

Thrush, W.K.

Social services administration study

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DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

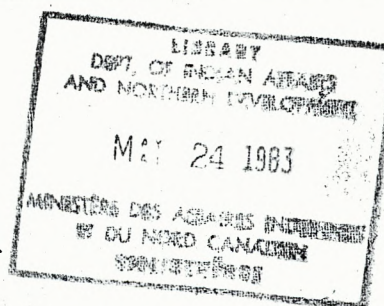
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PROJECT NO. 151
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION STUDY

AUGUST, 1970

ANALYSTS: W.K. Thrush
C.W. Woodley



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INTRODUCTION

Approval to proceed with this study and finalized terms of reference were received by Management Services early in April 1970. Interim Reports for all seven regions have been prepared and presented to the respective region to cover observations and recommendations which apply only to that region. This report contains recommendations which apply to most, if not all, regions.

Terms of Reference

To review the administration of the social assistance program at the various Departmental levels and by Indian bands (where appropriated funds have been transferred) in order:

- (a) to determine whether or not present procedures, practices and organization ensure that the delivery of financial assistance conforms with the standards established by Departmental policy and that adequate financial controls are applied,
- (b) to identify defects and limitations in the current procedures, practices and organization, and,
- (c) to recommend changes in the present system and/or replacement with new systems and to indicate additional fiscal and manpower resources required for implementation.

Study Methods

All seven regional offices were visited and within each region we visited and/or interviewed personnel from two or more of the field offices. We delved into the systems and procedures, forms, manuals, staffing, statistics, communication and the existing general situation.

Acknowledgements

The co-operation of all staff with whom we came in contact was greatly appreciated. Not one could be described as complacent when discussing social assistance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After observing the systems and procedures in all seven regions the analysts have developed a standard system for dispensing social assistance. We suggest that this composite system, with minor modification, could be implemented in all regions.

Some of the onus is placed on the recipient for the reporting of changes of circumstances and by having him sign and receive a copy of his Budget and Decision form. By replacing vouchers with imprest account cheques we can give the recipient more responsibility while reducing clerical work for the merchants and for our administrative support group.

A standard statistical reporting method is proposed for use in all regions. The field staff will report each month only the number of cases and dollars expended for three categories. Random sampling once or twice a year would produce a finer breakdown and these figures could be used, if and when required, as a percentage of the number of cases reported. We also recommend scheduled field office reviews by the regional social worker to promote uniformity and strengthen regional control of the program.

In budget preparation we would use the number of case-months and average per case cost adjusted by the population increase, provincial rates increase and other known factors. The new statistics would then be used to explain variances in the Financial Reporting System.

The Regions are now operating their programs in line with Provincial programs and communication between headquarters and region has been limited. By promoting the involvement of headquarters staff in manual preparation we can strengthen lines of communication and provide the field staff with better working tools. We also recommend that headquarters staff regularly review regional operations.

In staffing to administer the proposed system we define the duties of district social worker, welfare officer and clerk. We do not recommend rigid caseload staffing guidelines. Instead, we recommend careful assessment of the results achieved by welfare officers. We also suggest that the time spent writing volumes of justification for more social workers by each region every year could be saved by the staffing of one region to their suggested requirements. Other regions, aware of the experiment, would be told not to submit any more requests until the results from the selected region were assessed.

In most areas our staffs are so involved in one program that they are oblivious to what is going on in the other programs. An Indian can be and is being dealt with by three or four programs. To co-ordinate the efforts we recommend the establishment of case review committees and the transfer between programs of activity reports and other information.

The Grants-to-Bands Program has created a two policy conflict for our field management in those regions where the provinces are operating a centralized social assistance program. Expansion should be curtailed to avoid problems when the administration is transferred to the provinces. Those bands now operating under this program should submit the same

statistics as gathered for other bands and be provided funds on a working capital advance basis to resolve the present situation where the band retains budget overages but receives supplements to cover budget shortages.

FORMS, SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

The Study Team visited all seven regions and observed the methods and procedures being used to dispense social assistance to Indians all across the country. We were unable to visit all agencies and districts but did manage to visit and/or interview staff from at least two field offices in every region. Copies of provincial forms have been collected and analyzed, and several provincial manuals were also examined.

Observations which pertained to a particular region were noted in that region's interim report. Some recommendations in this report may come close to countermanding comments and recommendations presented in the earlier interim reports and this is due to later observations which have been considered to be more advantageous.

Some regions have followed very closely the forms and procedures of the province in which they are located. Other regions have allowed their field offices to set their own procedures and to design their own forms if existing forms did not suit or if the staff were unaware that official forms even existed. The result is a great number of forms, methods and procedures all aimed at achieving similar results.

One complete system with standard national forms and identical procedures could not be imposed on all seven regions under our present policy of operating the program in a similar fashion to the local provincial program. A system with the same common elements could be utilized in all regions, with

slight modification if and where necessary. Although the procedures would be common, the forms would differ in each region. The proposed system is outlined in Figures 1-7. (We have not attempted to outline the present systems because a different version is used in each area).

Therefore, we recommend that:

