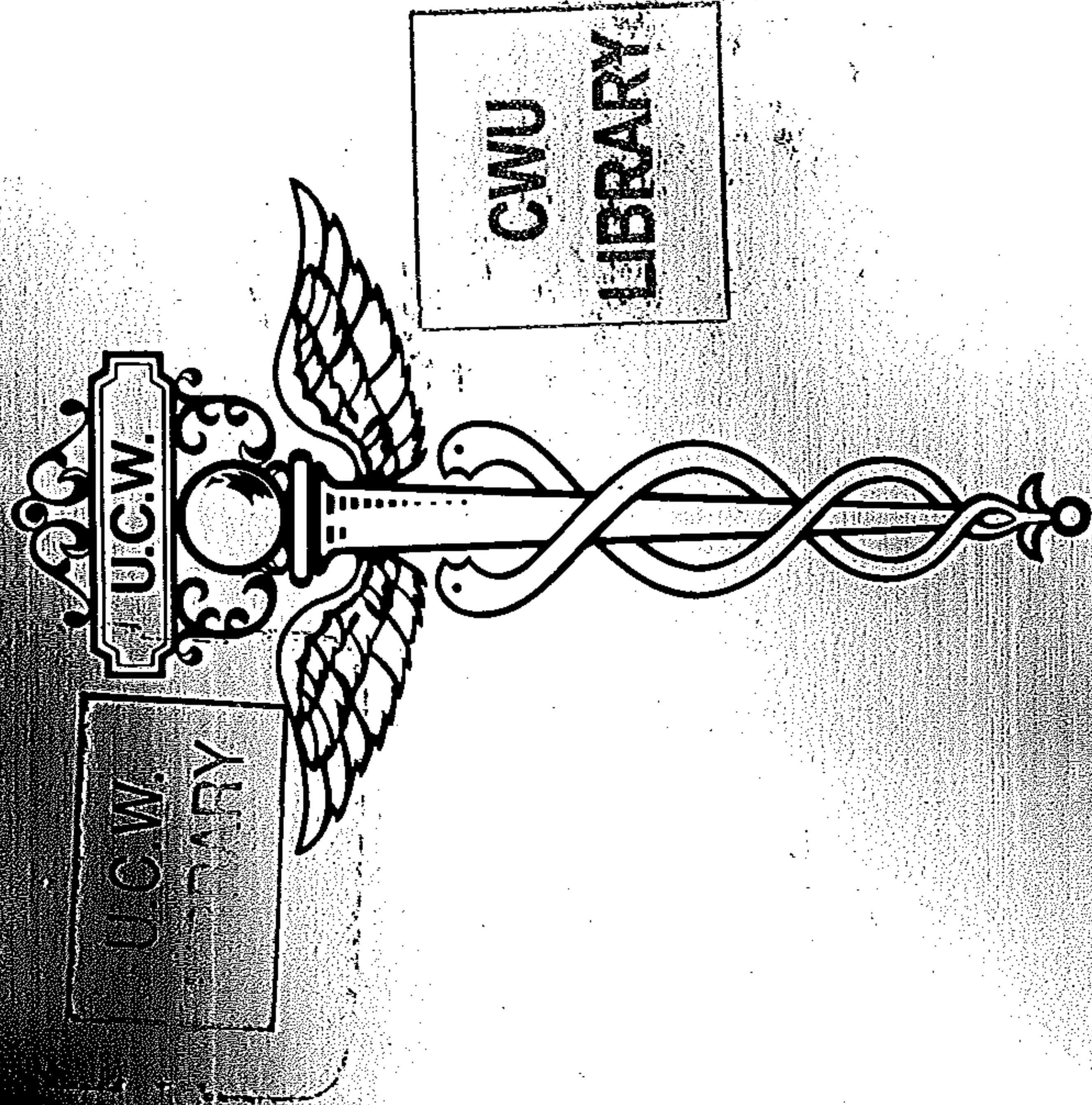


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# SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF THE MAILS BUSINESS

HANDBOOK SERIES

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UNION OF COMMUNICATION WORKERS

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**SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF THE  
MAILS BUSINESS**

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**HANDBOOK SERIES**

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## **SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF THE MAILS BUSINESS**

### **AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNION OF COMMUNICATION WORKERS AND THE POST OFFICE**

#### **SECTION 1 CHANGE IN PRACTICES**

##### **1. REVISED PLANNING AND CONTROL SYSTEMS** (Details at Appendix A)

1.1 Workload Assessment and IWM will be introduced at all offices by 1 July 1985, and staff-hour recording systems will be improved. Subsequently, revised duties using revised revision procedures will be introduced in a phased programme to be completed by April 1986.

##### **2. MECHANISATION** (Details at Appendix B)

2.1 There will be full co-operation from UCW in the speedy completion of all aspects of mechanisation and in the realisation of potential savings from the programme.

2.2 A revised quality control system for MLOs will be introduced.

2.3 Coding desk area performance will be improved to specified levels using the agreed report on a "Framework of Good Practice for the Coding Desk Operation".

##### **3. NEW TECHNOLOGY** (Details at Appendix C)

3.1 A New Technology agreement will be introduced so as to ensure the speedy introduction of New Technology combined with safeguards to staff on its use. The agreement stands comparison with good practice in outside industry and:

- (a) allows for retraining to maximise work opportunities for existing staff and minimise the need for external recruitment;
- (b) provides a mechanism for meaningful consultation and negotiation in the planning, siting and implementation of New Technology;
- (c) protects and expands existing services, improve their quality and provide new services to maintain employment security and create additional job opportunities;
- (d) enables staff to share in savings arising from the application of New Technology;
- (e) gives prime consideration to the health and safety of staff.

3.2 In particular Optical Character Recognition (OCR) (details at Appendix C2) would be quickly extended from the current single operational machine at Inland Section to no more than 20 locations. There will be a review of the operation of OCR by April 1988.

## SECTION 2 BENEFITS TO STAFF

The changes in working practices at Section 1 enable the Post Office to introduce certain benefits to staff, which are set out in this Section.

### 1. SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT

1.1 The Post Office and the Union recognise that the changes to working practices detailed at Section 1 of this agreement will contribute significantly to safeguarding the future of the Mails Business. The Post Office, resulting from this increased confidence in Business prospects, is able (subject to both the provisions of paragraph 1.2 below) to assure the union that there will be no compulsory redundancy directly arising from the measures detailed at Section 1. If, in spite of the opportunity retraining will allow in giving staff the necessary skills, a potential staff surplus were to arise, the reduction in staffing levels will be achieved by applying the other provisions of the Postal Redundancy Agreement.

1.2 The assurance of employment security in paragraph 1.1 will apply:

- (a) where there is full co-operation in any retraining and/or redeployment to other work areas; and
- (b) where there are no major changes in circumstances outside Post Office control.

### 2. IMPROVEMENTS IN BONUS PAYMENTS

2.1 The agreement, by making full use of the introduction of revision procedures and the increased use of mechanisation and New Technology, will provide the opportunity for boosting earnings for full-time uniformed grades, particularly those staff currently at or below average postal earnings.

2.2 This will be assisted by introducing the following additional local bonuses, which will replace all existing agreements for the sharing of benefits from mechanisation and New Technology:

- (a) **for achieving net staff inward and distribution savings:** all achieved direct work hour savings will be included in local bonus pools at a rate of £1.58 per hour (indexed to basic pay) to be distributed equally between staff in gaining and losing units, and taking account of workload changes. (This is a staff-share rate per hour taking account of maintenance and capital costs.)
- (b) **for savings above a standard 1100 code/sort area (ie whole mechanisation area including ancillary staff) throughput:** IWM bonuses will be earned in the usual way. (NB. The standard output for each installation will vary according to local circumstances, and the 1100 'norm' will therefore need amendment on the basis of national guidelines. up or

down, in individual offices, taking account of local configurations and traffic mix.) Other savings arising from outward concentrations or lower code/sort area throughputs will not attract bonus payments;

- (c) **staff hour savings arising from New Technology:** the staff share of such savings will be included in local bonus pools at a rate of £1.58 per work hour (indexed to basic pay) as at (a) above. This rate will specifically apply to OCR, STAIRS, and any other application of New Technology resulting in work-hour savings. It will be reviewed by 1 June 1987. (This rate per hour takes account of the principles on staff-share set out in Appendices C1 and C2.

### 3. LUMP SUM PAYMENT

In recognition of the acceptance of these proposals, which are designed to provide a final settlement of a number of outstanding difficulties between the UCW and the Post Office an introductory payment, not recoverable from savings, of £100 will be made to staff in the Postman, PHG, Cleaner, Doorkeeper and Liftman grades. This payment will be made to all established staff who are in post on 31st March 1985, part-time staff receiving pro-rata payments according to the number of hours worked.

### 4. IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

4.1 The Union of Communication Workers and the Post Office jointly recognise that the measures contained within this document will be the subject of endorsement at the Union's Annual Conference in May 1985. Meanwhile, the UCW agrees that the terms of the agreement relating to Mechanisation, New Technology and OCR will be provisionally implemented forthwith. In return, and as a mark of its good faith, the Post Office will make immediate payment of the £100 introductory lump sum at paragraph 3 above.

4.2 For its part, if the agreement is not endorsed by its Conference, the UCW gives notice that it may withdraw from the provisional measures implemented. If the UCW does withdraw from the agreement, it agrees that the Post Office will recover the lump sum introductory payment from pay and understands that the Post Office will proceed executively without sharing benefits gained in the face of union opposition.

## APPENDIX A

### REVISED PLANNING AND CONTROL SYSTEMS

#### 1. WORKLOAD ASSESSMENT AND STAFF HOUR RECORDING

Workload assessment will be introduced at all offices, and staff-hour recording systems will be improved so as to allow cost determination and control work area to assist in the economic provision and pricing of products and services. The Post Office agrees that any costs in providing the system will be borne by the Post Office.

#### 2. REVISED REVISION PROCEDURE

Taking into account the results of the management study at Leeds HPO and the introduction of the resultant new duties, and following national negotiation to be completed no later than June 1985 revised revision procedures will be introduced at further offices in each Region. These revised procedures for indoor work will be based primarily on a rate per item being set, using independent work measurement techniques, for each type of traffic and work area as appropriate. These rates per item will take account of local characteristics and will be used to determine the basic staff hours required for each part of the office. These identified staff hours will then be built up into duties matching workload and negotiated with local union branches in the normal way; the revised duties will be introduced at these further offices in order to complete final national negotiations for the revised revision procedures for use at all offices by December 1985. The aim will be to introduce revised duties at all major offices and as many others as possible by April 1986. For delivery work, use will be made of computer-assisted revision techniques, again following trials and national negotiation, with such measurement as may be necessary to establish basic staff-hour requirements. Similar up-to-date measurement techniques will be introduced for cleaning work. Both these activities will commence at some offices in June 1985. All eligible savings made in accordance with the above would be payworthy under IWM. Both parties will strive to achieve the dates in this paragraph, but if any do not prove to be practicable they will be subject to joint review at national level.

