

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1977-78)**

(SIXTH LOK SABHA)

FIFTH REPORT

MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT

Action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Hundred and First Report of the Estimates Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Shipping and Transport—Border Roads.



Presented in Lok Sabha on 23rd December, 1977

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 1977/Pausa, 1899(S)

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CORRIGENDA TO FIFTH REPORT OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
 (SIDATH LOK SABHA) PRESENTED TO LOK SABHA ON 23 Dec. 1977



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ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

(1977-78)

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Shri Satyendra Narayan Sinha

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4. *Shri Dilip Chakravarty
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24. Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde
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27. Shri K. P. Unnikrishnan

(iv)

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30. *Shri Roop Nath Singh Yadav

SECRETARIAT

Shri B. K. Mukherjee—*Joint Secretary.*

Shri K. S. Bhalla—*Chief Financial Committee Officer.*

Shri H. C. Bahl—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

*Elected w.e.f. 30-11-1977 *vice* Shri Samar Guha resigned and Shrimati Renuka Devi barkataki, Sarvashri S. Kundu, Janeswar Misra, Fazlur Rehman and Sher Singh ceased to be members on their appointment as Ministers of State.

STUDY GROUP 'G'
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1977-78)

1. Shri Satyendra Narayan Sinha—*Chairman.*
2. Shri Mukhtiar Singh Malik—*Convener*
3. Smt. Mrinal Gore
- 4 Shri Krishna Kant
5. Shri Mohd. Shafi Qureshi
6. Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde
7. Shri K. P. Unnikrishnan.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fifth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Hundred and First Report of the Estimates Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Shipping and Transport—Border Roads.

2. The Hundred and First Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 28 April, 1976. Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that report by 30 October, 1976. Further information called for by the Committee was furnished by Government by 18 April, 1977. The replies were examined by the Study Group 'G' of Estimates Committee (1977-78) at their sitting held on 29 October, 1977. The draft report was adopted by the Estimates Committee (1977-78) on 5 December, 1977.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters:—

I. Report.

II. Recommendations which have been accepted by Government.

III. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies.

IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 101st Report of the Estimates Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix. It would be observed therefrom that out of 30 recommendations made in the Report, 23 recommendations i.e. 76.7 per cent have been accepted by Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 5 recommendations i.e. 16.7 per cent in view of Government's replies. Replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee in respect of 2 recommendations i.e. 6.6 per cent.

NEW DELHI;

December, 22, 1977.

Pausa 1, 1899 (S).

SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1.1. This Report of the Estimates Committee deals with action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their 101st Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Shipping and Transport—Border Roads—which was presented to the House on the 28 April, 1976.

1.2. Action taken notes have been received from the Ministry in respect of all the 30 recommendations contained in the Report.

1.3. The action taken notes on the recommendations|observations contained in the Report have been categorised as follows:—

I. Recommendations|observations that have been accepted by Government:—

Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 & 9, 5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 16—22, 24, 25, 27—30 (Total 23)—Chapter II

II. Recommendations|observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies.

Sl. Nos. 7, 8, 11, 12 & 26 (Total 5)—Chapter III

III. Recommendations|observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee.

Sl. Nos. 15 & 23 (Total 2)—Chapter IV

1.4. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of these recommendations|observations.

Economic Development of Border Areas

Recommendation No. 2(Paras 2.10 & 2.11)

1.5. The Committee expressed their concern over the unconscionable delay of nearly 6 years in finalising the report of the committee set up to assess the impact of the Border Roads Programme and the strategy to be followed for economic development of border areas with particular reference to construction of border roads. The Committee also stressed that Government should take prompt follow up measures on such of the recommendations as are accepted.

1.6. The Committee felt that the gross delay in taking conclusive action in pursuance of the committee's recommendations had resulted in the denial of the opportunity for making use of this expert study while finalising the proposals for the draft Fifth Plan so that development of border roads was viewed in the context of the development of the border areas. The Committee also suggested that the Government|Planning Commission might look into the matter and take effective measures to obviate recurrence.

1.7. The Ministry of Shipping and Transport (Border Roads Development Board) have in their reply (October 1976) stated that the observations of the Estimates Committee were brought to the notice of the Planning Commission. It is noticed from the Planning Commission's D.O. No. T&C(1)77 dated 19 April, 1977 (addressed to the Border Roads Development Board and copy furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat) that the report of the committee set up to assess the impact of the Border Roads Programme on the socio-economic development, has been submitted to the Planning Commission who has forwarded a copy to the Border Roads Development Board for necessary action. The Report is being treated as secret. (A copy of the report was made available to the Committee by the Border Roads Development Board in October, 1970.)

1.8. The Committee note that the Report of the Committee set up by the Planning Commission in 1970 to assess the impact of the Border Roads Programme and the strategy to be followed for economic development of border areas with particular reference to construction of border roads was finalised in April, 1977 and forwarded to the Border Roads Development Board for necessary action. The Committee are distressed over the long period of seven years taken by this committee to complete its work. The Committee desire that the report should be examined in depth and follow-up action taken expeditiously on such of the recommendations as are accepted so as to ensure that Border Roads Programme is integrated with the plans for the overall development of border areas.

1.9. The Committee also desire that the Ministry|Planning Commission should take effective measures to prevent recurrence of long delays in submission of Reports of the Committee appointed by them.

Silchar—Aijal Road

Recommendation No. 6 (Paras 3.15 & 3.16)

1.10. The Committee recommended that the Silchar-Aijal Road being the lifeline not only for Aijal but for the entire State, as it were, of Mizoram, it was of the utmost importance that the road

was of as good a standard as a National Highway and was improved in respect of width, gradients, alignment, standard of maintenance etc. The Committee stressed that the entire matter had to be gone into at a high level by an expert committee consisting of representatives of the Defence Services, State Government, Border Roads Organisation and the Ministry of Finance so as to evolve an agreed proposal for implementation. They desired that this proposal should be finalised within six months so that it could be taken up for implementation without further loss of time in the interest of improving the road link to this very sensitive area.

1.11. The Committee while taking note that financial constraints were coming in the way of declaring Silchar-Aijal Road as a National Highway, hoped that keeping in view the importance of the road to the State and the entire area, it would be declared as a National Highway as early as possible.

1.12. In their reply (October, 1976), the Ministry of Shipping & Transport stated that in pursuance of the Committee's recommendation, a high powered Committee consisting of Secretary, Border Roads Development Board, Engineer-in-Chief, Joint Secretary Ministry of Defence, Director General Border Roads, Chief Secretary Mizoram and Additional Financial Adviser was set up in September, 1976 to go into the question of improving the Silchar-Aijal road to the best possible specifications within the limited resources available. The Ministry have since informed (October, 1977) that the high powered Committee have submitted their report in which they have suggested realignment of certain portion of the road and also continuance of the present alignment even after completion of the realigned portions.

1.13. Regarding the action taken on the recommendations to declare the Silchar-Aijal road as a National Highway, the Ministry of Shipping & Transport (Road Wing), which is the administrative Ministry for all National Highways have stated that the Silchar-Aijal road could not be covered in the Fifth Five Year Plan proposals for declaration as National Highway on consideration of the fact that it was already being taken care of by Central Government viz. Border Roads Development Board. Actually, even the limited list of roads proposed in this regard was pruned by the Planning Commission from 10,904 Kms. to 6,178 Kms. which has also not been cleared by the Financial authorities concerned due to financial stringency. Meanwhile following the mid-plan appraisal the allocation for National Highways in draft 5th Plan has been reduced from Rs. 481 crores to Rs. 327.62 crores which has tightened the

position further. The Ministry have added that in the circumstances, the question of declaring the Silchar-Aijal road could be considered only in the next Five Year Plan (1978-79) along with other roads depending upon the provision which may be made for the purpose in that Plan.

1.14. The Committee note that the Silchar-Aijal Road was not included in the Fifth Plan proposals for declaration of roads as National Highways, as this road was already being maintained out of Central funds by the Border Roads Development Board. The Ministry have stated that the question of declaring the Road as National Highway is proposed to be considered in subsequent Plans. The Committee would like to reiterate that keeping in view the importance of the road to the State and the entire area, the Silchar-Aijal Road should be declared as a National Highway as early as possible

The Committee would also like that the report of the High Powered Committee of officers which has since been submitted should be examined by the Government expeditiously and concrete measures taken to improve this road.

Surplus Equipment

Recommendation No. 15 (Para 4.16)

1.15. The Committee desired that concrete action should be taken in pursuance of the findings of the Expert Committee which examined surplus equipment and machinery in Border Roads Organisation so that the equipment and machinery which were found surplus to The Committee also desired that Government should examine in use by Defence and other Government Organisations without delay. The Committee also desired that Government should examine in every case how the equipment had become surplus in order to pinpoint responsibility and take corrective measures to obviate such purchases in future.

1.16. In reply, the Ministry of Shipping and Transport (Border Roads Development Board) informed (October, 1976) the Committee that in pursuance of the findings of the Expert Committee the equipment in which Army and NPCC had shown their interest were being transferred to them. Out of the remaining items nearly 85 per cent had already been declared surplus and transferred to DGS&D for disposal and the balance would be transferred shortly.

1.17. As regards fixing up of responsibility for the purchase of these equipments which were later found surplus, the Ministry stated that Border Roads Organisation was set up in 1960 for construction and improvement of roads in Himalayan region. At that time, previous experience in the requirements and utilisation of machinery in construction of hill roads involving work in mountainous, high altitude and snow clad areas, and knowledge of constructional problems was not available for guidance because no organisation for departmental construction of hill roads in such terrain and conditions existed in the country. Further, as the speed of construction was the essence of operations, the Border Roads Organisation did not have adequate and sufficient time to carry out exhaustive trials and evaluation of machinery required for the job as also of training the man-power. In the circumstances prevailing in the initial stages of the Organisation, the number, type and makes of the machinery required had to be largely decided on general engineering considerations and assessment as also on the basis of available technical advice, literature and experience in other countries. In order to undertake the work expeditiously, machinery had to be drawn from all available sources. Some equipments were purchased from Japan, USSR, USA and UK through high level delegations, a few came through Military Aid Programme, some were indigenously procured and even some second hand equipments were taken from the Army.

1.18. The Committee on Machinery and Equipment which examined Border Roads Organisation recommended that if the number of unwanted or surplus equipment was found to be large, it would be necessary to look into the circumstances of purchases and how they could be profitably utilised/disposed of. The Estimates Committee had endorsed this suggestion in their original report. In pursuance of these recommendations the matter was considered in detail. According to an assessment made by Director General Border Roads in July 1970 the ratio of the value of such surplus equipment to the total value of equipment in Border Roads Organisation was only 0.732 per cent and "hence it was not considered large enough to warrant the setting up of a Committee to probe into the circumstances of purchase of these equipment. This aspect, therefore, was not pursued further." The Ministry further stated that "keeping in view the negligible percentage of the equipment, the circumstances under which they were purchased and the fact that these purchases related to the period 1960—64, a fresh examination of these purchases at this belated stage is not likely to yield results and hence may not be pursued further. Presently, all purchases

of equipments are decided upon after careful consideration, trial and evaluation, where necessary and feasible and proper assessment of requirement on the ground on the basis of experience and expertise in the Border Roads Organisation.”

1.19. The Ministry have further stated (February, 1977) that the total value of equipments which were found surplus was Rs. 2,66,657. Out of these, equipment worth Rs. 1,05,205 has been transferred to Army/NPCC, and equipment worth Rs. 23,57,349 has been transferred to DGS&D for disposal. Equipment worth Rs. 20,202 is still lying with the Border Roads Organisation. DGS&D have disposed of equipment worth Rs. 22,26,997. The Ministry have further stated that the total amount of loss, if any, suffered due to the purchase of these equipments and later disposing them of without putting them into use would be available only after the sale proceeds are advised by the DGS&D.

1.20. The Committee are distressed to note that items of equipment worth Rs. 24.67 lakhs purchased/acquired earlier by the Border Roads Organisation have to be disposed of as they were found surplus and not required in the organisation. Of these, equipment worth Rs. 1.05 lakhs has been transferred to Army/NPCC and equipment worth Rs. 23.57 lakhs has been transferred to DGS&D for disposal. The DGS&D have disposed of equipment worth Rs. 22,26,997. The total amount of loss in the whole transaction would be known only after the DGS&D intimates sale proceeds.

1.21. The Border Roads Development Board have adduced the following reasons for the purchase/acquisition of equipment now found surplus:

- (i) The Ministry have stated that excessive purchase/acquisition of machinery and equipment in 1960, when the Border Roads Organisation was set up, was due to lack of experience in the requirements and utilisation of machinery in construction of roads at high altitudes and in snow clad areas, and lack of adequate time to carry out trials and evaluation of machinery required.
- (ii) The number, type and makes of the machinery had to be decided in the initial stages on general engineering considerations and on the basis of the then available technical advice. In order to undertake the work expeditiously some equipment was purchased from Japan, USSR, USA, UK through high level delegations, some came through Military Aid Programme and some procured indigenously.

1.22. According to an assessment made by the Director General Border Roads, in July, 1970, the ratio of the value of such surplus equipment to the total value of equipment in Border Roads Organisation was only 0.732 per cent. The Ministry have stated that keeping in view the negligible percentage of the surplus equipment the circumstances in which it was purchased and the fact that the purchases related to the period 1960—64, “ a fresh examination of these purchases at this stage is not likely to yield results and hence may not be pursued further”.

1.23. The Committee feel that although the value of surplus equipment as compared to the total value of the equipment with the Border Roads Organisation is stated to be insignificant in terms of percentage, one cannot lose sight of the fact that the unwanted and surplus equipment involved an expenditure over Rs. 24 lakhs which was avoidable. They were informed that now all purchases of equipment are decided upon after careful consideration and proper assessment by the Border Roads Organisation. The Committee strongly urge that the Ministry/Border Roads Organisation should learn lessons from the costly mistakes of the past and take all possible measures to avoid their recurrence hereafter. They would like that a detailed procedure for assessing the requirements and placing indents may be laid down and the procedure kept under constant review with a view to ensuring that the safeguards built in the procedure are adequate to prevent the purchase of equipment and machinery that may later on be found to be unwanted or excessive.

