

PRIME MINISTER

Review of Personnel Work

Attached is a minute from the Lord Privy Seal about the Report of the Review of Personnel Work. Also attached is the Report itself together with a summary which is flagged. The Report is based on the work of nine teams in Departments covering 60% of the non-industrial Civil Service.

The general view here, including that of the Rayner Unit, is that this is a very useful piece of work. The Review teams pulled no punches and seem to have identified a number of major points about the conduct of personnel work policy which seem to me to coincide with how the customers of personnel policy - the staff - view it. Particular points which they raised include:

- (i) The need to delegate more responsibility for personnel work to departments;
- (ii) The need to give staff more information about departmental personnel policies while at the same time avoiding giving them unrealistic expectations about promotion possibilities in a shrinking Civil Service.
- (iii) The need to tighten up appraisal procedures including those for inefficiency. My experience is that staff are willing to accept reduced promotion opportunities provided they perceive that the promotion system is fair and that there are no passengers in more senior grades.

The recommendations in the Report would, if implemented, go a considerable way not only towards improving the quality of personnel work but improving staff perceptions of that work. I suggest, therefore, that you should agree to Lady Young's suggestion that the Report should be published with your endorsement. If you agree, I suggest that your response should stress that it is important that departments should take the Report's recommendations seriously. Indeed you might ask for a report of the progress after, say, a year.

/ One further point.



One further point. The Report is very tough on the need to sharpen procedures for moving and removing inefficient staff. We talked about this during your recent visit to DES. Lady Young's minute makes only a passing reference to this aspect of the Report. Shall I ask Lady Young to give this point as much weight as the others to which she draws attention in her minute?

*Should have I would add the  
"with a view" point  
after "recruitment" at  
the bottom of page 2.  
That would have been  
without too much prominence  
me*

31 March 1983



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 April 1983

Dear Mary,

The Prime Minister has now seen the Lord Privy Seal's minute of 29 March with which she enclosed Mr. Cassels' Report on the Review of Personnel Work. She has also had an opportunity to look at the summary of the Report which the Lord Privy Seal also enclosed.

Mrs. Thatcher is very grateful for the considerable work which went into the Report and particularly to the departmental teams. She would be grateful if the Lord Privy Seal could undertake to pass on to those concerned the Prime Minister's thanks. She considers that the Report itself is a very useful contribution to the future of personnel policy and she very much hopes that its recommendations will be implemented as soon as possible. To this end she has asked that the Lord Privy Seal should report on progress on implementation in Departments in about a year.

On particular points raised in the Report the Prime Minister has noted the recommendations on the improvement of our approach in dealing with poor performance and inefficiency. She hopes that without giving these recommendations undue prominence they will be pursued as one of the priorities identified in the Lord Privy Seal's minute.

I am sending a copy of this to John Kerr (HM Treasury), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office) and Christopher Joubert (The Rayner Unit).

y  
Yours ever,  
Tim Flesher

Timothy Flesher

Mrs. Mary Brown,  
Lord Privy Seal's Office.

TFP





PRIME MINISTER

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back of file*

With this minute I am sending you Mr Cassels' report on the review of personnel work. This review was undertaken as part of last year's central efficiency programme. It was conducted by teams in nine Departments and a central team from the Management and Personnel Office. I commend the report to you.

The review covers amongst other things recruitment, probation, staff appraisal, career development and postings, promotion, and inefficiency procedures. I enclose a shorter, summarised, version of the report which you may find helpful.

The report has been discussed with Departments and has been generally welcomed, as likely to make personnel work less bureaucratic and more effective. I propose that it should be printed and published - and made available to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee - in mid-May.

This report follows the Financial Management Initiative in encouraging Departments to push out responsibility and authority from the centre and down the management line. Both involve giving managers at all levels clear objectives, well-defined responsibilities, and the necessary training and other support to do a good job.