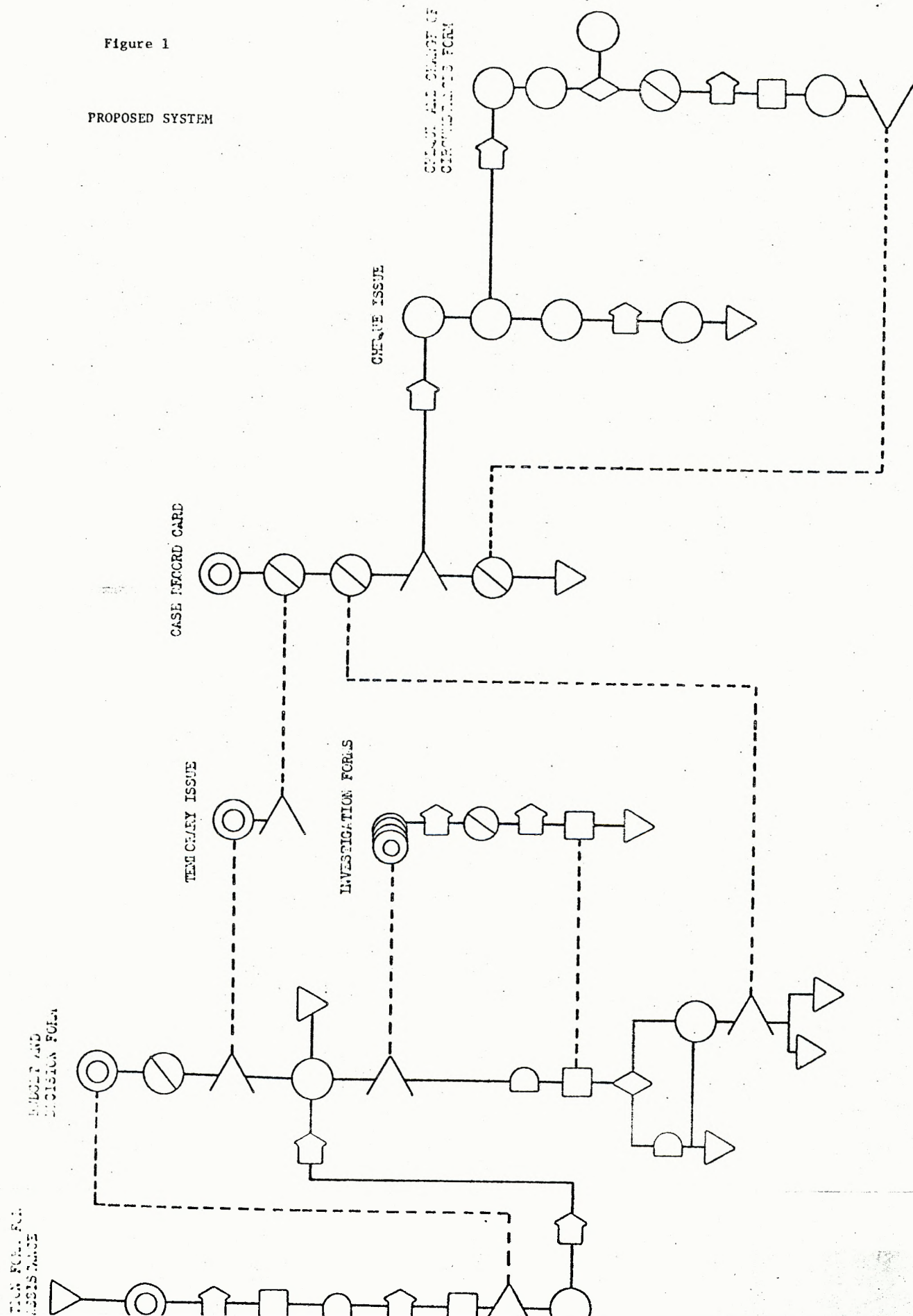
S-1

The proposed system of dispensing social assistance be adopted, with each region to advise headquarters of alternatives which they plan to substitute for any part of the basic system.

All districts and agencies within a region would then be carrying out the program in a similar fashion. Service to the recipients should be the same throughout the region. Staff could be transferred without retraining within a region. Field reviews by regional staff would be comparable.

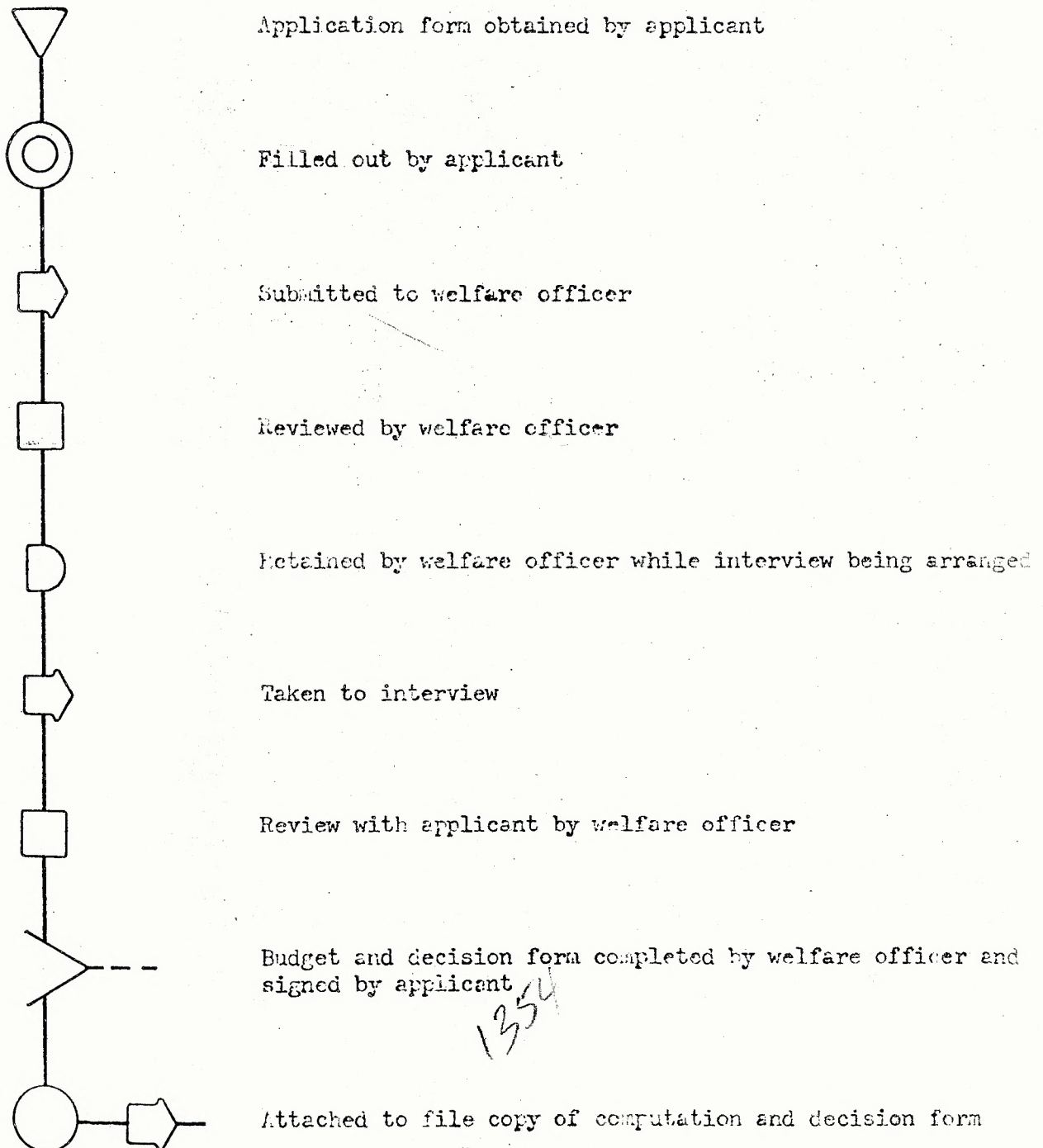
Figure 1

PROPOSED SYSTEM



APPLICATION FORM FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

FIGURE 2



"Welfare Officer" may be interpreted as District Social Worker, Agency Assistant, Welfare Officer, Welfare Clerk or Clerk as determined by local staffing

