Div have taken some action in the cutting out a couple.

J. Aldridge
S/Capt.
(J. Aldridge)
E.M.E.

1545