The follow-up to the FMI and to the report on personnel work and other linked initiatives will be the main tasks of the Management and Personnel Office this year, together with the scrutinies and multi-Department reviews which you approved some weeks ago.

In the field of personnel work, we shall concentrate on the following priorities:

(1) Career Management

New succession planning arrangements are already in place and working. Now we shall try to improve career management for those likely to get to the top, with less frequent job changes and postings and improved training. The Treasury and Civil Service Committee have urged on us a long mid-career training course - 3 to 4 months - for those entering the Open Structure. We think it better to spread training over the first part of the



career; but we are proposing to introduce a new 3 to 4 week course for those promoted to the Open Structure, to equip them for their role as top managers. I hope that for part of this course they will be able to work alongside people from the private sector.

(2) Staff Appraisal and Reporting

The review of personnel work has shown that reporting standards are lax, and that the system is geared too much to assessment for promotion and not enough to actual performance. The system will need to be made more performance-orientated.

(3) Performance-Related Pay

You have emphasised the importance which you attach to introducing merit pay. A practicable scheme requires people to be given clearly defined performance tasks and criteria. The FMI should help towards this, but it will take time to develop appropriate systems and thus overcome the objections which the Cabinet saw when they considered this matter a couple of years ago. At the same time we shall be taking steps to sharpen up our approach to dealing with poor performance and inefficiency.

(4) Training

We need to put more resources into training, especially for senior managers and finance staff. I am pursuing this with Treasury colleagues.

(5) Unified Grading

The Megaw Report encouraged us to think about the introduction of a system of unified grading which would break down the barriers between the main occupational groups - administrators, scientists, and professional and technical staff, particularly at more senior levels. There is enthusiasm amongst Departments for developing in this direction, but it will have to be a gradual process. We propose to make a start this year by eliminating pay distinctions at Assistant Secretary and Senior Principal and equivalent levels.

\* In addition, the new First Civil Service Commissioner will be considering what changes are required in recruitment procedures to make them more responsive and effective and less cumbersome.



With the reduction of manpower on course for 630,000 by 1 April 1984 and this combination of management and personnel work, we are well on our way to achieving the smaller, more professional and more efficient Civil Service which has been our aim.

I should be glad to know that you accept the Personnel Work report as the basis for further detailed work in the Departments, and that you are content for it to be published with a brief foreword by myself. Subject to your approval, and following the necessary consultations with our colleagues, I shall take the opportunity of publication to announce the tasks of highest priority outlined in this minute.

I am sending copies of this minute and its enclosures to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and Lord Rayner.

*Janet Young*

BARONESS YOUNG

29 March 1983



REVIEW OF PERSONNEL WORK  
SUMMARY OF CENTRAL REPORT

Chapter 1 : Introduction

1. Nine departments, covering some 60% of the non-industrial Civil Service, took part in a multi-departmental review of personnel work as part of the 1982 centrally co-ordinated efficiency programme. Review teams looked at practice inside and outside the Civil Service (eg Fords). Their terms of reference were:

"To examine major aspects of personnel work, ie staff appraisal and career management, recruitment, redundancy, staff movements and wastage, and selected other personnel activities; to consider the respective roles in such work of line and personnel managers and the effect of relevant national and departmental rules and agreements; and to make recommendations for improving the performance of personnel work by line and personnel managers and so raising the motivation of staff as well as securing the maximum possible cost-effectiveness."

2. The review was co-ordinated by a central team in the Management and Personnel Office (MPO) under the direction of Mr J S Cassels. His central report sets out the general findings and lessons which emerged from the review and makes recommendations aimed at securing better and more cost-effective personnel work across the Civil Service.

Chapter 2 : The Personnel Environment

3. The main purpose of personnel work is to mobilise the experience, talents and abilities of staff in an organisation to secure the efficient and effective execution of its policy and operational goals.

4. Personnel work must be tailored to the sorts of people employed in the organisation, the business it is in, the nature of the organisation and the changing environment within which the organisation exists. The majority of non-industrial home civil servants work outside London in clerical jobs; almost half are women. Both the nature of the work and the size and structure of individual departments vary greatly. The environment is changing as the Civil Service gets smaller. There is more delegation to line management, a workforce which wants greater responsibility, and increased emphasis on professionalism within a smaller, better managed service.



### Chapter 3 : Recruitment

5. "Fair and open competition" is the cardinal principle underlying recruitment to the Civil Service. But many of the procedures associated with it are costly and time-consuming. The review proposes greater flexibility. In the case of departmental recruitment (covering some 90% of new appointments, mainly to clerical grades), departments at local level should have greater discretion whether or not to take part in joint recruitment schemes (but on a repayment basis if they do so) and greater freedom in the arrangements for recruiting through Jobcentres. Departments should involve line managers more closely in local recruitment to strengthen their authority and control over their staff. As a safeguard for "fairness and openness", and as a counterpart to local flexibility, departments will need to monitor recruitment arrangements.

6. In the case of recruitment by the Civil Service Commission, delegation to departments of EO recruitment would give more accountability and flexibility but these advantages are outweighed by the costs and practical difficulties involved. The Commission already has in hand steps to improve the quality and speed of recruitment to this grade. These measures should be supported by an agreement between the Commission and departments on the standards of service to be met and their respective responsibilities; and, to underpin this, by the introduction of repayment by departments for the Commission's services. The case for a formal agreement and for the introduction of repayment is of equal validity in the field of specialist recruitment.

### Chapter 4 : Probation

7. New recruits need close supervision and special encouragement. Those unlikely to make the grade should be identified as early as possible. While a formal probation period (usually of one year) should be retained, there is a strong case for streamlining the existing procedures, which are lengthy and paper-intensive. It will be for individual departments to decide, in the light of their own circumstances, how this can be accomplished, but the objective should be to do so with the minimum of formality while ensuring fairness.



In the main, the responsibility for confirming an appointment should be vested in line management who are best placed to assess a new recruit's performance and to offer developmental advice. This would strengthen line management's accountability and responsibility for their staff. Personnel staff should always be involved to offer support and to monitor standards. In particular they should be alerted as soon as there is any doubt about confirmation of appointment. In future probationers should be required to demonstrate a capacity to reach a good standard of performance before their appointments are confirmed.

#### Chapter 5 : Staff Appraisal

8. Annual written reports on all staff are necessary to provide a framework for discussion of performance between an individual and his manager and to supply information to assist with personnel activities such as posting, training and promotion. But procedures and forms need not be uniform throughout the Service. Some departmental teams argue that the existing standard report forms cater for too many divergent departmental requirements and are, as a result, over-elaborate and under-utilised. Departments should therefore have discretion to develop appraisal systems appropriate to their own circumstances within a framework of basic principles laid down by the MPO.

9. A number of principles are of primary importance. There must, for example, be a further shift of emphasis in appraisal towards performance in the present job. This means drawing a clear distinction, perhaps by the creation of two different forms, between job performance and promotion potential. It also means that, in appraising performance, reports should emphasise actual achievements assessed against an agreed job definition, including, wherever possible, targets agreed at the outset of the year. A corollary is that the job-holder should see his performance report which should provide the basis for constructive counselling sessions. The office holder's line manager, rather than the countersigning officer as now, then becomes the obvious candidate to undertake counselling sessions, as the officer most familiar with the individual's work.



## Chapter 6 : Career Development and Postings

10. Career development and postings are primarily questions for individual departments who should develop and promulgate coherent career management plans in line with their general personnel policies. Such statements are important if, as is desirable, staff are to play a more influential part in their own development and line managers are to be given more responsibility for counselling, developing and deploying staff at least at junior levels. Greater involvement of line managers in career development will need to be complemented by closer liaison with personnel divisions. There will remain a need for Career Development Interviews, where staff can get advice from personnel divisions, but these should in general be undertaken selectively, as need arises, rather than as a matter of routine.