BUDGET AND DECISION PART - 3 PART FORM

FIGURE 3

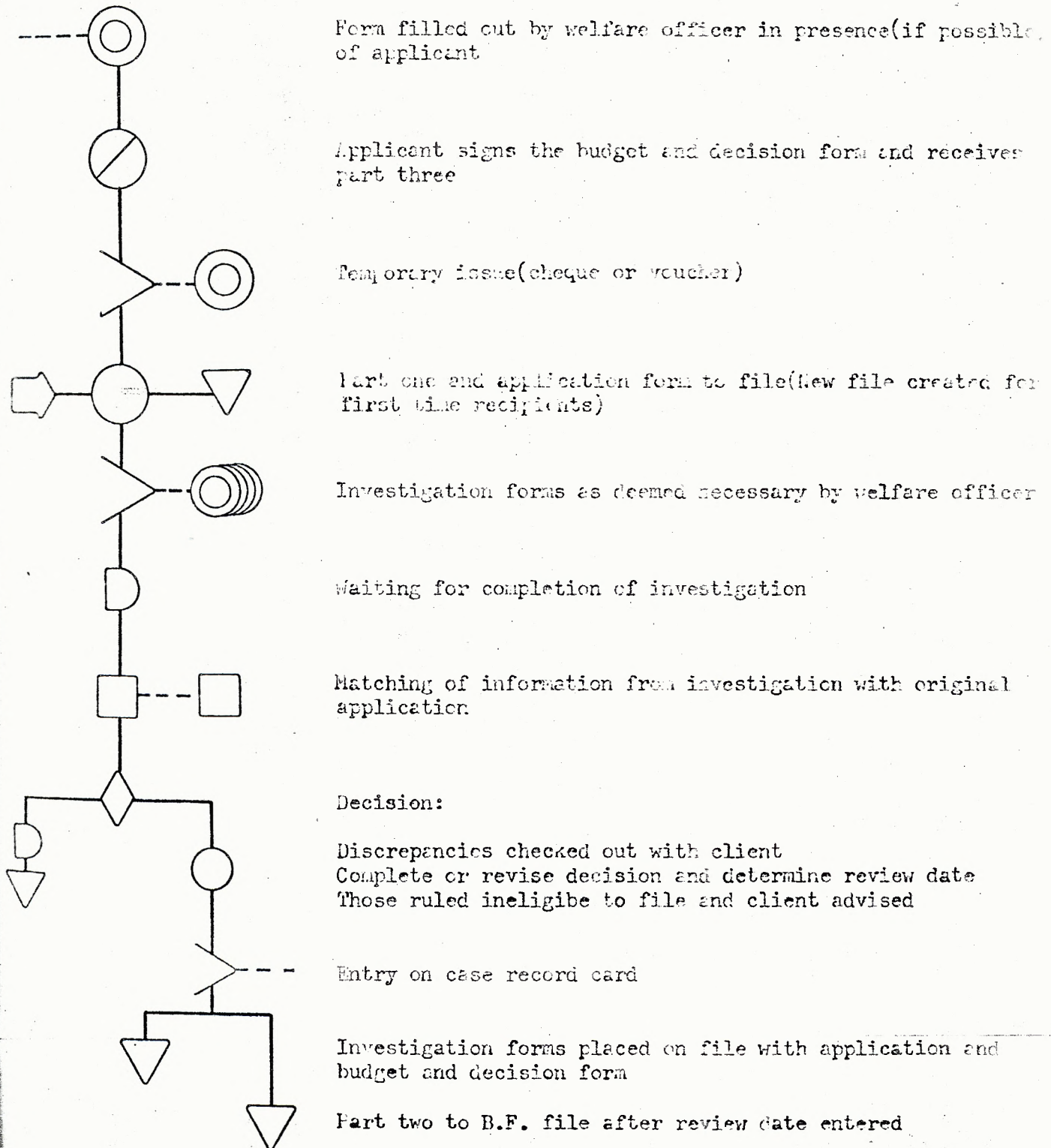
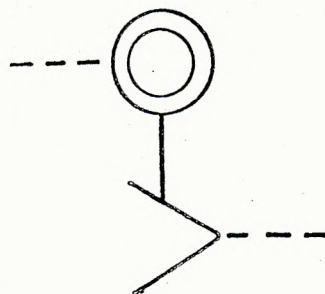


FIGURE 4

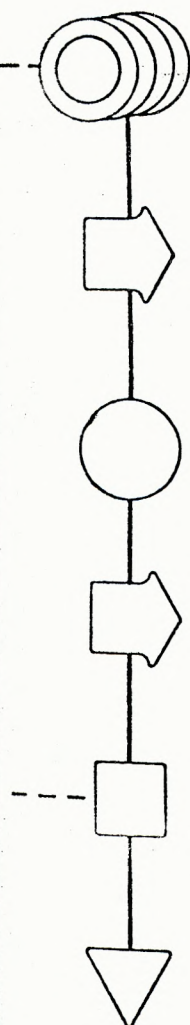
BUDGETARY ISSUES



Voucher or cheque, original to recipient and duplicate copy to finance

Entry on case record card

INVESTIGATION FORMS



Welfare officer determines which investigation forms are required

Sends investigation form(s) to Manpower, U.I.C., bank, doctor, etc.

