

STAFF REHABILITATION CENTRES

Minute No. 488 of the Chairman's Conference reads as follows:-

"Chairman directed Engineer-in-Chief, Acting Chief Commercial Manager, Executive Officer for Staff & Staff Welfare, and Mr. R. McDonald to examine and report on working of staff rehabilitation centre at Chiswick Works, and on proposal that an additional centre should be established; matter to be studied in light of Government's interim scheme for training and resettlement of disabled persons.

Chairman suggested that consideration should be given in this inquiry to the disassociation of the rehabilitation centres from the Board's workshops."

In accordance with instructions the subject has been examined and the following observations are submitted.

It is well known that when a person sustains injury involving a lengthy period of incapacity he tends to lose a good deal of interest in life, and to some extent his self respect. It is therefore desirable to remove such men from their idleness. The fact that a disabled man receives as compensation only one third of his pre-accident earnings not only tends to become a grievance but is often aggravated by the distress occasioned to his family consequent upon entirely fortuitous circumstances.

The institution of a Rehabilitation Centre not only assists men to forget their injuries and enables them again to become useful and productive members of industry, but also benefits them financially.

Chiswick Centre.

For many years those associated with injuries sustained by the Board's staff considered that some scheme should be devised where suitable light work could be provided for injured employees, but it was not until 1933 that the first definite step was taken in the matter. Minute No. 16 of the Vice-Chairman's Claims Committee reads as follows:-

"After consideration of the Weekly Reports the Vice-Chairman suggested that consideration might be given to finding some sort of employment, e.g. factory work of a light type, for the partially disabled men who were receiving Workmen's Compensation Act payments, the Claims Agent to confer with the appropriate Officers and submit a proposal in due course."

Mainly owing to the difficulty of securing suitable light employment for these disabled men which would assist them to return to their normal duties it was not until the 19th January 1938, that any progress was made. Mr. Durrant then indicated that he was prepared to allocate certain classes of work to the Centre and accordingly a small area of the Mounting Shop, sufficient to accommodate 20 men working at benches, was partitioned off and work began in November 1939. The staff were paid at the rate of 1/6d. per hour subsequently increased by 3d. War Wage for a 38 hour week. Where the earnings of these men are less than the rate of the grades in which they were previously employed compensation for partial incapacity is paid, representing one half the difference between the pre and post accident earnings, plus partial allowances.

Admission to the centre is on the recommendation of the Board's Medical Officer and is restricted to men whose recovery is likely to be expedited. Periodical examinations continue to be carried out by the Board's Medical Officer and when necessary time off with pay is allowed for men to attend hospital.

Although it was intended that accommodation should be restricted to 20 men, in course of time a greater number of men were available and the number there today is, in fact, 6 in excess of this figure, as follows:-

Conductors	7	Relayers	2	Hammermen	1
Drivers	6	Lengthmen	1	Fitter	1
Guard	1	Labourer	1	Craftsmen	2
Warden	1	Car Cleaner	1	Asst. "	1
Watchmen	1				

The number of men who have passed through the centre up to the beginning of November 1941 is 57, of whom 22 have resumed their ordinary work, 4 others have been provided with suitable work elsewhere and in 5 cases only treatment proved ineffective.

Cost of Chiswick Centre.

The full costs of this centre covering the period of 2 years since its inception are detailed in Statement "A" attached, and summarised below:-

	£	£
Wages of Supervisor	510	
" " Disabled Staff	4,254	
Workshop establishment expenses	<u>851</u>	5,615
Workmen's Compensation payments		<u>740</u>
		<u><u>£6,355</u></u>

Details of work carried out in the Centre over a recent period are given in Statement "B" attached, which also shows the estimated output efficiency for each job compared with the normal output of similar work if done by fit and qualified staff. The larger proportion of the work is of a "semi-skilled" nature and the average output efficiency of the men may be taken as approximately 60% of normal. If the output of the centre for the past two years had been carried out by Assistant Craftsmen in Chiswick Works (who receive a standard wage of 1/8d. per hour plus war bonus) the total approximate cost to the Board, assuming no additional supervision to be necessary, would have been:-

	£	£
Wages of Asst. Craftsmen @ 1/8d. per hour, based on normal rate of production	2,836	
Workshop establishment expenses	<u>567</u>	3,403
Add full compensation allowance to disabled staff		<u>2,348</u>
		<u><u>£5,751</u></u>

or £604 less than the total costs of the centre.

It may well be considered that this additional cost of £604 over two years is offset by the advantages derived from the saving in man power and the earlier return of disabled staff to their normal duties than would have been achieved without the benefits of occupational exercises at the centre.

