



CABINET OFFICE

Central Statistical Office

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From the Director: Sir John Boreham, K.C.B.

Our Ref: A22/26

2 February 1981

SIR DEREK RAYNER'S REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT STATISTICAL SERVICES

1. You already have a copy of Sir Derek Rayner's report to the Prime Minister on the review of the Government Statistical Services together with two minutes from the Prime Minister's Principal Private Secretary (one to Ministers' Private Offices, the other to Sir Robert Armstrong). These ask the Lord President, with my assistance, to follow through all the recommendations in the departmental and interdepartmental reports with a view to publishing a statement of the results around Easter.
2. The Lord President has now written to Ministers asking them to reach final decisions on all outstanding recommendations in their departmental reports and to let the Minister of State (CSD) and myself have, as soon as possible, a statement of their decisions in the form shown in the Annex. The aim is that these should be agreed between Ministers and the Minister of State CSD by 6 March. The Lord President has asked me meanwhile to take up directly with departments any particular issues or points that arise from the action documents prepared so far. If it proves necessary to depart from particular recommendations, the Lord President hopes that this will be done so as to preserve the objective of simplification and to make savings equal to or greater than those originally recommended.
3. Soon after 6 March, I shall submit to the Minister of State CSD a progress report to the Prime Minister. This will include a draft statement, suitable for publication, showing decisions made on the seven hundred or so detailed recommendations in the individual departmental reports and commenting on the action being taken to implement the general recommendations in the interdepartmental report. This will require a great deal of work to be done in a short time and I shall be grateful for your help in making this run smoothly. In particular I shall need to have from you the material required for the draft statement well before 6 March. I have written to the Head of your Department about this direct approach I am making to you.

Departmental Action Plans

4. I already have at the CSO copies of most of the departmental reports and action plans although they are not all the final versions.

- 4.1 Will you please let Julian Calder have a note by 13 February of any recommendations on which action has not yet been agreed by your Minister or where the agreed action produces smaller savings than the corresponding recommendation.
- 4.2 Please aim to clear with your Minister any outstanding issues and send me a copy of your return in the form shown in the Annex, as soon as possible, and in any case not later than 27 February. If it is convenient I should prefer to receive the material in stages (with blanks to be filled in later against some recommendations) provided that it is all in by the 27th. Please ensure that the entries in the "decision" column of the form are kept as brief as possible - preferably not more than 2-3 lines each. An ideal entry would be "Accept (1981/82)", the figures in brackets denoting the year in which the savings would be made. Any points which cannot be resolved at official level will need to be referred to the Minister of State CSD who will take them up, as necessary, with your Minister.

All this has to be completed by 6 March.

Action following Interdepartmental Report

5. Each of the numbered recommendations in Part I of the interdepartmental report will require action either by departments or by me or both. I attach a schedule showing a summary of the recommendations with overall responsibility for their implementation and proposed action to be taken initially by 6 March and then later.

- 5.1 Please let me have any comments on the schedule by 13 February. Once agreed, it will form the basis for that part of the published statement dealing with the interdepartmental report.

6. The emphasis in the interdepartmental report is on the steady improvement in cost-efficiency and value for money - both within the GSS and, through our activities, more widely within government. Recommendation 23 proposes an annual cost statement for Departmental Ministers and recommendation 2 requires me to report annually to the Prime Minister on the GSS achievements.

- 6.1 To do this, I shall have to obtain from you reports, with some budgetary information, covering the activities of your division in 1981/82. It is important that this should be consistent with the systems you devise for the annual statements to your Ministers; and it will, no doubt, be condensed from these. I shall circulate my proposals for discussion as soon as possible. They will relate particularly to recommendations 1 (productivity improvements), 2 (Annual report), 5 (computing costs), 18-20 (international work), 22-24 (efficiency and use of resources), 27-28 (payment between departments).

7. A number of recommendations concern reviewing needs for data. The Survey Control Unit is drawing up proposals to cover recommendation 11 on the periodic review of regular inquiries. There will be advantages in coordinating this with action on recommendations 3 (review data collection), 9 (reassessing data bases), and 12 and 13 (lists of compulsory statistics) where the initiative lies with Departments. I have written to Permanent Secretaries asking if they see any difficulties in accepting recommendations 7, 8, 21 and 25 (which make various proposals for continuing scrutiny of statistical work) and the second half of recommendation 15 on the amendment of administrative systems for the benefit of statistics.

8. Recommendation 17 on dissemination needs coordination across the GSS. Draft guidelines will be circulated for discussion in CSO(CP) before submission to CSD Ministers.

9. Recommendations 29 and 30 embody the main conclusions of paragraph 1-27 of Part II of the Report, dealing with OPCS and multi-purpose social surveys. Responsibility lies with the Registrar-General and myself. Some of the proposals raise major issues which I shall discuss with the Registrar-General before we proceed.

10. Paragraphs 28-47 of Part II deal with some issues on macro-economic statistics arising from four of the Departmental reports. I propose the action set out in the schedule.

11. Work in the CSO is being coordinated by Julian Calder (233-8298) assisted by Eric Lomas (233-8518). They will deal with any immediate queries. I am copying this letter to those on the attached list as well as to their Heads of Department.

JOHN BOREHAM

Emcs

Miss R J Maurice
K V Henderson
Miss M P Brown
J W S Walton
N Harvey
L S Berman
M J Erritt
A G Carruthers
C W Capstick
A A Sorrell
E J Thompson
C M Glennie
D Adams Jones
J Murray
A R Smith
E H M Price
W B Wakefield
G L Reid
B C Brown
R F A Hopes

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REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT STATISTICAL SERVICES

STATEMENT OF DECISIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

ANNEX

For consistency the statement of decisions should be in the following form -

RECOMMENDATIONS			DECISION AND DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION	RECURRENT ANNUAL SAVINGS/COST RESULTING FROM DECISION	
Recommended Recurrent Annual Saving/Cost		£ ⁽¹⁾		Manpower	
£ ⁽¹⁾	Manpower				
Each recommendation set out as it appears in the departmental study report					
Total recommended net recurrent savings (as in Annex A to Sir Derek Rayner's report)			TOTAL NET RECURRENT SAVINGS		
			TIMING OF NET RECURRENT SAVINGS ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾ RESULTING FROM DECISIONS		
			1980/81 -		
			1981/82 -		
			1982/83 } -		
			1983/84 } -		

NOTES (1) Cost basis: Staff-Col(V) of CSD Ready Reckoner 1979 Edition other -1979/80 prices

(2) The full annual value of any savings to be entered once only - against the period in which the saving is first made

(3) Any one-off savings/costs should be identified in a separate note to the table

Manpower and Annual Expenditure ⁽⁺⁾ All Statistical Services		
	May 1979	April 1984
Manpower (nos)		
Expenditure (£000/yr)		

(+) cf Tables 1 and 2 Annex B of Sir D Rayner's Report

INTERDEPARTMENTAL RAYNER REPORT ON GSS
Overall Responsibility and Proposed Action

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	PROPOSED ACTION BEFORE 6 MARCH 1981		PROPOSED LATER ACTION	
		Head of GSS	Departments	Head of GSS	Departments
<u>Methods and Processes</u>					
1. Increase statistical talent on data collection; involve computer experts; report on productivity improvements to senior management .	Departmental management with the help of the Head of the GSS.	To develop proposals.	To note.	To implement proposals for provision of suitable staff for data collection. Greater weight to be given in career assessment to experience in data collection.	To cooperate with Statistician Group Management Unit (SGMU). Report annually to senior management on productivity and other improvements; and inform Head of GSS.
2. Head of GSS to stimulate improvements in GSS methods and efficiency. Annual report to PM.	Head of the GSS	To begin preparation of proposals on information required on GSS methods and efficiency for report to PM.	To note.	To examine Departmental performance and advise. Prepare annual report.	Report annually to Head of GSS. Consider periodic proposals from Head of GSS and other Depts.
3. Departments to review external records (statistical and administrative).	Minister of State CSD, in consultation with Head of GSS (statistical forms).	To note reference to statistical data collection.	CSD to make proposals.	To monitor statistical reviews (in conjunction with rec. 11).	Depts. to conduct reviews of statistical data collection in collaboration with Survey Control Unit (SCU) and report results to Head of GSS. Depts. to review external administrative records in consultation with CSD as necessary.
<u>Computing</u>					
4. Use generalised statistical software.	Head of GSS in consultation with Depts. and CSD (CCTA).	Instruct CSO(C) to begin consideration of scope for savings.	Comment to CSO with suggestions for savings.	Set up working group to catalogue existing generalised software. Investigate possibility of implementation in each Dept. Prepare final report by end 1981.	List existing computer uses. Take part in review.
5.(a) Compare Depts. computing costs and productivity.	Head of GSS and CCTA.	Coordinate with CCTA and consider information needed centrally.	To note.	Issue guidance to Depts. jointly with CCTA. Report annually.	Report on costs. Investigate further cases where costs appear capable of reduction.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL RAYNER REPORT ON GSS (Cont'd)
Overall Responsibility and Proposed Action

