



Prime Minister

Content with this

provided that the Chairman of  
MSC is satisfied about the  
point at x | ?

Ref. A085/784

MR BUTLER ✓

*Yes*

FERB

14-3.

The Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) is proposing to launch a Job Centre Manager of the Year Award. The purpose of the scheme is to maintain progress in the improvement of productivity in Job Centres. The selection criteria and procedures will be stringent, based on performance, with cost consciousness, ability to innovate and capacity to manage effectively among the factors taken into account.

2. The winner (and his wife) will spend a week overseas (most probably in North America), with opportunities to study the public employment service while there.
3. The Chairman of the MSC is asking Trust House Forte and British Airways to sponsor the competition and finance the winner's "prize". Sponsors would be represented on the selection panel.
4. I have been asked to consider whether this would transgress the rules on acceptance of gifts by public servants.
5. I understand that schemes of this kind are common in the private sector, but I know of no precedent in the public service.
6. The question is whether the acceptance of the prize would put the winner under an obligation to the sponsors. It seems to me that it would not do so. The sponsorship is for MSC, rather than for the individual, and the individual will not be able to influence the selection by means of favours to the sponsoring companies. There is some risk, perhaps, of ill-disposed criticism to the effect that the sponsors might get preferential treatment from Job Centres or from other services of the MSC. I do not myself rate this risk very high, but we

X

not do it  
1 *mt*



should ask the Chairman of the MSC to assess it. If he is prepared to run the risk, I do not think that there is anything in the rules on acceptance of gifts which need lead us to say that he should not proceed.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

14 March 1985



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Thank you for your minute of 14 March (A085/784) about the proposal of the Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission to launch a Job Centre Manager of the Year Award. The Prime Minister is content that this scheme should go ahead, subject to the Chairman of the MSC being satisfied that it is proof against the criticism referred to in paragraph 6 of your minute. The Prime Minister shares your view that this risk is not very great.

F. E. R. BUTLER

15 March 1985

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE