

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1978-79)

(SIXTH LOK SABHA)

THIRTY-FIFTH REPORT

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION
(Department of Agricultural Research and Education)

INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
WORKING CONDITIONS OF AGRICULTURAL
SCIENTISTS



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ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

(1978-79)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman of Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Thirty-fifth Report on Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation—Indian Council of Agricultural Research—Working conditions of agricultural scientists.

2. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (Department of Agricultural Research and Education) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research on 26th and 27th March, 1979. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry and ICAR for placing before them the material and information which they desired in connection with the examination of the subject and giving evidence before the Committee.

3. The Committee also wish to express their thanks to the Agricultural Scientists in various institutes in the country for furnishing memoranda to the Committee and for making valuable suggestions.

4. The report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 23 April, 1979.

5. For facility of reference the recommendations|Observations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report. A summary of the recommendations|observations is appended to the Report (Appendix III).

SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA,

*Chairman,
Estimates Committee.*

NEW DELHI;

April 24, 1979

Vaisakha 4, 1901 (S).

CHAPTER I

ORGANISATIONAL SET UP OF I.C.A.R.

1.1. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research was established in 1929 as a Society following a recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture for a national co-ordinating agency in the area of agricultural research. Until 1965, the ICAR functioned largely as an apex co-ordinating body financing *ad hoc* research projects mainly through the revenues obtained from the agricultural Produce Cess Act of 1940. In 1965, the Government of India entrusted to the ICAR society the responsibility of managing research institutions in agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries. Thus, a network of research institutes located in different parts of the country was merged with the ICAR, so that problems of agricultural research could be viewed in their totality. In addition, the ICAR was also entrusted with the responsibility of fostering and supporting the growth and development of agricultural universities. Thus, today the ICAR occupies a unique position among the major scientific organisations of our country in that it has concurrent responsibility both for research and education.

1.2. The President of the ICAR is the Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation. The Governing body with a membership of 22 chaired by the Director-General is the principal executive body.

1.3. In several memoranda received by the Committee from agricultural scientists it has been represented that the present set up of ICAR as a society has "deprived the scientists of their constitutional service rights to get their grievances redressed because the courts have no jurisdiction over this body. In law it has been held that ICAR as a society is a private voluntary association having a 'master and servant' relationship between ICAR (employer) and employees and is thus not amenable to the writ jurisdiction of the court, and therefore, its employees have no legal rights." It has, therefore, been suggested that ICAR be converted into a government body or a statutory body so as to provide constitutional safeguards in service matters 'to check abuse of authority.'

1.4. It is noticed that the ICAR Enquiry Committee which was appointed in 1972 examined the status and structure of the ICAR and they observed in their Report as follows:

"The Royal Commission on Agriculture had recommended the creation of the ICAR under an Act of Legislature.

However, the Central Government at that time considered a flexible set up of a Society more appropriate for this purpose. It is generally believed that this type of flexible set up is more suitable for research. This system is very flexible and it can adopt its own rules and procedures for recruitment, purchases, construction, etc. The constituent units of such a body can also enjoy sufficient degree of autonomy. Moreover, such a flexible set up can work better with institutions like Agricultural Universities. The working of ICAR as a Society since its inception, however, shows that in actual practice, it has more often than not sacrificed its autonomy in favour of Government rules and regulations. Till 1966, recruitment to posts under the Society was being made through the UPSC. The headquarters office as from 1939 functioned as an attached office of the Government. It has been headed from the very beginning by a nominee of the Government. The funds have mostly come from the Government and its source of income from the cess funds is less than 5 per cent of its total annual budget now. It has followed the Government rules and procedure for purchase of equipment and construction of buildings. A large number of Government servants have always been in the organisation... Looking to all these facts, it would even be correct to say that calling it a society has been a myth. As a matter of fact, this attempt to keep up the myth of ICAR being a society, has created considerable confusion and agitation in the minds of employees and also in the public mind. We feel that the time has now come when the Central Government should itself directly take up agricultural research as one of its responsibilities, rather than entrust it to a society or a corporation. In order that co-ordination of research is done in an effective manner, the ICAR should enjoy a status which would enable it to deal with the State Governments and the Universities on the same footing as other bodies under the Central Government are able to do. It would be possible to achieve this objective if the ICAR is converted into a department of Agricultural Research and Education under the Ministry of Agriculture."

1.5. As regards the action taken on the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee, the Ministry have stated that this recommendation of the Committee was examined by a Group of four ministers

headed by the then Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation. The Government did not accept the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee to convert the ICAR into a Government Department. The Group of Ministers also considered the question of conversion of ICAR into a statutory body and after detailed discussions recommended that the ICAR structure could be re-organised on the basis of the changes made by the Government in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in the light of the recommendations of the CSIR Enquiry Committee, so as to confer on ICAR greater autonomy and flexibility in its operational and management procedures with such modifications as may be needed from the CSIR pattern. It was felt that statutory corporation would be no better than the existing society format. On the other hand, it would have the added disadvantage of insulation in its relationship with the Central and State Governments. The voice of the Council would reach Government only through intermediaries. It was also felt that, while the society format afforded flexibility in structure a statutory body set up by an Act of Parliament would have a rigid organisation and for making even slight changes, it would be necessary to introduce amendment to the Act. These difficulties even now persist and the conversion of the ICAR society into a statutory body will not ease the situation.

1.6. The Committee asked the Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education about his reaction to converting ICAR into a statutory body. He stated "This will have to be gone into. At present, there is a governing body. There is considerable flexibility in procedure. If some mistake comes to our notice immediately it can be rectified. The Expenditure Secretary, the Planning Secretary are all there to reflect the Government's views. My own impression after talking to people serving in statutory bodies is that there seem to be sometimes difficulties even in making small amendments and so on. But I suppose it is a drafting exercise."

1.7. The Committee find that in spite of the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee (1973) to convert the ICAR into a Department of Agricultural Research and Education, the Government have allowed it to remain as a society. This, as many scientists have represented to the Committee, has deprived the employees of ICAR constitutional rights and safeguard of moving the courts of law in service matters which are available to employees of Government departments. The Ministry have stated that the basic objective of retaining ICAR as a society was to confer on it 'greater autonomy

and flexibility in its operational and management procedures'. But as pointed out by the Enquiry Committee in actual practice the ICAR 'has more often than not sacrificed its autonomy in favour of Government rules and regulations' and 'calling it a society has been a myth' which has created 'considerable confusion and agitation in the minds of employees and also in the public mind'. The Committee agree with the findings of the Enquiry Committee that the society format for ICAR has created considerable confusion in public mind. They also feel that society format gives it no special advantage which it cannot have as a commission or a statutory body. The Committee also feel that if the ICAR is converted into a commission or a statutory body, while it will not lose its autonomy and flexibility in actual working, the employees of ICAR will gain legal right in service matters (which they do not have at present). The Committee desire that the Government may give serious consideration to this matter and convert the ICAR into a Commission or a Statutory Body as may be found to be most suitable for an organisation like ICAR. --

CHAPTER II

RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENTISTS

A. Recruiting Agency

2.1. Before 1966, the recruitment of the research Institutes, was done by the UPSC as the Institutes were under the Government. The recruitment of the staff at ICAR headquarters was also done by UPSC. After the reorganisation of the ICAR in 1966, and the merger of the Institutes with the ICAR all recruitments were made by the ICAR itself.

2.2. The ICAR Enquiry Committee (1973) which examined this matter observed in the Report that:

“The majority of ICAR scientists who gave evidence before the Committee and those who answered the questionnaire mentioned that the present recruitment policy was not satisfactory. The Enquiry Committee considered the desirability of having an independent scientific body to make recruitments, but have come to the conclusions that such a body may not have enough work to do throughout the year and appointment of a full time Chairman and Secretary, and part time members may create several problems and may ultimately concentrate power in the hands of the full time Chairman and the Secretary. Hence, we do not recommend the formation of a separate scientific body for recruitment of agricultural scientists.

In the light of the background and the objective stated above, and taking into consideration the various pitfalls in different systems of recruitment and bearing in mind particularly the present dissatisfaction in the Institutes. We recommend that the recruitment of scientists of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education should be made by the UPSC for five years, at the end of which the position may be re-examined. The Constitution of the UPSC should be changed to provide for these recruitments. The UPSC should have a science Wing which should have three eminent scientists from the dis-

ciplines of Agriculture and Biology. One of them should be the Vice-Chairman of the UPSC. The appointment of members of the Science Wing should be in conformity with that of other members of the UPSC. Technical staff should be appointed for the Science Wing."

2.3. The Government, however, did not entrust the recruitment of scientists to UPSC as suggested by the Enquiry Committee and instead set up a single member Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board (ASRB) as an independent recruiting agency and entrusted it with the following functions:

- (a) Recruitment to posts in the Agricultural Research Service and to such other posts and services as may be specified by the President from time to time.
- (b) Rendering such other assistance to the Council in personnel matters including promotion as may be required by the President.
- (c) Advising the Council in disciplinary matters relating to personnel recruited|appointed either by the Council itself or in consultation with the Recruitment Board.
- (d) Submitting annually a report on its activities to the President.

2.4. Several scientists of ICAR, in their memoranda submitted to the Committee have expressed reservations about the constitution and functioning of the ASRB. It has been stated in one memorandum that "all powers have been entrusted to a single person as its Chairman making it one man show, answerable to none, but controlling the destinies of thousands of young scientists. This one man board has been made so powerful that no body including the courts of law could question its malafide and arbitrary actions. In order to create confidence among the scientists, recruitment be entrusted to an independent body like UPSC or to a scientific recruitment commission to be set up through an Act of Parliament."

2.5. As to the reasons for setting up an Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board instead of entrusting the work of recruitment of scientists to UPSC as suggested by the Enquiry Committee, the Ministry have stated that "the ICAR being a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and not a department of the Government of India, the posts under the Council are not civil posts coming within the purview of the UPSC in so far as recruitment is concerned. If the recruitment to these posts were to be made through the UPSC the Ministry of Law expressed the view that it would be necessary to legislate under article 321 of the

Constitution of India which enables Parliament to enact a law providing for the exercise of additional functions by the UPSC as respects the services of the Union and also as respects the services of any local authority or other body corporate constituted by law or by any public institution". As the ICAR is not a local authority or a body corporate constituted by law, the Minister of Law held the view that "a reasonable view can be taken that the ICAR is a public institution falling under article 321 of the Constitution". They, however, felt that this cannot be considered as "entirely free from doubt". The Groups of Ministers who considered the recommendations of the ICAR Enquiry Committee, recommended that an emergency recruitment procedure should be initiated and a special Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, with an eminent Agricultural scientist as a whole time Chairman, be set up by the ICAR with the approval of the Cabinet to function as an independent recruitment agency for filling up those of the 1200 and odd currently vacant posts in the ICAR which carry a salary of Rs. 700--1250 and above. In the absence of legislation, it was stated that "it would be difficult to entrust the recruitment of posts under the Council to the UPSC. Hence there was a need for establishing a recruiting agency for filling vacancies in the ICAR. It was accordingly decided to set up an Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board under Rules 25 and 26 of the ICAR rules."

2.6. The Committee enquired as to how the independence of the Board was maintained and how it was ensured that the selection of candidates by the Board was fair and objective. The Ministry have stated that the terms and conditions of appointment of the Chairman are similar to those of the members of UPSC. The Chairman is directly responsible to the President of the ICAR, who is the Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation. He is given full freedom to constitute interview boards and selection committees without reference to the ICAR in matters of recruitment and promotion. The selection committees and interview boards are constituted by the Chairman himself in accordance with the provision of the Agricultural Research Services Rules and bye-laws of the ICAR society. In so far as induction and assessment of ICAR scientists are concerned, no scientist of the ICAR is included in the Assessment Committees. However, for direct recruitment to posts in the ICAR, a scientist of the ICAR is included as a departmental representative in the Interview Board in the same manner as is being done by the UPSC. It has also been stated that in order to ensure objectivity in the selection of the Chairman, ASRB constitutes committees and boards consisting of eminent scientists in various disciplines all over

the country (usually three for each board) for making recruitment and promotions to various posts in the ICAR. He does not take decisions himself in such matters but takes it on the advice and recommendations of the eminent scientists who constitute boards and committees.

2.7. The Committee have also been informed that the selections made by the Board require approval of the ICAR. They are submitted to the President of the Society, who is the Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, and they are given effect to only after his approval is obtained. All the selections made so far by the ASRB have been given effect to after they have been approved by the President of the ICAR Society.

2.8. The Committee enquired during evidence the various methods of science management by the Government and why it was decided to have a separate recruitment Board for ICAR. The Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education stated that there are three methods of science management by Government. One is to have a commission, like Atomic Energy Commission, Space Research Commission and Electronics Commission. All these are purely governmental organisations and employees are government employees. But they have been given a considerable degree of autonomy from the Government side. They do not make recruitment through UPSC. The second system is that which is operating in the Defence Science Organisations where all the Defence Science laboratories act as subordinate offices of the Defence Ministry. The third method was the ICAR and CSIR method, i.e., organisations registered as societies. The CSIR has also its own recruitment procedures. So, after carefully considering the pros and cons of these three systems of science management the Government decided to adopt for ICAR such changes as were recommended by the Sarkar Committee for CSIR. He added that the Committee of Ministers "analysed various issues and finally they came to the conclusions that this is a matter for political decision and judgement. As far as we are concerned if it is decided that it should be done by UPSC on a legal basis it is all right. At the moment we have implemented the decision of the Cabinet."

2.9. The Committee also enquired whether in view of general discontent or dissatisfaction with the present working of the recruitment Board, ICAR had thought of making any organisational changes so as to create more confidence in the people. The Secretary of the Department stated that "the President of ICAR has recently constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of the

Vice-President, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, to review the rules and bye-laws of ICAR.

The Agriculture scientists Recruitment Board today functions under a specific rule of the ICAR society. If you want to make any changes by way of widening the composition or making it a multi-member board, etc., we will have to make appropriate amendments to the rules. Now we have also decided at the suggestion of some of the members of the Committee, to invite recommendations about the kinds of amendments which are desirable. As soon as this committee make its recommendations, the ICAR Society can consider the amendments and make the necessary amendments."

2.10. The Committee find that the setting up of one Member Board for recruitment of Agricultural Scientists is contrary to the recommendation of the ICAR Enquiry Committee which did not favour the formation of a separate scientific body for recruitment of agricultural scientists. The Enquiry Committee had come to the conclusion that "such a body may not have enough work to do throughout the year and may ultimately concentrate power in the hands of full time Chairman and the Secretary." The Enquiry Committee had suggested that "taking into consideration the various pitfalls in different systems of recruitment and bearing in mind particularly the present dissatisfaction in the ICAR Institutes, the appointment of Agricultural Scientists should be made by the UPSC for five years at the end of which the position may be re-examined." According to the Ministry the recruitment of scientists could not be entrusted to the UPSC, as the ICAR being a society, the posts under the Council were not civil posts coming within the purview of UPSC. The Ministry of Law expressed the view that 'a reasonable view can be taken that the ICAR is a public institution falling under Article 321 of the Constitution. The matter, however, cannot be considered as entirely free from doubt'. The Committee feel that if the large number of memoranda received from the scientists is any indication, the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board has not been able to win the confidence of the scientists of the ICAR and the dissatisfaction among scientists in regard to the system of recruitment, as mentioned in the Report of the Enquiry Committee, is still persisting. The Committee feel that if the agricultural scientists working in the institutes, under the ICAR, have little confidence in the present recruitment set up, the sooner it is replaced by another set up the better it would be for everyone. In the Committee's opinion what the Enquiry Committee said in 1973 about recruitment system holds good even today

and that the ideal arrangement would be to entrust the task of recruitment of agricultural scientists to the UPSC. For this purpose, if it is necessary to pass a suitable legislation, it should be brought forward without any further delay.

B. Agricultural Research Service

2.11. The ICAR has introduced an Agricultural Research Service with effect from 1st October, 1975. This Service includes all posts the incumbents of which are engaged in agricultural research and education (including extension education), whether in physical, biological, statistical, engineering, technological, home or social sciences or in planning, programming and management of scientific research. The Service consists of four grades of scientists viz., S, S1, S2 and S3. The Controlling Authority of the service is the President of the ICAR assisted by a committee known as the Committee on Agricultural Research Service. The Committee is presided over by the Director-General, ICAR and has in addition six members nominated by the President of the Society.

2.12. The Service has been initially constituted by the absorption of regular employees of the Council who were found eligible and suitable by the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board. It has been stated that employees who did not possess the requisite qualifications on the crucial date i.e., 1st October, 1975 but were otherwise eligible for appointment to the Service are being encouraged to acquire the necessary qualifications and will be absorbed in the service subject to their suitability being determined by ASRB if they are able to qualify for appointment within a period of five years i.e., upto 1st October, 1980.

2.13. The Committee were informed that 3199 scientists submitted their bio-data to the ASRB for screening for induction into ASRB out of whom recommendations in respect of 3155 have been received from ASRB. Only 117 scientists have not been found suitable by the ASRB for induction.

C. Five Yearly Assessment

2.14. The Ministry have stated that the most significant feature of the Agricultural Research Service is that promotions will be irrespective of occurrence of vacancies on the basis of rigorous periodic assessment by an external panel of eminent scientists nominated by the Chairman, ASRB.

2.15. The Assessment Committee comprises not more than five members but not less than two excluding the Chairman or his nominee. These committees are constituted for each professional subject/discipline and eminent scientists belonging to that particular discipline only are its members. These committees deal with all scientists assessees belonging to that discipline though working in different research institutes. The scientists in Grades S-1 to S-3 who have completed five years in their respective grade are assessed for promotion or for advance increments. In accordance with the recent decision the five years limit of service is not applicable in the case of scientists belonging to 'S' grade who are to be assessed for advance increments/promotion to Grade S-1.

2.16. The assessment of the scientists is done taking into consideration:

- (i) The material furnished in the 5-yearly assessment proforma.
- (ii) Research project files maintained by the Scientists.
- (iii) Bio-data and career information (various posts held etc.) by the scientist throughout his service in the ICAR.
- (iv) C. C. Rs. for the past five years.
- (v) Personal discussion if so desired by the concerned scientist.

2.17. The recommendations of the assessment Committees on approval by the Controlling Authority of ARS are given effect from 1st July of the year following the five yearly period of assessment. As on 31st December, 1979, 947 scientists were recommended for promotion and appointed to higher grades. As on 31st December, 1976, 589 scientists were approved for promotion and appointed.

2.18. The Committee were also assured that the ICAR had not over-ruled the recommendations of the Assessment Committees in any case.

2.19. It had been represented to the Committee by the Scientists that "in most cases, what is being done is a whole-sale screening by a single committee consisting of experts in that particular discipline no doubt, but not experts in the sub-field of the persons being assessed. Further, in some cases persons who had lost touch with academic activities for long had been made members of the assessment committees. The composition of some committees was such

that members were sitting in judgement over their own former bosses or research guides.

2.20. The Ministry have stated that the experts nominated to various committees were specialists in requisite specific fields. Further, the experts to be co-opted to these assessment panels had to be drawn from either the various agricultural universities or retired service personnel, since the assessment system excludes the co-option of serving ICAR scientists for such assessment committees with a view to ensure total impartiality. Only reputed scientists have been co-opted as experts in all the committees, constituted by the Chairman ASRB for this purpose. The ASRB had also ensured that the scientists nominated on the assessment panels were not lower in rank to the scientists being assessed for promotion.

2.21. The Committee were also informed that as and when a scientist is nominated to assessment panel he is asked by the ASRB to specifically clarify if his relation or any one else in whom he may be personally interested is coming up in that assessment before him. The relevant para of the letter addressed in this regard read as follows:

“You are probably aware of the convention that a Member of the Interview Board should not have any relation or any one else in whom he may be interested as a candidate appearing at the above mentioned interview. It is presumed that there will be no such problem in this regard.”

2.22. The Committee need hardly emphasise that in order to ensure fair and objective assessment of the scientists and to generate confidence among them that their promotions will be based on merit and not on extraneous considerations, it is essential that the scientists appointed on assessment committees are experts in the specific fields of specialisation and that they are of reputed integrity. It also needs to be ensured that persons who have retired from ICAR and those who have lost touch with the academic activities for long are not made members of the assessment committees.

2.23. The Committee also consider that the letter addressed to the scientists nominated to the assessment panels needs to be modified. Instead of merely drawing their attention to the convention that “a member of the Interview Board should not have any relation or any one else in whom he may be interested as a candidate appearing in the interview” they should be asked to furnish a

written declaration that "none of the candidates being assessed for promotion is/has been his relation, student, ex-colleague or subordinate."

D. Representations from Scientists

2.24. It has been represented to the Committee that the scientists who are not promoted are not informed of the reasons for not being approved for promotion. The ICAR had prohibited the scientists from making any representations against selections, assessments etc. carried out by ASRB and had threatened them with disciplinary action if they represented.