Form completed by department or person from whom information has been requested

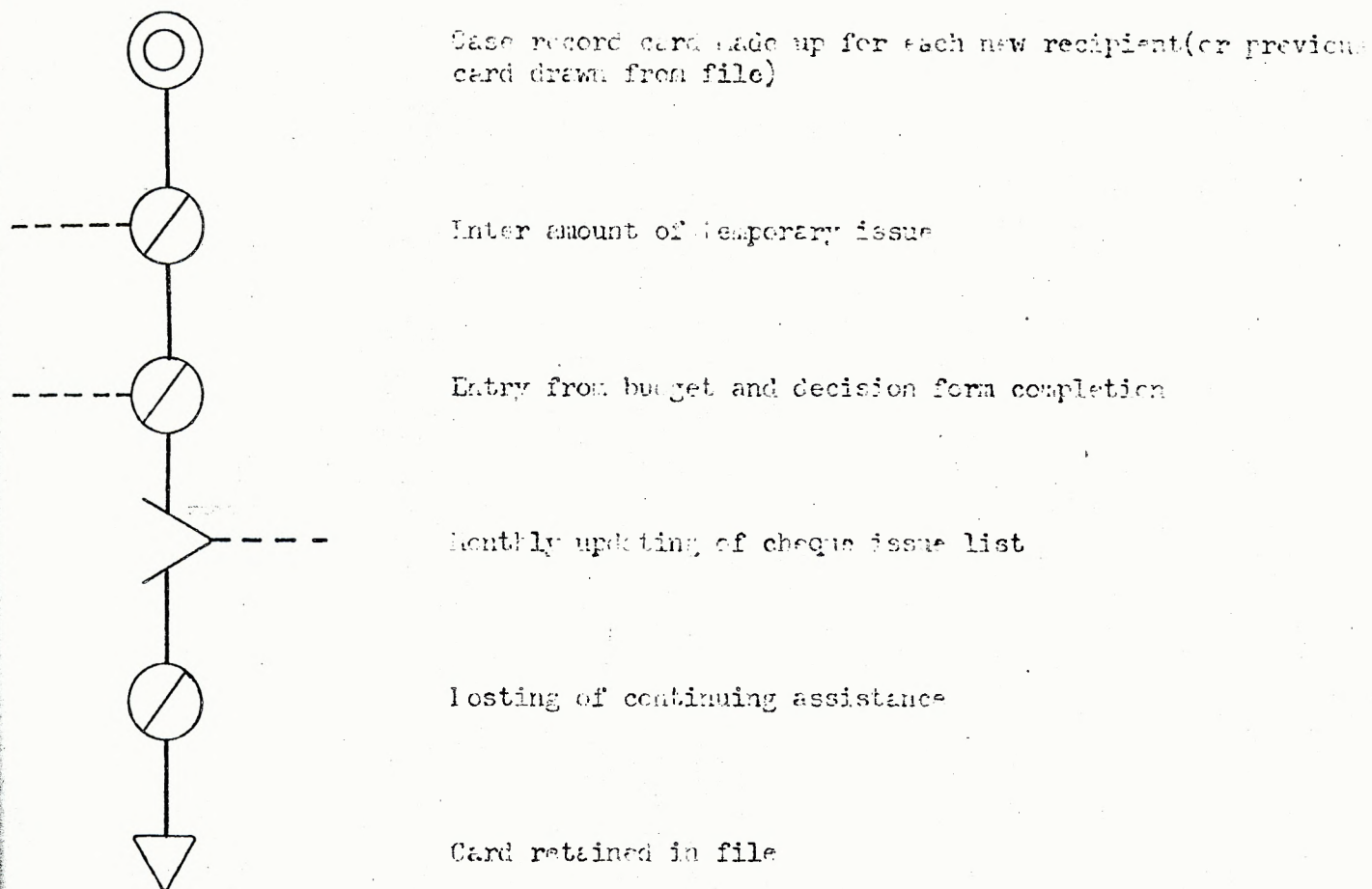
Returned to welfare officer

Matching of information from investigation with original application

Investigation forms placed on file with application and budget and decision form

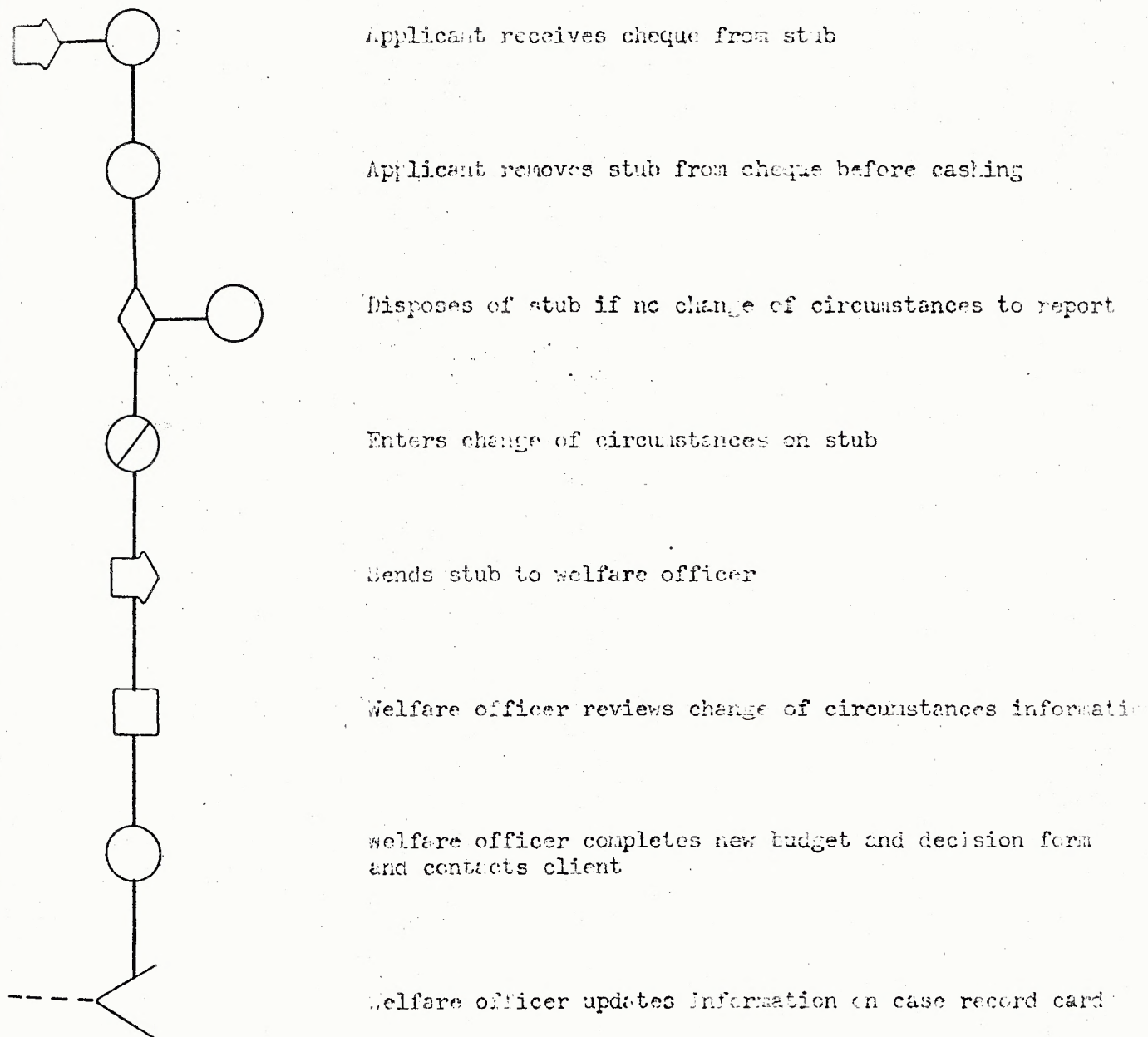
BASED CARD

FIGURE 5



AND CHANGE OF
CIRCUMSTANCES FORM.

FIGURE 7



Application Forms

All the provincial programs have an application form as the original source document in their systems. Our regions all have application forms although they do not all follow the same format as the province in which they are located.

Summary of recommendations from the interim reports:

Maritimes IA-828

Recommended several minor changes to their present form and suggested consideration be given to utilizing one of the provincial forms.

Quebec IA-308 and 309

Recommended that they combine their Family Statement IA-298 and their application form into one budget and decision form.

Ontario IA-311

This form is copied from the provincial form and we recommend that 50-00-001, the provincial form, be used in all areas.

Manitoba IA-312

Recommended adoption of the provincial form WW-171 with slight modification.

Saskatchewan IA-310

Recommended adoption of the provincial form DW-1001.

Alberta IA-313

Recommended continued use of their present form as the provincial form has many redundant sections.

British Columbia IA-327

This form is copied from the provincial form.

While we continue to align our programs with the local provincial programs (except in the Maritimes) we will need an application form. The analysts are not convinced that the application form is a necessary part of a social assistance system. It is a substitute for an interview and information entered on the form by the applicant is later duplicated on the Budget and Decision form or some other form in the system. The client, after initiating the first contact, should be interviewed at which time the welfare officer would complete a Budget and Decision form and provide the client with interim assistance if he qualified.

Following the case review there would be another interview and the client advised that he would be receiving continuing assistance or if not, why not.

There are arguments for and against having the client contribute to the writing of information that accumulates on his file. We often get along without his written contribution and we suggest that the file would be easier to read with less interpretation necessary if the client's contribution were verbal. One specific reason for

having the applicant fill out his application is to provide a basis for prosecution but departmental policy is not to prosecute those who make fraudulent statements.

We are not making a recommendation to eliminate application forms because it would require a change in Departmental policy away from the direction in which the Department is going.

Budget and Decision Forms

These forms vary greatly from region to region. In some areas they are called by a different name. Everyone recognized that the computation of a recipient's assistance and the reasons behind the decisions should be recorded on his file. In some regions the recipient signs the form after it has been completed and he receives a copy.

Summary of recommendations from the interim reports:

Maritimes IA-829 3 Part Budget Sheet

Recommended that this form be redesigned to provide an area for the recording of decisions. Currently their manual states "the decision on the application must be in writing" so we proposed a dual purpose form as used in other regions.

Quebec IA-298 Family Statement Form

Recommended that this form be combined with their application form to result in a budget and decision form.

Ontario IA-342 Budget Work Sheet

This form is a copy of the Provincial form.

Manitoba IA-343 Social Allowances

Recommended standardization throughout the region of one budget and decision form. Some areas are not presently using any form and another has recently implemented the form from Alberta Region.

Saskatchewan IA-332 Social Aid Decision Sheet

Recommended that this form be redesigned and that the provincial form DW-1111, a computer source document, not be used as it would necessitate too much duplication of information.

Alberta IA-345 Budget and Decision Sheet

Recommended a slight change of wording in the applicant's acknowledgement of decision area.

British Columbia IA-329 Social Allowance Grant Sheet

Recommended that this form be replaced by a new decision sheet and overage approval form. Acceptance of this recommendation would abolish the present overages approval form RO-WS1.

The budget and decision form is the key information form on the applicant's file. Having the applicant sign the form and then be given a duplicate provides him with full particulars on the computation of his social assistance. It could prove useful to those recipients who are making an attempt at budgeting their finances to have this

information. When an applicant's circumstances change, the receipt of a revised budget and decision form could eliminate possible misunderstanding and thus prove advantageous to both the applicant and the Welfare Officer.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-2 *Budget and Decision forms be signed
by the applicant and the applicant be
provided with a copy.*

When the budget and decision sheet is completed a review date could be assigned and one copy of the form placed in a B.F. file. The Welfare Officer could take the B.F. copy on field visitation and have that information for comparison purposes when preparing a new form. The new form prepared in triplicate would be distributed, one part to the client's file, a copy to the client and the third part to the B.F. file for recall on the revised or next revision date.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-3 *Budget and decision sheets be prepared
in triplicate for distribution to file,
client and B.F. file.*

Temporary Issues

The practice has been to issue a voucher to a new applicant for social assistance for a) emergency cases, b) transients, c) those recipients whose circumstances change monthly and d) those recipients who have proven unable to handle finances properly.

