



WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

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ST January 15, 2008

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Regular Pioneer Activity in Britain

Dear Brothers:

In the February 2008 *Our Kingdom Ministry* the secretary and service overseer are reminded to *review the activity of all regular pioneers*. This is usually done at the end of February. This allows the elders to determine if some pioneers are having difficulty meeting the hour requirement for regular pioneers for the current service year. It also affords opportunity to provide practical assistance for some who may be having difficulties. The purpose of this letter is to remind the secretary and service overseer of the importance of following through on this direction. While writing we felt it would be good to take the opportunity to provide a few reminders to help with this meeting.

HOUR REQUIREMENT: Page 114 of *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will* says: "You must be able to follow a practical schedule that will enable you to spend the required number of hours in field service." The hour requirement for regular pioneers should not be taken lightly. Please remember that unlike auxiliary pioneers, the hour requirement for regular pioneers is a *yearly requirement*. On average 840 hours for the service year will work out to 70 hours a month. However, you should keep in mind that each regular pioneer will have a different schedule. Some will have organized their affairs to spend more time in field ministry during the summer months. Secular employment, family responsibilities, and holidays will affect time spent in the field. Elders should not compare the activity of one pioneer with another. —Gal. 6:4.

On the other hand, are the pioneers lax regarding the pioneer hour requirement? Have they lost their self-discipline, joy, zeal, or urgency in the field? Are other activities consuming their time and energy? Are they self-sparing or somewhat disorganized? Do they need practical help? Do they have a schedule for the coming six months that allows them to reach their target of hours? Do not be quick to recommend their deletion. However, if pioneers have a *pattern* of not achieving the hour requirement it may be better for them to return to the publisher ranks, at least for a temporary period.

NEW PIONEERS: In the Britain field we currently have 1,962 who have spent less than two years as regular pioneers. Do you have any in your congregation? These new pioneers particularly need encouragement and commendation. They need to be assisted to maintain their joy in full-time service and make this their career. Perhaps they require assistance with their schedule, how to balance their responsibilities or ways to be more productive in the field. Have you commended them for what they have achieved so far? Has their Congregation Book Study overseer worked with them? Are they keeping up with their Bible reading and personal study? According to our records, 368 of our new pioneers are teenagers. Are you keeping a fatherly eye on their welfare?

With this letter we are therefore asking the secretary and service overseer to make a special point of arranging a shepherding call for any in the congregation who have spent *less than two years service as regular pioneers*. If the secretary and service overseer are unable to make these calls personally they may invite other elders and particularly their Congregation Book Study overseers to assist. Please see our letter to all bodies of elders dated ST February 10, 2005.

CONCESSIONS: Many regular pioneers work on a variety of approved theocratic projects. Their hard work is commendable. These faithful brothers and sisters are supported by their local elders and given every encouragement to enjoy their full-time service. As they are unable to spend 840 hours a year in the ministry an hour concession is provided for them. This should be *clearly marked* on their *Congregation's Publisher Record* card. Please remember that time spent in the ministry during a given month plus the hour concession should *never exceed 70 hours*. For example, if pioneers spend 50 hours in field ministry and 30 hours on approved theocratic projects, then 50 hours is marked in the hours column and 20 hours is noted in the remarks column on the *Congregation's Publisher Record* card. The congregation secretary should ensure this is being done accurately.

Pioneers may also receive a concession for some *temporary* difficulties they may experience. Paragraph 17 of the July 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert instructs pioneers: "If you are temporarily ill for a few months or for some other urgent reason beyond your control you cannot meet the required hours, you can approach a member of the Congregation Service Committee and explain the problem. If these elders think that it would be advisable to allow you to continue in the pioneer service without worrying about making up the lost time, they can make that decision." Many pioneers may be unaware of this directive. Is the Congregation Service Committee therefore *quick* to notice a problem and offer assistance? If a pioneer has such a temporary problem, can you take the initiative to offer help? If an hour concession is provided, this should be clearly marked on the *Congregation's Publisher Record* card. Please see our letter to all bodies of elders dated November 1, 2001, and September 5, 2007.

The secretary and service overseer should carefully review the above-mentioned letters to all bodies of elders prior to considering the activity of the regular pioneers. It would be good to speak to their Congregation Book Study overseer and work through him in providing any necessary encouragement and support.

Please circulate this letter to the entire body of elders as caring for the regular pioneers is a responsibility that every elder shares as he looks after Jehovah's sheep.—Acts 20:28.

We take the opportunity of sending you our warm Christian love and best wishes as we serve together in furtherance of the good news.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower B. & J. Society
OF BRITAIN

c: Travelling overseers