Supply of Free Ration to G.R.E.F. Personnel

Recommendation No. 23 (Para 5.15)

1.24. During the course of the tour of the border roads, the Sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee had sensed a certain feeling of discontentment and restiveness in the matter of availability of rations to GREF personnel as compared to those from the Defence Forces. While appreciating the fact that there were two streams of personnel working in the Organisation and that they had their own structures of salaries and amenities, the Committee felt that it was important for the Government to ensure that there was no feeling of discrimination in any section of the personnel living and working together in the hard conditions of border areas.

1.25. In their reply, the Ministry have stated that any increase in expenditure on provision of free rations on improved scales would necessarily escalate the cost of road construction by GREF which had been adversely commented upon by the Estimates Com-

mittee themselves. The Ministry have added that it has therefore not been considered desirable or expedient at this stage to increase the scale of rations for GREF personnel to bring them on par with the Army scale of rations

1.26 The Border Roads Development Board informed the Committee in December, 1977 that a Committee, which includes a medical expert, was constituted in January, 1977 to consider and recommend the extent of improvement necessary in the scale of rations prescribed for GREF personnel keeping in view the minimum nutritional requirement for efficient discharge of duties and to suggest cheaper substitutes wherever possible for balanced diet. The question of improvement in the scale of rations would be considered further in the light of its report when received.

1.27. The Committee note that a Committee has been constituted in January, 1977 to consider and recommend the extent of improvement necessary in the scale of rations of General Reserve Engineering Force (GREF) personnel keeping in view the nutritional requirement for efficient discharge of duties. They strongly feel that it is necessary to keep up the physical fitness and morale of the GREF personnel working under difficult conditions of border areas and to remove the feeling of discrimination in them in the matter of supply of rations. The Committee hope that the report of the expert Committee will be expedited and appropriate action taken to remove the feeling of discontentment among GREF personnel in border areas.

Implementation of Recommendations

1.28. The Committee would like to emphasise that they attach the greatest importance to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by Government. They would, therefore, urge that Government should keep a close watch so as to ensure expeditious implementation of the recommendations accepted by them. In cases where it is not possible to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee in time with reasons for non-implementation.

1.29. The Committee would also like to draw attention to their comments made in respect of the replies of Government to the Recommendations Nos. 13, 14, 16 and 17 (Chapter II) and desire that Government should take action in pursuance thereof and also furnish the requisite information to the Committee, where specifically called for.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation No. 1 (Para 2.6)

In paragraph 1.23 of the Original Report the Committee had observed that the Central Government should not shoulder the responsibility for maintaining the border roads developed out of Central funds indefinitely, but should allow it to devolve in due course upon the State Governments concerned. The Committee had, therefore, recommended that the Central Government should, in consultation with the State Governments concerned, evolve a programme for gradual transfer of roads developed by the Border Roads Organisation to the State Governments for maintenance after their commitment is over in 1974. The Committee understand that the original idea of the Government was that the equipment and manpower in the Border Roads Organisation should be utilised for constructing roads, and once the roads were built, the maintenance thereof could be done by the State Public Works Departments. This view has, however, subsequently undergone a change for two reasons. First it was found that the maintenance of roads entrusted to State PWDs was not upto the standards required for strategic requirements and secondly, the volume of construction work with the Border Roads Organisation has been dwindling and the surplus capacity could be utilised for road maintenance work. The Committee have been informed that taking into account both these factors, that is, operational requirements and the need for more work for Border Roads Organisation, Government have decided that the Border Roads Organisation should continue to maintain these roads. The Committee suggest that the position may be kept under watch and Government may consider at appropriate time the extent to which work relating to maintenance of roads which are not sensitive from the strategic point of view, could be devolved on the State Governments.

Reply of Government

The above recommendation of the Committee contained in the last sentence is accepted and action has been initiated accordingly.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB UO No. F.1(10)|BRDB|EC|75 dated 16-8-1976].

Recommendation No. 2 (Paras 2.10 & 2.11)

2.10. The Committee are perturbed at the unconscionable delay of nearly 6 years in finalising the report on the strategy to be followed for economic development of Border Areas with particular reference to construction of Border Roads. The Committee hope that the Planning Commission would make good the assurance given by their representative to the Committee in February, 1976 that the report would be finalised within 3 months. The Committee stress that Government should take prompt follow up measures on such of the recommendations which are accepted.

2.11. The gross delay to take conclusive action in pursuance of the Committee's recommendations has resulted in the denial of the opportunity for making use of this expert study while finalising the proposals for the draft Fifth Plan so that development of Border Roads was viewed in the context of the development of the Border areas. The Committee would like the Government/Planning Commission to look into the matter and take effective measures to obviate recurrence.

Reply of Government

The anxiety of the Estimates Committee that prompt follow up measures should be taken on such of the recommendations as are accepted, is noted.

In this case, the observations of the Estimates Committee were brought to the notice of the Planning Commission. They have now advised that, in response to a request made by them, the Estimates Committee have very kindly agreed to an extension of the time limit for submission of their report by 31st October, 1976. Planning Commission have been requested to ensure that they submit their report within this extended time limit.

The Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB UO No. F-1(10)|BRDB|P&C|76 dated 15-10-1976.]

It is noticed from the Planning Commission D.O. No. T&C/1(1)/77 dated 19 April, 1977 (addressed to the Border Roads Development Board and copy furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat) that the report of Committee set up to assess the impact of the Border Roads Programme on the Socio-economic development of the border areas has been submitted to the Planning Commission who has forwarded

a copy to the Border Roads Development Board for necessary action. The report is being treated as secret. A copy of the report was made available to the Committee in October, 1976.

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 1.8 and 1.9 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation No. 3 (Para 2.19)

The Committee need hardly point out that in the Border Roads Organisation the Government have an expertise in roads construction which is unique. There is a growing realisation that the development of border roads should receive special attention so as to bring up the level of development at par with the rest of the country. In this context, the construction of roads assumes special importance as these are the basic infrastructure for overall developmental activities. The Committee feel that in the foreseeable future, there should be a definitive role for the Border Roads Organisation in the sphere of roads construction for developmental purposes in border and other backward areas apart from their traditional role of construction and maintenance of roads from the point of view of strategic requirements.

The Committee would like to point out that large funds are being made available for construction of roads in the Union territories as well as for schemes which are directly the responsibility of the Centre or for which finances are largely provided by the Centre. These funds are canalised through the Ministry of Shipping and Transport under whom the Border Roads Organisation also functions.

The Committee would also like to point out that road construction is one of the basic activities undertaken to develop industrial areas or sites particularly for Public Undertakings under the Central Government. The services of the Border Roads Organisation could be effectively utilised for road construction in the Public Undertakings.

The Committee note that the Government have already decided to allow the Border Roads Organisation to diversify their activities by taking up works pertaining to dams, hydel projects, buildings etc., in the areas of its normal operation. The Committee stress that it should be possible for the Ministry of Defence to ensure that the construction works including buildings which are at present being given out to private contractors are got executed through the Border Roads Organisation in the area. As regards the dams, hydel pro-

jects, etc. the Committee expect the administrative Ministry to keep a close liaison with the Ministry of Irrigation and Power and with the State and other authorities so as to secure the works.

Reply of Government

Government appreciate the Committee's desire to keep the resources of Border Roads Organisation fully utilised which apparently is the motivating factor behind this recommendation. The position in this regard is that Border Roads Organisation does play an important role in the sphere of construction of roads in the border areas. However, due to the limited funds and resources at its disposal, roads considered important from the Operational/Strategic angle are given a higher priority than those required purely for developmental purposes. The balance of resources are deployed on the construction of roads for developmental purposes, from its own funds, if available, or from funds made available to it for the purpose. At present, a large workload for construction/improvement of about 2,000 KMs. of roads at a total cost of approximately Rs. 60—70 crores including two developmental roads of a total length of 258 KMs. at an approximate cost of Rs. 860.00 lakhs has been added to its programme by the Board at their meeting held on 13th July, 1976. This programme also includes two strategic-cum-developmental roads in Mizoram of a total length of 310 KMs. to be constructed at a total cost of approximately Rs. 11.00 crores for which additional funds will be provided to Border Roads Organisation. Hence, the resources of Border Roads Organisation are fully tied up for the next 5-6 years and the question of its playing a more defined role in the field of development can only be considered after the present programme is executed after keeping in view the operational requirements and the funds available with the Organisation at that time.

2. Regarding the recommendation of the Committee that the services of Border Roads Organisation may be utilised by Public Sector Undertakings for execution of road construction works in industrial areas etc., it is stated that the availability of the services of Border Roads Organisation for execution of works, has been brought to the notice of all Ministries/Departments of the Central Government and also the States by the Cabinet Secretariat. The Department/States have also been advised that they should feel free to assign works to Border Roads Organisation.

3. Regarding the suggestion that the civil construction works of the Ministry of Defence should be allotted to Border Roads Organisation, it is stated that the Board at their meeting held on 13th July,

1976 approved, in principle, that defence works in the border areas should be executed by Border Roads Organisation. Accordingly, maintenance of some works at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.10 crores per annum have been entrusted to B.R.O.

4. Further, as recommended by the Committee, a close liaison is being kept with the Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to secure some works from those Ministries also, particularly the civil works of the Hydel projects being executed in the border areas.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
2nd September, 1976]

Recommendation No. 4 (Para 2.20)

The Committee have elsewhere in this Report stressed the need for the Border Roads Organisation to effect utmost economy in its operation and to raise its level of efficiency so as to become fully competitive in the matter of rates. They would like the Border Roads Organisation to realise that it is in their own interest to achieve a high level of efficiency and economic operation in order to secure diversified jobs that are envisaged in the interest of keeping the force fully occupied and gainfully employed.

Recommendation No. 9 (Paras 3.26 and 3.27)

The Committee feel that, if the recommendations given by the high-powered Committee for better utilisation and maintenance of machinery and equipment, better selection of alignment, reduction in earth work requirements, re-organisation of GREF units and better advance planning of works programme and resources are acted upon in letter and spirit, it should be possible to bring about substantial economy in road construction. The Committee have, elsewhere in the report, pointed out that it is in fact in the interest of the Border Roads Organisation itself to bring down the cost of construction so as to secure on competitive basis more works from the civil authorities to engage fully its resources of machinery, equipment and manpower gainfully in the overall interest of the country. The Committee stress that the cost of construction should be kept under review both by the Dte. General Border Roads as well as by the Border Roads Development Board so as to take concerted measures to effect economies and improve efficiency without detriment to the quality of work. The Committee suggest that costing of road construction and maintenance should be done systemati-

cally so as to pinpoint the cost of various factors in the interest of taking corrective action and to effect the requisite economies. Another suggestion that the Committee would like to make for reduction in the cost of construction/maintenance is that the Border Roads Organisation should make determined efforts to engage the local inhabitants in the construction/maintenance works which are likely to be available at cheaper rate than the labour brought from far off places. This would also give a feeling of participation to the inhabitants of the area and generate goodwill for the Border Roads Organisation.

The Committee would like to be informed, within six months, of the concrete action taken in pursuance of the above recommendations in the matter of effecting economies in road construction/maintenance and in securing additional works from the civil authorities on the basis of competitive rates.

Reply of Government

The Government share the anxiety of the Estimates Committee that the cost and efficiency of B.R.O. should be subjected to a constant review so as to effect economy in its costs and also to ensure that the resources i.e. machinery, equipment and manpower available with B.R.O. should be gainfully engaged in the overall interests of the country. Keeping this in mind, the recommendations of the High Powered Committee on Cost of Construction for effecting economy and better utilisation of its resources outlined in this para, have been implemented. The norms of output of men and machinery have been revised upwards. The period of utilisation of equipment has been increased reducing the number of idle hours. Similarly, the level of reserve holdings of equipment have been reduced and the system of suspense holdings rationalised to ensure efficiency and more economy. The position is being kept under constant review and such other steps as may be necessary, would be taken from time to time to ensure greater efficiency in the working of B.R.O.

It may be stated that a system of costing the various jobs with a view to pinpoint the cost of various inputs and to critically review the inputs *vis-a-vis* the outputs so as to achieve better economy and take corrective action wherever necessary has been operating in the Organisation. This system has been streamlined further and the Dte. GBR has been asked to furnish a critical analysis of the inputs *vis-a-vis* the outputs in the shape of a half-yearly return to the BRDB Secretariat. A review of this return will enable Secretariat to keep a watch on the costs of construction and the efficient utili-

sation of the resources and take corrective/remedial actions whenever necessary with a view to effect further economy to the maximum extent possible.

Efforts are, at the same time, continuing to obtain additional workload for BRO to ensure optimum utilisation of its resources. Additional programme for development of about 2,000 KMs of roads at a total cost of about Rs. 60—70 crores has been included recently in the Board's programme. Perspective programming is also being attempted which will further ensure that Border Roads Organisation is gainfully occupied over the years. It is hoped that with the measures initiated and the efforts being made, the cost of construction of BRO would progressively come down and would become competitive with that of other civil authorities working in similar areas.

Government share the views of the Estimates Committee regarding the employment of the local inhabitants in the construction/maintenance of roads to the maximum extent possible and have suitably instructed the DGBR in the matter.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB UO No. 1 (10)|BRDB|EC|76 dated 15-10-76].

Recommendation No. 5 (Paras 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9)

The Committee find that while the idea of preparing a five-year rolling plan was accepted by the Ministry as early as 1970, the plan was drawn up for 1974—79 only to synchronise with the Fifth Plan. The Committee are constrained to observe that action should have been taken in letter and spirit to undertake the re-appraisal as soon as the concept was accepted so that it covered the Fourth Five Year Plan also.

The Committee are also not satisfied with the reply given by the Ministry to the effect that a Committee of Chief Engineers of the Army Headquarters, Ministry of Transport and the CPWD appointed to make a technical appreciation, had made recommendation about the development of border roads in the North-Eastern region in 1959, and since then, the position is reviewed from time to time. The Committee would like to point out that there has been a marked progress in the development of the States in the North and the North-Eastern region and many new State entities and Union Territories have come into existence. The Sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee which toured these areas towards the end of last year received numerous representations to the effect

that a number of roads, main and subsidiary, need to be developed on a priority basis in the interest of security as well as regional development. At a time when the border Roads Organisation admittedly do not have enough work and are even looking for openings outside the country, the Committee stress that there is an over-riding need for a critical assessment in depth of the requirements for provision of roads in each of the Border States, particularly, in the North-Eastern region, so as to prepare a Master Plan with proper perspective and priorities so that these works could be taken up for execution by the Border Roads Organisation.