These vouchers are made out to one supplier who then is required to submit his bill to the voucher-issuing office for payment. This entails considerable clerical work for the accounting staff in the agency office and for the storekeeper. The recipient, meanwhile, is restricted to one supplier and is not allowed the responsibility of handling his own finances and practicing any form of budgeting.

If an imprest account cheque can be issued in lieu of a voucher, the recipient would now have some responsibility, the merchant(s) would receive prompter payment and be required to do less clerical work for billing the account and the agency office staff would have a cheque reconciliation task which is recognized as a much lighter workload than the processing of vouchers. An imprest account cheque would result in less work for the merchant and our agency staff in remote areas where there is only one supplier. Therefore, we recommend that:

S-4

The present practice of issuing temporary assistance be converted from vouchers to an imprest account system.

Investigation Forms

Several departmental investigation forms do exist for use in all regions but we found numerous areas where our staff were unaware of any such forms.

Form IA-326, Enquiry Form, used to request information from the Unemployment Insurance Commission and from the Canada Manpower Centres was requisitioned from departmental stationery stores by only Geraldton, Ontario, and St. Paul, Alberta, during the last year. St. Paul indicated interest in the form when we showed it to them. Others, when they have time to make enquiries to these two departments, use the telephone, write letters or use 'bootleg forms' such as RO-WS9 in British Columbia. Those who had used the form occasionally and had some on the shelf implied that their usage was low due to the general situation regarding investigations.

In Quebec's Val D'Or District we were advised that one copy of the form returned from the Unemployment Insurance Commission is forwarded to the Placement Officer thus keeping him advised of people who have recently become unemployed. Other districts in Quebec also use this form.

We would like to see implementation of this form in all regions and instructions for its use written into the headquarters section of the Social Assistance Manual.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-5

The use of Enquiry Form, IA-326, be extended through all regions and instructions for its use be included in the headquarters section of the manual.

Form IA-341, Certificate of Physician, is primarily an Ontario Region form. Other regions indicated quite an interest in having a medical enquiry form. Manitoba Region had been considering the use of an involved provincial form prior to observing this form. In some provinces, such as Nova Scotia, the medical profession are not allowed to give out confidential medical information.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-6 *The use of the Certificate of Physician form, IA-341, be extended through all regions where it may be used and instructions for its use be included in the headquarters section of the manual.*

We note, however, that this form would not be required if the information is available from Indian Health Services.

Form IA-116, Confidential Relocation and Employment Information Record, is used in the Maritimes and parts of Manitoba to convey information from Social Affairs to Education and reverse. It is really an application for relocation and employment assistance. This form should be in use in all regions.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-7 *The use of the Confidential Relocation and Employment Information Record, IA-116, be extended through all regions and instructions for its use be included in the headquarters section of the manual.*

Several 'bootleg' forms were shown to the analysts in each region and considering the number that we saw in the offices which we visited there must be many, many more in existence. Some examples are:

Bank Assets Investigation Form	-	Ontario
Verification of Income	-	Maritimes
Referral Form	-	Manitoba
Questionnaire Letters	-	British Columbia

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-8 *Specific instructions about what referral forms are to be used should be included in the headquarters section of the Manual.*

Investigation Check List

We did not find a check-off list of investigation items in any of the offices which we visited. Most investigations are based on intuition and the investigations are not complete due to pressure of other work. Much of the investigation could be performed by office clerical help and a check-off list placed on those files investigated would be of invaluable use to other welfare officers who may be responsible for that case at a later date. The list could also be checked by the regional social worker at the time of the district review.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-9 *A check-off investigation list be compiled and this list become part of the file to record investigation history.*

Possible items for inclusion on this list are:

- birth dates (checked against band lists)
- income - agency paylists
 - band funds distribution
 - unemployment insurance
 - workmen's compensation
 - assistance from Province, City or other
- registration with Canada Manpower
- educational assistance
- school bus contracts or other sources of part-time income
- revolving fund loans
- medical reports

Case Record Cards

Ontario (IA-338) and British Columbia (IA-330) are the only regions which have departmentally printed record cards. Most of the others are using their own local cards or forms for record keeping.

We observed both the posting to file and the posting to card systems of recording payments to recipients. The cards are easier to work with than the pulling and replacing of files. The cards offer a faster means of obtaining specific information than does the drawing of the files. Statistics compilation from cards is also much easier than from files.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-10

*A case record card system be used in
all regions.*

The cards which we observed have been analyzed and in figure 8 we present a draft of a card which we feel could be used in all regions.

The case index cards are the master record of social assistance and consequently should never be removed from the office. A current copy of the computer print-out (see cheque issue system, page 27) should contain sufficient information for the welfare officer's use during home visitations.

BAND

S.I.N.

ADDRESS (HOME)

MESS (MAILING)

[illegible]

RELATIONSHIP

[illegible]

Prosecution of Fraud

Most provinces have provision in their statutes to prosecute applicants who make fraudulent statements. Our application forms all require some form of certification and infer prosecution. Form IA-327, used in British Columbia goes even further and refers to the Criminal Code section under which the applicant may be prosecuted. Applicants are generally aware that the departmental policy is not to prosecute. The analysts question the value of having any certification if present policy is to remain unchanged.

Cheque Issue System

When a social assistance applicant's case has been reviewed and/or it has been decided that he is to be a continuing recipient his name will be added to the list which is sent to the Regional Treasury Office (R.T.O.) each month. This list had been produced by the R.T.O. following the previous month's issue and was forwarded to the agency or district office from whence it originated, for up-dating.

The computer-equipped Regional Treasury Offices key-punch the changes, deletions and additions, update their master file, produce the cheques, and print out a new listing. Cheques are issued automatically if names and amounts are unchanged on the updated list. (Those still using the N.C.R. equipment, we are advised, could adapt to this issue system with little or no trouble).

This system is working very well in Alberta and a visit to the R.T.O. in Edmonton confirmed their complete satisfaction with these arrangements. Here we also learned that the issuance of a cheque with a stub attached was not only possible but simpler because they now remove a stub from the cheques which they are issuing. Quebec and Manitoba also use a system similar in part to the one we are recommending. Most offices in the other regions prepare completely new lists of names each month, using forms IA-297, IA-298, IA-305, IA-306, IA-331, IA-334, IA-340 or local forms. Adoption of the proposed system will reduce clerical work, typing, and the number of forms in use. Therefore, we recommend that:

S-11

The cheque issue system of updating the previous month's list be arranged with the R.T.O. in those regions which are not presently utilizing this system.

Change of Circumstances Form

The Province of British Columbia have a "Request for Continued Assistance" form SW-81, which the recipient must sign and return each month if he desires to continue receiving assistance. The B.C./Yukon Region have followed the provincial system by having the R.T.O. insert form IA-328 with each social assistance cheque. A great deal of clerical work results from use of this form. For those returned late a supplemental cheque list must be submitted and for those not returned emergency assistance is often the result. The checking and filing is also time consuming. In the interim report we proposed a change in the regulations to an exception reporting system.

A Change of Circumstances Form places the onus on the recipient to advise the department of variations or fluctuations in his situation. This gives him the responsibility of reporting information which may increase or decrease his social assistance. It should also result in adjustments being made at the proper time rather than sometime after the fact.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-12

*A Change of Circumstances Form be included
in the social assistance system in all regions.*

This could be accomplished by having a stub on each cheque issued by R.T.O., similar to a payroll stub. The recipient would be instructed to remove it before cashing the cheque. It would have a statement to the effect "by acceptance of this cheque I confirm to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development that my reasons and circumstances for receiving it are unchanged or they are changed and I have noted the changes on the back of this cheque stub for immediate forwarding to the department."