As already mentioned, the work done in the centre is similar to that performed by Asst. Craftsmen who receive 2d. per hour more than the wage paid to disabled staff. It will, however, be appreciated that not only is the normal output of the regular semi-skilled operator 40% higher, but he is expected to be capable of undertaking a wide variety of semi-skilled engineering work. On the other hand, it will be seen that the majority of disabled men attending the centre are of other than Engineering Workshop Grades and must be given a measure of training by the Supervisor for each

class of operation carried out. Further, to avoid undue fatigue, to provide intermittent exercise of injured limbs etc., and to promote interest in their occupational treatment, these men generally are employed for short periods only on one operation.

The Claims Agent and his Workmen's Compensation Assistant visit the centre from time to time and have been impressed by the satisfaction displayed by many of these men. The men appreciate that their interests have not been overlooked and appear gratified to know that some effort is made to lessen their hardships and at the same time to assist their return to more remunerative work. It has been part of the policy of the Claims Department to secure the active co-operation of the Trade Unions, and as a beginning the Legal Secretary and the Assistant of the Transport & General Workers' Union were conducted over the centre by the Claims Agent so that they might gain first hand knowledge of the scheme. They expressed satisfaction with the measures already undertaken by the Board but intimated their desire to see further improvements introduced if and when conditions permit.

Provision of additional Centres.

Chiswick, although geographically suitable for a large number of incapacitated employees, involves a long journey for those living in the north-east, east and south-east of London. For this reason it has not been possible to persuade men living in these areas to undertake such arduous journeys involving, as it may do, travelling time of two hours each way despite the fact that free travelling facilities are granted on the Board's services without regard to the type of pass held by the employee at the time of his accident.

To overcome this it has been suggested that another centre be provided at Charlton Works. There are, however, at present only 7 disabled men living within reasonable travelling distance of Charlton and, although in course of time this number may be augmented, it is thought that the present time is not opportune to contemplate the provision of a centre at Charlton.

There are, however, 11 disabled men, including 2 now at Chiswick, living within reasonable travelling distance of West Ham Works and it is therefore recommended that a further centre be provided at these Works.

There is no doubt that the ideal scheme would be the provision of four Rehabilitation Centres in the north-west, south-west, north-east and south-east areas of London.

Disassociation of centres from Workshops

With regard to the suggestion that consideration should be given to "the disassociation of the Rehabilitation Centres from the Board's Workshops" some doubt arises as to what is intended by this instruction. As has already been pointed out the Chiswick Centre has been segregated from the main works by means of partitioning with satisfactory results. The matter has therefore been approached on the following hypotheses:-

- (a) that the Board should close down the Chiswick Centre and rehabilitate its disabled employees under the Government's Interim Scheme for the Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons;
- (b) the removal of the Chiswick Centre to a point distinct and apart from the main Works.

With regard to (a), the Government's Interim Scheme is defined in a Ministry of Labour Circular, dated October 1941, on page 6 of which is stated that training under the scheme will be provided.

- (1) At certain Government Training Centres. These Centres are administered by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

- (ii) At special Centres. These are institutions which have special experience of the training of disabled persons for industrial employment.
- (iii) At Technical Colleges and other similar institutions. Training courses for the disabled will be started at these Centres as soon as the necessary facilities can be made available.
- (iv) At Employers' Works. It is hoped to enlist the co-operation of employers to provide training for disabled persons for employment either with the training employer or elsewhere.

It will be seen that the scheme makes definite provision for it to function in conjunction with, and not apart from, employers' Works. There must be, however, throughout industry as a whole a large number of small engineering shops which could not possibly set up Rehabilitation Centres, but in the case of large undertakings the Government would expect them to set up centres for such training and re-settlement. The possibility must therefore be envisaged of the Board being required under this scheme to provide accommodation in their centres for other than their own employees. It should, however, be emphasised that the principal object appears to be training men for the manufacture of munitions.

Moreover it is interesting to note that under the Government Scheme payments to disabled men include:-

	s. d.
Wages (adults)	42. 0. per week
Dinner allowance	3. 0. " "
Dependent's allowance	
Wife	7. 6. " "
Each child	3. 0. " "
	<u>57. 6. " "</u>

In addition, travelling expenses are allowed and full Workmen's Compensation allowances continue to be payable.

If these conditions had been applied to the Board's centres at Chiswick (assuming one child for every two disabled men, and ignoring travelling expenses), the total costs since its inception would have been as follows:-

	£	£
Wages of Supervisor	510	
Wages and allowances for disabled men at the rate of 56/- per week	3,742	
Establishment Charges	<u>750</u>	5,002
Full Workmen's Compensation allowance		<u>2,348</u>
		<u>£7,350</u>

or £995 more than the actual costs of the Board's Scheme.

