

CONFIDENTIAL



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

MR. STARK  
CABINET OFFICE

GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS  
SYSTEMS

Thank you for your minute of 20 September to Tim Flesher here.

The Prime Minister has taken note of the points you make, without comment.

I am copying this minute to Mr. Taylor (Home Office), Mr. Mogg (Department of Trade and Industry), Mr. Mottram (Ministry of Defence), Mr. Graham (Scottish Office), Mr. Daniell (Northern Ireland Office) and Mr. Broadbent (Chief Secretary's Office).

MARK ADDISON

23 September 1985

CONFIDENTIAL

*MS*



Ref. A085/2388

MR FLESHER

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Government Emergency Communications Systems

See Pt 17

In your minute of 8 August to Richard Hatfield you asked for further consideration to be given to the possibility of inviting competitive tenders from Mercury and Cable and Wireless for Government emergency communications systems.

See Pt 17

2. As indicated in Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 7 August to the Prime Minister, one of the aims of switching departmental responsibility for such central Government emergency systems to the Home Office is to use their greater expertise in this field to uphold the Government's interests as a customer more effectively. Part of this task will be to identify the most cost-effective options available to meet the Government's requirements, including the possible involvement of Mercury and its parent company Cable and Wireless, and the various cellular radio systems.

3. It has to be recognised, however, that at present only British Telecom (BT) can provide the full nation-wide and international network upon which our emergency communications depend for their special routing and protection facilities. As BT's competitors become more widely established, opportunities for competitive tendering should increase. It will be important for the review of these emergency communications systems which is now to be undertaken to look carefully at such possibilities for the future, in order to secure value for money for Government.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to Mr Taylor (Home Office), Mr Mogg (Department of Trade and Industry), Mr Mottram (Ministry of Defence), Mr Graham (Scottish Office), Mr Daniell (Northern Ireland Office) and Mr Broadbent (Chief Secretary's office).

*MS*

20 September 1985

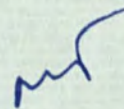
M C STARK

PRIME MINISTER

## GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

You asked if, in view of the fact that BT was being unhelpful  
in their charging arrangements in this area, we could get  
competitive tenders from Marconi and Cable and Wireless.

You will see from the attached note from Sir Robert  
Armstrong's office that the review of the Emergency  
Communications Systems will indeed be looking at this  
possibility. However, it seems at present as if only BT can  
provide the necessary national and international network  
required.



Mark Addison

Mark Addison

20 September 1985