#### 3. MONITORING

Outputs will be monitored by work-area groups to ensure that the required levels of performance are being met. The method of monitoring will form part of the national procedures at paragraph 2 above.

#### 4. DEVELOPMENT OF IWM

The spirit of the IWM scheme requires that savings be introduced as quickly as possible, avoiding the need to use the current full revision procedures. However, the Post Office accepts that there may be cases where such savings are not immediately realisable; where these circumstances are clearly shown to exist units may enter the full terms of the IWM scheme (including the traffic-related bonus provisions) without the need initially to identify Core savings.<sup>1</sup>

In conjunction with UCW agreement to IWM being introduced at all offices in line with the terms of this paragraph the Post Office agrees to the following enhancements to the scheme.

- (a) a fairer system of determining changes in workload (Annex 1);
- (b) the introduction into bonuses of changes in average rates per hour (Annex 2);
- (c) certain non-staff savings (Annex 3).

Reflecting the acceptance by both parties of the need for work measurement and standard performance rates determined at 2 above, further modifications to IWM will be made on a trial basis more closely relating payments to throughputs and will be introduced in ten Head Offices, one in each Region. These trials will run for 12 months from January 1986 with the aim of extending to all offices, following national discussions, from March 1987 at the latest.

The Post Office gives an assurance that in making these changes to IWM, existing Core bonuses will not be affected providing performance is maintained.

<sup>1</sup> The provisions of this paragraph were subsequently modified in Section Three of the Agreement.

## ANNEX 1

### TRAFFIC WORK CONTENT FOR IWM

The traffic base of IWM schemes will be adapted so as fairly to determine changes in workload:

#### 1. IDENTIFICATION AND MEASUREMENT OF TRAFFIC STREAMS

Each discrete traffic stream will need to be separately identified for recording purposes. Accurate and auditable techniques will be used to measure the items passed through each system.

#### 2. CONSIDERATION OF WORK CONTENT FOR EACH TRAFFIC STREAM

Where traffic streams have a different work content, any changes in traffic levels will be considered against the relevant work hours. In this way due allowance will be made for the varying workload required to handle different types of traffic. Due allowance will be made for those operations eg OMV runs, for which the workload is not wholly sensitive to traffic variation.

#### 3. APPLICATION

The work-hours as identified above will then be summed to determine the workload for the whole IWM scheme.

#### 4. EXISTING IWM SCHEMES

Existing IWM schemes will be adapted, as appropriate, to incorporate the above system as soon as the necessary data-collection procedures have been completed and audited.

NOTE: The application of this annex will be the subject of national negotiations with the UCW.

#### ANNEX 2

##### ADJUSTMENT OF AVERAGE RATE PER HOUR

1. The procedure identified below allows for the effect of change to the average rate per hour to be credited (debited) to the core bonus pool. Changes to the average rate arising from identifiable new core savings for IWM schemes are eligible. Old savings are not eligible but equally existing Core bonuses will not be affected. The procedure will only be used where these new savings result in a clearly foreseeable change in the average rate (eg reduction in NDA time, or a lowering of overtime levels); it will not be used for normal day-to-day fluctuations in average rate.

##### 2. AVERAGE RATE PER HOUR

2.1 The 'old' average rate per hour will be established for a representative week or weeks immediately preceding introduction of the 'new' savings (for new IWM schemes the average rate per hour will be that used to calculate core bonus).

2.2 The 'new' average rate per hour will be calculated on a weekly basis. For some schemes (eg small SPSO delivery offices which share pay units with other offices on the grade analysis) it may be more appropriate to calculate average rates on a less regular basis (eg quarterly) unless there is reason to suspect a significant change in rates.

3. The hours to which the change in average rate apply will be the gross-hour baseline established for the immediate preceding 12 month period (for new IWM schemes this will be for the same period as the IWM baseline), less the new hours identified for core savings.

4. The sum to be credited (debited) weekly (unless agreed otherwise) to the IWM core bonus pool will be:

$$(1 - \frac{B}{A}) \times C \times 0.7$$

where A = 'old' average rate per hour

B = 'new' average rate per hour

C = gross hours as determined at para 3 above

This sum will be eligible for a 1/14th addition for Quality of Service bonus in the normal way.

#### ANNEX 3

##### IWM: ELIGIBLE NON-STAFF SAVINGS

##### 1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of IWM schemes may give rise to certain ongoing non-staff savings in addition to the conventional staff savings currently provided for by the scheme. In order to encourage the full potential of savings to be achieved and share the benefit with staff, the IWM agreement is enhanced by the inclusion of such savings which are identified after 1 June 1985 and introduced by agreement and according to the spirit and intention of the IWM scheme. In particular savings must not be detrimental to Quality of Service performance. Non-staff savings eligible for inclusion are restricted to the areas identified and which arise directly from staff-hours savings under the IWM scheme.

##### 2. MOTOR TRANSPORT SAVINGS

Where the introduction of an IWM scheme, as distinct from other factors, gives rise to motor transport savings, 50% of the net annual depreciation and running costs will be credited for a period of 3 years to the local IWM bonus pool.

##### 3. ACCOMMODATION SAVINGS

IWM schemes may give rise to accommodation-related savings:

(i) staff scheduling may be improved through the introduction of an IWM scheme, to an extent which, unconnected with any other factors, enables an office to be closed for periods of time eg during each 24 hour period or at certain times during the week. In such circumstances, 50% of the annual savings arising from heating, lighting, etc. will be credited to the IWM bonus pool for a period of 3 years.

(ii) IWM schemes may, exceptionally, be the single factor resulting in the closure of a building eg revised staff or vehicle scheduling may permit the closure of a PDO. 50% of the realised net savings ie accommodation savings (from heating, lighting, rent and maintenance and, where a building is sold, the equivalent annual market rent) less any additional costs (transport, for example) will be credited to the local bonus pool for a period of 3 years.

##### 4. CALCULATION OF SAVINGS AND PAYMENT

The identification of the value of savings arising from the above measures will be determined according to the standard investment procedure for calculating savings. The total bonus arising from the savings will be credited to the IWM bonus pool in equal instalments over the relevant period of time.

## 5. LOCAL IWM AGREEMENTS

Details of non-staff savings should be drawn up locally, and the value of savings and contributions to bonus pool identified. The document should be signed by local management and staff representatives and associated with the IWM agreement. Supporting costing documentation must be retained for audit purposes.

## APPENDIX B

### MECHANISATION

#### 1. THE MECHANISATION PROGRAMME

There will be full co-operation from UCW in the speedy completion of all aspects of mechanisation and in the realisation of potential savings from the programme. The detailed agreement is at Annex 1.

#### 2. QUALITY CONTROL IN MECHANISED LETTER OFFICES

A revised quality control system for Mechanised Letter Offices will be introduced. The detailed agreement is at Annex 2.

#### 3. CODING DESK AREA PERFORMANCE

The detailed agreement concerning coding desk operator performance is at Annex 3. The Post Office and the UCW jointly agree to implement the Framework of Good Practice for the Code Desk Operation.

A copy of this agreement is appended to Annex 3.

As part of this, each coding desk operator must achieve a keying rate of 1200 items per hour by the fourth week on operating duties after completion of training and must achieve and maintain a keying rate of at least 2000 items per hour, normally by 12 calendar months after completion of training (with a maximum error rate of 1%), with defined levels of performance in the interim period.

The improvements made as a result of implementing the Framework of Good Practice will result in a maximum disparity of 20% and consequently a standard code desk throughput of 1600 iph.

#### 4. FINANCIAL BENEFITS FOR STAFF

In recognition of the importance of sharing with staff the financial benefits of mechanisation, local bonuses may be earned as follows and will be integrated into the mechanisms of the IWM scheme (this will replace all existing agreements for the sharing of such benefits).

- (i) **for achieving net staff inward and distribution savings:** all achieved direct work hour savings will be included in local bonus pools at a rate of £1.58 per hour to be distributed equally between staff in gaining and losing units, and taking account of workload changes. (This is a staff-share rate per hour taking account of maintenance and capital costs).
- (ii) **for savings above a 'standard' 1100 code/sort area (ie whole mechanisation area including ancillary staff) throughput:** IWM bonuses will be earned in the usual way. (NB The standard output for each installation will vary according to local circumstances, and the 1100 'norm' will therefore need amendment on the basis of national guidelines, up or



down, in individual offices, taking account of local configurations and traffic mix). Other savings arising from outward concentrations or lower code/sort area throughputs will not attract bonus payments.

## ANNEX 1

### LETTER MAIL CIRCULATION

The Post Office and UCW agree that the maximum advantage should be taken of the opportunity to beneficially machine sort distribution and inward traffic. Savings realised from these measures will be shared with the staff in accordance with the main body of the agreement. To these ends, the provisions below will apply:

- (i) The UCW will lift its embargo on the extension of inward machine sorting and co-operate in the introduction of walk sorting for the whole or parts of both MLO and out area post towns in the most economic and efficient order. In planning the implementation of the MLO Area Inward Code Sort Programme, the order of introduction should also take into account the resolution of any staff surpluses resulting from the various options;
- (ii) Where full walk sorting is not justified, the parent MLO, and any others performing a distribution function, should, as appropriate, provide a full or partial 'inward primary' sort (ie picking out large firms, delivery divisions, subordinate delivery offices etc);
- (iii) Distribution functions for machined traffic should be adjusted where necessary (on either a county or MLO area basis) to match traffic and machine capacity and to improve Quality of Service. If distribution functions for machined traffic are adjusted *on a county basis* then those for unmachined traffic should similarly be adjusted where the receiving office has capacity. Individual cases, however, will be the subject of consultation at national level and, to this end, the Post Office will make available to the UCW the results of the studies into the best option for each area;
- (iv) Any duty or staffing implications of changes of function under this agreement will be the subject of the normal local consultative procedures;
- (v) This agreement will be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances, particularly the level of postcode penetration.

It is agreed that in the current environment the letter circulation system needs to be flexible to meet commercial requirements. It is accepted, therefore, that office functions may need to change in the light of traffic trends, Quality of Service problems, staffing availability, postcode penetration and other circumstances. Any such proposals brought forward by management will be the subject of speedy consultation at national level.

## ANNEX 2

### QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM FOR MLOs TO REPLACE SPRT

#### PREAMBLE

The purpose of the new quality control system for MLOs is:

- to improve quality of service;
- to introduce a more balanced and systematic approach to quality checks;
- to identify operator, machine and public error as now, concentrating more attention on those selections that are most liable to missorts;
- to provide coding desk operators where required with advice and appropriate retraining that should enable them to improve coding quality (the use of individual operator idents is essential in this regard);
- to provide manual sorters with advice and appropriate retraining that should enable them to improve sorting quality.

#### 1. OPERATION OF THE SYSTEM

1.1 Boxes in the ASMs will be divided into 3 categories according to existing evidence of the missort rate on the outward part of the code. This can be done in the first instance using evidence from SPRT or special local checks.

**Category A:** Boxes with an outward missort rate greater than 5%.

**Category B:** Boxes with an outward missort rate of between 2 and 5%.

**Category C:** Boxes with an outward missort rate of less than 2%.

These categories will be revised in the light of local experience.

1.2 Sampling pro formas will be constructed so as to ensure that the A boxes are checked most frequently, the B boxes less frequently and the C boxes least frequently. Thus all boxes will be checked on a systematic rotation but with greater emphasis on the boxes known to produce the highest level of missorts.

1.3 The sampling officer will be required to take samples of 10 items from each of the pre-determined selections, and using Electra Mark II check both the outward code and the inward code and enter the details together with the address on the item and the desk and the operator idents on a pro forma. He will also be required to identify the errors as far as possible into the categories of operator, machine and public error. These duties will be undertaken by PHGs. Details of errors attributed to machines will be speedily referred to the PED in charge of the ASMs who will advise the local engineer for immediate remedial action if appropriate or to consider in conjunction with other data on machine performance.

1.4 Further analysis in relation to box weightings (ie the volume of traffic going to each selection) should enable a system missort rate and an outgoing missort rate to be

calculated for the office. Once the method has been established this element of work would be proper to the Postal Officer grade.

1.5 Details of operator miscoding errors will be entered on a separate pro forma for each operator and checking that the initial categorisation of causes of error is correct. Where (on the basis of 100 items coded by an operator) the operator error rate in terms of items incorrectly treated and characters miskeyed is in excess of 5% further checks will be carried out at the aggregator/presorter by a PED of items coded by those operators.

This will produce a more detailed picture of the error rate for the individual and most importantly it will enable the reasons for the errors to be identified (eg miskeying can result from uneven finger pressure, use of right finger of wrong hand etc) and enable, where appropriate, retraining to be given.

1.6 The acceptable standard of performance is an error rate of no more than 1%. The application of the more detailed checking initially to operators with error rates of 5% is in order to direct attention first time where it is most urgently required, and to allow for sampling variation. The figure 5% will be reviewed as part of the evaluation of the new system.

Where the presorter/aggregator check confirms an error rate in excess of 1% (based on at least 100 items) a code/sort instructor will, on the basis of the number and types of error shown by the checks, counsel the operator if appropriate and advise on action to correct problems including an element of retraining where necessary.

The details of error attributed to operators will be made available to the individuals concerned.

1.7 Presorter checks as described in para 1.6 will not commence until about one month after the start of the scheme in order to allow a sufficient number of samples to be collected from the checking at ASMs described at para 1.3. As the scheme progresses the cumulative sampling results will become increasingly representative of each individual performance.

It is self evident that the use of Electra Mark II will greatly assist the Supervisor in carrying out the quality checks and will thus improve the speed and efficiency with which assistance can be offered to those operators who require it. Electra Mark II provides the facility to analyse machined items in sufficient volume and quickly enough to decide remedial action before Q of S is put at risk.

## 2. CHECKS ON MANUAL SORTING

2.1 A scheme will be prepared for each MLO similar to that outlined in the Appendix to PHQ Circular 197/74.

2.2 The work of each sorter should be examined regularly and a predetermined number of items checked using Form P40. The size of sample undertaken will depend upon local knowledge of the manual missort rate and the amount of manual sorting carried out in the office. Results from the samples taken should be kept so that a detailed picture of an individual's errors can be built up. This will enable the types of missort to be identified and advice or remedial training to be provided as necessary. Counselling of staff as necessary will be provided.

## 2.3 Offices should also provide for:

- systematic checks of DBF sorting to check the quality of packet and letter bundle sorting;
- an analysis of results to identify blackspot selections and to help in deciding about periodic concentrations of effort on an individual area;
- ongoing checks of the adequacy of arrangements for the prompt recovery of mistreated items;
- checks of the quality of presentation, by the customer of meter traffic and items other than those emanating from posting boxes to ensure that these conform with Post Office needs;
- random checks of intermediate despatches.

## ANNEX 3

### THE CODING DESK OPERATION

#### PREAMBLE

The Post Office and the UCW agree that the gross coding desk area performance is affected by some factors which are not within the control of the individual operator (eg work flow, machine breakdown) and therefore wishes to concentrate the monitoring of operator performance primarily on keying rate (ie the number of items coded as measured by the coding desk traffic meter divided by the time elapsed as measured by the coding desk 'hours run' meter). The standard of acceptable performance for each trained and experienced coding desk operator will be a keying rate of 2000 items per hour. If coding desk operators, code/sort ancillary staff, supervisors and higher levels of management all fulfil their responsibilities effectively, then the operator keying rate of 2000 iph will be met and the disparity between operator keying rates and effective coding desk throughput will not exceed 20%.

#### TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT

1. Each coding desk operator must achieve a keying rate of 1200 items per hour by the fourth week on operating duties after completion of training (ie excluding the element of live work that is included within the 100 hours coding desk operator training).
2. A prospective Coding Desk Operator will only be made substantive when he or she has shown that he or she can achieve and maintain a standard of 2000 items per hour keying rate with no more than 1% error. This should normally occur within about 12 months of completion of training. Where, exceptionally, it is considered by management that the operator is making sufficient progress towards this keying rate

but requires more time to achieve his or her best sustainable performance, the 12 month period may be extended by up to a further 6 months. Operators who fail to achieve acceptable standards of performance even after an extension will be removed from coding and may be reverted to postman. Any operator given such an 'extension' should be warned of this possibility at the time.

3. Each coding desk operator will be expected to maintain a satisfactory rate of progress, to the defined levels of performance. He or she will be informed of his/her progress at regular intervals. It will be made clear at the outset that he/she will not be retained if he/she is unable to attain acceptable standards of performance.

4. Where performance standards are not being met the operator should be informed in writing and should be counselled by a code/sort instructor. Fair and sensible consideration should be given to factors that may have adversely affected the individual's performance on coding work and all reasonable measures should be taken to help the individual to improve his/her performance, including additional training where necessary.

5. If this does not result in the operator reaching the required standard the operator should be interviewed at no less than PEC level, and while the main emphasis should again be on offering assistance to improve performance, the operator should also be warned that removal from coding duties and reversion to postman, if appropriate, is likely to follow from any continuing failure to achieve an acceptable standard of performance. If the officer removed from coding is not a substantive PHG but being paid at PHG rate, he or she should be reverted to postman. In the case of existing substantive PHGs who are deselected for Coding Desk Operator duties and whose performance has been adjudged unsatisfactory through no fault of their own after the implementation of this agreement may, if there are no other suitable PHG vacancies available, retain on a reserved right basis PHG rates of pay whilst performing Postman duties. They will be redeployed on suitable PHG duties at the earliest opportunity.

6. At all stages after completion of training the maximum acceptable coding desk operator error rate is 1% (ie 1 item incorrect out of every 100 coded). Efforts will be made to assist coding desk operators with unacceptable accuracy rates to improve performance, but where performance nevertheless fails to reach an acceptable level, the operator may be removed from coding duties.

7. Local consultation should take place to ensure that the terms of this agreement and Code of Practice are effectively implemented.

## APPENDIX TO ANNEX 3

### THE CODING DESK OPERATION: A FRAMEWORK OF GOOD PRACTICE

#### PART 1 RESPONSIBILITIES

The achievement of good coding desk operator throughout is an essential part of ensuring that letter mechanisation:

operates effectively to meet Quality of Service commitments; makes its contribution to the efficiency of the Business in terms of a return on the investment, and in contributing to improved productivity.

Achieving a good coding desk area performance is not the responsibility of the coding desk operator alone. It is the joint responsibility of coding desk operators, code/sort ancillary workers, supervisors and higher levels of management.

#### 1. The responsibility of the Coding Desk Operator

To develop and maintain the skill and speed to key accurately at a rate of at least 2000 items per hour after one year's experience.

To apply himself/herself to this task so that a minimum of time is lost from coding due to factors within the operator's control.

To know and apply the correct coding rules at all times, and to code with an error rate of no more than 1% of items processed.

#### 2. The responsibility of the Code/Sort Ancillary Worker

To keep the desks supplied with suitable mail at all times so that operators do not run out of work.

To know what items should not be fed to the desks and as far as practicable to cull them out as he/she feeds.

To feed the desks correctly, tapping down mail and being alert to spot and correct minor jams at the destacker before they cause a stoppage.

#### 3. The responsibility of the Code/Sort Supervisor in relation to achieving a good Coding Desk Operator throughput

To maintain the correct flow of work, liaising with colleagues in the facing/segregating area as necessary.

To summon engineering assistance quickly in the event of machine faults.

To move coding desk operators to other work areas where the level of traffic for coding is insufficient, or in the event of machine breakdown (but avoiding unnecessary movements).

To record on the local control forms any movements of staff from coding to other work areas.

To monitor the quality of the mail presented to coding desk operators.

To exercise proper control of attendances including grace reliefs and meal reliefs.

To note where newly trained staff are on duty, particularly ancillary workers, and to advise them as necessary, liaising with an instructor where appropriate.

To monitor the quality of coding.

#### 4. The responsibility of Management above the First-line Supervisor

To ensure that there is an up-to-date office work plan and that all concerned are aware of and apply it.

To ensure that the staffing of the coding operation is correctly aligned to traffic by periodic review.

To provide training for coding desk operators, ancillary workers, and code/sort supervisors in accordance with the nationally agreed formats (including this Code of Practice).

To maintain an effective system of monitoring and counselling individual coding desk operators.

To ensure that supervisors are fully aware of the management objectives in relation to the coding operation and that there are sufficient channels of communication at all levels between supervisors/higher management/engineering staff.

To ensure that recruitment, training, absorption into coding desk operation duties, content and rotation of duties are such that they assist rather than hinder the development of good operating standards.

To review periodically the disparity between individual operator keying rates and overall coding desk area performance in order to maintain an efficient relationship between the two.

If coding desk operators, code/sort ancillary staff, supervisors and higher levels of management all fulfill these responsibilities effectively, then the disparity between operator keying rates and effective coding desk area performance will not exceed 20%.

Specific factors identified during the joint PO/UCW study which detract from the individual's ability to give his or her best performance or which contribute to the disparity between keying rate and gross throughputs are shown in Parts II and III together with action that can be taken to minimise the effect on coding desk operator performance.

#### PART II FACTORS AFFECTING CODING DESK OPERATOR PERFORMANCE -- KEYING/GROSS THROUGHPUT DISPARITY

The joint PO/UCW Study Group identified 7 main factors creating the disparity between keying rate (measured by the coding desk metered hours) and the gross coding desk operator throughput (measured by hours scheduled to and used on coding). These factors are listed below, together with action that can be taken to minimise their effect on coding desk operator performance.

##### 1. (a) Factor

Concessionary grace reliefs (as distinct from official meal reliefs which are not counted as work hours).