## Chapter 7 : Promotion

11. The evidence suggests that existing promotion arrangements, whether interview or paper-based, command the confidence of management and staff alike in their fairness and in their capacity to identify suitable candidates for promotion. Paper boards are cheaper but there are no hard data on comparative cost-effectiveness. Any moves to a greater use of paper boards, particularly for promotion at junior levels, should be monitored and the results circulated to all departments.

12. The main difficulty of the existing system lies in the excess of apparently promotable candidates over vacant posts, a disproportion which is tending to expand as promotion opportunities decrease (for example, in DHSS perhaps little more than 1% a year of the EO/IOI grade will be promoted to HEO from the mid-1980s on). Staff should be given an honest view of their own prospects. This will mean publicising more information about promotion procedures and vacancies and better feed-back from promotion boards to line managers. It also implies a heavier onus on line management both to provide more realistic assessments of promotability and to advise individual members of staff of their views. Even so, departments are likely to need more rigorous sifts of candidates at the pre-interview stage. Departments should also examine the case for self-nomination for promotion as a means of extending the opportunities for individuals



to influence their own careers. Attempts are being made to reduce the burden and cost of promotion pooling exercises between departments; if these do not succeed, routine promotion pooling should be abolished.

#### Chapter 8 : Inefficiency

13. The review teams are critical of the present operation of the inefficiency procedures within the Civil Service. They are rarely used, take longer than outside employers', tend to suffer from over-elaboration at departmental level and impose a considerable burden of monitoring on managers. While the procedures must comply with the requirements of employment law and should be regarded as fair by staff generally, they should not be unduly lengthy or complex.

14. The report therefore recommends that the length of the formal trial period should be reduced from a minimum of 6 to a minimum of 3 months. Departments would have discretion to set trial periods above this appropriate to the case but the general aim would be to complete the procedures within 6-12 months. Further improvements should be made by placing responsibility for identifying the inefficient, initiating formal action and seeing it through within the line management hierarchy since it is best placed to assess the quality of the individual's work. At the same time personnel staff have an essential duty in monitoring the operation of the procedures to ensure fairness and consistency and, in individual cases, in offering expert advice and information. Dealing properly with inefficient staff requires a close partnership between line and personnel divisions; personnel staff should be involved automatically as soon as formal inefficiency procedures are initiated. Each department should have clearly-defined procedures for internal appeals but these need not require Departmental Retirement Boards.

15. To emphasise management's determination to combat inefficiency in the Civil Service, the current discretion to withhold increments from unsatisfactory performers should be exercised in appropriate cases and compensation payments in cases of premature retirement on inefficiency grounds should be abolished.

#### Chapter 9 : Implications for Personnel Work in Departments

16. Five major themes emerged from the reports of the departmental teams:



- the need for coherent personnel arrangements with clear aims, tailored to the needs of the individual organisation;
- increased delegation to line management;
- greater expertise in personnel work;
- better communications on personnel matters;
- greater involvement of the individual.

17. One consistent theme has been the need for flexibility in the application of central guidance. Too heavy a reliance on uniformity in the name of "fairness and equity" often generates cumbersome, costly and time-consuming procedures. It is important that each department should develop a personnel strategy and practical procedures tailored to its own needs.

18. A corollary of delegation from the centre to departments is the decentralisation of the personnel function within them. Wherever possible, line managers should take direct responsibility for the management of the staff under them so that personnel work becomes an integral part of the more general management functions. The correct balance between the centre and the line will vary according to function and departmental circumstances; wherever it is pitched, the division of accountability between line management and personnel divisions should be clearly defined and well publicised. This redrawing of responsibilities will demand new skills of line managers, and current training programmes will need to be modified accordingly. While continuing to undertake some executive functions, personnel divisions will increasingly be required to frame personnel strategies and to offer specialised knowledge and advice to line managers in the discharge of their personnel responsibilities. This points to more expert personnel staff. To assist their development, new personnel managers should undertake a mandatory common core of 3 weeks' basic training at the Civil Service College.