Other Forms

During the course of the study we reviewed 48 of the existing official welfare forms with the field staff. The purpose was to generate interest, discussion and comparisons of forms and procedures in other regions. Recorded comments and issue records show that eight of the forms in our file are not being used by any of the seven regions.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-13 *After all field offices have been asked for confirmation, forms IA-146, IA-295, IA-300, IA-314, IA-336, IA-339, IA-340 and IA-611 be declared obsolete.*

Two or three of these forms are not stocked in our central stationery stores but all are still active in our forms control files.

If the recommendations in this report are adopted, we anticipate a further reduction of approximately 16 official forms, as well as many local forms that are now used in small quantities by only two or three agencies or districts.

REPORTS, STATISTICS AND BUDGETTINGField Visitation

The analysts were duly impressed with the Agency Reviews which are conducted in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario by Regional staff. (Files showed that reviews were formerly conducted in Saskatchewan also).

Advantages to regular reviews are: (a) functional guidance to staff, (b) assurance that standard forms and procedures are used, (c) assurance that recipients are treated according to regulations throughout the region and (d) the morale of the field staff is improved.

These reviews should be conducted by the Regional Social Worker, at least twice per year, and a copy of his report should be submitted to the agency or district visited.

Where there is a District Social Worker similar reviews could be implemented for the bands operating their own program.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-14

Scheduled Agency/District Reviews be conducted in all regions by the Regional Social Worker.

The reviews would cover such items as:

1. file content
2. records
3. use of emergency issues
4. case reviews - investigations
5. case reviews - committee
6. visitations

and a random sample of the case record cards could be taken to compare the amounts issued against the amount of entitlement.

Headquarters staff could become more involved in the operation of the program by conducting regional reviews in like manner to the agency/district reviews. These reviews would cover such items as:

1. adherence to departmental policy
2. liaison with provincial counterparts
3. staff utilization
4. program review

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-15

*Scheduled Regional Reviews be conducted by
Headquarters Social Services Staff.*

Monthly Reporting

We observed that a variety of monthly and quarterly reports are being submitted to regional offices by the field offices.

Basically the Maritime and Alberta reports are quite similar in that they break down their caseloads into three categories (Economic, Health and Social). The Maritime Region sub-divide "social" into six sections. Some regions report only financial variances without reference to caseload, while others report financial variances twice, in the Financial Management Reporting System as well as in a welfare report. Report compilation is generally very time consuming and tedious. Often the end use of the statistics is not known to the compiler and this has a direct bearing on his input and consequently on the accuracy.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-16 *A minimum of statistics be reported each month.*

By reporting only the number of cases and the expenditure, we can easily compute the average case cost per month. The number of cases and the monthly case cost figures would be used for budget preparation simply by increasing the former by the population growth and the latter by the increase in provincial rates. These figures would then be used meaningfully in variance reporting. A random sample may be taken periodically to provide information for a finer breakdown of the basic statistics reported each month.

Graphing the number of cases and the monthly case cost figures would show trends which may be developing and highlight problem areas. Management could use the graphs to determine in which areas our other programs should be concentrated and, eventually, to show the results achieved. Comparisons between agencies or districts, particularly the monthly case cost figures,

would provide a measurement to evaluate not only the staff but the general circumstances of the areas.

Therefore, we recommend that:

- S-17 *Monthly reports be compiled of the number of cases and their total cost.*
- S-18 *The number of case-months and average case cost be utilized in budget preparation and used for variance explanation.*

MANUALS

Regional manuals have been prepared in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario and the Maritimes. Quebec uses the departmental field manual, Alberta uses the provincial welfare manual, and Manitoba has no manual as such. Some districts in Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta have produced their own procedure manuals for use in that district alone. Bands operating under the grants to bands program generally lack written policy and procedures, although there are some exceptions, notably Ontario where bands use the provincial regulations. Most manuals contain both policy and procedure except the Maritimes which has two separate manuals. In effect Ontario also has a policy manual because they use a provincial consolidation of the regulations made under the General Welfare Assistance Act, along with their own procedure manual.

All existing manuals are incomplete because procedural and sometimes policy instructions are issued as memoranda and filed separately. Headquarters issues circular letters and memoranda but has not published a national manual since the field manual was last issued in 1962. The instructions in the welfare section of the field manual are generally obsolete and while the book may be available in some field offices it is not a working instrument for field administrators. In 1967 the draft of a new manual was sent to the field for comment, but the work was never completed and implemented. The analysts agree with the 1967 plan to establish a national manual produced partly by headquarters and partly by each regional office and suggest that this concept should

still be implemented. Therefore, we recommend that:

- S-19 *A national social assistance manual of policy and procedure be prepared by headquarters.*
- S-20 *Each region prepare supplementary policy and procedure guidelines to append to the national manual.*

A draft table of contents, suggesting those portions of the manual which might be completed by headquarters and those portions which might be each region's responsibility, is attached as Appendix A.

The responsibility for writing the headquarter's portion of the manual (philosophy and basic system) should be assigned to a person with social work training. This same person should be responsible for ensuring that the regional sections are written within a reasonable time and to provide assistance to the regions where required.

Therefore, we recommend that:

- S-21 *A member of the headquarters staff be assigned the responsibility for social assistance manuals.*

When completed, a full set of manuals should be maintained in headquarters. These social assistance manuals could be expanded to include other parts of the welfare program.

STAFFINGRegional Offices

All regional offices have a social worker position and in five regions the welfare program is the intended responsibility of the incumbent of that position. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan the Regional Social Worker is responsible mainly for Child Care work while the Regional Supervisor of Community Affairs looks after the total welfare program in addition to his other duties. We see no reason why Manitoba and Saskatchewan should not have a full-time program supervisor like all other regions.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-22

Every region be staffed with a Social Worker responsible for the supervision of the regional welfare program.

The main duties of this position would be:

1. liaison with provincial government
2. functional supervision of field staff
3. welfare administration procedures
4. co-ordination of the regional program
5. field office reviews
6. evaluation of staff utilization in each district
7. other related duties

We do not see a requirement for full-time support for this position in regional office. The general support staff for the Community Affairs Section would provide the necessary clerical and typing services.

Most regions have been successful in having service to the Indian people provided from the agency and district offices thus eliminating the requirement for duplicating service facilities and staff in regional office. Manitoba have several 'casual' positions in regional office to provide direct service and they explain that this is due to the fact that funds allocated to the field offices do not cover transients and these charges must be charged against regional office funds. It was also stated that the local district office does not have the staff to handle this workload.

Some regions will have a requirement for a specialist in one particular activity. Saskatchewan does not have a child care agreement with a child care agency so does have justification for a Child Care Specialist Social Worker.

Therefore, we recommend that:

- S-23 *All welfare services be provided from agency or district offices in all regions.*
- S-24 *When a region can show justification for a specialist in a particular activity with responsibility throughout the region, that position be located in regional office.*

Field Offices

In the district and agency offices a variety of staff take part in social assistance administration. Many district offices have a District Welfare Consultant, especially in the western provinces. In Prince Edward Island, a small agency, the Superintendent includes social assistance as one of the main duties which he is called upon to conduct. Some agency assistants are assigned functionally to work full time on social assistance and are generally referred to as Welfare Officers. Others, covering a geographic area, are responsible for all programs, except education, and retain the title of Agency Assistant. Welfare Aides, generally native people, are employed in some areas by the Department and many are band employees under the Grants to Bands program. Often clerical staff are assigned either full or part-time to perform the posting, filing, reporting and other routine tasks.

A breakdown of duties among professional, semi-professional and clerical staff is proposed in the following sections. This distribution has the district social worker in charge of the program, the welfare officer performing most of the field work and making the routine decisions, with the office support staff carrying out the clerical tasks.