Accounted for 5.53% of overall 20.86% disparity.

##### (b) Action

Time spent on official meal reliefs is accounted for separately. Time spent on grace reliefs is included (proportionately) in the hours accounted to coding. Disproportionate or badly timed grace relief which detract from the operators' overall performance should be avoided.

##### 2. (a) Factor

Other absences from the coding desk (voluntary), accounted for 4.67% of disparity.

##### (b) Action

Supervisory control of coding desk operators should ensure that voluntary absences from the coding desk are kept to a reasonable minimum. Proper control of attendances and departures and returns from reliefs should be exercised. The occasional absence from the desk during work time is reasonable as distinct from repeated or lengthy absences. In this respect the same supervisory control should be exercised over coders as over manual sorters or other staff.

##### 3. (a) Factor

Periods of not coding (voluntarily) other than for reasons stated below.

Accounted for 3.84% of disparity.

##### (b) Action

The occasional break to relax or adjust chairs or lights is reasonable as distinct from lengthy stoppages which disrupt working rhythm. This is an area where commonsense and an understanding of people must be applied as it should be applied in supervising any other work area. Managers, supervisors and staff should reach clear understandings about what is acceptable and what is not.

##### 4 (a) Factor

Machine stoppages.

Accounted for 4.26% of disparity.

##### (b) Action

Some level of machine stoppages is inevitable. This can, however, be minimised by the code/sort supervisor ensuring that:

ancillary feeders understand their role of culling mail likely to cause jams, correctly feeding and tapping down mail and being alert to spot and correct minor jams at the coding desk destacker.

that presorter plans and boxes are arranged with the need to avoid coding desk stoppages clearly in mind.

that the ancillary presorter minder is carrying out his tasks correctly and clearing any jams appropriate to him quickly.

that engineering assistance is summoned quickly in the event of machine faults that require it and that fault reports are completed.

that in the event of a major stoppage the operators are diverted without delay to other work and that any such movements are recorded on the control forms.

that persistent machine problems are reported to higher management so that they can be taken up with the engineers on a more formal level.

##### 5 (a) Factor

Waiting for work.

Accounted for 0.53% of disparity.

Except in the most unusual circumstances, this should not occur. It can be reduced/eliminated by the code/sort supervisor ensuring that:

the ancillary feeder is doing his job correctly and that all desks are stacked with mail before the commencement of coding shifts and before the return of operators from meal/grace reliefs.

there is good liaison with the supervision responsible for providing mail to produce a smooth work flow and where problems occur frequently they must be reported to higher management who should review the office work plan and alignment of staff to traffic.

#### 6. (a) Factor

Removing items from the easel.

Accounted for 2.03% of disparity.

#### (b) Action

Some items that cannot or should not be coded have to be removed by the operator if they arrive at the easel. The objective must be to reduce these items to the lowest possible level.

Items unsuitable for coding should be removed at the facing stage but the ancillary feeder should also cull the mail as he/she feeds to remove as many as possible of those that have 'slipped through' before they reach the operator.

The supervisor should ensure that ancillaries understand this aspect of their task, and should liaise with colleagues in the facing/segregating area where the numbers of items unsuitable for coding arriving at the coding suites appears excessive.

#### 7. (a) Factor

Incorrect recording of staff movements.

Not quantified but may account for variations of 2 to 3% in disparity.

#### (b) Action

It is essential that any change to the scheduled coding duties resulting in additional coding time being incurred or in hours being 'lapsed' from coding and spent on other work, is recorded on the supervisory control sheets.

The hours so recorded are used to calculate the coding desk performance which is an essential element in the monitoring of work done per hour paid for. Cases have been noted where failure correctly to record staff movements to and from other work areas has led to a distorted picture of coding performance.

An example draft control sheet for the coding area is associated at Annex A.

### PART III

#### FACTORS AFFECTING CODING DESK OPERATOR PERFORMANCE — KEYING RATE

In addition to the factors which contribute to the disparity between the keying rate and the gross coding desk area performance the PO/UCW study group identified other features of local practice or sorting office organisation which might detract from the individual's ability to give the best performance of which he or she is capable.

#### 1. (a) Factor

Failure to absorb a newly trained coder into a duty which provides adequate coding experience.

#### (b) Action

The training of coding desk operator involves building up knowledge of coding rules, keyboard expertise, confidence and stamina to the point where he can code at a rate of at least 1200 items per hour with no more than 1% error. The last part of the 100 hour training is spent coding live mail. Reinforcement of the skill learnt in training is essential in order that an operator can progressively improve his performance. Newly trained operators must therefore be absorbed into regular coding duties as soon as training is complete as far as is practicable. Where a gap of more than 4 weeks cannot be avoided the operator should be given up to 10 hours refresher training including classroom sessions to ensure that he regains the minimum level of skill required to 'pass out' of training. Monitoring of his performance should in this case start from the date he assumes coding desk operator duties rather than from the date at which he completes initial training.

#### 2. (a) Factor

Rotations or duty patterns which provide insufficient or intermittent coding experience.

#### (b) Action

Continuous reinforcement of coding skills is necessary to build up and maintain a good standard of performance.

Coding duties should provide for coding to be undertaken 2 weeks out of 3, or 3 weeks out of 4 with approximately half the time in each duty being spent in coding.

Where local rotation/duty patterns provide significantly less coding experience than this, local management and unions should review the arrangements with the intention of increasing the amount of coding per coding duty/set.

#### 3. (a) Factor

Inadequately trained code/sort supervisors.

#### (b) Action

This should not be a problem at new MLOs where code/sort supervisors will have been trained in readiness for the commencement of code/sort working. New supervisors at existing MLOs should be given the appropriate training courses as quickly as possible.

There is also a 2 day refresher course for supervisors in existing MLOs who received their initial training some time ago. This course is organised through POEC but is held with groups of supervisors at the local office and centres round a micro-computer simulation of their own MLO using local data on traffic, staffing, despatch times etc. (It must not be used as a substitute for the agreed initial training.)

#### 4. (a) Factor

Inadequately trained ancillary workers.

**(b) Action**

This can rapidly become a problem as turnover of staff duty changes, re-signings etc bring inexperienced Postmen into the code/sort area.

The local code/sort instructor has a full brief for the training of ancillary workers, and any Postman due to work on these duties should be given the full training locally. Supervisors should be aware of newly trained staff working on these important tasks and guide them as necessary. Untrained staff should not be used in the code/sort area.

**5. (a) Factor**

Embarrassing items presented to the coder, eg indistinct writing, slipped window envelopes. This is a significant factor in disrupting the operator's keying rhythm.

**(b) Action**

A certain level of embarrassing items is unavoidable. As far as possible (ie where they are obvious at the facing or feeding stage) the items should be removed before they reach the coding desk easel. Where significant numbers from one poster are evident to the operator he/she should draw the supervisor's attention to them.

The supervisor should note the problem and pass on the information via the appropriate channels so that contact can be made with the poster to establish what action can be taken to reduce the problem. Subsequently, operators should be informed of the action taken.

**6. (a) Factor**

Distractions resulting from environmental factors such as lighting, temperature, noise or uncomfortable seating.

**(b) Action**

Criticisms made by operators have been noted and will be researched in relation to the design of third generation coding desks.

Environmental questions such as the correct working temperature are particularly difficult given the different types and amounts of movement involved in different sorting office tasks, and wide variety of buildings and floor layouts. Judgements are also known to be very subjective. Thus most problems relating to temperature and draughts will need to be discussed and resolved locally calling on expert advice as appropriate. Where screens are to be used round the coding area there is advantage in making them moveable in order to avoid problems of excessive heat at other times of the year.

The provision of carpet in the coding desk area has been found in some offices to reduce noise and provide a pleasanter working environment. Where carpets are to be provided they should be of the type approved by the Estates Executive for use in the code/sort areas.

Some offices have experimented with the provision of music via individual headsets, and provided that this does not prove to be distracting for the operators it may be useful.

Provision of a suitable chair is important in ensuring correct and comfortable seating of the coding desk operator. Over a period, trials of various types of chairs have taken place in agreement between the Post Office and the UCW. A

recommended design has been offered for trials in sorting offices and will be available in due course.

Where problems exist, they should be discussed jointly and managers should ensure that staff know the action to be taken.

**7. (a) Factor**

Unconstructive pressure as distinct from encouragement to achieve optimum performance.

**(b) Action**

It is necessary to monitor the performance of individual coding desk operators in order to ensure that in the cases of new operators an acceptable level of progress is being made towards the performance expected of an experienced operator, and in the case of experienced operators that an acceptable standard of performance is being maintained.

Most operators will wish to know what performance rates they are achieving, and it is fair and constructive that they should be informed of their progress preferably at monthly intervals and at no less than three monthly intervals.

All operators should be informed in writing, before taking up code/sort training, of the standards they will be expected to achieve both as trainees and as 'live' coding desk operators, and should be made aware that inability to achieve the standard will lead to removal from coding desk duties.

As in all manipulative skills improvement in performance generally follows a particular pattern. Guidelines on the expected rate of progression by the individual towards performance of a keying rate of 2000 items per hour will be the subject of further study and consultation jointly. This will be concluded by 1 October and will be included in this Code of Practice. This will incorporate the expected normal rate of progression, and the minimum acceptable rate of progression to take account of the operator who, while steadily improving his or her performance, falls behind the normal rate of progress.

Counselling will be an integral part of this procedure. Regular counselling of all operators should take place preferably by a code/sort instructor to monitor progress and see whether additional training is likely to be beneficial or whether there are any particular points affecting performance on which assistance can be given.

The main objective of the counselling and interviewing procedures should be to assist individual operators to achieve the acceptable performance standard. It is inevitable that a few operators will not be able to do so despite assistance since the ability to code to an acceptable standard depends not only on training but also on intrinsic aptitude. It is necessary for the benefit of the Business as a whole (while no reflection on the other abilities and qualities of the individual) that such operators should be removed from coding duties, and in some cases this will mean that they are unable to advance to substantive promotion into the Postman Higher Grade.

Information on the progress of individual operators should be retained for joint examination in the event of an appeal against removal from CDO duties.

## APPENDIX C1

### AGREEMENT ON NEW TECHNOLOGY IN THE MAILS BUSINESS WITH UCW

#### PREAMBLE

1. Both parties to this Agreement recognise that the introduction and development of New Technology can be to the mutual advantage of the Mails Business and its staff. The adoption of the most effective available systems and equipment will enable the Business to respond to new market opportunities, withstand competitive pressures and thereby maximise the security of the business and employment within. Only through the success of the Business can employment be secured and conditions of service of staff represented by the UCW be improved.
2. It is accepted that the use of New Technology is a major means of protecting the future of the Mails Business and protecting as far as possible levels of employment in that Business. Without New Technology the Business would be increasingly vulnerable to competing forms of communications and services; with it, both parties to this Agreement believe that the Post Office can more than match the opposition.