The Committee need hardly point out that in preparing the Master Plan, not only the requirements of defence but also of development should be fully taken into account and, therefore, suggest that the team to prepare such a Master Plan should consist of representatives of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Finance and the representatives of the States concerned. In view of the importance and the urgency of the work involved, a definite time schedule for preparation of the plan should be laid down and enforced.

The Committee would like to be informed within six months of the action taken on the above recommendations and of the time by which the Master Plan for each of the States is likely to become available and the time by which the Government will take a decision on allocation of construction work to the Border Roads Organisation.

Reply of the Government

As recommended by the Estimates Committee the Ministry of Shipping and Transport have constituted a team under the Chairmanship of Director General (Roads Development) with representatives of the Ministries of Defence, Home Affairs, Finance, Planning Commission, North Eastern Council and BRDB to prepare a 'Master Plan' for the development of roads in the Border States. However, looking to the magnitude of the work involved, it is felt that it will take at least about one year to prepare this Master Plan for the States. A copy of the Government Resolution, on the above is annexed (Appendix I). On receipt of the Master Plan and the report of the team, a decision on the allocation of construction works to BRO will be taken.

2. The observations of the Estimates Committee contained in para 3.6 of their report regarding preparation of the Five Year Rolling Plan have been noted for future guidance.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the 28-10-76].

The Border Roads Development Board in their U.O. No. F.1(10) BRDB/EC/P&C/76 dated 23-12-76 have stated the following:—

“...At the first meeting of this Team, the precise scope and extent of the work come up for discussion. It was felt that, strictly speaking, a ‘MASTER PLAN’ has to be a comprehensive and all embracing plan for the development of the entire road system of the State. It therefore, has to include all roads including those of the nature of village roads, Panchayat roads, District roads, Forest roads etc. The preparation of such a comprehensive plan for development of road communication in each of the Border States, would however call for the collection of voluminous data from various sources, e.g. the Forest Department, Village and Panchayat Board, Districts, Municipalities etc. The entire data/information in respect of all such roads would then have to be sifted and analysed to assess the relative importance of each road before any conclusions could be arrived at. This would apparently be a very difficult exercise and also extremely time consuming and would not be completed within the stipulated period of one year. Besides, ‘roads’ being a State subject, the States are completely free to develop the roads according to their own plan from their own resources to the extent possible. Further, the possibility of periodical shifts in their priorities for such roads could not be ruled out since they would be dependent upon the development needs of the area which is governed by numerous factors and the availability of resources with the State. Hence the concern of the Central Government over the execution of the total Plan, most of which would necessarily have to be from the resources of the State itself, would be limited. The evolution of such a Plan at the Central level would, therefore, have a very limited utility. Keeping this in view and also the background in which the recommendation was made by the Estimates Committee, i.e. to provide adequate work to BRO to keep their resources fully utilised on a long term basis, it was felt that the plan to be evolved should be restricted to the development of roads, main and subsidiary, which

may be financed out of the Central Sector Road Development Schemes. The States would also be associated with this exercise so that they can coordinate their own plans for the development of other roads, so as to have an integrated road development programme in future. This would, in a sense, provide for a total Plan for the development of the road system in the State.

“The roads included in the ‘MASTER PLAN’ so prepared by the Group, as suggested by the Estimates Committee, could then be considered for construction/development out of the various Central Sector Schemes, keeping in view their *inter-se* importance and the funds provided for the various schemes. Roads included in this plan to be financed from the Central funds could then be considered to be allocated for execution to a Central Government construction agency *viz.* Border Roads Organisation to the extent appropriate. With the evolution of the ‘MASTER PLAN’ as envisaged above, it would be possible to achieve the TWIN objectives envisaged by the Estimates Committee, *i.e.* to ensure a coordinated development of road communication in the Border States and to allocate a definite work load on a long-term basis to BRO.

“It is accordingly proposed to proceed in the manner indicated above to implement this recommendation of the Estimates Committee. Director General (Roads Development) concurs to this procedure. This is being submitted for information of Estimates Committee.”

Recommendation No. 6 (Paras 3.15 & 3.16)

The Committee note that the Silchar-Aijal road is partly in Cachar District of Assam and partly in Mizoram and is the only communication link to Aijal. The capital of Mizoram which is a very sensitive border surrounded on three sides by foreign countries. The sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee which visited North Eastern States in November-December last year to see the conditions of the Border Roads decided to travel by the Silchar-Aijal road in preference to going by helicopter so as to have first hand experience of the conditions of travel on the road. They felt that the standard prescribed for maintenance of the road was far from adequate. This being the lifeline not only for Aijal but for the entire State, as it were, of Mizoram, it is of the utmost importance that the road is of as good a standard as a National Highway

and needs to be improved in respect of width, gradients, alignment standard of maintenance etc. The portion 0 to 23.4 miles-falling in Cachar District and the portion 31.5 to 111.9 miles from Kawnpui to Aijal are particularly unsatisfactory. As far as the road falling in Cachar District is concerned it is only appropriate that its maintenance should be taken over by the Border Roads Organisation who are looking after the remaining portion of the road so as to maintain a uniform standard. In regard to the road from Kawnpui to Aijal, the Border Roads Organisation has admitted that 'the geometrics of the present alignment of this sector were fairly bad. It has, however, been added that the Army Headquarters were averse to the proposal of the Border Roads Organisation for an alternative alignment on operational considerations. It has also been added that it is proposed to undertake some additional permanent works in this Sector and that the estimate for the same is 'in the final stage of sanction'. The representatives of State Government were one in emphasizing the need for improving the road between Kawnpui and Aijal. "The Committee stress that the entire matter has to be gone into at a high level by an expert Committee consisting of representatives of the Defence Services, State Government, Border Roads Organisation and the Ministry of Finance so as to evolve an agreed proposal for implementation. The Committee would like this proposal to be finalised within six months so that it can be taken up for implementation without further loss of time in the interest of improving the road link to this very sensitive area.

While the Committee note that the financial constraints are coming in the way of declaring Silchar-Aijal Road as a National Highway, they hope that keeping in view the importance of the road to the State and the entire area, it would be declared as a National Highway as early as possible.

Reply of the Government

As recommended by the Estimates Committee, Government have set up a Committee consisting of Secretary, Border Roads Development Board, Engineer-in-Chief, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Director General Border Roads, Chief Secretary, Mizoram and Additional Financial Adviser to go into the question of improving the Silchar-Aijal road to the best possible specifications within the limited resources available. The Committee is expected to submit its report by the end of December 1976. Their recommendations will then be examined for implementation.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
15-10-1976]

Further Information called for by the Committee

Recommendation No. 6 (Paras 3.15 and 3.16)

Copy of the Report of the High Powered Committee set up to go into the question of improving the Silchar-Aijal road, together with a note indicating the action taken on the recommendations made by the Committee.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. OM No. 5/22/EC/76 dated 5-1-1977].

Further reply of Government

The Committee set up to go into the question of improving the Silchar-Aijal road have not yet submitted their report. The Committee has however completed its deliberations and its report is under finalisation for presentation to the Government.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
5-2-1977].

A copy of the Final Report of the High Powered Committee set up to go into the question of improvement of Silchar-Aijal road and the action taken may be furnished.

The action taken to declare the Silchar-Aijal road as National Highway may be intimated.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76 dated 22-2-1977].

Reply of Government

The Report of the High Powered Committee set up to go into the question of improvement of Silchar-Aijal road is expected to be submitted to the Government shortly. A copy of the same will be sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat as soon as it is submitted to the Government.

Regarding the action taken to declare the Silchar-Aijal road as a National Highway, the matter was referred to the Ministry of Shipping and Transport (Roads Wing), the administrative Ministry for all National Highways, and a copy of the note sent by them is enclosed herewith.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

Note showing the action taken on the recommendations made by the Estimates Committee

(Furnished by the Ministry of Shipping and Transport—Roads Wing)

As regards the declaration of road as a National Highway, the position is as under:—

- (1) The declaration of a road as a National Highway primarily means assumption of the entire responsibility for the development and maintenance of a road by the Central Government. This is actually being already done by the Border Roads Development Board who have already developed this road to restricted Class IX standard and are now maintaining it entirely at Central Government cost.
- (2) The Silchar-Aijal road was included in the proposals submitted by the Governments of Assam and Mizoram for the declaration of certain roads in those States as National Highways. Similar proposals were received from other States also. As the proposals received from the various States, including Assam and Mizoram, aggregated to 43,000 KMs of roads involving a total expenditure of Rs. 856 crores for development as single lane NHs and another Rs. 413 crores for development as double lane National Highways, it was not possible to cater this requirement within the limited provision of Rs. 20 crores made for making new additions to the existing N.H. System in the draft 5th Five Year Plan as part of the total provision of Rs. 481 crores included in that draft plan for National Highways.
- (3) In the circumstances, all the proposals aggregating to 43,000 KMs were closely examined keeping in view the resources available and the criteria laid down for the declaration of roads as NHs and a list of 10,904 KMs arranged in the order of their *inter se* priority was formulated. The Silchar-Aijal road could not be covered by this limited list on consideration of the fact that it was already being taken care of by Central Government viz., B.R.D.B. Actually, even this limited list was pruned further by the Planning Commission to 6,178 KMs which has also not been cleared by the Financial authorities concerned due to financial stringency. Meanwhile following the mid-plan appraisal, the allocation for NHs in draft 5th

Plan has been reduced from Rs. 481 crores to Rs. 327.62 crores which has tightened the position further.

2. In the circumstances, the question of declaring the Silchar-Aijal road could be considered only in the next Five Year Plan (1978—83) along with other roads depending upon the provision which may be made for the purpose in that Plans. Meanwhile, as indicated above the road is already being attended to by the Border Roads Organisation entirely at Central cost.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F 1(10)|BRDB|75, dated 13-4-1977].

The Border Roads Development Board furnished a copy of the report of the High Powered Committee to the Lok Sabha Secretariat (October, 1977). The said committee have suggested realignment of certain portion of the road and also the continuance of maintenance of the present alignment even after completion of the realigned portions.

Comments of the Committee

Please see para 1.14 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation No. 10 (Para 3.31)

The Committee note that the security arrangements for GREF personnel deployed on works in Mizoram costing Rs. 60 lakhs per annum are being charged to the cost of construction of roads. This unnecessarily inflates the cost of road construction work in Mizoram. The Committee learnt that a proposal is under consideration for excluding this expenditure from the cost of construction, and to book it to a separate Head of account. The Committee recommend that the GREF personnel deployed in disturbed areas should be provided with proper and timely security and the expenditure on the security cover should not be treated as a part of cost of construction, specially for the purposes of comparative study with cost of construction in other areas or of works executed by State PWDs.

Reply of Government

Security protection is already being provided to the GREF personnel and units deployed in works in Mizoram. In deference to the wishes of the Committee, it has also been decided that, with effect from the Budget for 1977-78, the provision for the expenditure, which at present is made in lumpsum under Major Head of Account "361-Grant-in-Aid to Union Territory Governments" will be made under distinct units of appropriation, namely, 'construction', 'Maintenance', 'expenditure on security cover' etc., under that Head of Account.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F.1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated
26-10-75].

Recommendation No. 13 (Para 4.11)

The Committee find that as many as 83 indents have been outstanding for over one year with the Director-General of Supplies and Disposal, 38 with Bharat Earth Movers Ltd; and 19 with Director-General, Ordnance Factories. Out of these, 56 indents on the Director-General of Supplies and Disposal, 36 on Bharat Earth Movers Ltd.; and 17 on the Director-General, Ordnance Factories were outstanding for more than 3 years. The Committee need hardly point out that the non-availability of these parts imply that machinery and equipment of the Border Roads Organisation manifold in value would have preforce to be kept out of service for want of essential parts (Cf. paragraph 4.3). The Committee cannot understand now Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. and Director-General Ordnance Factories which fall under the administrative control of Ministry of Defence could have kept these indents pending without compliance for over 3 years with the result that valuable equipment and machinery could not be put to use. The Committee would like the Ministry of Defence to take emergent steps to see that all the parts required from Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. and Director-General, Ordnance Factories are supplies without delay. The Committee would like to be informed of the concrete action taken within six months as also the progress made in recommissioning the machinery and equipment which are lying out of action for want of these spares.

Reply of Government

As recommended by the Estimates Committee, the matter regarding pendency of indents was brought to the notice of the Ministry of Defence (Department of Defence Production) and then were requested to clear the pending indents early. The position of pendency as on 1st October, 1976 is that only 9 indents (176 items) out of the total number of 20 indents (1072 items) against DGOF and 4 indents (233 items) out of the total number of 40 indents (3378 items) against BEML now remain outstanding for compliance. It has been stated by these organisations that most of the balance items are of foreign origin and are required to be imported and hence will require some more time to materialise.

2. Regarding the machinery and equipment that was lying out of action as on 31st March 1975, as reported to the Estimates Com-

mittee, it is stated that as on 30th June, 1976, out of the equipment worth Rs. 3.10 crores classified as 'C', equipment worth only Rs. 1.41 crores had yet to be recommissioned. Similarly, out of the equipment worth Rs. 2.46 crores lying out of action for want of spares, equipment worth only Rs. 0.85 crores had yet to be recommissioned as on 30th June, 1976.

[BRDB U.O. No. F.1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated 26-10-1976].

Further Information called for by the Committee

(a) A statement showing pendency of the indents placed on DGOF and BEML upto 31st December 1976 (i.e. more than 4 years, 3 years, 2 years, 1 year and six months) may be furnished.

(b) The value of equipment lying out of action (Classified as 'C') as on 31st December, 1976 may be intimated.

(c) The value of equipment lying out of action for want of spares as on 31st December, 1976 may be intimated.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76 dated 22-2-1977].

Further Reply of Government

A total number of 9 indents placed on DGOF and 4 indents placed on BEML were pending as on 31st December, 1976. Their period-wise break up is given below:—

	Over 4 years	Over 3 years	Over 2 years	Less than 6 months
	No. of Indents	No. of Indents	No. of Indents	No. of Indents
DGOF	7	—	1	1
BEML	3	1	—	—

(b) The value of equipment lying out of action (Classified as 'C') as on 31st December, 1976 was Rs. 91,74,602.65 against the Rs. 1.41 crores already reported to the Committee *vide* our note of even number dated 26th October, 1976.

(c) The value of equipment lying out of action for want of spares as on 31st December, 1976 was Rs. 56,15,689.10 out of the equipment worth Rs. 85 lakhs already advised to the Committee *vide* our note of even number dated 26th December, 1976.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F.1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated 18-4-1977].