19. Underlying these reforms must be a commitment to improve communications within departments. Staff and managers both need better information about departmental personnel policy; the former as a basis for assuming the initiative in shaping their own careers, the latter in order to exercise their responsibilities conscientiously and effectively. Departments should therefore publish for staff an explicit statement of their personnel policies.



## Chapter 10 : Implications for the MPO

20. Allowing departments more discretion to frame personnel systems suited to their own needs has important implications for the MPO. There is a continuing need for a central personnel function, but it is one in which the emphasis should be much more on laying down central principles and leaving departmental managers to get on with the job, subject to audit. Central prescription should be applied only to those functions where it is necessary or desirable for the maintenance of Service-wide standards (eg minimum recruitment qualifications, redundancy procedures). The MPO should continue to provide services for departments where it is more efficient or cost-effective to organise them centrally (eg the provision of medical advice).

21. At the same time the MPO will need to develop further the capacity to audit selectively the performance of departments. It should command the confidence of departments by ensuring that its staff are experts in their field. This underlines the importance of the existing policy of interchange of staff between MPO and operational departments and of establishing links with outside management interests.

## Chapter 11 : Implementation

23. The review is part of a wide range of work, recently completed or still in progress, which will have important consequences for the future development and application of personnel policies in the Civil Service. This necessitates a single coherent programme of action with clearly designated priorities for rapid progress. A first choice for priority among the review's recommendations will be the early introduction of improvements in the staff appraisal system. Resource implications will need to be kept firmly in mind. There are likely to be some initial costs in revising procedures and introducing new systems, particularly in relation to training, but it should be possible to make substantial progress without requiring significant additional resources.

24. Successful implementation of the review's recommendations will depend upon the support and commitment of managers, staff and trade unions across the Civil Service. It will require a clear lead from the top and sustained education to bring about the necessary changes of attitude. More senior managers, in particular, must see staff management as an integral part of their responsibilities.

## Chapter 12 : Summary of Recommendations (attached)



## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recruitment

1. As an experimental measure, departments should be allowed greater flexibility in operating local recruitment, including having vacancy notices removed from Jobcentre display once a specific minimum ratio of qualified applicants for each vacancy has been achieved. The outcome should be reviewed in September 1983 (paragraph 3.7).
2. Departments should undertake their own local recruitment where they wish to do so, provided that the needs of small departments can be satisfactorily met (paragraph 3.10).
3. Where departments elect to continue with collective schemes, they should operate on a basis of repayment (paragraph 3.10).
4. Departments should pursue cost-effective ways of involving their local line managers, with the support and advice of personnel staff, more closely and decisively in the process of local recruitment (paragraph 3.11).
5. Departments should set up appropriate arrangements, where they have not already done so, to monitor and evaluate their local recruitment processes (paragraph 3.12).
6. The MPO, in consultation with departments, should carry out a thorough review of local recruitment arrangements by the end of 1985 (paragraph 3.13).
7. Direct entrant EO recruitment should continue to be undertaken centrally by the Civil Service Commission (paragraph 3.18).
8. The Commission should press ahead with its plans to improve the quality and speed of EO recruitment, including a continuous scheme of recruitment from 1984 (paragraph 3.20 - 21).
9. Specific proposals for the introduction of a recruitment concordat between the Commission and departments, repayment and ways of involving departments more closely in selection decisions for EO recruitment, should be worked up during the scrutiny of the Commission (paragraph 3.24).
10. There should be a thorough review of the revised arrangements for EO recruitment by the end of 1985 (paragraph 3.25).