#### SCOPE OF AGREEMENT

3. It is accepted that the introduction of technological change can best be achieved following consultation aimed at securing mutual understanding and common consent. Accordingly this Agreement has been drawn up to enable the Mails Business on the one hand and the UCW on the other to reach agreement and co-operate on the application of New Technology, and to minimise any problems that may arise. This Agreement covers all aspects of the introduction of New Technology (whether in work areas staffed primarily by UCW represented grades or in other areas) where New Technology could have a material impact on UCW represented grades. The arrangements outlined in this Agreement are intended to involve the UCW in discussion and planning at the earliest opportunity. It is accepted by both parties that the involvement of other Unions in discussions on New Technology will also be necessary.

#### NEW TECHNOLOGY

4. The expression 'New Technology' in the context of this Agreement is identified as any systems or equipment which utilise micro-electronics and/or micro processors. The Agreement covers any new such systems or equipment, or new applications of existing systems/equipment, which replace or change existing manual, mechanical or electronic systems, and which give rise to material changes in the level of employment, in job content, in skill requirement or in the work environment of UCW members.
5. The Post Office and UCW accept that technological change can improve efficiency, job opportunities and the working environment. Both parties accept that some of the essential changes will be aimed primarily at speeding up information

flows thus improving the Mails Business competitive position and hence the job security of its staff. There will be changes which will require a willingness to accept re-training in order to maximise work opportunities for existing staff and to minimise the need for external recruitment. Some changes may also require careful forward planning to minimise the impact on staffing levels.

#### CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION PROVISION

6. The Post Office and UCW recognise that meaningful discussions and negotiation can only proceed if both parties are well-informed and aware of the other's aims and aspirations. The Postal Business undertakes to consult with the UCW in the planning, siting and implementation of New Technology. For its part, the UCW accepts the need for field trials to be conducted at an early stage in research and development programmes so that the effects of proposed changes can be properly assessed; field trials will not be held up pending the outcome of consultation on the project as a whole. During the various feasibility and trial stages of a development programme the Post Office will keep UCW informed of work in progress and its significance for the project. Once the consultative procedure has begun both parties will advance the talks and any subsequent negotiations at a reasonable pace so as to avoid the uncertainties caused by delay.

7. Projects will be progressed through the existing consultative machinery. The Post Office will give the fullest possible information to the UCW in advance of any meeting so as to ensure that the discussions are meaningful. Both parties will aim to keep employees abreast of technological developments while respecting the need to treat commercially sensitive information in a confidential manner.

#### EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION

8. The Post Office and the UCW agree that a prime objective in introducing technological change will be to protect existing services, improve the quality of services, expand services and provide new services with the intention of maintaining employment security and of creating additional job opportunities.
9. Accepting that the introduction of New Technology will call for changes in staff employment, careful and early manpower planning will be necessary, both to ensure an adequate supply of staff with the necessary skills and to minimise staff surpluses.
10. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 11, there will be no compulsory redundancy as a direct result of the introduction of New Technology. If, in spite of the opportunity retraining would allow in giving staff the necessary skills, a potential staff surplus were to arise, the reduction in staffing levels would be achieved by applying the other provisions of the Postal Redundancy Agreement.
11. The terms of paragraph 10 will only apply:
  - where employees co-operate fully in any retraining and/or redeployment to other work areas; and,
  - where there are no major changes in circumstances outside Post Office control.

12. The introduction of New Technology is essential if the Postal Business is going to be able to compete effectively in the years ahead. In recognition of the contribution which the co-operation of staff will make to the successful application of New Technology, savings arising from the introduction will be shared with staff. Bonuses will be calculated taking into account the net cost of purchasing and maintaining equipment for each separate application, using standard investment techniques.

#### MANPOWER PLANNING

13. The Post Office acknowledges the crucial importance of manpower planning to the smooth introduction of New Technology and will provide UCW with forecasts of the likely staffing consequences at the earliest possible stage of planning. These forecasts will take account of projected manpower needs including:

- an identification of the skills and qualifications which will be necessary to facilitate introduction of the New Technology;
- an assessment of the forecast changes in job content, work organisation and manning arrangements;
- an assessment of manning levels and proposed gradings; and
- an outline of any necessary proposed training programmes.

Discussions on the staffing implications of proposed technology changes will begin at the earliest possible stage of planning and will normally run concurrently with the discussions on the operational implications of the proposed changes.

14. The introduction of New Technology should be used as far as possible to improve working conditions, job design and job satisfaction. The nature of the tasks to be performed may in some cases change; job satisfaction and good performance are most likely to be secured by ensuring that the staff employed on these tasks are skilled in the nature of the work they have to perform. (Grading of jobs, selection and training are therefore important issues.) In devising job content associated with New Technology, due account will be taken of the need to reduce monotonous tasks which people are better able to perform.

15. New jobs arising out of the introduction of New Technology in work areas staffed by grades represented by UCW shall, wherever practicable, be offered to existing employees in the appropriate grade represented by the UCW, provided the staff have the ability, or the potential to develop it, and can be trained in the appropriate skills.

#### TRAINING

16. Careful manpower planning should make it possible to identify those jobs which will be affected by the introduction of New Technology and to identify what new skills may be required. The Post Office and UCW accept that a willingness on the part of staff to accept retraining is vitally important to protect the competitive position of the Postal Business. UCW will encourage their members to accept such retraining and

the Post Office, for its part, will provide full training as necessary for UCW members required to operate New Technology systems and/or equipment. The procedure for selecting those to receive training and the training programmes will be subject to the normal consultative procedures. Should redeployment to other work areas be necessary, training will be provided to assist staff in achieving the skills necessary to transfer to different work areas.

#### HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

17. The Post Office fully accepts that the introduction of New Technology requires a careful evaluation of all the environmental factors which might affect the health, safety and welfare of staff, and that these need to be the subject of continuous study. The Post Office will utilise the professional expertise which exists within its Safety, Occupational Health and Welfare services to monitor for such studies. Close liaison will be maintained both between the Health, Safety and Welfare units and between those specialists engaged in them and external organisations working within those fields. The findings of relevant research will be made available to the UCW.

18. The health and safety of staff will be one of the prime concerns when considering the introduction of New Technology. The Post Office in consultation with its Unions, will take such steps as are necessary to safeguard the health and safety of staff. Every care will be taken to ensure that both the siting and operation of new equipment complies with safety requirements and that safe systems of working are introduced and maintained.

#### UCW CO-OPERATION

19. On the basis of this Agreement UCW members will co-operate fully in the introduction of New Technology.

#### REVIEW

20. The terms of this Agreement will be reviewed after it has been in operation for three years, or earlier with the agreement of both parties.



## APPENDIX C2

### OPTICAL CHARACTER RECOGNITION (OCR)

1. The operational trial of the OCR equipment installed at Mount Pleasant/Inland Section (MP/IS) concludes at the end of March 1985. A detailed report of the trial by the joint management/unions monitoring group has been agreed by the Post Office, CMA, UCW and NCU, and consequently the Post Office intend and the UCW agree that the equipment will now become operational equipment.
2. The performance of the equipment under trial at MP/IS has indicated the equipment is both operationally and economically viable. It is important that the Post Office should take advantage of potential financial and service benefits arising from OCR.
3. It is agreed by both parties that the way forward for OCR is to install it where financially justified at MLOs as a replacement for, or addition to, conventional code/sort equipment. The next stage is to carry out detailed costings for individual offices.
4. After commissioning there will be a period where the office alters its work flow to take best advantage of the machineable content of the office's own outward traffic. Whatever the quality of the mail processed, a proportion will be rejected and redirected to the other work areas. Then the spare processing capacity of the OCR equipment can be established and consideration given to the possibility of moving particularly well suited traffic from other locations, following national negotiations.
5. Indications are that the staff savings from the installation of OCR at not more than 20 MLOs will be approximately 300 staff in total, although the numbers concerned will vary from office to office according to volume of traffic suitable for OCR. The staff savings will be achieved through normal wastage. Where schemes produce staff-hour savings, these will be shared with the staff in line with para 12 of the New Technology Agreement.
6. Operational OCR machines will require two machine minders, ie one for loading and one for unloading work. Staff will also be required to transport mail from OCR equipment to ASMs. The number of staff employed on the latter work will depend on the physical layout of each office.
7. The work described in paragraph 6 is identical to the ancillary work carried out by Postmen in the code sort area. Ancillary work in the code/sorting area (feeding of coding desks, clearing of stackers, feeding, minding and clearing of sorting machines) remains proper to the Postman grade, but can be performed by operators as part of code/sort duties.
8. The Post Office agrees to pursue vigorously marketing initiatives to secure maximum new work for OCR.

### SECTION 3 ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND CHANGES IN STAFFING PRACTICES UNION COMMENTARY

NONE

### PARAGRAPH

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The changes in working practices detailed in Section 1 and agreed between UCW and the Post Office are important to the success of the Mails Business, but are not in themselves sufficiently comprehensive to remove significant obstacles to greater efficiency or, therefore, to safeguard its future against intensified competition. In the interests of customers and staff, the Post Office and the UCW agree to the additional changes in practice set out in paras 3-7 below which are vital to the continued security of the Business. In recognition of the major contribution these measures will make to protecting the future of the Mails Business, the Post Office agrees to share additional benefits with staff as set out in paras 8 & 9 below.

This paragraph should be read in conjunction with Annex 3 which contains the assurances in respect of full-time staff, "casualisation of the industry" and earnings level. The Executive Council insisted that these assurances be given by the Post Office Board before it could recommend acceptance of the Agreement.

2. The Post Office and the UCW jointly recognise the need to provide an economic and reliable service to the customer and, within this objective, for staff to have the opportunity to maintain and improve reasonable regular earnings expectations without relying on excessive levels of overtime. The changes in working practices set out in this agreement should be introduced with these aims. Certain assurances relating to this agreement are contained in the letter attached at Annex 3.

3. IWM: The IWM scheme is to be introduced at all offices by 1 July 1985. It is mandatory — see para 8 — for all units to make new core savings (unless in exceptional local circumstances given a certificate of exemption by the local manager).

The interpretation of this particular paragraph is that Branches should commit themselves to IWM and WLA by that date with a view to establishing staff hour baselines and traffic baselines and this paragraph should be taken in conjunction with para 8 of the agreement and also the addendum to this report that deals with Conference policies on IWM.

4. New Associate Categories of Staff: New Associate categories of the grades of Postman/woman, PHG, Cleaner, Doorkeeper and Liftman will be established. These categories, together with supplementary staffing, and a new concept of scheduled attendance will be introduced as soon as possible. Details of the changes are appended.

5. Staffing Arrangements: Management has a duty to satisfy itself that staffing arrangements are compatible with providing an economic and reliable service. Within this staff will continue to be able to select their duties on whatever basis has operated locally subject only to the following:

- the rotations system and duty start times adopted will promote efficient working;
- the results produced by the duty selection system are consistent with the over-riding need to satisfy the operational commitments of the office;
- individuals have the aptitude and are, after training if necessary, otherwise suitable for the duties they have chosen;
- staff may be re-assigned to other tasks or duties during their attendances where necessary to ensure the efficient maintenance of services.