Comments of the Committee

The Committee suggest that there should be a standing arrangement to review and expedite the outstanding indents in order to ensure that the machinery and equipment are not allowed to go out of service for want of spares.

Recommendation No. 14 (Para 4.12)

As far as the indents on the Director General of Supplies and Disposal are concerned, the Committee are not convinced by the reasons given by the representative of DGS&D in not complying with the indents for such a long time. The Committee has asked for a comprehensive note from Border Roads Development Board in consultation with the DGS&D on the problems relating to machinery lying idle classified as 'C' for want of spares and the position of indents pending with DGS&D and the steps taken to overcome these problems. This note is still awaited. The Committee cannot resist the impression that the procedures followed by the various departments are too involved and the real purpose of ensuring that these parts are made available in time to keep the machines and equipment in working condition, is lost. They would like a high-powered team consisting of the Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Secretary Department of Supply, Secretary Technical Development and the representative of Ministry of Finance to go into the matter in detail and ensure not only that the outstanding indents are complied with within a specified period but that the procedures are rationalised and simplified and powers delegated to the project Authorities as necessary in the interest of ensuring availability of spares required for keeping the machinery and equipment in working order.

Reply of Government

This recommendation of the Estimates Committee consists of two parts. The first part refers to the need to clear the outstanding indents within a specified period, and the second part pertains to the need for rationalising and simplifying procedures and delegating adequate powers to the Project Authorities in the interest of ensuring availability of spares required for keeping the machinery and equipment in working order.

2. So far as the first part is concerned, periodical meeting between the DGS&D and Secretary, Border Roads Organisation are being arranged and this will ensure that the outstanding indents are cleared as early as possible. In addition, Secretary, Depart-

ment of Supply is also holding periodical meetings to ensure early clearance of pending indents of various other Departments. The pendency of "critical" indents of Border Roads Organisation will also be taken up at this meeting to ensure that they are met as expeditiously as possible.

3. So far as the second part is concerned, it may be mentioned that the Department of Supply have constituted a high-powered Committee under the Chairmanship of Minister of Supply and Rehabilitation to consider rationalisation and simplification of the purchase procedures of various Departments of the Government. Several working Groups have been set up under this high level Committee and one such working group will examine the special requirements of the Border Roads Organisation fully reckoning with the recommendation of the Estimates Committee. The Recommendation of the working group will in turn, be considered by the high level Committee under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Supply and Rehabilitation. In view of the fact that this arrangement has been made by the Department of Supply, the Constitution of a separate high powered committee by the Border Roads Organisation does not seem necessary, as the terms of reference of both the Committee overlap, and the Committee's recommendations can be fully implemented through the Working Group and the high level Committee recommendations.

Ministry of Finance have seen. ..

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated
28-10-1976]

Further information called for by the Committee

Note indicating the date on which the Working Group in respect of Border Roads Organisation was set up, its composition and when is it required to submit its report.

The latest position of the indents placed by Border Roads Organisation on DGS & D.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. OM No. 5/22/EC/76 dated 5-1-1977].

Further Reply of Government

The Working Group in respect of Border Roads Organisation was set up vide Ministry of Supply and Rehabilitation, Department of Supply OM No. DGS&D/HPCS/16/76-P III dated 27-10-1976. A copy of OM No. DGS&D/HPCS, 16/76-P III dated 27-10-1976 is

enclosed herewith. (Appendix II) The report of the Working Groups is to be submitted within 3 to 4 months time but this is likely to take some more time. However, the Chairman of this Working Group dealing with B.R.O. has been requested to expedite it as much as possible.

2. Regarding the latest position of indents that were shown pending on DGS&D, it is stated that only 29 indents were outstanding on 31-12-1976 as against 89 indents that were shown outstanding on 1-4-1975.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB UO F. 1(10)|BRDB|EC|72 dated 7-2-1977].

Further Information called for by the Committee

(a) The period-wise break up of the 29 indents out of the 89 indents which were pending as on 1-4-75 (i.e. for more than three years, two years, one year and six months), the reasons therefor and the action taken or proposed to be taken to expedite the requisite supply may be intimated.

(b) The number of indents placed during 1-4-75 to 31-12-76, the number of indents pending out of this, with period-wise break up (for more than one year and more than six months) and the reasons thereof may be intimated.

(c) A copy of report of the working group in respect of Border Roads Organisation set up by Ministry of Supply and Rehabilitation to study the supply procedure and the action taken thereon may be furnished.

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76 dated 22-2-1977].

Further Reply of Government

Item (a)

The period-wise break-up of the 29 indents out of the 89 indents which were pending as on 1st April, 1975 is given below:

Over 3 years	..	—27 Nos.
Over 2 years	..	— 2 Nos.

of these 29 indents only 22 indents are now pending. The period-wise break up of the 22 indents is as under:—

Over 3 years	..	— 21 Nos.
Over 2 years	..	— 1 No.

The reasons for the pendency of indents as indicated by the Ministry of Supply are indicated in Annexure 'A'.

With a view to expedite these supplies against the pending indents, meetings are being held at periodical intervals between the DGBR and DGS&D at which all the outstanding indents are reviewed and action to be taken, if any, for expediting the supplies discussed. The position in respect of these items is also reviewed at the BRDB Secretariat in periodical meetings. DGS&D is also taking all possible action to expedite materialisation of these indents. Further, having regard to the recommendations of the Estimates Committee, the rationalisation and simplification of the purchase procedures is being gone into by a High-powered Committee appointed by the Department of Supplies under the Chairmanship of Minister of Supply and Rehabilitation and a Working Group constituted by this Committee is now closely examining the matter.

Item (b)

The number of indents placed during 1st April, 1975 to 31st December, 1976 are 25 Nos. out of which 19 indents are pending. The period-wise break-up of these indents is as under:—

Over 1 year	..	—2 Nos.
Over 6 months	..	—9 Nos.

The remaining 8 indents are below 6 months. The reasons for the pendency of these indents, as indicated by the Ministry of Supply are indicated in Annexure 'B'.

Item (c)

The Working Group to study the supply procedure in BRO has not yet submitted their report. As and when it is received, a copy

will be made available to the Estimates Committee as desired.

Annexure 'A'

S. No.	Reasons	No. of cases
1	Cases under reference to Ministry of Law	3
2	Where D/P is still alive but part/full supplies are outstanding	5
3	D/P expired but not request from firm for extension received	4
4	Where D/P has to be extended	3
5	Cases where balance items have already been offered for inspection but could not be released due to expiry of D/P.	1
6	Cases where firm have stated that balance items are not available/cannot be supplied due to various reasons and prospects of supplies are bleak, D/P expired	6
		22

Annexure 'B'

S. No.	Reasons	Nos. of cases
1	Cases where part items are outstanding D.P. has just expired. Firm have applied for D.P. extension	4
2	Cases where part time items are outstanding D.P. alive	1
3	Indents just covered i.e. in Feb/March 1977—D.P. alive	6
4	Indents outstanding for coverage	8
	TOTAL	19

A further break up of indents outstanding for coverage at S. No. 4 above is as under :—

(a)	Indent where F.E. required referred to I/O	1
(b)	Tenders have already been opened and are under process for coverage	4
(c)	Tender have since opened and reference made to I/O for his comments—reply awaited	1
(d)	Cases where clarifications sought from the firm have since been received and are under examination for coverage	1
(e)	Cases where considerations are being made for issue of fresh tender enquiry	1
	TOTAL	8

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated 18-4-77].

Comments of the Committee

The Committee hope that the High Powered Committee and its Working Groups would complete their studies expeditiously and in the light of their recommendations, Government would take conclusive action to simplify and rationalise the procedure, of the various departments. They also hope that the Border Roads organisations will continue to pursue vigorously the outstanding indents with DGS&D with a view to securing expeditious materialisation of indents.

Recommendation No. 16 (Para No. 4.22)

The Committee are unhappy that while on the one hand there should be heavy shortage of spares with the result that lot of valuable machinery and equipment belonging to Border Roads Organisation cannot be commissioned expeditiously, there should, on other hand, be surplus spares of the value of Rs. 85 lakhs. The Committee would like Government to continue to pursue the question of finding alternative use for the surplus spares so that these are put to best use in public interest. Meantime they stress that detailed investigation should be made where any particular surplus spare part is of high value or excessively large in number, so as to pin-point responsibility and take deterrent action.

The Committee would like Government to learn a lesson from this heavy accumulation of surplus spares and see that the scrutiny at the time of placing the indents is done critically so as not to give rise to such heavy accumulations or surpluses.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted. Efforts are being made to utilise these surplus spares to the maximum extent possible by suitable conversion/modification. The spares found unsuitable for use in the Organisation will be disposed of.

As regards the suggestion to carry out detailed investigation to fix responsibility for the procurement of such large number, the Committee may kindly recall that they had made a similar recommendation in para 5.79 of their original report. This was based on a recommendation made by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment set up earlier by BRO. A special Court Inquiry was constituted to go into the causes of such huge surplus spares. The Court of inquiry concluded that as the major portion of the surplus spares pertained to the equipments which had either become obsolescent or had finished their life and were purchased when BRO

had no experience regarding the requirements or utilisation of spares nor was any proper system of provisioning of spares in existence, no one could be blamed for it.

A comprehensive procedure now exists for the initial scrutiny of the indents at various levels in the entire chain of preparation, submission, approval and sanction.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
18th August, 1976].

Further Information called for by the Committee

The value of surplus spares brought into use by conversion/modification and the value of spares disposed of as unsuitable upto 1st January, 1977.

The value of spares still lying unused/undisposed of as on 1st January, 1977.

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76, dated 5-1-1977].

Further Reply of Government

A Technical Board of Officers was ordered to survey and suggest use of these surplus spares. The task involves a study of detailed specification of components and in some cases reference to the manufacturers. By 1st January, 1977, the Board had identified spares worth Rs. 2 lakhs for use in BRO after suitable modification. In view of the nature of the work involved, the Board of Officers has taken a longer time than originally anticipated. Their examination of these spares is expected to be completed by 30th April, 1977 and thereafter disposal of surplus spares will be taken up with DGS&D.

The value of spares thus identified for use by conversion/modification is approximately Rs. 2 lakhs and the value of spares still under examination is approximately Rs. 82.7 lakhs. No spares have yet been disposed of.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
8th February, 1977].

Further Information called for by the Committee

(a) A note indicating when the technical board was appointed, its composition, the time allowed for completing its work and the reasons for delay, if any, and the responsibility fixed therefor, may be furnished.

(b) The progress made in modification and utilisation of the spares worth Rs. 2 lakhs which were found useful after suitable modifications, may be intimated.

(c) Final position regarding examination of the remaining spares worth Rs. 82.7 lakhs may be intimated.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76 dated the 22nd February, 1977]

Further Reply of Government

The technical Board of Officers was appointed in June 1976 to assist the Store Divisions to survey and suggest the use of the surplus spares in the Organisation and submit its report by 31st August, 1976. The composition of the Boards is as under:—

(a) Board to assemble at Eastern Store Division

Presiding Officer—EE/Major from Eastern Store Division

Members —1. AEE from Eastern Base Workshop
2. AEE/AE from project Vartak

(b) Board to assemble at Western Store Division

Presiding Officer—EE/Major from Western Store Division

Members —1. AEE from Western Base Workshop
2. AEE/AE from project Beacon.

As already reported to the Estimates Committee, the task involves a study of detailed specifications of components for assessing their suitability for alternative use even by making references to the manufacturers in some cases. The Board of Officers have therefore taken a longer time than originally anticipated. In view of this, the question of fixing of the responsibility for the delay does not arise.

(b) It has been reported by the Dte GBR that the modification/ utilisation of spares worth Rs. 2 lakhs will be completed by 30-4-77. These items will be utilised in due course as and when demands are placed by Field Workshops/Base Workshops.

(c) The Technical Board is identifying and evaluating the quantum of spares that can be utilised for alternative purposes and this work is also likely to be completed by the end of April 1977.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the 22nd March, 1977].

Comments of the Committee

The Committee desire that the Technical Board of Officers set up to survey and suggest alternative use of surplus spares should draw up a time bound programme for completing the survey of the remaining items valued at Rs. 82.7 lakhs approximately and the Ministry should keep a close watch on the progress made by the Group with a view to ensuring its timely completion.

Recommendation No. 17 (Para 4.26)

In paragraph 5.89 of their Original Report the Committee had underlined the need for standardisation of machinery and equipment with the Border Roads Organisation in view of fact that machinery was lying idle awaiting repairs in workshops for long periods for want of spare parts and the problems of procuring spare parts in adequate quantities was aggravated on account of multiplicity of makes and models. The Committee had recommended that the requisite data should be compiled and evaluated and a decision taken expeditiously in regard to the items which remained to be standardised. The Committee note that standardisation in respect of only three items has been done so far. The Committee were informed during evidence by the Secretary, Ministry of Defence that it was proposed to constitute a committee of officers drawn from Director General Border Roads, Director General Road Development and Director General Technical Development etc. to go into the question of standardisation of the remaining items. The Committee would like this expert team to be appointed without further loss of time so that they can give recommendations by a specified date about the scope for standardising other main item of machinery and equipment which are in use in the Border Roads Organisation.

Reply of Government

A Technical Committee consisting of Officers drawn from various technical organisations/institutions to go into the question of standardisation of machinery and equipment in BRO has been appointed. It is expected that the Committee will be able to give its recommendations by the end of March 1977.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
31st August, 1976].

(a) A note indicating when the Technical Committee was appointed to go into the question of Standardisation of machinery and equipment in Border Roads Organisation and the time allowed for completing its work may be furnished.

(b) The latest position regarding the finalisation of the report and when it is likely to be submitted, may be intimated.

(c) A copy of Report and action taken thereon may be furnished.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76 dated the 22nd February,
1977].

Further Reply of Government

(a) The Technical Committee to go into the question of standardisation of machinery and equipment in Border Roads Organisation was set up in April 1976 *vide* Government of India, Ministry of Shipping and Transport, Border Roads Development Board, O.M. No. F. 176(18)/BRDB/S-69/Standn. dated 6-4-76.

Though no specific period for completion of its work relating to standardisation was indicated in the OM setting up the Committee, it was expected that the Committee would be able to give its recommendations by the end of March 1977. The Committee has already held four sittings but have not been able to consider the Standardisation of all vehicles and equipments. As such, it is now expected to give its recommendations by the end of June 1977.