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	PROPOSED ACTION BEFORE 6 MARCH 1981		PROPOSED LATER ACTION	
		Head of GSS	Departments	Head of GSS	Departments
<u>Computing (Cont'd)</u>					
5. (b) Computer management should cost computer work consistently and inform customers of the costs of their jobs.	Departments in consultation with CCTA	To note.	CCTA to issue guidance.	See next column.	Report annually to Head of GSS on improvements. To note and take account in budgetary arrangements.
6. Scrutinise OPCS computing.	Secretary of State for Social Services.	See next column.	Secretary of State for Social Services to consider, Head of GSS to be informed of his decision.	Possible involvement in scrutiny.	Undertake scrutiny (if agreed).
<u>Examine Needs for Data</u>					
7. Directors of Statistics to be consulted on any proposal to Ministers with a statistical implication.	Departments	To write to Perm. Secs.	To note.	To monitor.	To maintain.
8. Be harder on outside demands.	Departments in consultation with Head of GSS.	To write to Perm. Secs.	To note.	To monitor.	To maintain.
9. Reassess "big" data bases regularly.	Departments with CSO assistance.	To consider information required from Departments following a reassessment.	To note and prepare timetable for reassessments. Liaise with Survey Control Unit.	To liaise with Departments; and review CSO databases.	Reassess big data bases at least once every five years, in collaboration with Survey Control Unit as appropriate. Report results to Head of GSS.
10. Ministers to challenge need for statistics.	Departments	To note.	To note.	-	To keep under review.
<u>Control of Forms</u>					
11. SCU to review regular inquiries by Departments and Agencies.	Head of GSS to take up with Departments in first instance.	Arrange for paper to be drafted setting out: 1. method of review and tentative timetable; 2. scope of ad hoc survey assessments.	To note new role for SCU. Begin preparation of list of regular inquiries. Make necessary arrangements with Departmental agencies.	Establish new system. Undertake reviews in conjunction with Departments. Annual report.	Agree method and timetable. Collaborate in reviews with SCU.
12. Provide Ministers with annual report on statistics collected using statutory powers.	Departments	Agree uniform reporting arrangements with Depts.	See previous column.	Monitor as necessary	Compile reports annually. Copy to SCU.
13. Include agencies in arrangements for controlling forms.	Departments	As 11, 12, 14	Arrange with agencies.	As 11, 12, 14	As 11, 12, 14
14. Improve estimates of form-filling burden imposed by Departments and Agencies.	Departments in consultation with Head of GSS	Discuss work programme with BSO and other relevant Depts.	See previous column.	To collate and circulate Departmental experience and use in regular reviews (rec.11).	Carry out investigations and report.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL RAYNER REPORT ON GSS (Cont'd)

Overall Responsibility and Proposed Action

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	PROPOSED ACTION BEFORE 6 MARCH 1981		PROPOSED LATER ACTION	
		Head of GSS	Departments	Head of GSS	Departments
<p><u>Sampling</u></p> <p>15. CSO to monitor inquiry registers and research sampling and estimation techniques. Consider amendments to administrative systems to improve statistics.</p>	<p>Head of GSS</p> <p>Departments</p>	<p>To propose suitable work programme.</p> <p>To write to Perm. Secs. on administrative systems.</p>	<p>To note.</p>	<p>To liaise with Depts. on register availability.</p> <p>To coordinate research in sampling and estimation.</p> <p>To consider possible amendments to administrative systems under rec. 11.</p>	<p>Liaise with SCU on registers.</p> <p>Undertake research; implement findings.</p> <p>Advise within Dept. and Head of GSS on desirable amendments to administrative systems.</p>
<p><u>Analysis and Interpretation</u></p> <p>16. Reduce overlaps with other specialisms.</p>	<p>Departments in consultation with Head of GSS and CSD.</p>	<p>To consult CSD</p>	<p>To note.</p>	<p>To consult CSD and monitor as necessary.</p>	<p>Consider and inform Head of GSS of any proposals affecting statistician posts.</p>
<p><u>Dissemination</u></p> <p>17. More rigorous approach to cost of disseminating statistics.</p>	<p>CSD Ministers in consultation with Head of GSS and Department.</p>	<p>To draft guidelines to achieve uniform approach across GSS. Arrange for discussion in CSO(CP) with a view to making a submission to CSD Ministers as soon as possible.</p>	<p>To note and comment to Head of GSS on specific Departmental aspects as necessary.</p>	<p>Establish guidelines and monitor as necessary.</p>	<p>Follow up.</p> <p>Report to Head of GSS on improvements.</p>

INTERDEPARTMENTAL RAYNER REPORT ON GSS (Cont'd)
Overall Responsibility and Proposed Action

