

B. MAN-POWER UTILIZATION COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

From the outset the Department has recognized that the effective wartime organization of industry can only be achieved through the co-operation of the parties in industry.

Accordingly, as mentioned in the 1943 report, Man-power Utilization Councils have been set up in connection with a number of important industries. These Councils are Dominion-wide in their scope and include equal numbers of representatives of employers' and workers' organizations. These representatives are nominated by the organizations concerned, and appointments are confirmed by the Minister of Industrial Man-power. Council meetings are chaired by the Controller of Man-power or his deputy. Representatives of other Government Departments directly concerned in the industry are added to the Councils as considered necessary. These Councils are advisory; their duty is to keep the Industrial Man-power Division (and through it the Government and other Departments) informed of the man-power position in the industry, to advise on the effectiveness or otherwise of man-power measures already in operation, to assist departmental officers to understand the problems and needs of the industry, to make recommendations regarding steps which might assist towards the better use of man-power in the industry, and to discuss any difficulties or other matters which may have arisen and which are in any way related to the harmonious and efficient mobilization of industrial man-power.

Councils are essentially informal and flexible. They are expected to proceed in an atmosphere of informal good will and sympathetic understanding, and to sink any personal hostilities or partisan differences in a common effort to do the best for the industry and the war effort as a whole. In the main they are expected to proceed by unanimous agreement. A Council is regarded as one unit with one common objective. It is expected to pool its divergent opinions and ideas with a view to reaching a conclusion that takes all the pros and cons fairly into consideration.

Local Man-power Utilization Committees have been set up wherever such action is desirable. These Committees consist of equal numbers of representatives of local employers' and workers' organizations in the industry, with the District Man-power Officer as Chairman. Local representatives of other Government Departments are added to the Committee if the Man-power Officer deems this to be desirable. The Committees are advisory bodies whose duty is to keep the Man-power Officer informed of the man-power position in the industry locally, to bring to his notice any seemingly mistaken or incorrect decisions that may have occurred, to assist him in understanding the particular needs of the industry, to advise him regarding the directing, building-up, or tapering-off of man-power, to assist him in effecting a thorough comb-out of man-power, and to recommend any other steps which he might consider necessary for securing the better distribution or more effective use of man-power. Committees are also charged with the duty of investigating all possibilities of release of man-power, either to other industry or to the Armed Forces. In addition, Committees may put forward recommendations for the consideration of Dominion Councils on matters affecting man-power generally. They may also deal with local difficulties or disputes with a view to overcoming these by unanimous agreement, but they may not pursue matters which are the proper province of other Departments or jurisdictions—such as, for example, matters which should be dealt with by the Arbitration Court or the Industrial Emergency Council. Committees, like Councils, are essentially informal and flexible. Good will, a willingness to give sympathetic consideration to each other's difficulties, and the sinking of personal or party differences in the interests of the industry and the nation as a whole have been regarded as most necessary features.

Utilization Councils and Committees represent sections of industry with corresponding sectional interests. The Man-power Officer and the Department retain the power to co-ordinate these interests, to hold the balance between the rival claims of different industries, and to serve the national interest by securing that sectional interests are merged, or realigned, or subordinated as the circumstances of the situation as a whole may require.

These Councils and Committees are the only advisory representative bodies having any status under the Industrial Man-power Emergency Regulations. Other forms of committees exist, and in some cases the Industrial Man-power Division has assisted their formation and permitted Man-power Officers to be elected as chairmen. This does not give such committees official status under the Industrial Man-power Emergency Regulations. The Department is, however, sympathetic to all attempts at joint advisory organizations designed to promote harmonious relationships and, through such relationships, to achieve a better and more efficient use of man-power. It is the belief of the Department that the spread of voluntary advisory committees, if they operate in a spirit of sympathetic understanding and good will, can be a great stimulus to industrial harmony and efficiency.

An up-to-date schedule of Man-power Utilization Councils and Committees is given in the Appendix.

C. DISTRICT MAN-POWER OFFICERS

The greatest part of the burden and pressure of work performed by the Department during the past year has been born by the twenty-two District Man-power Officers and their staffs.

It is no simple thing to direct a worker to change his employment, or to make a decision affecting an application to leave an essential job, or to deal with a case of alleged absenteeism. Workers and employers are thinking human beings with their own views, their own plans and tastes and hopes and interests and temperaments. Each is striving towards some goal, and is prepared to try various means of reaching it. Before a decision or direction is given, much investigation, interviewing, and recording work must be carried out. Some workers and employers accept the direction or decision without question, but in many cases a whole train of further interviews and negotiations is opened up by each action of the District Man-power Officer, leading at times to a modification of the step being taken or (in a few cases) to appeal, which means still more work. The magnitude of the volume of work executed by District Man-power Officers and their staffs may perhaps be best appreciated from a brief survey of their work during the past year.

They have drafted more than 20,000 men released from the Armed Forces into suitable employment; they have successfully coped with the problem of supplying more than 10,000 workers to the seasonal