11. Specialist recruitment by the Commission should continue to be undertaken centrally but should be covered by arrangements similar to those for EO recruitment (paragraph 3.27).

#### Probation

12. New entrants should continue to serve a period of probation or trial, limited to one year for all grades except Administration and other trainees for whom a 2 year probation remains appropriate (paragraph 4.10).

13. The primary emphasis of probation should be on the positive development and encouragement of recruits and on identifying in good time those who are not likely to make the grade (paragraph 4.8).

14. Probationers should demonstrate a capacity to reach a good rather than a fair standard of performance to merit confirmation of appointment (paragraph 4.11).

15. Specific probation procedures should be for departmental determination and should concentrate on making line management responsible for the development and appraisal of new recruits with minimal formal reporting. Streamlining might include requiring extensive reporting only in cases of unsatisfactory progress (paragraph 4.12).

16. Authority for taking decisions on confirmation of appointment, except in the case of Administration and other trainees, should lie with line management at an appropriate level; personnel staff should always be involved (paragraph 4.13).

#### Staff Appraisal

17. Written appraisal reports should continue to be made annually on all staff (paragraph 5.11).

18. Departments should have discretion to determine the details of their own appraisal systems and forms within a centrally-prescribed framework of general principles (paragraph 5.13).

19. The MPO should take responsibility for establishing these fundamental principles after consultation with departments; for providing guidance on good practice; and for giving expert advice



on form design, supplemented by specimen model forms including those for the centrally managed groups (paragraph 5.13).

20. The primary emphasis of the annual appraisal form should be on performance in the present job; this would be assisted by greater separation of assessments of performance and of potential (paragraph 5.15).

21. Every performance report form should include a scale rating for overall performance with a clear line below which performance is regarded as unsatisfactory (paragraph 5.15).

22. Performance should be assessed against an agreed job definition including, wherever possible, targets agreed at the outset of the year. The form should focus more on actual achievements on the job and less on personal qualities and traits (paragraph 5.16).

23. Performance reports - but not promotion reports - should be completely open, with space for the individual's comments, and should form the basis of an appraisal interview, usually with the immediate line manager (paragraphs 5.17 - 18).

24. There should be no further degree of openness in relation to the promotion and longer term potential parts of the appraisal system; staff would as now be entitled to disclosure of their promotability marking (paragraphs 5.17 and 7.12).

#### Career Development and Postings

25. Each department should prepare a statement of its career management policy. This should clarify respective responsibilities for action and include estimates of likely length of posting (paragraph 6.10).

26. Career Development Interviews should be undertaken on a selective basis, as need arises, rather than as a matter of routine (paragraph 6.11).

27. The mobility obligation should remain a condition of service for all grades of staff presently classified as mobile (broadly full-time staff from EO level and equivalent upwards) (paragraph 6.15).

28. The MPO should be responsible for overseeing departmental succession plans and the career development plans for certain groups of specialists and staff already in, or considered potential candidates for, the Open Structure (paragraph 6.16).



29. There should be more selectivity in internal circulation of trawl notices (paragraph 6.17).

#### Promotion

30. Departments should monitor the effect and cost of greater reliance on paper boards at junior levels or interview boards at more senior levels and disseminate the results to all departments (paragraph 7.7).

31. Departments should publish for staff information on promotion procedures, vacancies and required experience and skills (paragraph 7.10).

32. Interview board members should be given more information and training (paragraph 7.16).

33. New arrangements to improve the operation of the promotion pooling scheme should be given a trial; if they do not prove successful, routine promotion pooling exercises should be abolished (paragraph 7.18).

#### Inefficiency

34. The framework for dealing with the inefficient should continue to be laid down centrally (paragraph 8.9).

35. The formal trial period should be reduced from a minimum of 6 months to a minimum of 3 months (paragraph 8.13).

36. There should be recognised departmental procedures for appeals but these need not require a Departmental Retirement Board (paragraph 8.14).

