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PS/PRIME MINISTER

From: Mrs M B Chapman
Date: 17 December 1985

PUBLIC BODIES 1985

Please find enclosed a copy ^{/ See inside of cover} of the Cabinet Office (Management and Personnel Office) publication "Public Bodies 1985", an annual catalogue of non-departmental public bodies which is published today by HMSO.

In addition to providing extensive coverage of non-departmental public bodies, "Public Bodies 1985" also gives key statistics for a wide variety of public sector bodies including National Health Service authorities and nationalised industries. For the first time it includes summary tables showing the number of bodies, staff numbers and expenditure in 1979 and then annually since 1982 both globally and by sponsoring department.

Further copies can be borrowed from the Cabinet Office/HMT library or, exceptionally, can be obtained from Mr M C Dawson in the Machinery of Government Division of the Management and Personnel Office. His telephone number is 233-8232.

For your information I also enclose a copy of the Press Notice.

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PRESS RELEASE

16/85

FEWER QUANGOS

17 December 1985

The number of quangos (properly called non-departmental public bodies or NDPBs) continues to fall.

In reply to a Parliamentary Question today, Mr Richard Luce, Minister of State, Privy Council Office said: "On 1 April 1985 there were 1653 non-departmental public bodies. That is 28 fewer than last year and over 500 fewer than in 1979. These bodies are listed in 'Public Bodies 1985'* published today."

The number of quangos fell by over 400 during the early 1980s following a fundamental review in 1979. Current emphasis is on value for money - this means ensuring that any NDPB whose functions are no longer essential is wound up, that all existing NDPBs are managed cost-effectively and that a new body is set up only after rigorous scrutiny. In the last year there was a net reduction of 28 bodies; staff numbers fell by 3000 (from 141,000 to 138,000 in round terms) and central government spending on NDPBs, measured at current prices, fell by £60m (from £5,160m to £5,100m).

"Public Bodies 1985" gives key statistics for a wide variety of public sector bodies including National Health Service authorities and nationalised industries as well as NDPBs. Its many footnotes give further information about individual bodies, and show any plans for changes in their organisation.

'Public Bodies' monitors the trend in numbers of NDPBs and the resources they consume. This data is of particular interest in the light of the Government's current initiative to scrutinise the need for each and every body and to increase the cost effectiveness of all NDPB operations. 'Public Bodies' provides a useful reference for the companion publication "Non-departmental Public Bodies: a Guide for Departments" (ISBN 0 11 430007 0) published by HMSO in September.

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* HMSO: Price £11.00 ISBN 011 430008 9

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Public Bodies 1985 is a factual document, the fourth in an annual series.
2. It includes the following information:
 - i) Non-departmental bodies and NHS authorities
 - number of staff employed
 - gross expenditure of body
 - amount of expenditure funded by government
 - (where available) expenditure by the body's sponsoring department in acting as a 'sponsor'
 - appointments to Boards (men and women shown separately).
 - ii) Nationalised industries and Public Corporations
 - details of appointments to the Board (men and women shown separately)
 - address
 - availability of the body's Annual Report
3. This year, for the first time, summary tables are included in "Public Bodies". These show the number of NDPBs, staff numbers and expenditure in 1979 and then annually since 1982 both globally and by sponsoring department.*
4. In November 1984 the Prime Minister announced new review arrangements for NDPBs. Each NDPB is to undergo a policy review in which the need for the body and the appropriateness of its current structure is closely questioned. The financial management systems of bodies with executive functions are also to be scrutinised. This programme of reviews will be substantially completed by 1987. The summary figures published in "Public Bodies" provide one way of monitoring some of the effects of such reviews.
5. Questions about individual bodies should be addressed to the sponsoring department, or, where appropriate, the body itself.

* A copy of the first summary table is attached to this note.

Summary of Non-Departmental Public Bodies 1979-1985

	Number of Bodies				Total	No. of Staff (a)	Total Expenditure £m(b)	Amount Funded by Government £m(b)	Other Departmental Expenditure £m(b)
	Executive	Advisory	Tribunal	Others					
1979	492	1,485	70	120	2,167	217,000	6,150	2,970	70
1982	450	1,173	64	123	1,810	205,500	8,330	3,910	87
1983	437	1,074	65	121	1,697	196,700	9,940	5,120	94
1984(c)	402	1,087	71	121	1,681	141,200	7,280	5,160	115
1985	399	1,069	64	121	1,653	138,300	7,770	5,100	111

(a) Figures include staff at ACAS, HSE and MSC who are civil servants.

(b) Current Prices.

(c) Staff and expenditure figures from 1984 exclude the English and Welsh Water Authorities which were reclassified as Nationalised Industries. Staff numbers in 1983 approx. 58,000; expenditure approx. £26m.