District Social Workers

Under the proposed system the main duties of the District Social Worker will be:

1. supervising the social assistance program
2. assessing the performance of staff
3. handling problem cases referred by welfare officers

4. attending case review committee meetings
5. preparing budgets
6. explaining monthly variances
7. equalizing the distribution of cases
8. reviewing band offices

In all regions the analysts were advised of the dire need for more social workers to properly staff the program: "We have been providing only financial assistance while the personal and social problems are left unsolved." "We should have a service-oriented approach working towards the prevention of dependency." "Major changes in attitude and philosophy must be made etc."

Volumes have been written for presentation to Headquarters pleading the case for more trained staff to complement the existing welfare officer, agency assistant and welfare aide positions.

A review of the July 1, 1970, computer establishment listing shows that there are 36 existing or proposed social worker classification positions in the 7 regions. The analysts could find no answer to the question "on what basis have professional staff been allocated in the past?"; and it is difficult on the surface to see that staff have been fairly assigned. (See figure 9).

Social Worker Positions*
(Outside of Headquarters)

	<u>Regional Office</u>	<u>Field Offices</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Social Assistance Budget 69/70</u>	<u>Caseload Feb. 1969</u>
Maritimes	1	Nil	1	\$ 1,413,124	867
Quebec	1	2	3	2,269,592	1743
Ontario	2	Nil	2	2,546,110	1550
Manitoba	1	3	4	2,786,200	2680
Saskatchewan	1	5	6	6,138,342	4124
Alberta	1	11	12	2,947,860	2152
B.C./Yukon	1	7	8	4,511,350	2558

*Filled, vacant and proposed as per July 1, 1970, computer establishment listing.

Headquarter's staff should be involved in the selection, staffing and evaluation of the experiment.

Welfare Officers/Welfare Administrators

Under the proposed system, the main duties of the welfare officer are:

1. assesses initial application
2. interviews the applicant
3. prepares the budget and decision sheet
4. issues temporary assistance cheque
5. conducts investigations
6. attends case review meetings
7. reviews files
8. arranges follow-up interviews

In some areas case loads are carried by professional staff and very occasionally by clerical staff, but generally case work is the responsibility of welfare workers (agency assistants) qualified at the WP1 - WP3 level.

Case loads vary from agency to agency and even between welfare officers in the same office. Attempts have been made to compare case loads to so-called provincial standards and our staff always appear to be carrying much heavier case loads than their provincial counterparts. We found that provincial standards averaged one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty cases per worker and the range was from twenty to two hundred and fifty. Information was not available as to actual case loads, types of

cases nor administrative support received by provincial workers. Too many variables exist to allow us to set a firm case load figure, but some of the main factors besides the number of cases are:

- (a) distance travelled
- (b) turnover of cases
- (c) state of local economy
- (d) services provided by other agencies
- (e) attitude of recipients
- (f) the mixture of cases
- (g) the clerical support in our offices

Rather than concentrate on a measure such as the number of cases, we suggest that the District Social Worker should first assess the quality of service provided by welfare officers, and the results they achieve. Therefore, we recommend:

S-26

The use of the number of cases as a workload measure to be discontinued and, in its place, measures of effectiveness to be developed by professional staff in the Social Service Division.

The prime responsibility for carrying out this assessment would fall upon the District Social Worker, who would then be expected to redistribute his staff and case loads accordingly.

Clerical Staff

Under the proposed system clerical staff would perform the following tasks:

1. originates files and case record cards
2. files all documents

3. posts the case record card
4. prepares (up-dates) the monthly cheque list
5. compiles statistics
6. operates b.f. system
7. requests renewal applications
8. initiates investigation enquiries (assisting Welfare Officer)

Figures reported in the M.U.S.T. reports show that the field work for assistants assigned full-time and part-time on social assistance averaged 35% and clerical work 25% (the balance is staff meetings, personal time, reading, correspondence, etc.) In addition, professional staff have been observed to perform clerical tasks such as the compilation of statistics. By providing more clerical work we could increase the field work time thus providing more service to the clients. Therefore, we recommend that:

S-27

Clerical assistance be provided to assist the welfare officer with his routine office tasks.

Clerks could operate as part of a pool support staff rather than being assigned full-time to the welfare section. There are areas, particularly in British Columbia, where welfare clerks are performing the duties we have recommended above and this appears to be working very well.

LIAISON WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

It has been said that social assistance touches the lives of more Indians than any other departmental program. Yet, as one field person admitted, there is sometimes a tendency in the Department to "play the numbers game" placing more importance on the number of persons a program touches than on the end result. In reality the same Indian could be and is dealt with by three or four programs. Hence, there is a need for co-ordination lest staff become wrapped up in their own assignments to such an extent that they are oblivious to other programs.

We assume one of the goals of social assistance is self-sufficiency and self-sufficiency usually means having a job. The social assistance program then is particularly closely related to the various education programs. Unfortunately, however, the steps in the process from social assistance to employment are not clearly defined. A vital link is missing between our programs, a link fulfilled by such provincial agencies as the Rehabilitation Board in Ontario, the medical-social panel in Manitoba or the "reclassement des travailleurs" program in Quebec. Without this link to further services, many Indians end up on permanent social assistance. They are not medically unable to work but according to the Canada Manpower Centre or our departmental Placement Officer, they are not immediately employable.

The analysts suggest that a co-ordinated effort to bring all programs together must be made at the field level, where our personnel are in contact with Indian persons. This places the onus on the agency superintendent or district supervisor. His staff must be made aware

of what others are doing and must take a group approach to problem solving. We see this being accomplished by regular staff meetings where individual cases are presented for discussion and possible problem solving. Habitual social assistance recipients without medical disabilities would be a good starting point. A group approach has been tried on the Oka Reserve in the Quebec Region involving the Educational counsellor and the Welfare Officer.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-28 *Scheduled meetings of education and social assistance staff at the Agency or District level be held to carry out specific case reviews and to keep others informed of activity within their particular work area or assignment.*

We suggest the following terms of reference for the case review committee:

- bringing together all the pertinent information about the social assistance case, especially employment history, attitude, and family or social problems.
- deciding what further services the social assistance case may require. These could be, among others:
 - medical attention
 - intensive social counselling
 - aptitude or ability testing
 - re-training or up-grading
 - relocation
 - placement

- making long term decisions about employability.
- deciding if and when each case will next be reviewed.

The immediate result of the case review is that the applicant will be cleared for continuing social assistance until such time as the committee reviews the case again, subject to the Welfare Officer adjusting the actual amount of assistance as casual income or the number of dependents changes.

The case review committee would be made up of the District Supervisor, Vocational, Relocation and Placement counsellors, the District Welfare Consultant and the Welfare Officer. The District Supervisor, as chairman, would decide when other staff, other social agencies, or perhaps the recipient himself should attend a case review meeting. Where the provincial government is handling Vocational Training or the Department of Manpower is handling Indian placements, their representatives could be invited.

Staff assigned to the programs other than social assistance will also benefit from the group approach. A guidance counsellor might present a case where a student from a family receiving social assistance has a poor academic record due to poor home conditions which could involve the Construction Supervisor for repairs, the housing program for new accommodation, the Adult Educator for the parents, the Placement and Relocation Officer, or any combination. By handling such a situation as one case with all the facts presented at one time, rather than as several cases handled at the different times, a solution may be developed.

Case Information

Social assistance has files containing certain information on more Indians than does any other program. Much of the same information is duplicated in other program files. Activity reports from one program are seldom provided to other programs even though they could be immediately or at some later date affected by the results achieved by the reporting program. For example, lists of "employable social assistance recipients" are not forwarded each month to Placement; agency paylists and "students enrolled in residential schools" are not sent to Social Assistance; "students receiving vocational training" are not sent to Placement, or to Social Assistance if the student is receiving educational assistance.

Only in Val D'Or, Quebec Region, did we observe a regular transfer of information between programs. Information is passed between programs on special request in all regions, but not on a continuing basis.

