



HOME OFFICE
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CCNO

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6 August 1984

SIR BRIAN CUBBON GCB
PERMANENT UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE

Prime Minister:

The largest blocks of Prison Department staff are:

- i) on personnel (about 220 staff dealing with 24,000 staff in prisons)
- ii) on individual prisoners casework which has expanded as the courts have expanded "prisoners rights"
- iii) on prison buildings + maintenance on which the Government has the biggest evm programme.

Dear Robin

EFFICIENCY SEMINAR : HOME OFFICE

At the meeting on 10 July the Prime Minister asked about the size of the central administration in the Home Office dealing with the Prison Service.

This is not to say there is no scope for economies.

.... I enclose a detailed note of the work done by the 840 people in the Prison Department in Central London.

All the staff mentioned in the note have been inspected by the Staff Inspectors since 1979. The Directorate of Works (see paragraphs 8 and 9) will be the next unit to be staff inspected.

DA

7/8

You will see that very nearly all the architectural and design work is contracted out. In view of my ultimate responsibility as Accounting Officer, I must retain some professionals to control and develop the necessary expertise to monitor this outside work.

We are considering the best way of mounting a radical review of the personnel management function (paragraph 10) with particular reference to what need not be done in headquarters.

Yours ever
Brian

F E R Butler Esq



PRISON DEPARTMENT STAFF IN CENTRAL LONDON

1. The Prison Department staff in Central London number about 846 staff, out of a national prison service total of 27350. They are engaged on the following duties.

2. The Prisons Board, of 12 members (2 non-executive) is responsible for the strategic management of the system. It has a secretariat of 4. The Deputy Director General, at the head of a Unit of 9 staff, is responsible, through 4 Regional Directors, for the day-to-day line management of the 23611 staff working in Regional Offices and Prison Department outstations.

3. 35 staff are responsible for security and control matters, including Headquarters responsibility for arrangements to deal with emergencies such as riots. Other policy responsibilities include development of specific security and control measures, the transport of prisoners between establishments, the security of court accommodation and the prison dog service.

4. A Division of 125 staff deals with life sentence and parole cases. These staff have responsibility for managing the population of over 1900 life sentence prisoners and considering the case for their release or recall. They also consider about 23,500 cases of fixed term prisoners referred to the Home Secretary each year by Local Review Committees and the Parole Board.

5. All other matters relating to adult male inmates are handled by a Division comprising 57 staff. They are responsible for management of the population of about 400 confirmed or provisional Category A prisoners (ie those, including terrorists, who must not be permitted to escape), and for casework or petitions to the Home Secretary (currently running at about 3400 a year, not counting those which are dealt with by Regional Offices). A particular concern of this Division is the ever increasing amount of litigation by prisoners on prison issues, in the English courts and at Strasbourg.



6. A separate Division of 26 staff is responsible for policy and tactical management for the young offenders' and women's prison systems. In 1983, 31,300 male young offenders and 3,500 women and girls were received into custody under sentence.

7. There are 64 headquarters staff providing direction and supervision of medical services, education, physical education, psychological services and religion throughout the prison service. There is also a small coordinating unit (7 staff).

8. About 180 staff are concerned with the management and development of Prison Buildings, both the maintenance and repair of the existing estate and the major extensions or refurbishment taking place or planned at 90 existing establishments. The cost will be about £79 million in 1985/6. About 90% of design services are contracted out to the private sector at a cost in fees of around £10 million in 1984/85. All the corresponding building work is contracted out, together with a good deal of the other building work in prisons: the small direct labour force is based on prisons and regions and is used largely for maintenance and minor works and work on which inmates are employed.

9. In addition, a Central Engineering Section of 18 staff works on locking and special security systems; there is an Estates Section of 12 (covering the whole of the Home Office); a Training Section of 9 dealing with staff and inmate works training; an energy conservation group of 5 and a Health and Safety at work section of 5; both covering the whole of the Home Office; Finance and personnel and Administration account for a further 11 staff. [The Chief Architect's Branch and Directorate of Works also includes 40 staff working mainly on matters for which parts of the Home Office other than the Prison Department are responsible].



10. Personnel management of the prison service's 23380 staff based at outstations rests with about 221 Headquarters staff. These provide a central control of the recruitment of prison officers (over 1300 were recruited in 1983; this is due to increase on current plans); management of the service's training programme (with overall responsibility for the Prison Service College, 2 Officer Training Schools, and a Desk Training Unit at Leicester); career development and promotion (on average over 50 boards have to be held annually, with interviews of over 2,500 candidates); postings (over 3,200 annually); industrial relations; pay; superannuation (about 6300 cases) and conditions of service; management of over 9500 staff quarters; staff facilities; uniforms; and Health and Safety matters. About 50 staff are employed in the Prison Department's files registry (which processed 196,325 items in the year ending 30 May 1984) where a computerisation study is in train.

11. Manpower and financial policy and control account for a further 39 staff, with a further 8 being responsible for management of the Prison Department's strategy for introducing computerisation and information technology into the Prison Service.

3 August 1984

Gov March 4 Reunited & Pg 15





FILE

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

8 August, 1984

This is just to record that the Prime Minister has seen and noted Sir Brian Cubbon's letter of 6 August about the role of the Prison Department central administration. She was grateful for this further information following the Home Office Efficiency Seminar on 10 July.

(Timothy Flesher)

H.S. Webber, Esq.,
Home Office

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