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COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS ON ENERGY CONSERVATION

OIL SAVING CAMPAIGN: INITIAL PUBLIC SECTOR RESPONSE

Note by the Secretariat

The attached Note by the Department of Energy is circulated for discussion at the meeting of the Ministerial Committee to be held on Wednesday 25 July at 4.00 p.m.

MEC Secretariat  
Energy Conservation Division  
Department of Energy

24 July 1979

## OIL SAVING CAMPAIGN : INITIAL PUBLIC SECTOR RESPONSE

### A Note by the Department of Energy

#### Introduction

The Secretary of State for Energy's letter of 31 May to all Ministers in charge of Departments (Annex A) asked them to set out how they saw their Departments, and those parts of the public sector for which they are responsible, contributing towards the programme of oil savings in the public sector to which the Government had committed itself. The detailed information contained in the Ministerial response to this request, supplemented in some cases by information received at official level, is summarised in Annex B.

#### Response by Government Departments

2 Most buildings occupied by Government Departments, and other buildings of the Civil Estate throughout the country are supplied with fuel by the Property Services Agency, whilst Armed Services establishments are supplied from Ministry of Defence sources. Except in leased buildings the PSA will usually have control of the heating equipment. Heating fuels for the MOD (Procurement Executive), Royal Ordnance Factories, Prisons and the Post Office are supplied by PSA but the Agency is not responsible for the heating services.

3 The role of the Property Services Agency is thus central to the success of the public sector campaign. PSA officials have co-operated with Department of Energy officials to produce a simple

check-list of "good housekeeping" measures susceptible to action by Departments through their Accommodation Officers which was circulated along with guidance on more technical measures normally under the control of the PSA (except in buildings controlled by MOD Procurement Executive, Royal Ordnance Factories and Prisons) in mid-May. A revised Accommodation Officers Guide (Fuel Economy) is also being issued by PSA. It was in addition suggested that Departments who are served by the PSA for their heating requirements should establish contact with the PSA District Works Officer and ensure a joint approach to the campaign; a suggestion which many Departments have already taken up.

4 Departments are also being asked to consider possible savings in their use of transport. This will again involve consultations with PSA in many cases, since they are responsible for running the Government Car Service.

5 In the absence of any quantitative information from the PSA, MOD, the Home Office and the Scottish Office on savings achieved in the second quarter of 1979 it is impossible to say anything definite about the effectiveness of the campaign so far as regards Government Departments. There are some signs that steps are being taken in a number of directions which could result in useful savings, although it is clear that the various studies and discussions outlined in Annex B need to be given an urgent impetus and translated into firm action if the full 5% target is to be achieved this year.

### Response by other parts of the Public Sector

6 It is too early for a clear picture to emerge. Approaches to nationalised industries and other public sector bodies by their sponsoring Departments have been rather haphazard, particularly as regards the timing of requests for co-operation in the conduct of the campaign. This is partly due to the heterogeneous nature of the public sector, which covers a wide range of nationalised industries, public services, supervisory and advisory bodies of varying size and status. However it is clear that the main responsibility for ensuring the whole-hearted co-operation of public sector bodies lies with sponsoring Departments, and that a great deal more effort in this direction is now required as a matter of urgency.

7 One encouraging development has been the preparedness of Local Authority Associations to co-operate in monitoring and reporting savings following a meeting between their representatives and officials of the Departments of the Environment, Energy, Education and Science and the Welsh Office on 19 July.

### Monitoring

8 An essential element in the campaign is the need to monitor the savings achieved. Following consultation with the PSA, the Department of Energy circulated to all Departments in mid-May a simple pro forma which could be used by the PSA, MOD and Home Office (for Prisons) and Departments with their own fleet of cars, and by other public sector bodies to record and monitor oil savings as a result of the campaign on a quarterly basis.

Although the first returns, covering the period April-June were due in by mid-July, the response has been very patchy, with only a few returns being received so far. It is to be hoped that Departments will make every effort to ensure that returns covering their own use of oil and that by the public sector bodies which they sponsor are made as quickly as possible so that they can be reported to MEC.

Department of Energy

23 July 1979