2.25. The Ministry have however, informed that "the scientists were asked to desist from making any observations or insinuations in their representations, or otherwise against the functioning of the ASRB as such observations would tantamount to interference with the functioning of the Board. The ASRB has been set up as an independent authority to assist the ICAR in making recruitment to scientific posts and had to be treated in the same way as the UPSC. Hence, no attempt should be made to interfere with the functioning of the Board." Copy of letter No. 1-2/78 per. IV dated 23-8-78 issued in this connection is given in appendix I.

2.26. During evidence, the Director General ICAR stated that "there are all kinds of allegations against the individual members of the Board and experts. The President ICAR had ordered that such allegations were not advisable.... We do not prevent them from making representations. We get all kinds of representations. They are being considered. There is no case of any disciplinary action having been taken under this head." He, however, agreed that there was need for an amendment in the letter to make clear the intention of the administration.

2.27. Asked whether the scientists are informed about the reasons for not being promoted, the Ministry have stated that it is not possible to inform the scientists about the reasons for not being promoted, since ASRB does not give reasons. Any such disclosure by ASRB may result in endless correspondence and administrative complications. It is not done in any other service.

2.28. As regards the action taken on the representations received from the scientists the Ministry have stated that the ASRB who was consulted in the matter, has replied as follows:

"The then Chairman, ASRB examined these representations and recorded that "we do not reply to representations." This stand was taken by the Chairman in view of the fact that the Assessment Committees which consist of eminent scientists always go into the merit and performance of the scientist and their recommendations based on the expert assessment are not subject to any change."

2.29. The Committee find that the letter issued by the ICAR on 23 August, 1978 provides for disciplinary action being taken against employees who make "allegations and representations against the Board." This has created an impression in the minds of scientists that they have been prohibited from making any representations against selections, assessments etc. carried out by ASRB whereas according to the Ministry the intention of the management was that the scientists should "desist from making any observations or insinuation in their representations or otherwise against the functioning of the ASRB", and that there was no intention of preventing them from making any representations against the decisions of the Board. The Committee suggest that a letter clarifying the position may be issued by ICAR to allay the apprehensions in the minds of scientists on this account.

2.30. The Committee are not satisfied with the procedures followed by the ASRB for dealing with the representations received from the scientists. From the reply furnished by the Ministry it is apparent that no action is taken on such representations by the ASRB. The Committee suggest that all representations against the decisions of the Board in regard to induction of a scientist into the Agricultural Research Service or promotion of a scientist to the next higher grade should be considered by the President of the Council. If after going through the representation, it is found that there are facts in the representation which prima facie justify a review of the decision arrived at by the ASRB the matter should be referred to the Board for reconsideration. The recommendation made in such cases by the Board should be recorded in writing alongwith the reasons therefor, and the scientist making the representation informed of the final decision in the matter.

CHAPTER III

WORKING CONDITIONS

3.1. The ICAR Enquiry Committee pointed out in their report that the working conditions for scientists were not conducive to research. Some of the major complaints regarding the working conditions in the Divisions mentioned in the Report of the Enquiry Committee were:

- (i) The Head of the Division does not give facilities for work. He favours those who work for him.
- (ii) There is no academic atmosphere as there is no free discussion on research projects and results obtained.
- (iii) Senior scientists insert their names in research papers even though they do not do the actual work.
- (iv) Purchase of chemicals, glassware etc. take inordinate delay.
- (v) Scientists are not allowed to use certain equipments which are available in the Divisions or in the Institute. For example, the equipment available in the Division of Biochemistry of IARI are not shared by all the colleagues of the Divisions or in the Institute. The Nuclear Research Laboratory has several equipments which scientists of other Divisions normally cannot use.

3.2. The Enquiry Committee had felt that "most of these complaints are genuine and these should be remedied. The working conditions for scientists should be made attractive so that a scientist would be encouraged to engage himself in research rather than engage himself in unacademic activities." The Enquiry Committee had made several recommendations to improve the working conditions. From a large number of memoranda submitted by the scientists, to the Committee, it is noticed that most of the complaints mentioned in para 2.20 above are still persisting due to non-implementation of the suggestions made by the Enquiry Committee. Some of these are dealt with in the following paragraphs:

A. Rotation of Heads of Divisions

3.3. One of the complaint of the scientists mentioned in the Report of the Enquiry Committee and which is still persisting, as is

evident from the memoranda received by the Committee, is that "the Head of the Division does not give facilities for work. He favours those who work for him." To remedy the situation the Enquiry Committee had suggested that:

"The post of Head of Division should not be permanently held by a Principal Scientist. This post should be of a tenure type and should normally rotate amongst the Principal Scientists for a period of three years on the basis of seniority except in cases where Divisional Committee and the Director feel otherwise for reasons to be stated. This will give a sense of participation and belonging to the Principal scientists, all of whom are in the same grade. A Principal Scientist holding the position of Head of Division can have a second term of office. But no more, if all the scientists of the Division desire so. A Principal Scientist may also have the option of refusing the post of Head of Division."

3.4. As to the action taken on the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee, the Ministry informed in February, 1979 that "a decision had already been taken to appoint the Heads of the Divisions on rotation basis....The guidelines for making such appointments were under consideration of the Governing Body of ICAR". On being asked about the reasons for the delay in this regard, the Ministry informed in March, 1979 that "the guidelines for making appointments of Heads of Divisions, on rotation basis have been finalised and orders issued, a copy of which is attached (Appendix II). These orders take effect from the 1st April, 1979." It has been stated that the rotation system will not be applicable to the Heads of Divisions who have not been appointed on a tenure basis. Such divisions will come under this system only after the existing incumbents vacate their positions.

3.5. The Committee were informed that the following 18 Heads of Divisions, who had been confirmed, would not come under the purview of the rotation principle:

Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi.	..	10
Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur.	..	4
Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar.	..	4

B. Divisional Committees

3.6. In order to remove the complaints regarding favouritism by the Heads of Divisions in providing facilities to the scientists, the ICAR Enquiry Committee had also suggested in their Report the formation of Divisional Committees to look after some of the functions of the Division. The Enquiry Committee had observed that "the administration of Division should be such that all the scientists may be involved in it. This should make them feel that they have something to contribute to the progress of the Division." It had suggested the formation of a Divisional Committee for each Division consisting of the representatives of the three categories of scientists, the project coordinator of the All India Coordinated Project, if it is located in the Division, Heads of all the sub-disciplines of the Division and all the project leaders. The Committee had suggested that the following matters of the Divisions should be looked after by the Divisional Committee:

- (a) make proposals for new staff and specify the requisite qualifications for each post.
- (b) Annual budget which should be divided into three categories—teaching, research and extension while preparing the budget separate allocations should be made for each scheme.
- (c) Purchase of materials and equipment.
- (d) Recommendations for deputations of staff for seminars and training.
- (e) Scholarships and freeships for students.
- (f) Recommendations for registration of students for MSc. and Ph.D.
- (g) Identification of Project Leaders and authors of research papers and the question of Publication of research papers.