6. Promotion to PED: The Post Office having given an assurance that the large majority of promotions to PED will continue to be from the PHG grade, the Post Office and UCW agreed to a joint custody to be completed by 1 October 1985 to determine the most effective and equitable arrangements for suitably qualified and experienced Postmen to progress directly to PED.

Dealt with in Annex I.

This paragraph was originally headed 'Duty Selection', however, the Executive Council sought a number of changes in its content including the heading which was misleading and restrictive.

It is not the intention of this paragraph to change the existing rules in respect of selection of duties nor rotation systems. Neither is it designed to allow staff to be unnecessarily and uneconomically moved from task to task.

It has now been agreed that the Post Office and the Union will immediately set up a Joint Study Group to consider this question in detail with the aim of completing this Study by 1 October 1985. If the Study finds that it is feasible, negotiations would then proceed.

7. Direct Recruitment to PHG: Where a trawl of eligible staff in accordance with Annex 1 produces insufficient suitable internal candidates to fill a PHG vacancy, local managers will proceed to external recruitment after notifying the local UCW branch. External recruits will be required first to pass the PHG aptitude tests (but not the Postman Job Knowledge tests unless also appropriate) and meet the normal recruitment conditions. In addition they must be at least age 18 and not older than 45. These guidelines will be jointly reviewed by 1 October 1985.

- (a) Normal Transfer Applicants.
- (b) Postman/PHG Acting Lists.

On (a) of course, no trials are made for transferees, but if there is an application it should be recorded locally until a vacancy occurs.

On (b) many offices do maintain Postman/PHG Acting Lists. We now consider such Acting Lists to be essential, their usage must cater for the need to safeguard the reasonable levels of earnings of substantive PHGs.

The Executive Council were able, after considerable discussion to persuade the Post Office to increase the lump sum by an additional £25. Once Branches have signed an agreement, additional core savings (where applicable), the date for implementation and a timetable for discussions on implementing the other measures in the overall agreement, all members in post at that time will receive £175, (pro-rata part-time staff and excluding catering grades).

8. Lump Sum: In return for the additional changes in working practices listed in Section 3 of this agreement, the Post Office agrees to increase the total lump sum of £275. Of this, £100 has been paid, the further £175 will be paid locally to staff in post on the date that local branches and local managers sign a jointly accepted agreement setting out the additional core savings for new and existing IWM offices (except for those given a certificate of exemption such as at para 3 above) and the dates for implementation, as well as a timetable for discussion on implementing all the measures in the overall agreement.

## 9. Attendances and Duties

9.1 Using 'Scheduled' attendances, the aim would be, as far as is possible, consistent with the need to provide cost effectively the necessary experienced skills within an office, to provide delivery staff with a Monday to Friday 5 day week. Other staff in grades covered by this agreement would, again as far as is consistent cost effectively with service requirements, also be provided with a 5 day week.

Local managers would examine, where it was not possible to convert a duty to a Monday to Friday week, the following options:

- Tuesday to Saturday week;
- 11 day fortnights;
- rotating days off.

Nationally, the aim would be to increase Monday to Friday duties from an estimated 30% to over 60%.

9.2 To improve the leave arrangements of regular staff through the use of supplementary staff in line with existing rules, every effort would be made to improve the proportion of leave which could be taken in the summer or concentrated into a period and this would be discussed locally. Local leave arrangements would need to ensure that service commitments could be properly met and they would need to be certified by local managers.

The existing rules to determine the level of leave reserves are not disturbed by this agreement, however, Branches may negotiate the use of supplementary staff, ie summer casuals, to improve their local leave arrangements should they so wish.

In general terms, existing nationally agreed rules and agreements will remain unchanged, however this agreement should be read in conjunction with them to ensure their compatibility.

10. Effect on Other Agreements: This Agreement replaces (partially or wholly as appropriate) those national and local agreements and practices on relevant matters where these are inconsistent with the spirit and intention of this Agreement.

11. Consultative Process: All UCW branches and local managers are required to conform speedily with the terms of this Agreement. The only way of resolving any local disagreements about the application of its terms will be by the use of the procedural agreement in the normal way.

Branches are reminded that any areas of disagreement arising during local negotiation must be dealt with under the terms of the Procedural Agreements.

**1. LESS THAN FULL TIME STAFF**

The Union and the Post Office jointly recognise the following:

[ ] With present levels of unemployment particularly among young people the creation of grades working less than full time hours and acting as a bridge to or from full time Post Office employment is desirable; however, this does not take away from the objective of establishing economic full time duties which match service requirements;

[ ] the establishment of such categories must not dilute the skills required for the job; in particular basic pay will be the same (on a pro rata basis) as for the main grade;

[ ] many staffing practices are not consistent with aspirations for staff betterment; moreover to the extent that they impair business efficiency or prevent the business from providing good value for the customer, they endanger job security and are therefore unfair to staff generally.

**2. NEW CATEGORIES OF GRADES**

New categories of grades entitled Associate PHG (MLOs and London Sections only), Associate Postman/woman, Associate Cleaner/Liftman, Associate Doorkeeper will be created replacing the existing Auxiliary Postman, Allowance Deliverer and other part time grades as appropriate. These new categories will work less than full time hours and when

Where this paragraph refers to Associate PHG as specified in paragraph 2 of the Appendix, the consideration of employment of an Associate PHG is restricted to MLOs and London Sections only, those being the Inland Section, Foreign Section and the London Overseas Mail Office (LOMO).

**3. SUPPLEMENTARY STAFF**

filled by external recruits preference will be given to unemployed applicants under 45 years of age. Subject to suitability and on the basis of merit such recruits to the new categories will have first call on any full time vacancies otherwise due to be filled externally within the same office (or Head Postmaster's area subject to local consultation). In the case of PHG vacancies, suitable full time Postmen would be considered first. Any vacancies in the Associate categories themselves would first be offered to existing full time staff, subject to fitness and efficiency. Details are contained at Annex I.

We have been successful in our negotiations in avoiding any question of the employment of Associate PHGs in Delivery Offices, PCOs and all other non-MLOs, etc. in the country. Assuming that, in finality, there are 80 MLOs, these plus the three sections, means that out of our 1,350 workplaces in the country, consideration to the employment of Associate PHGs is restricted to 80-odd offices.

(see Annex I)

Branches should ensure that the existing rules on the employment of casual staff are observed and that such staff should be used to supplement and not replace full-time leave reserves determined in the normal way.

3.1 In addition to locally determined reserves, seasonal and casual staff should be employed in line with existing rules. In particular, to improve the leave arrangements of regular staff, every effort should be made to increase the proportion of leave which can be taken in the summer or concentrated into a period and this should be discussed locally. Local leave arrangements must be authorised and certified by local managers as providing sufficient staff with appropriate skills to meet at all times the service requirements of the Business in an economic manner.

3.2 To this end, in order to provide additional employment during months of increased pressure or absence, Associate staff may be recruited on seasonal contracts of 13 weeks or more.

#### 4. SCHEDULED ATTENDANCES

4.1 The Union and the Business agree the desirability of moving as far as service requirements permit to a 5 day working week whilst economically maintaining a 6 day service. To this end, and to provide the resource needed to maintain service on Saturdays or at other times, 'scheduled' attendances (outwith normal duties and overtime) may be introduced. Such attendances (which may also apply to any person (with some exceptions at weekends) and will be paid on the basis of hours worked per week. They will be the subject of a separate exchange of undertakings and will be offered first to suitable existing staff (of any grade, with Postmen, PHG and Associates having priority). Pay will be at basic rate for the grade  $\times 1\frac{1}{3}$  and will exclude NDA and Saturday premium payments. Sunday pay will be at basic rate for the grade  $\times 2$ . (External recruits will, for the first year, be paid at adult recruit rates, then at basic pay). Details are contained at Annex 2.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF ASSOCIATE PHG, POSTMEN/POSTWOMEN, CLEANERS, DOORKEEPERS OR LIFTMEN

#### ANNEX I

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Post Office and the UCW agree that representatives of management and unions will examine the scope for the employment of Associate staff and the introduction of scheduled attendances in every Head/District Office and its area by end of June 1985 with a view to introducing a first tranche of Associate staff by 22 July 1985 but with regard being taken of the effect on earnings including overtime (but without relying on excessive levels). It is further agreed that Head/District Postmasters may employ such staff wherever this, or any subsequent examination/review (a more radical examination of the staffing base will for instance be undertaken concurrent with and as part of the implementation of revised duties resulting from Revised Revision Procedures), shows that this will:

- (i) provide better attendance patterns for existing staff (subject to there being no loss of efficiency) or
- (ii) facilitate the handling of traffic growth or
- (iii) provide more efficient staffing arrangements or
- (iv) reduce over-dependence on overtime, thereby ensuring more consistent meeting of service objectives.

It is important that Branches should seek during the joint examination, to establish a reasonable balance between the employment of Associate Grades, the use of scheduled attendances and, where available, a reasonable level of overtime consistent with meeting service objectives. Where they so desire, existing Auxiliary Postmen, Allowance Deliverers and Part-time staff can retain their existing terms and conditions.

To meet these needs, all staff who are contracted to work for less than full weekly conditioned hours of the following full time grades:

- Postman/Postwoman
- PHG
- Cleaner/Liftman
- Doorkeeper

and who are recruited after 17 June 1985 will be offered Associate employment on their contract of employment. Allowance Deliverers, Auxiliary Postmen and other part time staff recruited on or before that date will, if they so wish, have reserved rights to the terms and conditions under which they were recruited.

## 2. FILLING OF VACANCIES

It is also agreed that:

- (i) when filling a vacant Associate post, first consideration will be given to full time staff in the same or higher grade within the Head Postmaster's area who wish to work as Associates instead; no transfer costs will be payable in such circumstances. Generally, staff re-employed as Associates may, subject to fitness and efficiency, be employed until they reach the age of 65. In the case of external recruits, preference will be given as far as possible to applicants, not in full time employment, if possible under 45 years of age. Failing this, applicants in full time employment may be employed after

- (i) The Executive Council's major preoccupation when considering this paragraph was to ensure as far as it is possible, that Associate Grade posts would not be filled by those who were already employed elsewhere. To this end, an acceptable "pecking order" has been established which branches must ensure is adhered to. Only after established staff have been given the opportunity of covering Associate duty vacancies albeit on a temporary basis by scheduled attendances, will external applicants already in employment be employed.

staff in the office, who have already volunteered for Scheduled Attendances, have been given the opportunity of covering, temporarily, Associate duty vacancies by Scheduled Attendances in line with the criteria in Annex 2. These staffing arrangements must meet the objectives of securing the efficient provision of reliable services.

