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EFFICIENCY UNIT

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Prime Minister

Sir Robin Ibbs thought you might be interested to see this DHSS handbook of good management practice. He thinks highly of it.

DMB 4/4

3 April 1984

Sir Geoffrey Otton KCB
Second Permanent Secretary
Department of Health and Social Security

Dear Geoffrey,

HANDBOOK OF GOOD PRACTICE: SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

I have just seen the Handbook published last July and am writing to offer congratulations both on the idea and on the fertile range of innovation the booklet shows. I am pleased to see the way in which many local offices have responded to your lead in calling for customer service to be put high on the scale of values. I am sure you are right to stress the importance of personal responsibility and accountability by the individual staff member for achieving good customer service.

Much of the booklet's strong impact comes from the examples, time and again, of practical action which line management in other offices can adopt and adapt. And I liked your willingness to tell the story as it really is - thus it is sad to see the comments on page 28 about vandalism and pilfering but a tribute to the staff that they have not given up even in those circumstances. By contrast, the example on page 60 from Stoke (North) was very encouraging.

Another lesson well brought out, I thought, was the necessity of staff seeing themselves as part of the community - and the contribution that opening up to media visits (admittedly in one of the more gentle parts of the country) can make. There is much that is very good in those who come to work in the public service. Allied to purposive management, which shows a proper concern for the taxpayer's money this is a powerful combination.

Once again, congratulations on this booklet. I think it marks a real step forward and I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister so as to draw it to her attention. I am also sending copies to Robert Armstrong and to Kenneth Stowe.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Ibbs

p.p. ROBIN IBBS

FCS SH

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

SIR ROBIN IBBS

The Prime Minister was grateful to you for reminding her about the DHSS Handbook of Good Practice in your letter of 3 April to Sir Geoffrey Otton. She had a look at the Handbook over the weekend, and was impressed.

DB

DAVID BARCLAY

9 April, 1984

KO

AS has seen.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY

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Telephone 01-407 5522 ext 6618

From the Second Permanent Secretary

SIR GEOFFREY OTTON

D M Barclay Esq
Private Secretary
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London SW1

4 April 1984

Dear David,

HANDBOOK OF GOOD PRACTICE: SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

Sir Robin Ibbs has sent the Prime Minister a copy of his letter of 3 April to Sir Geoffrey on this subject. You may therefore like to have the enclosed copy of the Handbook. I am also sending a copy to Richard Hatfield.

Yours
Mary

Mrs M Kirk
Private Secretary

Handbook filed in useful docs.

Govt Machinery : Rayner A 15.