3.7. As regards the action taken on the recommendations of the Enquiry Committee, the Ministry have stated that "Depending upon the size of the Institute and the nature and quantum of work, committees have been appointed in the Institutes to look after the various functions concerning the administration of the Divisions. National Institutes like Indian Agricultural Research Institute have such committees and other Institutes are also setting up the Committees as and when need arises."

3.8. The Ministry have also stated that a team consisting of Director (P) and two specialists from Indian Institute of Public Administration was engaged in an in-depth study into the administration of the Division with a view to identify the bottlenecks and to suggest remedial measures to eliminate them. As to the reasons for appointing this team even after the examination of the matter by the enquiry Committee, the Ministry have stated that "suggestions were made off and on to take steps to streamline the administration of the Division and to relieve the scientists of the routine administrative duties so as to enable them to concentrate more on research. The team has been constituted to suggest measures to achieve these objectives."

3.9. On being asked during evidence whether IARI had implemented the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee regarding Divisional Committees, the Director IARI stated "it might not have been implemented 100 per cent but it has been implemented in a large measure. Now we have a plan not only to implement it fully but even to augment it in terms of a consultative machinery."

3.10. From a note furnished by the Ministry it is noticed that although some of the Institutes under ICAR have set up a few Divisional Committees, there is no Divisional Committee in any of the Institute having composition and functions as suggested by the ICAR Enquiry Committee.

C. Delegation of Financial Powers

3.11. In several memoranda submitted to the Committee it had been represented that there was complicated and lengthy system to purchase and procure equipment, chemicals and the items needed for research. All financial powers were vested in the Head of the Division. Even senior scientists had no power to purchase small items.

3.12. This matter was also considered by the ICAR Enquiry Committee and they were constrained to note that "there is too much of red tape and financial constraints which hinder research work of scientists. For the purchase of petty things, the procedure followed is so involved and complicated that it frustrates any scientist". The Enquiry Committee recommend that "subject to necessary salutary rules, financial and administrative powers be delegated not only to the Heads of the Divisions but also to the actual scientists whose project has been approved and who is carrying out the work. Each scientist who has been granted a project should be final authority to make purchases from the grant. The scientists who do not have research projects should be allowed to share the Divisional grant and

equipments on the basis of their needs. This matter should be considered by the Divisional Committee."

3.13. As to the action taken to implement the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee, the Ministry stated that 'delegation of financial and administrative powers have been given to the Directors of the Institute who in turn had re-delegated to them to the Heads of Division and other scientists. But these delegated powers can be exercised properly only if the scientists understand the procedures and help to maintain the prescribed purchase and other procedures, so that audit objections are not attracted.

3.14. On being asked during evidence whether powers had actually been delegated to the scientists, the Director IARI however, stated:

"We have delegated by and large, powers to the Head of divisions and project coordinators. In addition, in each division, we have appointed by and large, stores advisory committees. This advises the Head of the Division with regard to procurement of stores. The idea is this. Decision making with regard to store purchase is carried out not by the head of the division alone but it involves a group of scientists who advise him in this matter. In the next stage we propose to delegate even sanctioning powers to individual group leaders. This has not been done so far but this is our next plan. We plan to do that. This will be done any time now."

3.15. The Committee find that it was in 1973 that the ICAR Enquiry Committee had made several recommendations to improve the working conditions of Agricultural Scientists. But even after six years many of these recommendations have either not been implemented at all or are still in the process of examination|implementation. As mentioned in the earlier paragraphs, the guidelines for appointment of the Heads of Divisions on rotation basis have been issued only on 23rd March, 1979. No action has been taken to appoint Divisional Committees, having composition and functions as suggested by the Enquiry Committee. Similarly in spite of the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee that powers be delegated to the actual scientists, no financial powers have been delegated to them even to purchase small items needed for research work causing hindrance in their work. In the circumstances it is not surprising that the frustration and unrest among the agricultural scientists in regard to their working conditions is still persisting. Such a dilatory approach towards such simple but important recommendations of the Enquiry Committee which were intended to improve the work-

ing conditions of the agricultural scientists and to bring about their participation in administration cannot be too strongly deprecated. The Committee would urge that this matter should now receive immediate attention of the Council and recommendations of the Enquiry Committee implemented in letter and spirit without any further loss of time under intimation to his Committee. . . .

D. Use of Equipment

3.16. One of the complaints of the scientists has been that scientists are not allowed to use certain equipments which are available in other Divisions of the Institute. The Committee enquired whether it would not be desirable if major equipments, which cannot be made available in each Division, a centralised instrument section is established under the charge of a technical supervisor who should be responsible for maintenance of the equipment and making it available for us by scientists according to some standard norms. The Director General ICAR stated during evidence "that is very good. We have accepted the idea."

3.17. The Committee desire that the details of this scheme should be finalised and it may be introduced soon in all the Institutes of ICAR to solve the difficulties of the Scientists in regard to the equipment needed for their research work. Proper guidelines should also be laid down for making the instruments available to the scientists without giving any one of them any cause for complaint.

E. Annual Assessment

3.18 It has been noticed from several memoranda received from the scientists that they are not satisfied with the present system of annual assessment of work. In a memorandum received from an association of IARI it has been stated that the annual assessment is "primarily done through CCR which contains so many other columns which are not relevant to the objective evaluation of scientific work. Recently the name of CCR has been changed to Annual Assessment Report but it is still confidential and contains all columns which the earlier CCR proforma was having." In another memorandum it has been stated that "the present system of annual assessment of scientists by the Heads of Divisions affords 'virtually unbridled' powers to the Heads of the Divisions to make or mar the careers of scientists working under them. . . . The comments made on the performance of scientists should be accompanied by reasons in support of conclusion drawn."

3.19. The Ministry have, however, stated that the annual assessment form is very elaborate and has been drawn up after detailed

consideration. It does not require any change at present. The Committee, have also been informed that the scientists are informed of the adverse comments in their annual assessment reports and they are given an opportunity to represent against adverse remarks. The representations duly considered in consultation with the Reporting and Reviewing Scientists and after obtaining their comments, decisions are taken at the appropriate level either to tone down the remarks or expunge them or allow them to remain.

320. When the Committee pointed out during evidence that many of the headings in the Annual Assessment Report were such as had little to do with the performance of the officer as a 'scientist' and left scope for subjective assessment by the heads of Divisions, the Director, IARI stated,

"By and large, it has been made clear to the heads of divisions that while writing the assessment of the scientist, they are to free themselves from any individual prejudices. In so far as it is humanly possible, this is done. I am not saying that this is something which can always be achieved to the maximum possible degree, but they try their best, and the heads of division comments are not final. The concerned Scientist has an opportunity to go to the Director and of course, to a higher level."

321. Asked whether a review of the form of Annual Assessment Report was not called for, the Director General ICAR stated that this form had been developed after discussion. They had consulted the Bhaba Atomic Energy Centre there was a seminar at the Administrative Staff College at Hyderabad. He however, added "we will review it."