In the case of (b), if the intention is to remove centres to points distinct and apart from workshops difficulties would arise in selecting suitable work for the disabled staff and would involve considerable cost in transporting such work to and from the centres. At Chiswick the Supervisor of the centre selects the work from the workshops and as the centre is separately housed in the main building no transport costs are involved.

It is therefore apparent that the economic success of the centres depends to a great extent on their close proximity to the workshops.

CONCLUSIONS.

- (1) The Chiswick Centre is working satisfactorily and its establishment appears to have been justified.
- (2) It is recommended that the present practice whereby the centre is partitioned off from the main Workshop be continued.
- (3) To avoid lengthy journeys for disabled men and to relieve the present pressure on the Chiswick centre the provision of a further centre at West Ham Works is recommended.
- (4) It would appear that the Board's Rehabilitation Scheme has anticipated to a large extent the requirements of the Government Scheme for the training of disabled persons at employers' Works except that the latter scheme relates mainly to training for the manufacture of munitions, whereas the object of the Board's scheme is to facilitate the early return of their disabled employees to normal employment.

(Signed) L.A.Fuller.
" H.Kent.
" A. Sibson.
" H.W.Lamprell.
Claims Agent.

29th January, 1942.

STATEMENT "A"

TOTAL COST OF STAFF REHABILITATION SCHEME - CHI SWICK CENTRE

PERIOD ENDED	SUPERVISORS' WAGES	STAFF WAGES INCLUDING WAR BONUS	ESTABLISHMENT CHARGES	COMPENSATION PAYMENTS	TOTAL COST
1939 26th December	£ 19	£ 48	£ 10	£ 12	£ 89
1940 23rd January	19	96	19	21	155
20th February	19	104	22	19	164
19th March	14	123	25	20	182
16th April	20	123	25	18	186
14th May	20	152	30	24	226
30th June	33	250	48	40	371
6th August	22	187	37	34	280
3rd September	19	151	30	24	224
1st October	20	108	22	20	170
29th October	20	162	22	28	243
24th November	15	131	26	28	200
31st December 1941	27	175	35	30	267
28th January	20	149	30	20	219
18th February	15	119	24	20	178
18th March	20	202	40	32	294
15th April	23	220	44	30	317
13th May	23	182	36	32	272
10th June	16	164	33	36	249
8th July	21	168	33	36	258
5th August	21	191	38	40	290
2nd September	21	206	42	36	305
30th September	21	259	52	44	376
28th October	21	293	59	48	421
25th November	21	291	58	48	418
	510	4,254	851	740	6,355

STATEMENT "B"

OUTPUT OF STAFF REHABILITATION CENTRE - CHISWICK
 REPRESENTATIVE PERIOD - 4 WEEKS ENDED 25TH NOVEMBER, 1941.

J O B N O.	I T E M	O P E R A T I O N	O U T P U T				Percentage efficiency of Rehabilitation staff compared with output by normal staff
			Quantity	Man-hours	Quantity per man-hour	Estimated quantity per man-hour of normal staff	
3057	Lamps - Bus	Sort, test and clean	6677	281	24	35	33%
"	Wiper Rods & Blades	Remove rod from blade, straighten rod and blade	568	83	7	20	35%
"	Wiper Clips	Clean clip, fit 2 nuts and 2 bolts	1030	155	7	40	17%
"	Wiper Motors	Dismantle, clean and sort parts ready for assembly	795	534	1 1/2	3	50%
"	Auxiliary Sockets	Remove base from socket	117	7	17	20	85%
"	Battery Bolts	Straighten bolt, re-thread bolt and retap nut	1400	150	9	12	75%
3081	Nuts - 3/4 tap	Remove nut from bolt and retap nut	713	71	10	15	66%
"	Distance Pieces	Saw and file to pattern	772	75	5	9	55%
3101	Studs 3/8	Remove nuts and re-thread studs	825	27	30	40	75%
3141	Dribble Pipes	Clean, straighten and re-shape pipe and fit two nipples.	1410	285	5	15	33%
"	Nuts - Cylinder	Re-tap	2359	120	20	30	66%
"	Rocker Push Rods.	Remove ends, clean rods and solder converted ends.	468	224	2	6	33%
"	Nuts - connecting Rod	File heads and re-thread nut	3712	460	8	12	66%
"	" - crankcase	do.	1200	60	20	30	66%
"	Bolts - "	Remove nuts and scrap bolt	600	86	7	11	66%
"	" connecting rod	Re-thread bolts	1335	50	27	30	90%
3342	Shop cleaning	Routine work	-	64	-	-	-
5457	Respirators - A.R.P.	Normal repairs	16	14	1	-	-
9718	Brake Levers	(After Welding) File lever both sides and reamer both holes	109	107	1	1	100%
"	Hospital & Board's M.O.	Special leave attending	-	211	-	-	-

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