Action to consider their recommendations for implementation will be initiated on receipt of their report.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[B.R.D.B. U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated the
19th March, 1977].

Comments of the Committee

The Committee desire that a copy of the Report of the Technical Committee set up to go into the question of standardization of machinery and equipment and the action taken thereon may be furnished to them.

Recommendation No. 18 (Paras 4.30 Page 84)

The Sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee had, during the course of their tour to the border roads in North Eastern zone, felt the need of rationalisation of authorisation of machinery and equipment for each Task Force. For example, in a water-scarce area like Mizoram, there may be a case for providing water-tankers which may not be required by units functioning in other areas. While the Committee note the changes made in 1972 by the Border Roads Organisation in the interest of rationalisation of distribution of Machinery and equipment to the Task Forces, they feel that the authorisation for each Project should be reviewed periodically at least once a year by the Director General Border Roads with the Chief Engineer of the Projects so that machinery and equipment which are considered essential for construction and maintenance work particularly in sensitive areas in the north-east are made available.

Reply of Government

The requirements of units as also the authorisation for equipment and machinery for the Organisation is reviewed annually during January|February each year after finalisation of the Works Plan and Budget Proposal for the ensuing year. The resources held are made available to different units as per their specific requirements by inter-project transfers where necessary. To the extent the requirements cannot be met from the existing resources, action is initiated for procurement of additional Machinery|Equipment.

The required review for the year 1976-77 was duly conducted by the Dte. General Border Roads in consultation with Chief Engineers in January-February, 1976.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 10-8-1976.]

Recommendation No. 19 (Para 4.33)

The Sub-Committee during the course of their visit to Mizoram learnt that acute difficulties were being experienced in the matter of road construction for want of availability of sand in the area. It was in that context that project authorities had suggested that acquisition of sand crushers as early as 1970. This matter had, however, remained under consideration for nearly 4-5 years and it was only in August 1975 that a decision was taken to procure the equipment. While the Committee can understand that some period may

be required to go into the necessity and feasibility of using a new equipment, the delay of four to five years is indefensible. It is possible that there may be other cases of urgently needed machinery and equipment which have been under examination for years. The Committee would like the Border Roads Organisation to have a critical look at these proposals and where it is found absolutely necessary in the interest of work to procure machinery and equipment, this may be done with due expedition as such delays are bound to prove costly.

Reply of Government

A critical review of all the proposals for the procurement of machinery and equipment has been carried out. It has been revealed that there are no other cases of urgently needed machinery and equipment which have been under examination only for years.

The recommendation of the Estimates Committee to procure the machinery and equipment with due expedition has been noted for future guidance.

Ministry of Finance (Def/BR) have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F-1(10)|BRDB|EC|75 dated 10-8-1976].

Further information called for by the Committee

Full details of the causes for delay in according sanction to the proposal to purchase sand crusher.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76 dated 5-1-1977.]

Further Reply of Government

Sand crusher being an altogether new equipment not in use so far in the Border Roads Organisation or in any other construction agency like C.P.W.D. or M.E.S., the necessity for its induction into the Organisation had to be examined carefully, taking into account the following:—

- (i) the delays/difficulties experienced in bringing sand from natural sources to the work sites;
- (ii) the comparative economics of obtaining sand by crushers installed at sites *vis-a-vis* transportation of sand from elsewhere;
- (iii) determination of the number of sand crushers actually required in different projects; and

- (iv) the future availability of adequate work-load for the machines during their life expectancy.

The working out of the comparative economics of sand crushers *vis-a-vis* transportation of sand from elsewhere took an unduly long time for want of precise data as to (a) the exact life span of a crusher; (b) its average output; (c) the assessment of requirement of sand in different Projects, year-wise; and (d) the norms for working out the exact savings in terms of the cost of sand and the cost of vehicle hours at present spent in transportation of the sand etc.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F-1(10)|BRDB|EC|75, dated 5-2-1977].

Recommendation No. 20 (para 5.5)

The Committee note that the problem of under-utilisation of GREF personnel during the slack season was examined by a high powered committee appointed in 1970 and that Committee had come to the conclusion that de-induction of personnel at the commencement of the slack season and its subsequent re-induction would be a costly affair. They also note that the efforts made to get works from State PWDs for execution by the Border Roads Organisation during the slack season have not been fruitful mainly due to Synchronisation of the slack season for both the Organisations in areas having similar weather conditions. They are, however, informed that efforts are being made to keep the personnel occupied during slack season by undertaking ancillary works of quarry operations, collection of materials, field repairs of plants and equipment, maintenance of roads and repairs to damages caused by the monsoon/snowfall etc. Except the staff required on these works, others are also encouraged to go on leave and casual labour is reduced to the minimum. The Committee are not convinced that it is not possible to find alternative work for the Border Roads Organisation during the slack season so as to keep them gainfully employed. The Committee need hardly point out that there is scope for utilising the surplus GREF manpower on local developmental works in the areas of their operations which are mostly under-developed and backward areas and if concerted efforts are made and close liaison maintained with the State Governments/local authority, it should be possible to locate in advance gainful opportunities for making effective use of the manpower, machinery and equipment and expertise of the Border Roads Organisation in the larger interest of the country.

Reply of Government

The Government appreciate the Committee's desire to ensure that the resources of Border Roads Organisation are fully utilised throughout the year and also share their anxiety that Border Roads Organisation should contribute its share in the development of the country by taking up works of a developmental nature during the slack season.

As noted by the Estimates Committee in para 2.17 of their report, the Cabinet Secretariat, in a Circular letter issued to, *inter-alia*, the State Governments have advised them about the availability of resources of Border Roads Organisation for execution of various works and also that they should feel free to entrust any works to the Organisation in the area where it operates. The Chief Engineers of all projects in Border Roads Organisation have also been instructed to maintain a close liaison with the State Governments/local authorities and to make efforts to locate developmental works, which can be executed during the 'slack season' so that the resources of Border Roads Organisation are put to the maximum use in the largest interest of the country.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 16-10-1976.]

Recommendation No. 21 (Para 5.9)

The Committee note that time is being taken in the processing of cases of confirmation of officers and personnel due to delay in settling questions of *inter-se* seniority and consulting the U.P.S.C. where required. It should be possible to streamline the procedure in order to speed up processing of cases.

Reply of Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been examined. It is seen that the delay in processing cases for confirmation of officers and subordinates in GREF, has not been because of any lacunae in the procedure for dealing with such cases. The main cause of delay in confirming officers and personnel has been the disputes with regard to fixation of *inter-se* seniority in various grades. Most of these disputes have since been settled. Even in cases still under dispute, Government are now going ahead with confirmations on a provisional basis as per the advice of the Ministry of Law.

2. The latest position is that against 29,122 total permanent posts as on 31st December, 1975, 24,415 officers and subordinates have already been confirmed. Most of the remaining posts are reserved for officers and subordinates belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and confirmations against these would be taken up either on availability of personnel belonging to these communities or after these have been de-reserved.

3. Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 29-9-1976.]

Recommendation No. 22 (Para 5.10)

The Committee have no doubt that Government would keep in mind the present state of flux through which the Border Roads Organisation are passing in the absence of long-term work to engage them gainfully over the years. This important aspect should be kept in view while giving permanent status to officers and personnel in the Organisation.

Reply of Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been noted. So far, 653 posts of Officers and 31,510 subordinates have been made permanent. This works out to only about 2/3rd of the existing sanctioned strength of the Organisation. A new programme of road construction/improvement and allied works has recently been sanctioned which will take 6 to 7 years to execute. Long-term prospective programming is also being attempted which will further ensure that the Border Roads Organisation is gainfully occupied over the years. As far as it can be foreseen, therefore, there is little likelihood of any substantial decline in work-load which would warrant a reduction in the establishment which has been made permanent.

2. Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 29-9-1976.]

Recommendation No. 24 (Para 5.21)

The Committee welcome the idea of providing *pucca* accommodation at headquarters of Chief Engineers other static units like Base Depots, Transit Depots and Base Workshops and also at certain selected non-static headquarters and units where the work is considered to be of a permanent nature. The Committee would like the Government to draw up a perspective plan for providing regular structures not only for the workshops stores, depots, etc., but also for

the stay of the personnel and their families. The Committee have earlier in this Chapter dealt with the question of gainfully utilising the services of the Border Roads Organisation during the slack season. The Committee have no doubt that if the funds are made available and the works properly phased out, it should be possible to achieve the twin objectives of providing regular accommodation at selected places and the utilisation of the spare available capacity of the Border Roads Organisation particularly during the slack season.

Reply of Government

This recommendation has been accepted and a plan is being worked out.

2. Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 29-9-1976.]

Recommendation No: 25 (Para 5.26)

The Committee note that in pursuance of their recommendation in an earlier report, a separate Vigilance Organisation has been set up in the Border Roads Organisation with effect from April 1971. The Committee, however, consider that if the Vigilance Organisation is to function without fear or favour it should be separated from the DGBR and brought directly under the Border Roads Development Board.

Reply of Government

The recommendation has been examined. The Vigilance Organisation in the Border Roads Organisation has two distinct functions, one relating to departmental vigilance and the other relating to technical examination of works. It has been observed that departmental vigilance in other Government organisations such as the CPWD, MES, etc. is primarily the responsibility of the head of the organisation concerned and the vigilance units function under direct control of the respective heads. The performance of the vigilance units is overseen/supervised by the respective Ministries. It is only the function relating to technical examination of works which is generally undertaken by an independent organisation. It has, therefore, been decided that while the vigilance set up may continue to function under the D.G.B.R. as heretofore, the work relating to technical examination of works should be made independent of the D.G.B.R. and placed directly under the control of the B.R.D.B. on

the pattern obtaining in C.P.W.D. and M.E.S. Necessary action is now being taken accordingly.

2. Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 30-10-1976.]

Recommendation No. 27 (Para 5.40)

The Committee are constrained to observe that despite the creation of a special cell to expedite the finalisation of the pending revised estimates, the finalisation of such estimates has tapered off since 1972-73, so much so that as on 1-4-1975 as many as 87 revised estimates were pending finalisation out of which 65 were more than one year old. The Committee note the assurance given to them by the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board during evidence that they would make all out efforts to clear the backlog of pending revised estimates in the course of the next 18 months or so. The Committee stress that not only the backlog should be cleared as per a time-bound programme which should not exceed one year but also desire that the entire procedure for preparation and submission of the revised estimates and their scrutiny should be streamlined so that these are finalised within months of the completion of the works but in no case the matter should be allowed to remain inconclusive beyond one year.

Reply of the Government

A time bound programme for the clearance of the backlog of revised estimates has been drawn up. 44 of the 87 estimates i.e. 50 per cent of the backlog have already been sanctioned, and it is expected that the remaining estimates also will be cleared by March, 1977.

The procedure for scrutiny and sanction of the Revised Estimates has been streamlined to provide for finalisation by discussion across the table if the first examination on the file does not yield agreement. Instructions have also been issued to the Chief Engineers to ensure that R.A.Es are initiated immediately it becomes evident that the actual expenditure is likely to exceed the permissible limit over the administrative approval or when there is a change in the scope of the work. Steps have also been taken to provide for a periodical review by Border Roads Development Board Secretariat/Directorate General Border Roads of the R.A.Es becoming due/initiated to ensure their timely initiations and sanction.

With the introduction of this procedure, it is expected the R.A. Es will be finalised well in time in future and that there will be no further accumulation.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB|EC|75 dated 16-10-1976]

Recommendation No. 28 (Para 5.46)

The Committee note that as a result of a clearance drive launched in 1967—70, the number of pending loss statements came down from 1,489 as on 31-8-1967 to 89 as on 30-6-1970. They are, however, constrained to observe that despite the assurance given to the Committee that if it was found that the pending cases were accumulating, another drive will be launched to clear the outstanding cases, the number of pending cases has again shot up to 904 as on 31-3-1975. The Committee fail to understand why the procedures for investigation into and disposal of loss statements could not be sufficiently streamlined so as to ensure that arrears are not built up. The Committee would like Government to immediately undertake a clearance drive so as to liquidate the outstanding loss statements and streamline the procedures so that accumulation of this work is avoided in future.

Reply of Government

The 89 numbers of loss statements pending as on 30-6-1970 indicated in this paragraph are the balance numbers from those which had arisen prior to 31-8-1967 and were still pending as on 30-6-1970. The total number of loss statements pending as on 30-6-1970 was actually 1,430. The figure of 904 cases pending as on 31-3-1975 should therefore be compared with this figure. If this comparison is made it will be seen that there has been no increase in the number of cases pending as on 31-3-1975. In fact, there has been a progressive reduction in the number of pending loss statements which was 1,489 as on 31-8-1967, 1,430 as on 30-6-1970, 904 as on 31-3-1975 and now stands at 780 as on 25-6-1976.

However, the Government share Estimates Committee's concern for early clearance of pending loss statements and a drive to clear the outstanding loss statements has been launched.

2. Some modifications to the procedures for finalisation of loss statements expeditiously at each stage to ensure their timely disposal were introduced recently and taken note of by the Estimates Committee in para 5.44 of their report. The working of this revised pro-

cedure is being watched and the procedure will be further streamlined wherever necessary.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U O No. F. 1(10)|BRDB|EC|75 dated 31-8-1976].

Recommendation No. 29 (para 5.47)

The committee note that the value of losses during 1973-74 and 1974-75 were Rs. 10.45 lakhs and Rs. 7.82 lakhs respectively. The Committee would like Government to go into the reasons for these losses, fix responsibility therefor and take remedial measures as may be necessary without delay to obviate recurrence of such losses.

Reply of Government

The figures of Rs. 10.45 lakhs and Rs. 7.82 lakhs mentioned in para 5.47 of the 101st Report of the Estimates Committee actually refer to the cases of losses written off during the years 1973-74 and 1974-75 respectively. It will be seen that these figures show a progressive decline in the figures relating to losses written off during the earlier years, which are as below:—

Year	Amount
	Rs.lakh.
1970-71	43.76
1971-72	26.30
1972-73	19.83

2. As regards the reason why these losses occur, a survey was undertaken to determine the causes of losses in the Border Roads Organisation. This survey has revealed that these are mainly due to natural calamities, accidents, losses of stores in transit etc. B.R.O. operates in hilly and difficult areas where working conditions are extremely hazardous due to heavy rain, snow-fall and bad weather. In view of this, losses arising on account of these factors cannot altogether be avoided.