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	PROPOSED ACTION BEFORE 6 MARCH 1981		PROPOSED LATER ACTION	
		Head of GSS	Departments	Head of GSS	Departments
<u>International Obligations</u>					
18. Apply value for money to international work.	Departments in conjunction with Head of GSS and FCO.	Arrange for Departments to provide information regularly on the cost of items of international work.	Initiate review of international obligations and their cost.	Co-ordinate action required.	Review international obligations. Notify CSO of burdensome returns.
19. Cost international work before accepting responsibility.		-ditto-	To note.	Annual report.	Consult CSO on doubtful cases.
20. Harmonise UK and international requirements and methods.		Begin consideration, in conjunction with Depts. of possible approaches to SOEC and other international bodies.	Identify major cases and begin consideration of appropriate action.	Follow through as necessary with FCO, SOEC etc. Annual report.	Consider major cases and report.
<u>Management of Statistical Services</u>					
21. Those responsible for managing departmental resources should inform themselves about statistical work.	Departments in consultation with Head of GSS,	To write to Perm. Secs	To note.	-	To maintain.
22. Directors of statistics to account for their use of resources.		As below.	To note.	As below.	As below.
23. Annual cost statement to Ministers.		Consider how to integrate information needed centrally with Departmental arrangements.	To note.	Agree capital information needs with Departments	To devise and implement suitable budgeting and reporting systems, taking note of Head of GSS' need for information.
24. Head of GSS to be given new remit which includes advising on efficiency.	Prime Minister. Head of GSS.	Begin consideration of methods.	To note the new remit which has been issued by Prime Minister.	As above and regular discussion with Depts. See also 2.	As above. Regular reports and discussion with Head of GSS.
25. Depts. to release statisticians if required elsewhere.	Departmental senior management and Head of the GSS in consultation with CSD.	To write to Perm. Secs.	To note.	To co-ordinate.	To maintain.
26. CSO to stay in Cabinet Office.	-	No action required.	To note.	No action required.	To note.
<u>Payment between Departments</u>					
27.1 Introduce where sensible.	Departments in consultation with Head of GSS.	Invite Departments to identify major items of work done for others in Departmental budgets.	Identify cases.	Draft and issue guidelines on categories of work suitable for repayment.	Take up appropriate cases. Consult HMT and CSD as necessary.
27.2 Transfer of finance should not be automatic.		-	-	To monitor.	To consider cases as they arise.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL RAYNER REPORT ON GSS (Cont'd)
Overall Responsibility and Proposed Action

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	PROPOSED ACTION BEFORE 6 MARCH 1981		PROPOSED LATER ACTION	
		Head of GSS	Departments	Head of GSS	Departments
<u>Interdepartmental Statistics</u>					
28. Where payment is not introduced (27.1) Head of GSS to ensure clear understanding between parties.	Head of GSS.	Invite Departments to identify major items of work done for others without repayment.	Identify cases.	Periodic checks of main examples.	Review understandings with other Depts. as necessary.
29. Contract out ad hoc social surveys whenever cheaper; OPCS to work on payment terms.	Departments in consultation with Director of OPCS and Head of GSS.	To consult Director of OPCS and prepare draft plan of action for discussion with Departments.	See previous column.	To monitor.	Implement agreed arrangements.
30. Modify multi-purpose surveys.	See below.	Identify with Depts. those responsible for action.	See previous column.	Follow up through CSO Committee system.	Make proposals and discuss as required.
<u>PART 2</u>					
OPCS (paras 1 - 27)	Director of OPCS, Head of GSS and Departments.	To consult Director of OPCS.	OPCS to consider and begin preparation of corresponding Action Plan.	Handle broadly as a Departmental Report.	See previous column.
<u>Macro-Economic Statistics</u> (paras 28 - 47)					
<u>para 35</u> DIT to review data required for industrial sponsorship.	DIT	No action required.	DIT Statistics Divisions to make necessary arrangements.	To advise on effect on govt. statistics.	DIT to review. Report proposals to Head of GSS.
<u>para 39</u> Head of GSS and Statisticians in DoE and BSO to reconsider provision of adequate construction data to SOEC without an annual census (ACOC).	Head of GSS, DoE and BSO.	To arrange working party of CSO, DoE and DIT(BSO).	DoE and DIT(BSO) to note.	working Set up/ party to report in time to complete any negotiations required with SOEC before decisions needed on ACOC in respect of 1981.	See previous column.
<u>para 42</u> Treasury and Trade and Industry Ministers should discuss recompensing HM Customs and Excise for work necessary to bring export statistics up to the standard required.	HMT and DI	To write to colleagues in Customs and DIT.	See previous column.	To monitor and comment as necessary on quality of Trade and Balance of Payments statistics.	To make any arrangements required and report periodically to Head of the GSS
<u>para 47</u> Sec of State for Environment in consultation as necessary with Sec of State for Education & Science and other Ministers concerned, should set up early examination of costs of information required for local authority finance.	Sec of State for Environment.	-	-	To consider effects of proposals on govt. statistics generally.	To undertake examination.