- (ii) Associate PHGs will be employed in MLOs and also in LPR offices designated as Sections, in the main on Code Sorting work, but they may also be used on outward and distribution sorting; in all offices where it is economic to do so consideration should be given to building duties consisting of part PHG work and part Postman work which would, under existing agreement, be graded at PHG, and if necessary, filling any residual Postman work requirement with an Associate.

- (iii) when filling a vacant full time PHG post in an MLO itself, all Postmen including appropriate cadets in the Head Office area of the MLO and from offices whose work has been concentrated on to the MLO would be invited to apply. At the same time panellists from a regional trawl will also be invited to apply, as would all PHG Associate and Postmen Associate staff in the local promotion unit. Vacancies would then be filled in the following order:

- suitable full time Postmen or cadets, with the appropriate service qualifications from the MLO and its concentrated offices;
- suitable full time Postmen regardless of service qualifications from the MLO and its concentrated offices;

This rule means that one hour of PHG work attached to Postmen work, creates a PHG duty.

The Post Office has accepted that this can be applied in all offices, which of course includes the MLOs and Sections, to create hybrid Postman/PHG content duties, even though the majority of the content is Postmen work.

It is specified that the Associate PHG should in the main be employed on Code Sorting work and if a local manager, in spite of the arrangements to cover the work in other ways under this agreement, considers that there is PHG work which requires coverage, the one hour rule can be used to meet that need.

There are certain effective steps which can be adopted as alternative arguments to such staff, over and above the question of overtime and scheduled attendances to cover PHG work. The first is extremely important and re-emphasizes the existing rule which is termed as the "one hour rule" and which is widely used in the smaller Postmen Delivery Offices.

suitable full time Postmen with more than 2 years' service from the Regional panel (compulsory terms will apply only to transfers into newly established MLOs at the time of the initial draw) and the filling of any further vacancies occurring in the next 12 months);

suitable Associate staff, PHG then Postmen, but no transfer costs will be payable.

(iv) In the case of full time PHG vacancies in other offices preference will be given to full time Postmen followed by suitable Associate PHGs (where employed) and then Associate Postmen all from within the local promotion unit. No transfer costs will be payable to Associate staff.

(v) For both types of offices in the event of no suitable candidates, there will be direct recruitment to fill the full time vacancy, after notifying the local UCW branch that this is the case.

(vi) Other vacant full time posts in the grades covered by this agreement which are due to be filled externally will first be offered to existing staff in the same office (or HPs area, subject to local consultation) who work in the grade for less than the full conditioned hours; suitable staff in other Associate grades will have second consideration. No transfer costs will be payable.

All remaining vacancies will be offered to external recruits.

### 3. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR ASSOCIATE STAFF

3.1 The Post Office gives an assurance that the basic hourly rate of pay of staff working less than the full conditioned hours will be comparable pro rata with that for full time staff. Staff with recent relevant experience will be recruited on a pro rata basis to the basic rate for the grade, others to the adult recruit rate. Conditions of service on sick pay will be as laid down in SCM Div 3 para 1.6. The annual leave requirements laid down in Div 1 para 11, as being appropriate to staff on duties of between 12 and 16 hours a week, will be extended to cover staff contracting after 17 June to the new Associate categories of up to 16 hours' employment.

3.2 However, staff with Associate employment will not be eligible for NDA or Saturday premium payments; nor will they be included in IWM productivity schemes (and the replacement scheme unless agreed otherwise). Other allowances etc will be (pro rata) as for the basic full time grade. Associate staff will only be trained for the type of work which they will be liable to perform on their duty. Where duties are less than 16 hours a week Associate staff will be subject to and protected by Post Office rules and procedures relating to security of employment except where explicitly excluded.

Despite forceful argument, the Executive Council was unable to persuade the Post Office to give a firm undertaking not to employ Associate Grades for less than 16 hours per week. However, even though less than 16 hours employment does not meet the Statutory "employment protection threshold" the Post Office has given assurance that such staff will be given adequate employment protection as well as the terms on a pro rata basis of the relevant employment conditions.

One of the concerns of the Executive Council in respect of the use of Associated staff was that they might be used as a completely "mobile" group in an office. In an effort to minimise this possibility, it has been agreed that such staff will only be trained for a particular type of work. Branches should ensure that such work is identified during the initial examination and Associate staff deployed accordingly.

To the management, there must be an attraction in this course in an economic sense, in that it saves on training costs and the "learning curve" which is indeterminate in many cases.

If we have to resort to the employment of Associate Grades, whether Postman or PHG, our first priority must be to seek to employ, or re-employ our own qualified members who are seeking a way of affording retirement, or supplementing their retirement earnings.

The importance of this aspect of the agreement will be obvious to our members within the MLOs and Sections.

To this end the Branch might identify Postmen's duties on the late turn, the first half of which can remain as scheduled with the later half being on Code Sort, etc. The second part of the Postman's duty could then be dealt with within the other parts of this agreement relating to the Associate Postman or scheduled attendances.

SCHEDULED ATTENDANCES

1. DEFINITION

Scheduled Attendances are those which, through an exchange of undertakings, existing members of staff guarantee to cover on a specified and regular basis. They may, for instance be set up on a weekly, monthly, seasonal etc basis. In return, the Post Office undertakes for a specific period of time, subject to satisfactory attendance and performance, to pay for attendance according to the details set out below. Scheduled attendances may be set up for Postmen, PHG, Cleaner/Doorkeeper or Liffman work, but undertakings must take account of the normal duty pattern and rotation of staff. Taking into account the remainder of this agreement, the allocation of scheduled attendances to staff will be a matter for local discussion, but Scheduled Attendances should only be set up where they provide an economic way to secure a reliable service in line with the objectives set out in paragraph 2 of the main agreement.

2. UNDERTAKINGS

Scheduled Attendances will be the subject of undertakings by staff and the Post Office: examples are given at the end of this Annex.

3. DURATION OF UNDERTAKINGS

Scheduled Attendance agreements will last for one year from the date of the undertaking given to the Post Office to attend for the Scheduled Attendance. At the end of this one year period, a review will be undertaken locally to ensure that the pattern of such attendances still economically meets the office circumstances. Suitable adjustments will be made, and attendance, if appropriate, re-offered to staff on a locally determined basis, within the framework outlined here. If changing circumstances warrant, the undertakings may be terminated within this annual period by the giving of one month's notice by the Post Office or by the employee.

4. CONDITIONS

4.1.1 Payment for full time staff will be made at an hourly rate of 1 1/2 x ordinary basic rates (2 x ordinary basic rates on Sundays) of pay, excluding London Weighting, appropriate rate of 1 1/2 x ordinary basic rates (2 x rate for full-time staff will be made at an hourly rate of 1 1/2 x ordinary basic rates on Sundays) of pay, excluding London Weighting, appropriate rate of 1 1/2 x ordinary basic rates (2 x rate for full-time staff where undertaken to perform scheduled attendances Monday to Saturday, double time being paid for scheduled attendances performed on Sunday.

- (i) age: age points will continue to apply to staff under 19 years of age;
(ii) experience: for the Postman grade, adult rates of pay will be at either the maximum or adult recruit rates of pay as appropriate.

4.1.2 Payment for Associate staff who perform Scheduled Attendances will be made at single hourly rate where their basic hours plus scheduled attendance is less than the conditioned basic hours of the equivalent full time grade. Hours performed on Scheduled Attendances which are above a total including basic hours of full time conditioned weekly hours will be paid for at 1 1/2 rate (2 x rate on Sundays).

Branches should ensure that the first priority for the introduction of scheduled attendances is to create, wherever possible and economically viable, Monday to Friday 5-day attendances. However, such attendances can be introduced, wherever local joint discussions indicate that they will provide an economic way to provide an efficient and economic service.

It is understood and accepted that scheduled attendances provided an alternative to the dependence upon excessive overtime levels and Branches should bear this in mind during the initial joint examination.

Once an undertaking is signed by a member of the staff he/she must meet the commitment of the scheduled attendance or provide a substitute (see the terms of the undertaking).

The Executive Council were able to negotiate an increase in the original proposal from 1 1/4 rate to 1 1/2 rate for full-time staff where undertaken to perform scheduled attendances Monday to Saturday, double time being paid for scheduled attendances performed on Sunday.

The same overtime payment rules will apply to Associate Grades performing scheduled attendances as currently apply to existing Part-time employees, ie the full-conditioned hours of the appropriate grade must be worked, including the scheduled attendance before the 1 1/2 rate (double time on Sunday) is paid with the proviso that the maximum rate paid is 1 1/2 Monday to Saturday and double time on Sunday.



## 4.2 Reckonability

4.2.1 Scheduled Attendance payments are not reckonable for pension purposes, are not payable during sick leave or for any other absence, however caused. They do not qualify for NDA or Saturday premium payment neither do they attract paid meal reliefs or qualify for booked through or travelling time. They do however qualify for appropriate allowances.

4.2.2 They do not qualify for inclusion in the calculation of Improved Holiday Pay.

4.2.3 Scheduled Allowances worked on Bank Holidays are exceptionally to be treated in accordance with the provisions for Bank and Public Holiday overtime.

4.2.4 Scheduled Attendance hours do not count towards overtime rate reckonability.

## 4.3 Eligibility

The exclusion of the 10-hour limit if performed on Saturday or Sunday has been agreed exclusively to facilitate the creation of additional Monday to Friday 5-day week duties. The priority for covering scheduled attendances must be given to full-time staff, followed by the appropriate Associate staff as set out in the agreed "pecking order".

Attendances per week will be limited to 10 hours per person not counting Sunday, nor Saturday if performed by a member of staff on a Monday to Friday 5 day week duty, but particularly if the maximum allocation is taken up by an individual care should be taken to ensure that the total number of additional hours worked over basic hours each week is not excessive. Scheduled Attendances will be offered in the following order (where required and economic, appropriate modular training will be given):

(i) suitable full time staff of the Scheduled Attendance grade;

(ii) suitable Associate staff of the Scheduled Attendance grade;

(iii) (a) if the Scheduled Attendance is Postman grade then suitable PHGs (full time then Associate);  
(b) if the Scheduled Attendance is PHG or Cleaner then suitable qualified Postman staff (full time then Associate);

(iv) if these measures fail and Scheduled Attendances are still considered the appropriate and economic way to cover the work, then the local manager may, following consultation and taking into account the cost of training that might be required, offer the Scheduled Attendances to suitable staff in grades other than those covered by this agreement.

The responsibility for ensuring the Scheduled Attendance is made (including the provision of his own suitable substitute previously agreed by the local management) rests with the person who has given the undertaking. If a Scheduled Attendance is not covered without adequate reason this will result in immediate cancellation of the Scheduled Attendance undertaking and loss of eligibility for the person who has given the undertaking to apply further for 6 months (unless a shorter period is agreed). For these purposes, absence through the entitled period of annual leave, for instance, would constitute adequate reason. Otherwise, disciplinary rules and procedures are the same as for existing employment.