37. Authority to decide on inefficiency cases should rest with line management, usually at senior levels (paragraph 8.10).

38. Line management should be assisted and monitored by personnel staff and provided with clear concise guidance on the necessary procedures, particularly the required amount of detailed oversight of the individual. Personnel staff should be involved automatically as soon as line management sees need to initiate the first stages of the formal inefficiency procedures (paragraph 8.11).



39. The current discretion to withhold increments from unsatisfactory performers should be more rigorously applied (paragraph 8.16).

40. Compensation payments in cases of premature retirement on inefficiency grounds should be abolished (paragraph 8.17).

41. In autumn 1983, the MPO should review the full range of early retirement arrangements and take into account experience of the new arrangements introduced in April 1983, practice in outside organisations in the UK and practice in the public sector in other countries (paragraph 8.18).

#### Implications for Personnel Work in Departments

42. Each department should develop a coherent personnel strategy tailored to its needs (paragraph 9.4).

43. Departments should define explicitly the division of responsibility between line and personnel management and the personnel responsibilities and authority of individual posts (paragraph 9.8).

44. As far as possible, line managers should be fully responsible and accountable for the management of their staff. Their training needs to this end should be assessed and met (paragraphs 9.9 - 10).

45. Personnel staff should continue to undertake directly some executive functions but should place more emphasis on providing information, support and expert advice to line management in the discharge of its personnel responsibilities; exercising a monitoring and co-ordinating function; and taking responsibility for personnel strategies (paragraph 9.11).

46. All new personnel managers should undertake a mandatory common core of 3 weeks' basic training at the Civil Service College. This requirement should be reviewed after 3 years by the MPO's Training Division in conjunction with departments (paragraph 9.13).

47. Departments should set in hand arrangements to identify and meet personnel managers' training needs over and above those covered in the College's basic course (paragraph 9.15).

48. Each department should publish for its staff an explicit statement of its personnel policies, including career management and mobility policies (paragraph 9.16).



## Implications for the Management and Personnel Office

49. Responsibility for developing personnel policies and procedures tailored to its particular needs should rest clearly with each individual department. The MPO should promulgate basic principles for the Service as a whole; disseminate advice, guidance and examples of good practice; and audit departmental performance selectively (paragraph 10.7).
50. New initiatives or other major changes proposed by MPO should have the specific approval of its top management as part of the activity planning cycle, and Establishment Officers should be consulted before detailed work goes ahead (paragraph 10.11).
51. The MPO should immediately draw up an Action Document on this and related reviews and this should serve as a statement of MPO's intentions to other departments (paragraph 10.13).
52. For the longer term, the MPO should devise arrangements for the selective audit of departmental performance. These should include provision for MPO staff to see for themselves what approach departments have adopted and to study in detail what is happening on the ground (paragraph 10.13).
53. The present policy of increasing interchange of staff between MPO and operational departments should continue; special attention should be given to ensuring the application of the policy fully to the MPO's Personnel Management Group (paragraph 10.14).
54. The MPO should establish continuing links with the IPM and outside personnel managers to keep abreast of developments in personnel management and should consider enabling a small number of key personnel management staff to acquire deeper knowledge through appropriate courses of study (paragraph 10.15).

## Optional Topics included in the Review

55. Responsibility for authorising work related allowances including overtime and leave should normally lie with line management where this is not already the case (Annex I, paragraph 7).
56. In carrying out their review of accommodation management, ME2 Division of the MPO should:



- explore further the problems of accommodation management reported by LCD and Home Office;
- examine the extent of over or under provision of office space in departments;
- seek to extend the use of budgetary mechanisms for the control and management of accommodation and related expenditure;
- establish guidelines for good practice in accommodation management for promulgation to the departmental managers concerned by April 1984 (Annex I, paragraph 31).

*J. S. Casseles*

J S CASSELS

MARCH 1983