322. It is noticed that the ICAR Enquiry Committee suggested in this connection that:

"There should be periodic assessment of the scientists in each category including that of the Principal Scientist. Each scientist should, at the end of each year, give a summary of his work in a performa indicating research and teaching work done by him, papers published and difficulties encountered in carrying out the work, to the Head of the Division who should forward it to the Director with his comments. The Director, in consultation with the Executive Council, should have a panel consisting of three expert members for each discipline from the Institute itself who would assess the work. If the report of the panel is unsatis-

factory, the Director should then take appropriate disciplinary action according to rules. In extreme cases, termination of service may also be considered. An organisation should not only create proper conditions for the scientists and encourage them to do work, but it should also have a mechanism by which scientists who are not sincere and devoted to their work are appropriately dealt with."

3.23. On being asked about the action taken on the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee, the Director General, ICAR, stated during evidence:—

"The assessment of the scientist for purposes of service conditions like promotion, advance increment etc. has been taken out of the Institute and is vested in the Agricultural Scientist Recruitment Board who appoints a panel of experts to go into whatever work the scientist has submitted, if every year we are to have three experts to review the work of each scientist, when we have about 700 research scientists, in the IARI alone, it may lead to a lot of complications. It was considered and it was felt that it would be proper for the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board to have an independent assessment of the work of the candidate, because neither the Director nor the Head of the Division is represented in the Board. The candidate gives a summary of the work he has done and justifies how he is suitable for a higher grade. The Board considers these requests and makes its recommendations. It was felt that this particular recommendation of the Committee was difficult for implementation. There are 4000 scientists. If this recommendation is to be implemented, it will mean 12,000 scientists have to be involved every year in going through the assessment form. It would take an enormous amount of their time."

3.24. To an enquiry whether this job could be entrusted to the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, the Director General, ICAR stated "we will discuss it with the Chairman of the new Board."

3.25. The Committee are not satisfied with the present system of annual assessment of the work of the scientists. A perusal of the headings in the annual assessments from in use at present shows that many of the headings under which a senior scientist is required to give his assessment of the work of a scientist working under him are vague, overlapping and have no relevance for assessing the professional competence of the scientist. Instead of an objective assess-

ment of the achievements of the scientist during the year it leaves considerable scope for subjective judgement by reporting scientist. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the present assessment form may be reviewed with a view to simplifying it and only such columns should be kept in the form as are strictly relevant to assess the performance of the scientist during the year as an individual scientist and as a member of the team.

3.26. The Committee also regret to note that inspite of the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee that the Director in consultation with the Executive Council should have a panel consisting of three expert members for each discipline from the institute itself to assess the work of the scientists and to take follow-up action on the basis of such assessment, no such procedure has yet been introduced and the annual assessment of the work of the scientists is being made by Heads of Divisions as before. The argument by the Director General ICAR that if this recommendation is to be implemented it will mean that 12,000 scientists will have to be involved every year in going through the assessment forms of 4000 scientists is untenable and fallacious as what is required is not a separate panel for each scientist but only one panel for all the scientists in each discipline in an Institute. The Committee feel that instead of brushing aside the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee, the Government should give careful thought to its implementation so as to ensure that there is fair and objective assessment of the work of a scientist during the year and follow up action is taken on the basis of such assessment.

F. Research Papers

3.27 The ICAR Enquiry Committee had pointed out in its report that there was a tendency on the part of the senior scientists particularly Heads of Division to insert their names in research papers for the work which is done by the junior scientists. It suggested that "only those scientists who have made distinct contribution in carrying out research work should be the authors of research papers/reports. The Heads of Division or any other person should not associate his name with the paper unless the student is registered under him or he has made distinct contribution to the work. Help received from any person from the Division or outside the Division for carrying out the research work should be acknowledged in the paper." The Ministry have stated that "the position obtaining at the IARI and other institutes conforms to the views of the Committee.

3.28. It has, however, been stated in several memoranda received by the Committee that Heads of the Division pressurise scientists to

give them authorship in research papers although the Heads have not contributed at all in the work being sent for publication.

3.29. The results of the research are published in the various scientific journals pertaining to agricultural sciences published by Indian and International scientific societies, organisations, universities, etc. These are also published in the various annual reports and special bulletins of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and its Research Institutes as also the agricultural universities in the country. Results of practical interest are also published in journals like "Indian Farming" and 'Kheti'. The guidelines in regard to procedures for forwarding research papers to scientific journals etc. have been issued to Directors/Project Directors of the Research Institutes *vide* Indian Council of Agricultural Research letter No. 10-11/77/Per. IV, dated the 9th November, 1977.

3.30. According to this order if any scientist wishes to have his research paper published in a scientific journal the manuscript of the scientific paper is to be cleared by the Head of the Division/Director within a month from the date of submission of the manuscript by the scientist. Where the Head of the Division/Director considers that the paper does not merit publication but the individual scientist does not agree with that view or where there is an undue delay in offering comments; the scientists concerned can forward the paper for publication on his/her responsibility making it explicit in the forwarding letter to the Editor of the Journal that "the Institute does not hold responsibility for the opinions expressed therein". It has been represented to the Committee that such a declaration in the forwarding letter to the Editor of the Journal is not necessary as it is well understood principle that only the authors of research papers are responsible and answerable for the correctness of the contents of the paper. The Ministry have maintained that when the papers are not cleared by the Head of the Division/Director it is necessary to clearly state that the Institute does not hold responsibility for the opinions expressed therein. The Secretary of the Ministry, however, agreed during evidence to a suggestion that in cases where the research papers are not cleared by the Heads of the Division in time the declaration by the scientists forwarding the research paper could be as follows:—

"Views expressed in the paper are those of the author and not necessarily of the Institute."

3.32. The Committee were informed that out of 2289 papers submitted by the scientists during 1978, 2117 papers were cleared within the prescribed period.

3.33. The Committee have received complaints from scientists that senior scientists pressurise junior scientists to insert their names even in those research papers in which they (senior scientists) have not made any contribution. The Committee would expect the senior scientists to be generous enough to allow their juniors to claim sole credit for the research papers in which they (senior scientists) have made no contribution and thus establish a healthy climate of goodwill in their units.

3.34. As regards forwarding of research papers for publication, the Committee consider that normally it should not be difficult for the Head of the Division or the Director of the Institute to clear the manuscript of a scientific paper for publication within a month from the date of submission of the manuscript by a scientist and in fact as the Committee have been informed, out of 2289 papers submitted by the scientists during 1978, 2117 papers were cleared within the prescribed period. In cases, however, where there is delay in their clearance by the Director/Head or where the Head of the Division/Director considers that the paper does not merit publication but the individual scientist does not agree with that view, the scientists concerned may be allowed to forward the paper for publication after making it explicit in the forwarding letter to the Editor of the Journal that "the views expressed in the paper are those of the author and not necessarily of the Institute."

G. Transfers

3.35. The service rules for Agricultural Research Service provide that 'a scientist shall be liable to transfer to any place in India and a scientist may be required to serve for a minimum period of time in a backward or comparatively less developed area of the country as may be determined and decided by the controlling authority.'

3.36. It has been represented to the Committee that "the provision for compulsory service in a backward area is 'mischievous' because it is obvious that a laboratory scientist who needs sophisticated equipment for his work would be rendered non-functional in a backward area."