3. As for the fixing of responsibility of loss, it is submitted that provision already exists that except for small cases immediately on the occurrence of loss due to whatever cause, a Court of Inquiry has

to be convened to investigate the loss. The findings of the Court are submitted to competent Administrative authorities viz. Task Force Commander/C.E. Project/D.G.B.R., who, in turn, record their opinion taking into account the circumstances of the loss. Disciplinary action against the defaulters, where necessary, is also taken/initiated as per orders passed by the competent Administrative Authority, before the case is considered by the competent Financial Authority for regularisation.

4. However, with a view to avoid recurrence of losses in the Organisation, maximum precautions are being taken and vigorous training is imparted to the personnel concerned to avoid accidents. Suitable instructions have also been issued by Dte. G.B.R. from time to time to avoid recurrence of such losses.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB UO No. F. 1(10) |BRDB|ECE|75 dated 31-8-1976.]

Recommendation No. 30 (Para 5.51)

In response to an earlier recommendation by the Committee the Ministry had informed in November, 1970, that instructions had been issued to all Chief Engineers to carry out a review of the outstanding cases of payment of compensation and that a careful watch would be kept to ensure their expeditious settlement. They find, however, that, on 1st April, 1975, there were as many as 194 cases involving a payment of over Rs. 30 lakhs pending and that, out of these 194 cases, 55 had been pending since 1970 and even earlier. In February, 1976, when the Committee pressed this matter during the course of examination of the Secretary to the Govt. of India, Ministry of Defence, it was stated that there had been some progress during the last few months, that 27 cases had been cleared and that in the case of 56, sanctions for payment of compensation were being issued, leaving a residue of 111 cases which were under scrutiny—76 by the civil authorities of the States concerned and 35 by the Border Roads Organisation. The Committee need hardly point out that the earnestness which had been shown during the last few months in settlement of compensation cases should have been displayed all these years and in fact, after accepting the Committee's recommendation in November, 1970, there should have been an all-out effort to resolve all such outstanding cases. The Committee would like this matter to be examined in detail so as to clear and make payment in all cases where the land was acquired more than one year earlier. The Committee need not emphasise that land for construction of border roads has been taken over in far-flung areas of the country and in the interest of

ensuring that all those who are dispossessed of the land are given compensation in time and in the interest of maintaining good relations in the field, it is imperative that payment of compensation is watched by the Chief Engineers in the field and by the Director-General of Border Roads centrally and the position reported in the form of a self-contained memorandum to the Border Roads Development Board, so that the matter receives specific attention and directions are given where required in the interest of expediting payments.

Reply of Government

The Government share the Committee's anxiety for expeditious settlement of claims for payment of compensation for land acquired by Border Roads Organisation. Instructions on the lines recommended by the Committee have again been issued to the Headquarters Director General, Border Roads and the Chief Engineers concerned, advising them to keep a strict watch on all outstanding cases in order to ensure expediting payments.

In this connection, it may be pointed out that further progress has since been made in the clearance of the 194 outstanding cases reported earlier to the Committee. Payments have since been made in 75 of these cases and sanctions for payment issued in another 38, making a total of 113. Of the remaining 81 cases, 25 do not pertain to land acquisition, 25 are being processed for sanction and 3 are subject matters of Notice for civil suits, leaving a balance of only 28 cases pertaining to land acquisition compensation. These are pending for want of a formal assessment award or for certain clarifications from Civil Authorities. Efforts are being made to clear these cases also as early as possible. It is, however, pertinent to point out that in land acquisition cases, the compensation can only be given after the declaration of award by the State Civil Authorities, which often takes a considerable amount of time. However, the local officers of the Border Roads Organisation have been instructed to continue pursuing these cases vigorously to ensure expeditious disposal.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB UO No. 1(10)/BRDB/EC-75 dated 16-10-1977]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Recommendation No. 7 (Para 3.18)

Kohima-Imphal highway connects two State Capitals of Nagaland and Manipur and is strategically situated. The Committee find that while the responsibility for maintenance of the highway in the portion running through Nagaland is that of the Border Roads Organisation, the portion falling in Manipur State is being looked after by the State Public Works Department. The Committee would like the matter to be reviewed so that the maintenance of the entire road can be entrusted to the Border Roads Organisation with a view to effect improvements and raise the standard so as to ensure a secure and well maintained road link in this strategic area.

Reply of Government

The Ministry of Shipping & Transport (Roads Wing) who are responsible for the maintenance of National Highway under the National Highway Act have taken up the matter with the Manipur Government for transferring the road to Border Roads Organisation for maintenance etc. As and when the road is transferred to BRO, it will be included in the BRDB programme.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

t [BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 10-8-1976.]

Further Information called for by the Committee

Latest position regarding the transfer of maintenance etc., of the portion of the Kohima-Imphal Highway falling in Manipur State from Manipur Government to Border Roads Organisation.

(Lok Sabha Sectt OM No. 5|22|EC|76 dated 5-1-1977)

Further Reply of Government

The matter was taken up by the Ministry of Shipping and Transport (Roads Wing) with the Manipur State to transfer the portion of N.H. 39 falling in Manipur to BRO for maintenance etc. As a

result of this the Manipur Government have agreed to transfer only the portion between Mao and Maram (23 KMs) of this National Highway. This portion has been taken over by BRO with effect from 7-12-1976.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10/BRDB/EC/75 dated 5-2-1977.]

Further information called for by the Committee

A note indicating the length of the remaining portion of the Kohima-Imphal National Highway falling in Manipur which has not yet been transferred by Manipur Government the reasons therefor and the time by which this entire National Highway would be transferred to Border Roads Organisation for maintenance etc. may be furnished.

(Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5|22|EC|76 dt. 22-2-77).

Further reply of Government

The matter was referred to the Ministry of Shipping and Transport (Roads Wing) which is the administrative Ministry for National Highways and copy of their Note on the subject which explains the position is enclosed.

Note showing the action taken on the recommendations made by the Estimates Committee.

The total length of NH No. 39 in Manipur is as under:—

(i) Mao-maram	24 KMs
(ii) Maram-Imphal		83 KMs
(iii) Imphal-Morah		110 KMs

2. Actually a part of NH No. 39 (Dimapur-Kohima-Mao) falls in Nagaland and another part (Mao-Maram-Imphal-Morah) in Manipur. The question of transferring NH 39 to the Border Roads Organisation was discussed at the meeting of the B.R.D.B. held on 28-1-75. Following that meeting, the question of transferring this NH in those 2 States to the B.R.O. was taken up with the State Governments concerned who had been entrusted with its development and maintenance under Section 5 of the National Highways Act, 1955 from the very beginning. While the Government of Nagaland agreed to the proposal, the Manipur Government in August 1975 indicated that they had the necessary capability to handle the work and that it would not, therefore, appear to be compatible to

transfer the work of NH 39 to the B.R.O. They added that all that they needed was larger allocations of funds and some more machinery. The matter was reported to the BRDB at their 2nd (75) meeting on 26-9-1975 when it was recommended that steps should be taken to consider the feasibility of transferring atleast the stretch from Mao to Maram in Manipur to BRO for maintenance. The Manipur Government was addressed accordingly.

3. In July 1976, the State Government intimated their agreement to the transfer of Mao-Maram Section. As indicated above, the total length of this section is 24 KMs. This still leaves 193 KMs with the State P.W.D. from Maram to Morah. It is felt that the performance of the State Government for this remaining portion may be watched for the time being since meanwhile there has been—

- (I) An improvement in the financial position.
- (II) Additional Road making machinery worth Rs. 15 lakhs is also being supplied to the State Government.
- (III) The Roads Wing of the Ministry of Shipping and Transport have also strengthened their Regional Office with a Chief Engineer stationed at Gauhati and one EE at Imphal.

[BRDB U.O. No. 1(10)|BRDB|EC|75 dated 28-3-1977.]

Comments of the Committee

The Government should watch the performance of the State Public Works Department in maintaining the Maram-Imphal-Morah section of the Kohima-Imphal Highway with a view to ensuring that this strategically situated road is well maintained and conforms to the prescribed standards.

Recommendation No. 8 (Para 3.24 and 3.25)

The Committee note that a study of comparative cost of construction and maintenance of roads which was taken up at their instance in 1970, has remained inconclusive on the plea that the relevant data was not forthcoming from the State PWDs. The Committee have also been informed that the Border Roads Development Board itself had reviewed the matter and had decided that it was not necessary to compare the cost of construction of the Border Roads Organisation with other agencies for a number of reasons, such as, remoteness, difficult terrain, high altitude, etc. The Committee would like to clarify that the whole objective under-lying their suggestion for undertaking a comparative study was to bring,

in concrete terms, to the notice of the Border Roads Organisation and the administrative authorities concerned the scope and need for effecting reduction in the cost of construction and maintenance of border roads.

The Committee are glad that, as a result of the recommendations made by a highpowered Committee, it has since been possible for the Border Roads Organisation to bring down the cost of maintenance for Scale I roads from Rs. 15,375 to Rs. 9,143 and for Scale II from Rs. 9,375 to Rs. 7,446. The Committee would like to draw pertinent attention to two aspects: first that there is ample scope for effecting reduction as is clear from the reduction of 41—21 per cent already effected; and secondly, that the economies effected in the cost of maintenance are not upto the level recommended by the high-powered Committee and approved by the Border Roads Development Board. They stress that every effort should be made to bring down further the cost of maintenance of Scale I road to Rs. 9,030 per mile and of Scale II road to Rs. 6,395 per mile.

Reply of Government

The costs of maintenance of Scale I and Scale II Roads of Rs. 9030 and Rs. 6935 per mile respectively referred to by the Committee were worked out by the Committee on Cost of Construction on the basis of the norms recommended by them as computed according to the prices prevailing when the Committee had examined this question *viz.*, before 1971. The BRDB not only welcomed the norms recommended by the Committee on cost of Construction but, in fact, prescribed even more stringent norms for being adopted for the work of maintenance of both Scale I and Scale II roads as shown in the chart enclosed. (Appendix III) It, however, transpired that due to all round escalation in prices and wages from 1971 onwards, the actual costs worked out even on the more stringent norms prescribed by the BRDB, came to higher amounts than those worked out by the CCC. Thus, while every effort has been made to reduce the cost of maintenance of Scale I and Scale II roads by way of laying down norms even more stringent than those recommended by the COC, the actual cost figures have been higher than the figures of Rs. 9030 and Rs. 6935 per mile, wholly on account of higher prices and wages involved since the recommendation was made by the Committee. Government share the concern of the Estimates Committee that every effort should be made to bring down the cost of maintenance and all necessary steps in this direction will be constantly taken within the constraints of the prices and wages that prevail from time to time.

2. Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/76 dated 18-10-76.]

Recommendation No. 11 (Para 3.35)

The need for research activities arises in two ways: first to tackle the technical problems, including the use of materials for road construction|maintenance: and secondly for effecting economies. The Committee need hardly point out that if the research activities of the Border Roads Organisation had been well organised and coordinated with the other leading research institutions, including the road research institution, in the country, it should have been possible to find a substitute for sand in road construction in an area like Mizoram which has been posing problem for years. The Committee are somewhat intrigued by the reply that the "use of crushed stone in lieu of sand is one such possibility proposed to be put into effect". Since this problem has been existing for years, the Committee think that it should have been possible, by now, to try out this suggestion on a pilot basis, watch its results and reach a conclusive decision.

Reply of Government

The activities of Border Roads Organisation are well coordinated with the various research institutes of the Government viz. CRRI, GSI and CWPRS.

The proposal to use crushed stone in lieu of sand could not be effected early due to the delay in the procurement of the sand crusher. This is being dealt with separately under para 4.33.

Ministry of Finance have seen

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/76 dated 10-8-1976.]

Further information called for by the Committee

The specific area in which the outcome of the researches have been applied in the field and the results achieved.

The mechanism evolved to have constant feedback from fields in order to concentrate research on important problems.

(Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5|22|ES|76 dated 5-1-77).

Further reply of Government

In BRO the outcome of Research and experiments can be applied to:—

(a) Problems faced during the course of road construction;

- (b) Trials of new techniques evolved by research institutions, organisations and their subsequent adoption in the execution of works.

Regarding (a):

The problems encountered during the course of road construction like unstable hill slopes, taming of turbulent rivers designing of pavement or permanent works, are examined in consultation with the various specialised organisations like the CRRI, Central Water and Power Research Station, and the GSI. These Institutions/Organisations carry out necessary experiments with reference to the condition obtaining in the problem area. The out come of the research conducted by them is then utilised directly on the problem area. Measures recommended by the agencies have been successfully implemented to tackle problem areas on many roads of which the following may be referred:

Areas where recommendations have been applied	Location
1. Stabilisation of hill slopes by horizontal drains, benching and terracing, trench, drains chutes.	KM 26, 40 of the NH 31A, Kalia Saur slide on Rishikesh- Joshimath road.
2. Afforestation for stabilising slopes.	MS 9 on NH 31A, KM 0-3 on Alagarh-Rishi roads.
3. Asphalt mulching.	MS 9 NH 31-A MS 7 Gangtok-Nathula road.
4. Revetment, apron, toe walls for river training and prevention of erosion.	At KM 26, 40, 52 of NH 31A
5. Guide bunds for river training	Rangpo bridge, Rorathang bridge.
6. Model study for river behaviour.	Lohit river at Demwe.

The measures adopted have been successful to a great extent in solving the problem, encountered at these locations.

Regarding (b):

The new techniques evolved from research activities are first tried out on some areas to assess their results. For example, for surfacing the use of uncrushed gravel is being tried out on the Imphal-Jiribam road and the use of precast aggregate is being tried out on the Akhnoor-Poonch road. Similarly, certain experiments conducted by the Snow Avalanche Study Establishment

have been taken up for trials on roads in Ladakh areas in consultation with the Organisation. Besides, it is proposed to lay out tracks for conducting trials on "types of bituminous" surface crops for flexible pavements in certain snow bound areas.

2. A mechanism to have constant feedback from the fields regarding the results of these research activities exists. The allocation of the various new techniques for conducting trials by the user departments is co-ordinated by the Highway Research Board of the Indian Road Congress and the Ministry of Transport. Necessary feedback and collection of the results of the trials is also organised under their aegis.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB S.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/77 dated 7-2-1977.]