**5. ASSOCIATE STAFF**

Where an existing Associate employee performs a Scheduled Attendance then, where it is sensible to do so, the hours of the Associate Employee may be adjusted, together with his contract of employment, to comprehend the Scheduled Attendance. (For instance, if an Associate Employee is contracted to attend for ordinary duty between 1800 and 2200 Monday to Friday, and is allocated a Scheduled Attendance from 1700 to 1800, the Associate post can be converted from 20 hours attendance per week to 25 hours by incorporating the Scheduled Attendance into duty time). This may only be done where the need for the Scheduled Attendance is long term; where it is perceived that future staffing patterns might result in abolition or redistribution of Scheduled Attendances, such attendances must not be reformulated into duties.

**SCHEDULED ATTENDANCE**

The Post Office is willing to offer available Scheduled Attendances to staff (Postmen/PHG etc as appropriate) who are willing to give an undertaking to perform them at specified times on particular days in the week. If you wish to give such an undertaking, fill in one of the forms below and return it to

Obviously, the number of attendances which can be allocated like this will depend on the number of people interested, but it is a real opportunity for you to plan in advance and be sure of your earnings.

**SCHEDULED ATTENDANCE UNDERTAKING**

I undertake to attend for Scheduled Attendances at the following times

For its part I understand the Post Office undertakes that it will pay for my attendance at these times at appropriate rates. I understand that if I fail to attend for a Scheduled Attendance without adequate reason or without arranging for a satisfactory substitute the Post Office will regard the agreement as being cancelled immediately and I will not be eligible for another such undertaking for 6 months. This undertaking will remain in force until

or until ceased with 1 month's notice by either me or the Post Office.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF THE MAIL'S BUSINESS

Dear Mr Tiffin,

Arising from our extensive discussions last week, I am as arranged attaching revised versions, incorporating all the changes we have agreed, of two documents:—

- (i) Section 3 of the main "Safeguarding the Future of the Mails Business" Agreement;
- and (ii) The supplementary Agreement covering postal business catering staff.

During these discussions you asked the Post Office to set out unequivocally its intentions on the employment of less than full-time staff, and there are a number of important new clarifications on that aspect in the agreement at (i) & (d) above. I hope it will be helpful, therefore, if I now emphasise the following:—

- (a) The Post Office has no aim or intention of "casualising the industry". The large majority of jobs will remain full-time, there is no intention to dilute the skills requiring by the workforce for the effective running of the industry, and all staff, full-time and less than full-time, will receive the training necessary to enable them to carry out their duties.
- (b) A primary purpose of Section 3 of the Agreement, within the essential objective of providing an economic and reliable service to our customers, is to give staff the opportunity to maintain and improve reasonable earnings expectations without relying on excessive levels of overtime. This purpose will be achieved through

significantly enhanced and improved IWM bonuses and through securing a reasonable balance between scheduled attendances and less than full-time duties.

(c) The new Associate categories will provide an important bridge to full-time employment especially for the young unemployed; in external recruitment to these new categories, preference will therefore be given to suitable unemployed applicants under 45 years of age. Staff in the new Associate categories will receive the same basic pay (on a pro-rata basis) as full-time staff.

I trust that with these assurances, and taking into account the earnings opportunities for staff via substantial additional bonuses without excessively long hours of overtime, your Executive Committee will recommend the Agreement to the membership. The measures in the Agreement are so vital to the future of the Mails Business that we must, as you know, soon implement them in full in accordance with the Agreed Statement on Section 3 which both parties signed on 3 April 1985. I hope that through our long negotiations over nearly 12 months we have found a way to do this with the union's cooperation.

*Yours sincerely*  
(K. M. Young)

SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT COVERING CATERING STAFF  
UNION COMMENTARY  
PARAGRAPH

1. GENERAL

The Union and the Post Office regard the spirit and intention of the main Safeguarding the future of the Mails Business Agreement as appropriate and applicable to Catering Group staff. It is recognised however that the nature and circumstances of their working environment make it impracticable to provide for the contribution of Catering Group staff to increased efficiency under the precise terms of the main agreement. The Union and the Post Office have therefore put together this supplementary agreement which separately encourages and recognises the beneficial participation of Catering Group staff in ensuring the economic provision of a catering service to the Business.

Catering grades were not included in the original Section 1 & 2 of the Agreement as they are not affected by the proposed working practices set out in those Sections. It was only after requests by Branches for the inclusion of Catering grades in the payment of the £100 bonus related to Sections 1 & 2 that the Executive Council made the necessary representations to the Post Office.

It was made clear to the Union in its response to our claim that the Post Office expected some return if it was to agree to pay the £100 bonus to Catering grades.

In its initial set of proposals, the Post Office sought the withdrawal of the daily meal allowance to Catering grades which is payable whilst on paid leave of absence. The Executive Council decided that this was unacceptable and advised the Post Office that this was its position.

Annual Conference was advised by the Executive Council in reply to an amendment by Chiswick SDO, that if it were possible to obtain payment of the £100 then there would undoubtedly be some conditions attached to the agreement but in the meantime negotiations were continuing.

The Executive Council was subsequently able to persuade the Post Office to withdraw its proposal to cease the allowance entirely and instead to continue to pay it to existing staff but to cease if for staff employed after the agreement is promulgated.

**2. STAFF COVERED**  
This agreement applies to staff in Catering Groups 1 to 4 in the Postal Business.

### 3. CONDITIONAL NATURE

This supplementary agreement is conditional to the main agreement and relates to its Sections 1 & 2. Being supplementary, this agreement cannot exist separately from the main agreement and the Union will accordingly take this into account regarding national acceptance.

### 4. STATEMENT OF CHANGES

The Union and the Post Office concur that the following points represent the contribution to safeguarding the future of the business appropriate to be made by Catering Group staff under this supplementary agreement. The Union therefore agrees and accepts these points and undertakes to co-operate fully in their expeditious fulfilment and implementation.

4.1 The acceptance of a flexible approach to the staffing of catering work to meet the needs of local circumstances within the agreed job descriptions, including where necessary the compulsory re-training of catering grades where the nature of the work changes (eg the introduction of vending machines, SBCs etc).

4.2 The further employment of part-time catering grades at those locations where this would facilitate more efficient staffing arrangements on attendances related to service requirements.

This means that existing staff will lose nothing in return for payment of the £100 (part-time staff pro-rata) — the meal allowance will continue to be paid and uprated as necessary. All existing full-time staff will receive the £100 bonus, part-time staff will receive it on a pro-rata basis.

This supplementary agreement covering the Union's Catering grades is an integral part of the entire agreement — Sections 1, 2 and 3.

This policy statement is the current approach adopted by the Post Office and accepted generally by the Union. As the nature of the work changes and the duty requirements of our Catering members are altered, the Executive Council has demanded that re-training shall take place rather than redundancy. This will continue.

Because of the special nature of the work that the Union's Catering staff perform and the vital service that they give to Post Office staff, the use of Part-time staff and/or agency and casual staff has been necessary on an intermittent and regular basis in many Post Office establishments in order to maintain the catering services that our members expect and demand.

This paragraph does no more than emphasise the continued use of such measures where necessary.

National negotiations on proposed new measures as outlined in this paragraph have been taking part and will continue through the medium of the POU Joint Sub-Committee on Catering Services.

One of the major difficulties experienced by local Branches and UCW Headquarters is the total absence of an agreed procedure for revisions and overhauls in the revisions and overhauls in the Catering Service. The Executive Council is of the view that this paragraph gives the Union the first positive opportunity to negotiate a "copper-bottomed" agreement to give job protection to our Catering members.

This paragraph sets out the requirements of the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974, in respect of Catering Establishment Hygiene.

This paragraph emphasises the agreed Postal Instructions N. Personnel C0021 issued in 1982 which again is a requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and does not alter the current employment conditions of our Catering members.

The Executive Council has taken cognisance of Motion 10.7 by Chiswick SDO carried at Annual Conference 1985, but must again remind branches that the claim for "the issue of suitable footwear or financial assistance to purchase" has been represented to the Post Office in 1983 and 1984 without success. The terms of the Post Office rejection is reproduced below:—

4.8 External catering students to be employed on supernumary live work while located in Post Office restaurants during periods of work experience which are part of an approved catering course.

4.7 Catering grades to wear suitable footwear provided at their own expense.

4.6 The wearing of suitable headwear by catering grades within catering areas to be compulsory.

4.5 National discussion to agree a new and timetable revision procedure for establishing catering complements to be completed by the end of August 1985. The agreement will then be applied at those offices identified by management as requiring action in 1985/86 so that revised duties are introduced before 31 March 1986.

4.4 The continued introduction of cost-effective new catering preparation, cooking and service equipment and systems (including self-help and clearing).

4.3 The intermittent and regular use of agency and/or casual catering staff at peak periods, holiday times, weekends etc as required by management for efficient and cost-effective staffing.

"You wrote to Miss Fothergill on 31 March 1983 seeking provision of, or payment for, suitable footwear for Catering Grades RTC Groups 1-4. Your letter referred to PIN-Personnel 4-Catering C0021, and the further guidance issued in LPR to Catering Executives which advised all reasonable steps that should be taken before resorting to the normal disciplinary code procedure.

The Post Office has an obligation to ensure that staff are aware of hazards by drawing attention to contributory factors: the PI does this with necessary firmness in the interests of the individual and of nearby colleagues. As in all cases of irresponsible attitudes towards reasonable instructions, particularly when others may be placed at risk, equal firmness of action must be taken. On this I believe we are agreed.

The Post Office does not dictate that specific types of footwear must be worn, only that clearly unsuitable types should not. Staff are free to select any which do not create a hazard.

Having considered your claim, the Post Office cannot accept that there is any obligation to undertake such a provision. If you think it would be useful we could remind staff that in many HPOs there are schemes which enable the purchase of footwear direct from manufacturers at competitive prices. Although mainly used by other grades we seen no reason why catering staff should not make use of such facilities.

If you would like a discussion perhaps you would let me have some dates on which you would be available."

4.9 The Staff Meal Allowance, while on paid absence, will be discontinued for staff new to the Postal Business offered contracts after 17 June 1985. The Allowance will be retained, and uprated as appropriate in the normal way for existing staff.

4.10 Acceptance of the use of cash cards for the payment of catering services, enablement to be determined after joint trials, recognising that this initiative is largely customer orientated.

It is recognised by both parties and some of the above points may require discussions with other Post Office unions.

## 5. LUMP SUM PAYMENT AND PROMULGATING TIMETABLE

In recognition of the Union's acceptance of the measures mentioned at paragraph 4 and the Union's preparedness to cooperate immediately in their implementation, the Post Office is prepared to pay a once and for all lump sum payment of £100, as soon as local branches sign an agreement recording acceptance locally of these measures. This payment will be made to all established Catering Group 1 to 4 staff in post on 1 July 1985, part-time staff receiving pro-rata payments according to their scheduled hours.

Branches should immediately enter into discussions with local management to finalize agreement on the measures in order that our Catering members receive as quickly as possible the £100 bonus.