3.37. The Committee were informed by the Ministry that "the provision for transfer in a backward area is a wholesome one laid down for the purpose of providing the technical skill and transfer of technology to the people in the backward areas neglected for so long. It can on no account be considered as 'mischievous'. Even young scientists want postings near their own homes and bring all

sort of pressures to change the posting if they are posted to places not of their choice." The Committee were also informed that the broad guidelines for making transfers and the details regarding posting in backward or comparatively less developed areas of the country had been laid down.

3.38. The Committee were also informed during evidence by the Director General ICAR that the provision in regard to the posting in the backward areas had not yet been implemented, because the compensatory package of benefits which should be given to the scientists by way of children education, health facilities, housing facilities etc. were still under negotiations with the Ministry of Finance. He also added "it is wrong to say that you need sophisticated laboratory equipment. There are lots of things which can be done, particularly in those areas like Arunachal and Mizoram; there are so many challenging problems there; scientists will be able to do more original work instead of repetitive work if they go to those places. The agriculture of this country will never progress unless we are in a position also to disperse our scientific talent throughout the country. I consider this provision to be one of the most important steps forward in improving the production potential of all parts of our country."

3.39. The Committee are not averse to the idea of posting scientists to backward areas or to other places where their services can be gainfully utilised. In fact the scientists themselves should welcome such an opportunity as a challenge to carry on research in the field in realistic conditions and help the cause of agriculture in backward and hitherto neglected areas in national interest. The Committee would, however, like the ICAR to ensure that the scientists are not transferred to work on projects unrelated to their field of specialisation and that they are provided adequate facilities to carry on their work. The guidelines laid down for making such transfers should also be followed uniformly in all cases to avoid any cause of complaint.

H. Grievance Machinery

3.40. It has been represented to the Committee by the scientists that there was no machinery for redressal of the grievances of the working scientists. The Ministry have, however, stated that as per orders issued on 1 April 1978 it had been decided with the approval of the governing body that the Committee consisting of the following may be set up at the Institutes and the Headquarters of the Council to look into the grievances of the employees like members

of the Agricultural Research Service and other employees who were not covered under the existing Grievance Cells Scheme:

At the Institutes

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Director of the Institute | Chairman |
| 2. Two Heads of Divisions to be nominated by the Management Committees | Members |
| 3. C.A.O. S.A.O. A.O. | Member-Secretary |

At ICAR Headquarters:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Dy. Director General to be nominated by Director General | Chairman |
| 2. Secretary, ICAR | Member |
| 3. Director (Personnel) | Member |
| 4. Director (Publicity and Information) or in his absence Chief Publicity and Public Relations officer | Member |
| 5. Dy. Director (Admn.) | Member-Secretary. |

3.41. The tenure of the Committees would be for a period of three years and the committees were required to consider grievances relating to salary, overtime, leave, training, opportunities, seniority, research facilities, promotion and general working conditions.

3.42. It was noticed that the Grievance Committees did not have any representative of the Scientists. The Director General ICAR agreed during evidence before the Committee to have the scientists' representatives on these committees.

3.43. The Committee desire that the membership of the Grievance Committees may be enlarged to include the elected representatives of the scientists. It should also be ensured that these committees are actually set up in all the Institutes of ICAR and are allowed to function effectively.

.. CHAPTER IV ..

DEPUTATION ABROAD OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENTISTS

4.1. Agricultural scientists of ICAR, its Research Institutes, Agricultural Universities and State Governments are deputed abroad for trainings|study tours and for participation in conferences, meetings, workshops, symposia, etc., under the following three categories:

- (i) Training|study Tours under the approved projects/programmes, bilateral agreements and-protocols;
- (ii) participation in conferences, meetings, etc. held abroad in response to invitations received from the foreign agencies|International Organisations by ICAR|Institutes; and
- (iii) Participation in conferences, meetings, etc. held abroad in response to the invitations extended by the foreign agencies|international organisations to individual scientists.

4.2. It has been stated that for categories (i) above, proposals are generally invited from the ICAR Institutes|Agricultural Universities and where appropriate, State Governments keeping in view the specific field of training and its usefulness in the context of the overall interest of the agricultural research in the country. Where a specific project is in operation at particular Institutes|Agricultural Universities, the deputation proposals for training|study tour are invited from these Institutes|Agricultural Universities. Such deputation proposals are examined at the headquarters of the ICAR and suitable scientists are recommended for training etc. For category (ii), whenever such invitations are received the same are examined from the usefulness of the participation from scientific|national point of view. If it is decided that the participation would be useful, proposals are invited from Institutes|Agricultural Universities|State Governments, where work in particular discipline of the meeting is being done. The proposals received are considered, in detail, and suitable scientists are recommended on merit for participation. For category (iii), whenever invitations in the name of individual scientists are received, the same are also considered from the overall interest of scientific research in the country. If the participation of the scientists invited is considered useful, it is approved.

4.3. The number of agricultural scientist sent abroad during 1978 was 261 and its break up was as follows:—

<i>Name of the institute Organisation</i>	<i>No. of scientists sent</i>
ICAR Headquarters	31
Scientists working in ICAR INSTITUTES	179
Scientists working in Agricultural universities	41
Scientists from Institutes not directly under ICAR	9

4.4. It had been stated in a memorandum to the Committee by an association of the scientists that "only sometimes are nominations invited from the Institutes, most often the last dates for which have already expired or are too close. The scientists who take all the trouble of preparing several copies of their bio-data for submission, at considerable cost and labour, do not later even get to know the fate they met. Were these stopped by the Head of the Division or Director or did they reach the ultimate authority in time for consideration? Were they considered and rejected? Whatever be case, it acts as a dampener for further attempts."

4.5. When asked whether it is ensured that the circulars in this regard are sent to various research institutes and Agricultural Universities well before the last date for submission of applications and the applications are received in the Headquarters of the ICAR in time for final decision the Ministry stated:

"Every effort is made to give as much time as possible to the institutes and the Agricultural Universities for sending nominations to the ICAR Headquarters. However, occasionally very little time is available to the ICAR Headquarters in inviting the nominations and as such it is helpless in giving more time to the Institutes or the universities for submission of applications."

4.6. To a question whether the scientists whose applications are not forwarded to ICAR or who are not in the final list of selected candidates are informed of the decision in the matter, the Ministry have stated that "in case of applications received in response to vacancy circulars the Institutes etc. are informed of the decision who in turn are expected to suitably convey the same to the scientists concerned. A circular, however, is being issued to all the concerned organisations to convey such decisions to the scientists concerned in all cases."

4.7. It had been represented to the Committee that "selection for foreign assignments is made by the Head of the Division or Director according to his own personal judgement. In the process it is common to find that the same person is sent on foreign assignments a number of times." The ICAR Enquiry Committee also observed in their report that "even in the matter of attending seminars or conferences either in India or outside it is alleged that Heads do not act fairly and cases have in fact come to our notice when discrimination has been made."