One possible reason was stated in the Maritime Interim Report: "Personnel working in other program areas felt that they might jeopardize their relationship with Indians if they divulged information to other officers which could effect benefits for the Indians". This situation exists to varying degrees in all regions. Nevertheless, we consider that the benefits of transferring information far outweigh the disadvantages.

In particular, the advantages of reporting the names of social assistance recipients to the educational counsellors on a regular basis are:

1. To identify social assistance recipients who need but have not received training, relocation or employment;
2. To prevent payment of social assistance to those already receiving educational assistance;
3. To make possible a cost-benefit analysis of the amount by which educational training, relocation, or placement staff and funds will reduce social assistance costs.

When specific information on an individual case in one program is considered to be of interest to another program, the speedi-memo could be used. This would cover situations where information is not tabulated monthly and where the immediate transfer of information could be advantageous.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-29

Information be communicated between programs on a regular basis by providing copies of activity reports and by speedi-memos.

Cross-Financing between Programs

The total costs reported as being for social assistance do not always present a true picture.

In one region we were told of a housing program where the eighty-five hundred dollar homes were really thirteen thousand dollar homes with seventy dollar monthly mortgage payments being charged against social assistance.

Community projects in Manitoba have been paid from social assistance funds.

On-the-job training in Alberta was recently made possible for thirty-eight men by expending social assistance funds when other budgets could not find the funds. Bands in other provinces have used welfare funds for work projects.

When other programs are able to present the advantages of expending funds on their projects by cost/benefit analysis, the funds should be made available but not charged against social assistance.

If easier arrangements could be made to transfer funds between programs we would then be in a position to see quite clearly just how much was spent on each program.

Work for Welfare

The community projects and on-the-job training mentioned in the previous section are simply an answer to the old problem of 'work for welfare' which has been mentioned and discussed in all seven regions. Opinions

range from 'very pro' to 'dead against'.

Ontario and British Columbia have recently added incentive plans to their social assistance programs. If the Departmental policy were to implement an incentive-to-work ingredient in our social assistance program, the analysts would be pleased to present a possible formula.

GRANTS TO BANDS

The Grants to Bands Program has created a two-policy conflict for our field management. On one hand they have been advised to follow provincial practices which, in most regions, means centralization; while on the other hand the Grants to Bands promotes decentralization to Band Councils.

In the interim reports we observed that social assistance administration in the Provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec and New Brunswick, is centralized within one provincial department. Towns and villages are not permitted to hire their own welfare administrators and instead they are generally served by a network of field offices staffed by the provincial department. Manitoba is also reported to be considering a centralized administration.

If the administration of Indian assistance is transferred to the Province, bands now administering their own program under the grants to bands program would also have to accept service from provincial staff. Under the assumption that bands may be reluctant to give up their own administration, we recommend that:

S-30

Consideration be given to curtailing the social assistance portion of the grants to bands program in those provinces which have a centralized provincial administration for social assistance.

One method of reducing workload for band welfare administrators would be to offer large budget bands the services of the regional Treasury Office for issuing recurring social assistance cheques each month. An automatic cheque issue system is described in the methods and procedures section of this report.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-31

Bands under the grants to bands program be encouraged to adopt an automatic cheque issue system for recurring social assistance recipients, using the services of the Regional Treasury Office.

Band welfare administration would then correspond to the existing Alberta provincial system where the province issues cheques to those designated as "permanent" recipients while the municipalities provide temporary assistance for up to three months.

Training of Band Staff

All regions have commented to the analysts about the problem of training band welfare administrators. Courses and conferences have generally been arranged in each region and in many cases the provincial welfare department has agreed to help train band staff. Ideally, the type of person required by the bands to administer their program is a person with the same qualifications as the worker hired by the province, so that if the province takes over, band administrators will be eligible for employment with the provincial department. In general, provincial case workers are hired at the WP1 to WP3 level and are graduates of a course in welfare administration from a technical college. Few band administrators now possess these qualifications. Certified courses in

welfare administration are now available in almost every province from technical colleges from St. Francis Xavier in Nova Scotia across the country to Vancouver City College, from which several Indian welfare administrators recently graduated. As a desirable goal for the future, therefore, we recommend that:

S-32

Bands under the grants to bands program be encouraged to hire graduates of a recognized course in welfare administration from a technical college.

S-33

Education Branch be instructed to promote the enrollment of qualified Indians into welfare administration courses.

Attendance at a workshop conference in Winnipeg, at which there were several band administrators, pointed out the lack of training in the basic philosophy of social assistance which these people have received. If we continue to use Band-aides as social assistance dispensers with no training for preventative service we must also continue to add more trained social workers. Our program for training these people must be expanded and rather than having all seven regions work on this problem we feel that the trained staff at headquarters should be used to produce and conduct training sessions for all regions.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-34

Social assistance training courses be developed and conducted by headquarters personnel for presentation in all regions.

Band Reporting

Collection of statistics by the bands varies from complete reporting in Alberta, to no reporting at all in parts of Saskatchewan, Quebec, Manitoba and the Maritimes. In some areas no statistics are collected because bands have just begun to administer their own program.

Statistics on the number of cases and the average case cost figure are necessary for budgetting. They would also provide an auditor with the minimum information necessary to audit the program.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-35

*Bands under the Grants to Bands Program
be required to submit monthly statistics
of the number of cases and funds expended.*

By providing these bands with the identical reporting form as used by departmental staff, complete statistics for the region could be compiled. (See section on Reports, Statistics and Budgetting).

If the bands did provide full expenditure statistics some of the present financial problems might be averted. Trends, both upward and downward, could be recognized and action taken.

The present practice of issuing funds to the bands on a quarterly basis results in some running out of funds before the quarter ends and others ending with surpluses. Surpluses are not returned to the departmental coffers but shortages are covered by supplementary

issues. This method guarantees that the budget for that part of the program covered by the Grants to Bands will always be expended and that supplementary funds will most probably be necessary.

By providing funds to the bands as a working capital advance and reimbursing them each month as their expenditure statements (statistics) are received we would be in a position to detect or forecast trends and possibly be prepared for or solve them. The working capital advance, we suggest, should be for approximately a three-month period to cover the first month, that portion of the second month which transpires prior to reimbursement and emergency situations.

Therefore, we recommend that:

S-36

Funds for social assistance in the Grants to Bands Program be provided on a working capital advance basis.

DIFFERENCES WITH PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

In the interim reports for almost every region the analysts noted minor discrepancies between our assistance rates and the provincial rates. Quebec region uses an entirely different rate structure than the Province and in the Maritimes one common rate is used in all three provinces corresponding to the New Brunswick rate structure but somewhat higher than the rate actually paid by the New Brunswick government. Bands under the Grants-to-Bands program often pay their own scale of rates. These variances between our rates and provincial rates are significant, first of all because Treasury Board only authorized the Department to pay provincial rates and secondly because they help either to encourage or discourage Indians from moving off the reserve. Where departmental rates are higher, as in the Maritimes, this could also discourage Indians from accepting work.

Even accepting the desirability of comparable rates, there are problems in equating provincial standards. In several regions, details about the provincial rate structure are not made available to our regional office. On the other hand, in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, our field staff use official regulations or the provincial manual in which the provincial rates are explained in detail. In the other regions field staff use rate tables published by each regional office which are usually derived from the Regional Social Worker's knowledge of the provincial rates. In the latter case it is much more difficult to compare and to align our rate structure with the provincial.

In British Columbia and in Nova Scotia the provincial regulations allow wide local discretion in setting the amount of assistance and our programs cannot be measured against such flexible provincial standards.

Manitoba and Quebec pay, in effect, a cost of living bonus in some parts of the province at the discretion of the administrator and this too hampers any exact comparisons with our own program.

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POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL
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