Recommendation No. 12 (Para 3.36)

As regards the second objective of bringing about reduction in cost, the Committee are surprised to find that this study is being carried out under the auspices of the World Bank. They would have thought that such a study should, first and foremost, have been undertaken in conjunction with the other research institutions within the country itself so as to reach some tentative conclusions and if there were any larger points requiring further examination and study, the issues could have been pinpointed for further research under the auspices of an international organisation, if this was not in conflict with security considerations. Now that a study under the World Bank auspices appears to have been nearly finalised, the Committee would like to be informed of the concrete measures suggested by the study and the action taken by Government in pursuance thereof and the economies actually effected.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Estimates Committee regarding the association of Border Roads Organisation with the World Bank appear to be based on an impression that the study was initiated by Border Roads Organisation, who then enlisted the support and assistance of the World Bank for its execution. The fact is that the World Bank had undertaken a study of the substitutability of labour for equipment in Civil Engineering construction in order to evolve a suitable technology to achieve optimum utilisation of resources and their most economic output. During the course of this study, the World Bank suggested the association of Border Roads Organisation with the study since substantial work of road

construction is carried out in this Organisation by the equipment intensive methods. As the results of a study of this nature would have been of use to Border Roads Organisation also this was agreed to.

The final report of the team has still not been received. Based on their interim report, however, a directive to implement certain recommendation, considered feasible for implementation in BRO, was issued to the Chief Engineers. The results of these directives as advised by the DGBR, are indicated in the statement annexed*. The preliminary finding appears to be that there is an increase in the output with the use of the methods recommended. However, since the Tools and Plants required for the implementation of these recommendations are not readily available and their costs are high, therefore, the gain due to increased output is, more or less, nullified.

Ministry of Finance have been.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/BWA/76 dated 26-10-1976.]

Further information called for by the Committee

Copy of the report of the World Bank team on the substitutability of labour for equipment in civil engineering construction in order to evolve a suitable technology to achieve optimum utilisation of resources and their most economic output.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. 5/22/EC/76 dated 5-1-1977.]

Further reply of Government

The final report of the World Bank Team on the substitutability of labour for equipment and civil engineering construction is still awaited. A copy of the interim report on the basis of which the implementation directives were issued by the DGBR is enclosed for perusal etc.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 5-2-1977.]

Comments of the Committee

The Committee hope that necessary action will be taken on the final report of the World Bank Study Team on receipt

Recommendation No. 26 (Paras 5.35, 5.36)

The Committee deprecate the gross delay in sanctioning work estimates. In as many as 24 estimates sanctioned during 1972-73,

7 sanctioned during 1973-74 and 13 sanctioned during 1974-75 there has been a delay of more than two years in sanctioning the work estimates which can hardly be justified for it has been repeatedly brought to the notice of the Committee that the present workload is in fact not sufficient to engage fully the available resources of manpower and equipment of the Border Roads Organisation. Obviously if the procedure for examining these work estimates is speeded up it would provide the much needed works to gainfully employ the Border Roads Organisation and also ensure that the works in the fields are attended to with promptness in the interest of preserving a high level of maintenance and removing any feeling of suspense and uncertainty in the matter of sanction and execution of works. The Committee are glad that taking note of the heavy delays in the issue of sanctions of estimates during discussions with the official representative of the Ministry of Defence, it has since been decided that the procedure for processing of estimates would be streamlined. Government have rationalised the procedure with effect from 1st April, 1976 whereby the estimates will be prepared in 3 sets to facilitate quicker processing by the Director General Border Roads, the Border Roads Development Board Secretariat, Ministry of Finance etc. The Committee would like to judge the efficacy of the revised arrangement by the actual results in communicating sanction to the estimates in time.

One of the primary reasons for excessive time taken in processing may well be on account of the separate processing of estimates which is done by the Director General of Border Roads and the Secretariat of BRDB. Since both these Organisations are located in Delhi, the Committee see no reason why it should not be possible to streamline the procedure and provide for one thorough scrutiny with the help of a checklist to be drawn up in this behalf. In fact, the time taken for processing of work estimates and for communicating the sanction should in no case be more than six months and preferably all such sanctions should be issued within three months. A self explanatory memorandum giving full facts and figures about the position of sanction of work estimates and in particular bringing out the reasons for delay in sanction of work estimates beyond a period of six months, should be prepared and placed before the Border Roads Development Board so that they can go into the matter in depth and give suitable directions. The Committee would also suggest that the procedure should be such as to pin-point the responsibility for delays and take deterrent action against those who are held responsible for dilatory working. The Committee attach great importance to this matter and would like

Government to inform them of the concrete action taken in pursuance of those recommendations.

Reply of Government

As noted by the Estimates Committee, the revised procedure came into effect only from 1-4-1976. Its working needs to be watched for some more time than before drawing any specific conclusions regarding its efficacy. It may, however, be pointed out that the number of sanctions issued during the period April—July this year (1976-77) has been the highest as compared to the No. of sanctions issued during the corresponding months in the last five years as will be seen from the following figures:

Year	No. of sanctions issued
1976	174
1975	106
1974	85
1973	113
1972	130

The suggestion to combine the process of scrutiny of estimates which, at present, is done separately in the Dte. GBR and BRDB Sectt. was earlier examined by the High Powered Committee on Cost of Construction in 1971. They came to the conclusion that the scrutiny of estimates in the Dte. GBR's office was important from the technical angle and for giving them an institutional support. This scrutiny is directed towards establishing the technical necessity/feasibility of the proposal while the scrutiny by the Government is essentially directed towards its administrative/financial aspects to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with the directives of the Board and is inescapable for the completion of the Project. Hence Government are of the view that scrutiny by the Dte. GBR and BRDB Sectt., being different in nature, should continue to be exercised separately as at present.

The Government nevertheless agree that it is necessary to ensure that estimates are quickly processed and sanctions issued without delay. With the implementation of the revised procedure for finalisation of estimates by discussion, it is felt that sanctions should issue within a reasonably quick period of time and in any case within

a period of six months from the date the estimate is initiated to the Government. Cases of delay, i.e. where the sanction does not issue within six months, will be placed before the Deputy Chairman through the Defence Secretary with an explanatory note, bringing out, *inter alia*, the reasons for delay and whether responsibility for the delay can be pin-pointed and, if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken. Cases which are considered serious and so indicated by the Deputy Chairman, will be reported to the full Board. In other cases, it is felt that the Board, which is very high powered body with the Prime Minister in the Chair and which normally concern itself with the policy issues only, need not be unnecessarily burdened with this work.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated 8-9-1976.]

Further Information called by the Committee

The latest position regarding sanction of estimates.

(Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5|22|EC|76 dated 5-1-1977.)

Further Reply of Government

Number of sanctions issued till December 1976 during the current year was 647 as compared to 166 and 187 sanctions for the corresponding period in 1974 and 1975. It will, thus, be seen that, as a result of efforts made, the flow of sanctions has greatly increased. It may be mentioned that all the sanctions for the current year works plan have been issued and, in fact, 242 sanctions pertaining to the next year's Works programme have also been issued.

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated 5-2-1977.]

Further Information called for by the Committee

Number of estimates pending sanction as on 31-12-76 and the period-wise break up of pendency (over 3 years, 2 years, 1 year and over 6 months), may be intimated.

(Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 5|22|EC|76 dated 22-2-77)

Reply of Government

The total number of estimates pending sanction as on 31-12-76 was 149. Their period-wise break up is indicated below:—

(a) No. pending for over 3 years	17
(b) No. pending for over 2 years	14
(c) No. pending for over 1 year	11
(d) No. pending for over 6 months	23
(e) No. pending for less than 6 months	84
TOTAL	149

Out of the above, a total number of 134 estimates have since been finalised and the break up of balance 15 estimates is given below:—

(a) No. pending for more than 3 years	Nil
(b) No. pending for more than 2 years	Nil
(c) No. pending for more than 1 year	2
(d) No. pending for more than 6 months	2
(e) No. pending for less than 6 months	11
TOTAL	15

Ministry of Finance have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 14-4-1977.]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 3 and 4 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation No. 15 (Para 4.16)

The Committee note that as a result of an Expert Committee appointed by Government, it has been reported that some equipment and machinery which are lying idle with the Border Roads Organisation would be used in other defence Organisation like ordnance corps, engineering corps etc. The Committee would like concrete action to be taken in pursuance of the findings of the Expert Committee so that the equipment and machinery which have been found surplus to the requirements of Border Roads Organisation, are brought into use by Defence and other Government Organisations without delay. The Committee would, however, like Government to examine in every case how the equipment had become surplus in order to pinpoint responsibility and take corrective measures to obviate such purchases in future.

Reply of Government

In pursuance of the findings of the Expert Committee the equipments in which Army and NPCC had shown their interest are being transferred to them. Out of the remaining items it may be mentioned that nearly 85 per cent have already been declared surplus to DGS & D for disposal and the balance will be transferred shortly.

2. As regards the suggestion that each case should be examined to establish how the equipment had become surplus in order to pinpoint responsibility and take corrective measures to obviate such purchases in future, it may be stated that the Border Roads Organisation was set up in 1960 for construction and improvement of roads in Himalayan region. At that time, previous experience in the requirements and utilisation of machinery in construction of hill roads involving work in mountainous, high altitude and snow clad areas, and knowledge of constructional problems was not available for guidance because no organisation for departmental construction of hill roads

in such terrain and conditions existed in the country. Further, as the speed of construction was the essence of operations, the Border Roads Organisation did not have adequate and sufficient time to carry out exhaustive trials and evaluation of machinery required for the job as also of training the man-power.

In the circumstances prevailing in the initial stages of the Organisation, the numbers, type and makes of the machinery required had to be largely decided on general engineering considerations and assessment as also on the basis of available technical advice, literature and experience in other countries. In order to undertake the work expeditiously, machinery had to be drawn from all available sources. Some equipments were purchased from Japan, USSR, USA and UK through high level delegations, a few came through Military Aid programme some were indigenously procured and even some second hand equipment were taken from the Army.

3. This question had initially been raised by the Committee on Machinery and equipment which examined B.R.O. who recommended that if the number of unwanted or surplus equipment is found to be large, it would be necessary to look into the circumstances of purchases and how they could be profitably utilised|disposed of. The Estimates Committee had endorsed this suggestion in their original report. In pursuance of these recommendations the matter was considered in details. Accordingly to an assessment made by DGBR in July 1970 the ratio of the value of such surplus equipment to the total value of equipment in BRO was only 0.732 per cent and hence it was not considered large enough to warrant the setting up of a Committee to probe into the circumstances of purchase of these equipments. This aspect, therefore, was not pursued further.

4. Keeping in view the negligible percentage of the equipment, the circumstances under which they were purchased as pointed out in sub-para to para 2 above and the fact that these purchases relate to the period 1960—64, it is stated that a fresh examination of these purchases at this belated stage is not likely to yield results and hence may not be pursued further.

Presently, all purchases of equipments are decided upon after careful consideration, trial and evaluation, where necessary and feasible and proper assessment of requirement on the ground on the basis of experience and expertise in the Border Roads Organisation.

Ministry of Finance (Def/BR) have seen.

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 16-10-1976.]

Further Information called for by the Committee**Recommendation No. 15 (Para 4.16)**

- (a) The total value of equipments which were found surplus.
- (b) The total value of equipments transferred to Army/NPCC.
- (c) The total value of equipment transferred to DGS&D for disposal.
- (d) The total value of surplus equipment still lying with Border Roads Organisation.
- (e) The total amount of loss suffered due to the purchase of these equipment and later disposing them of without putting into use.

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 5/22/EC/76, dated 5-1-77]

Further Reply of Government

The information called for is given as under:—

- | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|
| (a) The total value of equipments which were found surplus | Rs. 24,66,657.00 | |
| (b) The total value of equipment transferred to Army/NPCC. | Rs. 1,05,205.00 | (This includes freight & departmental charges) |
| (c) The total value of equipment transferred to DGS&D for disposal. | Rs. 22,44,530.84* | |
| (d) The total value of surplus equipment still lying with Border Roads Organisation. | Rs. 1,33,021.16* | |
| (e) The total amount of loss suffered due to the purchase of these equipment and later disposing them of without putting into use. | | The value of the equipments that had to be disposed of without being put into use is Rs. 1,22,646.00. |
- The total amount of loss, if any can be ascertained only after the sale proceeds are advised by the DGS&D.

Ministry of Finance have seen. . . .

[BRDB UO No. F.1(10)/BRDB/EC/75, dated 5-2-1977]

*At time of factual verification (December, 1977) the Border Roads Development Board have stated that equipment worth Rs. 23,57,349.34 have been transferred to DGS&D for disposal and that equipments worth Rs. 20,202.66 were still lying the Border Roads Organisation. DGS&D have disposed of equipment worth Rs. 22,26,997.10.

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 1.20—1.23 of the Report—Chapter I.

Recommendation No. 23—Para No. 5.15

5.15. During the course of the tour of the border roads, the Sub-Committee of this Committee sensed a certain feeling of discontentment and restiveness in the matter of availability of rations to GREF personnel as compared to those from the Defence Forces. While the Committee appreciate that there are two streams of personnel working in the Organisation and they have their own structures of salaries and amenities, it is important for the Government to ensure that there is no feeling of discrimination in any section of the personnel living and working together in the hard conditions of border areas.

Reply of Government

The observation of the Committee has been noted.

2. However, any increase in expenditure on provision of free rations on improved scales would necessarily have the effect of escalating the cost of road construction by BREF, which has been adversely commented upon by the Estimates Committee themselves. It has, therefore, not been considered desirable or expedient at this stage to increase the scale of rations for GREF personnel to bring them on par with the Army scale of rations.

3. Ministry of Finance have seen

(MANISH BAHL),

Secretary, BRDB.

(Lok Sabha Sectt., Estimates Committee Branch)

[BRDB U.O. No. F. 1(10)/BRDB/EC/75 dated 26-10-1976.]

The Border Roads Development Board informed the Committee in December, 1977 that a Committee, which includes a medical expert, was constituted in January, 1977 to consider and recommend the extent of improvement necessary in the scale of rations prescribed for GREF personnel keeping in view the minimum nutritional requirement for efficient discharge of duties and to suggest cheaper substitutes wherever possible for balanced diet. The

question of improvement in the scale of rations would be considered further in the light of its report when received.

Comments of the Committee

Please see para 1.26 of the Report—Chapter I.

NEW DELHI;

December 22, 1977.

Pausa 1, 1899(S).

SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

APPENDIX I

(Vide Recommendation No. 5—Para 3.6—3.9, Chapter II)

[To be published in the Gazette of India (Extraordinary)
Part I, Section I]

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (ROADS WING)

No. PL-10(95)|76

New Delhi-1, the 21st October, 1976.

RESOLUTION

In their hundred and first report on Border Roads, the Estimates Committee (1975-76) of the Fifth Lok Sabha recommended that a Master Plan for the construction of roads in each of the States in the border areas should be drawn up with proper perspective and priorities after a critical assessment in depth of the requirements for roads in each of the concerned States. The Government of India have accepted this recommendation and have consequently decided to set up a Group for this purpose with the following composition:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Director General (Roads Development) and Additional Secretary,
Ministry of Shipping and Transport, (Road Wing). | Chairman |
| 2. Joint Secretary, (dealing with Roads), Planning Commission | Member |
| 3. Joint Secretary (N.E.) Ministry of Home Affairs . . . | Member |
| 4. Joint Secretary, Plan Finance, Ministry of Finance . . . | Member |
| 5. Joint Secretary (G) Ministry of Defence . . . | Member |
| 6. Director, Military Operations, Army Headquarters . . . | Member |
| 7. Secretary, North Eastern Council, Shillong . . . | Member |
| 8. Secretary, Border Roads, Development Board . . . | Member-Secretary. |

In addition, Chief Engineer, Planning (Roads Wing), Ministry of Shipping and Transport, would function as Joint Secretary of the Group.

2. The terms of the reference of the Group will be as follows:

- (a) To evolve a Master Plan for the development of road communications in the Border States keeping in mind the requirement of State Governments, requirement of National Highways, requirement for operational and strategic considerations, requirement for economic and industrial development and the special requirements of an area. The Master Plan would be a perspective Plan of atleast 15 years span and would also contain the programme that would be executed in the five years of the next plan in the subsequent Five Year Plans.
- (b) Having evolved the said Master Plan, to indicate the roads/Highways which would be developed in the State Plans and those roads/Highways which may be financed under the various Central Sector Schemes for road development; and
- (c) Having indicated the programmes under which the various roads would be taken up, indicate the agency for execution of the various programmes keeping in mind that the Border Roads Organisation should be made the primary agency for execution of Central Sector Road Development Schemes.

3. The Headquarters of the Group will be at Delhi but it will be free to visit such places as it may consider necessary in connection with its work. The Central Government hope that the State Governments and Local Administrations concerned will afford the Group all assistance it may require and furnish any information which it may call for.

4. The Group will submit its report within a period of one year.

Sd/-

(J. S. MARYA)

Director General (Roads Development)
and Additional Secretary.

No. PL-10(95)/76.

New Delhi, dated 21st October, 1976.

ORDER

Ordered that copies of the Resolution be communicated to all the Border States/Local Administrations, Planning Commission, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Finance (Plan Finance Division), Ministry of Defence, DMO, Army Headquarters, Secretary, North-Eastern Council, Shillong and Secretary, Border Roads Development Board and also that it be published in the Gazette of India for general information.

Sd/-

(J. S. MARYA)

*Director General (Roads Development)
and Additional Secretary.*

To

The Manager,
Govt. of India Press,
New Delhi.

APPENDIX II

(Vide Recommendation No. 14—Para 4.12 Chapter II)

No. DGS&D/HPCS/16/76-PIII

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION
(DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY)

New Delhi, dated 27-10-1976

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: *Setting up of Working Groups under High Power Committee.*

A High Powered Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Minister of Supply and Rehabilitation to study whether existing organisation for government purchases in India and abroad and the methods adopted are adequate. This Committee will also be making specific recommendations for streamlining the existing organisations, their method of work procedures etc. The terms of reference of the Committee are as follows:

- (a) To identify and suggest improvements in the system and procedures of purchases (both indigenous and imports) adopted by different Ministries/Departments of the Central Government with a view to achieve the aim of efficiency and economy in procurement.
- (b) To examine and suggest improvements in the system and procedures of financial payments for the purchases by and on behalf of Central Government with a view to cut down delays to effect savings.
- (c) Any other related matters such as specifications, inspection, testing, clearance, shipment, etc.
- (d) Organisational set up for (a), (b) and (c) above.

The Committee has since studied the procedures relating to purchases, quality control, payment etc. followed by the Central Purchase Organisation (Directorate-General of Supplies and Disposals) functioning under the Department of Supply and its recommendations are awaited.

2. Since the terms of reference of the Committee also cover purchases made by different Ministries/Departments of the Central Government, the Committee has decided to study in depth the procedures and methods of purchase adopted by selected departments of the Government of India and recommend suitable procedures keeping in view the objectives for which the Committee has been constituted. To this end Working Groups consisting of representatives of the major purchasing Departments have been constituted. The Groups will be as follows:

* * * * * *

Group VI—Border Roads Organisation

1. Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defence—Chairman.
2. Director General Border Roads
3. Secretary, Border Roads Development Board
4. Shri B. K. Banerjee, Additional Financial Adviser
5. A representative of the DGS&D.

3. The Secretariat of the High Powered Committee in the DGS&D will be assisting in compiling the necessary data and background material to feed the Working Groups.

Sd/- J. M. LYNGDOH,
Director to the Government of India.

To

All Ministries/Departments concerned.

Appendix III

(Vide Recommendation No. 8—Paras 3.24 and 3.25 Chapter III)

STATEMENT SHOWING COMPARISON OF NORMS FOR MAINTENANCE OF BORDER ROADS BETWEEN BASIC NORMS SANCTIONED DURING 1965-66 RECOMMENDED BY CCC 1970-71 AND FINALLY RECOMMENDED BY BRDB SECTT. FOR ACCEPTANCE TO MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Sr. No.	Item	Scale I (Norms for 60 miles)			Scale II (Norms for 60 miles)			Remarks
		Sanctioned 65-66	Proposed by CCC	Finally recommended by BRDB Sectt.	Sanctioned 65-66	Proposed by CCC	Finally recommended by BRDB Sectt.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Machinery								
	(a) 1 Ton veh	1.2	1.2	1	1.2	1.2	1	
	(b) 3 Ton veh	2.4	2.4	2	2.4	2.4	2	
	(c) Tractor size II	1.2	1.2	1	—	—	—	
	(d) Wheel tractor	2.4	1.2	1	—	—	—	
	(e) Compressor	2.4	1.2	1	—	—	—	
	(f) Road Roller	2.4	1.2	1	1.2	1.2	1	
	(g) Stone crusher/Granulator	1.2	—	—	—	—	—	
	(h) Motor Grader	0.6	—	—	—	—	—	
	(j) Bitumen Boiler	1.2	—	—	1.2	—	—	

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2 Manpower

(a) Tradesmen (GREF)

(i) MT Driver	4.8	4.8	4*	4.8	3.6	4**	*65% of cost to be met from capital works.
(ii) OEM	4.2	2.4	2£	—	—	—	**60% cost to be met from capital work. £ 25% of cost to be met from capital works.
(iii) DME	—	—	1*	—	—	—	
(iv) Driller	6	—	1£	—	—	—	
(v) DES	—	—	—	—	—	—	
(vi) RR Driver	—	2.4	2*	2.4	2.4	1*	
(vii) Compressor Dvr	—	—	—	—	—	—	

(b) Skilled Labour (GREF)

(i) Carpenter	Nos. 2.4	Nos. 1.2	No. 1	No. 2.4	No. 1.2	No. 1
(ii) Painter	1.2	1.2	1	1.2	1.2	1
(iii) Mason	4.8	4.8	3	4.8	4.8	3
(iv) Black-smith	2.4	1.2	—	2.4	1.2	—

(c) *Skilled labour (Civil)*

(i) Mason — — — — — 1 — — — — — 1

(ii) Blacksmith — — — — — 1 — — — — — 1

(d) *Unskilled labour (Civil)*

(i) CPL/Mate 4.8 2.6 2.4 3.6 2.4 1.86

(3.6 for 6 months & 6 for 6 months) (1.8 for 6 months & 3.6 for 6 months) (1.5 for 12 months & 1.83 for 5.7 months) (2.4 for 6 months & 4.8 for 6 months) (1.2 for 6 months & 3.6 for 6 months) (1 for 12 months & 1.8 for 5.7 months)

(ii) Mate 12 6 10 12 6 8

(ii) Skilled labour & machinery — — — — — 14@ — — — — — 12@ @Cost 0.3 helper to be met out of capital works.

(c) *Unskilled labour (GREF)*

Helper for skilled labour & Machinery 25.8 Nos. 16.8 Nos. — 16.8 Nos. 15.6 Nos. — Cost of 3.4 helpers to be met out of capital works.

3 POL 61560 ltrs, 34890 ltrs. 16650 ltrs. 13770 ltrs. 13770 ltrs. 4660 ltrs.

4 *Constructional Stores*

(a) Cement 15 MT Rs. 28500 (LS) Rs. 21600 Same as given under Col.

(b) Bitumen Rs. 69600 (LS) Rs. 51475

(c) Explosives 1 MT

(d) Timber 150 FC

(e) Paint 60 ltrs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	(f) Firewood			90 MT				
	(g) Slaked lime			10 MT				
	(h) Polythene pipe		for gravel	1000 FT				
	(i) <i>Constructional materials</i>		roads only		Rs. 34974			
	(i) Sand			1683 FC				
	(ii) Metal Rs. 1/2 ,,			376 FC				
	(iii) Chips 3/8 ,,			15120 FC				
	(iv) Stones			6000 FC				
				81 MT				
	(k) <i>Transportation of stores</i>							
	(l) Total				Rs. 9925			
	(m) Add 1% on (l) for misc. items viz iron mongery viz nail and screw hinges bolts, CGI sheets, electric/sanitary fitting etc.				105474			
					1100			
	(n) Grand total							Restricted to Rs. 96000/- (details refer)
					106574			
					Say Rs. 96,000			
5	Small T&P	Rs. 8200 (LS)	Rs. 4800 (LS)	7000/-	4800 (LS)	4800 (LS)	7000/-	
6	Establishment charges (on cash and adjusted only)	50%	50% 33	1/3%		50%	33 1/3%	

APPENDIX IV

(*Vide* Introduction to Report)

Analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 101st Report of the Estimates Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha)

I.	Total number of recommendations	30
II.	Recommendations which have been accepted by Government (<i>vide</i> recommendations No. 1, 2, 3, 4 & 9, 5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28 & 30).	
	Number	23
	Percentage	76.7%
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies (<i>vide</i> recommendations No. 7, 8, 11, 12 & 26).	
	Number	5
	Percentage	16.7
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee (<i>vide</i> recommendations No. 2, 15 & 23).	
	Number	2
	Percentage	6.6%

LIST OF AUTHORISED AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT PUBLICATIONS

Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.	Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.
ANDHRA PRADESH					
1.	Andhra University General Cooperative Stores Ltd., Waltair (Visakhapatnam)	8	12.	Charles Lambert & Company, 101, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Opposite Clock Tower, Fort, Bombay.	30
2.	G.R. Lakshmiopathy Chetty and Sons, General Merchants and News Agents, Newpet, Chandragiri, Chittoor District.	94	13.	The Current Book House, Maruri Lane, Raghunath Dadaji Street, Bombay-1.	60
			14.	Deccan Book Stall, Ferguson College Road, Poona-4.	65
ASSAM					
3.	Western Book Depot, Pan Bazar, Gauhati.	7	15.	M/s. Usha Book Depot, 585/A, Chira Bazar, Khan House, Girgaum Road, Bombay-2 B.R.	5
BIHAR					
4.	Amar Kitab Ghar, Post Box 78, Diagonal Road, Jamshedpur.	37	MYSORE		
			16.	M/s. Peoples Book House, Opp. Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore-1	16
GUJARAT					
5.	Vijay Stores, Station Road, Anand.	35	RAJASTHAN		
6.	The New Order Book Company Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad-6.	63	17.	Information Centre, Government of Rajasthan, Tripolia, Jaipur City.	38
HARYANA					
7.	M/s. Prabhu Book Service, Nai Subzamandi, Gurgaon, (Haryana).	14	UTTAR PRADESH		
			18.	Swastik Industrial Works, 59, Holi Street, Meerut City.	2
MADHYA PRADESH					
8.	Modern Book House, Shiv Vilas Palace, Indore City.	13	19.	Law Book Company, Sardar Patel Marg, Allahabad-1	48
MAHARASHTRA					
9.	M/s. Sunderdas Gianchand, 601, Girgaum Road, Near Princess Street, Bombay-2.	6	WEST BENGAL		
10.	The International Book House (Private) Limited, 9, Ash Lane, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay-1	22	20.	Granthaloka, 5/1, Ambica Mookherjee Road, Belgaria, 24 Parganas.	10
11.	The International Book Service Deccan Gymkhana Poona-4	26	21.	W Newman & Company Ltd, 3, Old Court House Street, Calcutta	44
			22.	Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 6/1A, Banchharam Akkur Lane, Calcutta 12.	82
			23.	M/s. Mukherji Book House, 8B, Duff Lane, Calcutta-6	4

Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.	Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.
DELHI.					
24.	Jain Book Agency, Connaught Place, New Delhi.	11	33.	Oxford Book & Stationery Company, Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi-1.	68
25.	Sat Narain & Sons, 3141, Mohd. Ali Bazar, Mori Gate, Delhi.	3	34.	People's Publishing House, Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi.	76
26.	Atma Ram & Sons, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-6.	9	35.	The United Book Agency, 48, Amrit Kaur Market, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi.	88
27.	J. M. Jaina & Brothers, Mori Gate, Delhi.	11	36.	Hird Book House, 82, Janpath, New Delhi.	95
28.	The Central News Agency, 23/90, Connaught Place, New Delhi.	15	37.	Bookwell, 4, Sant Naran-kari Colony, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-9.	96
29.	The English Book Store, 7-L, Connaught Circus, New Delhi.	20	MANIPUR		
30.	Lakshmi Book Store, 42, Municipal Market, Janpath, New Delhi.	23	38.	Shri N. Chaoba Singh, News Agent, Ramlal Paul High School Annexe, Imphal.	77
31.	Bahree Brothers, 188 Lajpatrai Market, Delhi-6.	27	AGENTS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES		
32.	Jayana Book Depot, Chaparwala Kuan, Karol-Bagh, New Delhi.	66	39.	The Secretary, Establishment Department, The High Commission of India India House, Aldwych, LONDON, W. C.-2.	59

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