4.8. In reply to a question about the procedure followed for the selection of scientists for training|participation in conferences|seminars abroad and whether any guidelines had been laid down in this regard, the Ministry have stated that "in every case efforts are made to ensure that the deputation of a particular scientist is in the interest of research and in national interest. In a number of cases, invitations are received on the basis of the scientific work done by the scientists in their respective fields known to the international scientific community. In such cases it is not considered desirable to prevent participation of such scientists in conferences/symposia etc. in view of expertise of such scientists in their respective field and the recognition of their work in International Scientific Community. In order cases when invitations are not by name to individual scientists, efforts are made to expose as many scientists as possible to such international meetings, conferences, etc., keeping in view the performance of such scientists and their capabilities. Each case is first scrutinized by the Director of the Institute concerned and then at the Headquarters of the ICAR by the subject matter specialists who are aware of the work of different scientist in particular discipline so that in selection a fair chance is given to a suitable and competent scientist to go abroad. Even though this procedure is followed, no specific guidelines have been laid down on the subject. General guidelines on the subject are being formulated. When proposals are put up for such deputations, it is clearly mentioned as to whether the officer being considered, has been abroad in the preceding two years. However, the reputations of the scientist, the relevance of the subject matter of the programme and the need to depute a particular scientist in this context is taken into consideration."

4.9. It has also been stated that "the Directors of the Institutes have been advised to restrict their foreign visits as far as possible and to suggest names of suitable younger scientists for participation

in international conferences, Meetings etc., in their places. This question is further being examined and more detailed procedure will be laid down in due course."

.. 4.10. The Committee find that a large number of agricultural scientists (261 in 1978) are sent abroad for training/study tours and for participation in conferences/meetings/workshops/symposia etc. and they are mainly from ICAR Headquarters or from the institutes under the ICAR. The Committee, however, regret to note that the procedure followed for the selection of scientists for deputation abroad is not satisfactory. According to the scientists adequate time is not given to them for submitting their applications. As pointed out in a Memorandum submitted by an association of scientists "nominations are invited from the institutes most often when the last dates have already expired or are too close. The scientists who take all the trouble of preparing several copies of their bio-data for submission at considerable cost and labour do not later even get to know the fate they met." The ICAR has expressed its helplessness in giving adequate time for submitting applications on the ground that "occasionally very little time is available to the ICAR Headquarters in inviting the nominations and as such it is helpless in giving more time to the institutes or the universities for submission of applications." The Committee suggest that in the case of training programmes, which are of regular nature, e.g., under the Colombo Plan and bilateral agreements etc. and even in the case of conferences which are held at regular intervals, it is desirable to invite names of qualified candidates periodically and maintain an up-to-date panel of eligible scientists to ensure that the scientists are not deprived of the chance of going abroad for training etc. because of late receipt of the proposals from the ICAR Headquarters or because of delay in processing and forwarding of applications by the Institutes/Agricultural Universities to the Headquarters of ICAR. In the case of ad hoc training courses and conferences/seminars it should be ensured that the circulars in this regard are sent to various research institutes and Agricultural Universities well before the last date for submission of applications and these are processed expeditiously by the Institutes/Universities and sent to the Headquarters of ICAR in time for final decision.

4.11. The Committee also suggest that all the scientists who apply for foreign assignments/deputations or training should be informed by the Institutes in which they are working as to whether or not their applications have been forwarded to ICAR; and the scientists whose applications are forwarded to ICAR should be informed in

due course as to whether or not they figure in the final list of selected candidates so that they do not remain in dark about the fate of their applications. The Committee desire that suitable instructions should be issued by the ICAR to the Institutes under it.

4.12. The Committee also regret to note that there are no specific guidelines laid down for the preliminary selection of scientists for foreign assignments/deputation either at the Institute level or for final selection at the Headquarters level in ICAR. The selection of scientists, it appears, depends upon the Director of the Institute concerned and the subject matter specialist at the Headquarters of ICAR. The Committee cannot ignore the observations of the ICAR Enquiry Committee in this connection that "even in the matter of attending seminars, conferences either in India or outside, it is alleged that heads do not act fairly and cases have in fact come to our notice when discrimination has been made." The scientists in their memoranda to the Committee have also complained that "selections for foreign assignments is made by the Head of the Division or Director according to his own personal judgement. In the process it is common to find that the same person is sent on foreign assignment a number of times." On enquiry by the Committee, the Ministry have stated that "general guidelines on the subject are being formulated."

The Committee stress that the selection of scientists for foreign assignments/deputation/training should be fair and objective and it would be better if instead of leaving the judgement to the Head of an institute, the selection is made by a committee of scientists. It should also be ensured that only those scientists are sent abroad who have the requisite qualifications and experience and who on return from abroad will be able to serve the Government/Institute in the specialised field for a certain minimum period to be fixed by ICAR. Similarly, for participation in conferences/seminars/symposia the selection of scientists should be made keeping in view the subject for discussion and only the scientists working on those subjects should be sent. In case of any relaxation the reasons for it should be recorded in writing.

4.13. The Committee also desire that guidelines for selection of scientists for foreign visits should be formulated expeditiously and circulated to all institutes and other bodies for strict compliance. The guidelines should, among other things, lay down the number of times a scientist can go abroad for training, participation in conferences/seminars and the period in between two foreign visits so that the same person is not sent abroad time and again and others also can get a chance.

4.14 The Ministry have stated "that the Directors of the Institutes have been advised to restrict their foreign visits as far as possible and to suggest names of suitable younger scientists for participation in international conferences, meetings etc. in their places." The Committee would like the detailed procedure in this regard to be finalized expeditiously and the Committee informed.

SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA,

New Delhi;

Chairman,

April 24, 1979

Estimates Committee.

Waisakha 4, 1901 (S).

APPENDIX I

(Vide para 2.25 of the Report)

**INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
KRISHI BHAVAN: NEW DELHI**

DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD ROAD, NEW DELHI,

D.O. No. 1-2/78-per.IV

Dated the 23rd August, 1978

S. S. DHANDA

**Secretary, ICAR &
Joint Secretary to the
Government of India.**

Dear Dr.

After the introduction of the Agricultural Research Service, a number of scientists at different Institutes have been representing to the Council on various matters connected with A.R.S. While raising the general service matters, some of the scientists have also been questioning the functioning of the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, more particularly the selections made by the Board against different posts advertised by them as also the results of the five-yearly assessments of scientists. In this connection, I would like to invite your attention to the office order No. 12 (37) /75-EE.I (2) dated the 16th July, 1975, wherein it was emphasised that ASRB being an independent authority to assist ICAR in recruitment for scientific posts will be treated in the same way as the Union Service Commission. No attempt should therefore be made to interfere with the functioning of the Board and that employees who make allegations and representations against the Board would attract disciplinary action.

I shall be grateful if you kindly impress upon all the members of your staff to desist from making any observations in their representations or otherwise against the functioning of the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, as such observations would tantamount to interference with the functioning of the Board and would warrant disciplinary action against the concerned employees.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(S. S. Dhanda)

APPENDIX II

(Vide para 3.4 of the Report)

Guidelines for manning positions of Heads of Divisions|Departments on rotational basis

- (1) All positions of Heads of Divisions|Department except those held by permanent Heads of Division|Department who have either not opted for or have not been appointed to the ARS, shall be filled by rotation from amongst S-3 scientists of Agricultural Research Service including those having higher personal grades working in a Division and from scientists holding grades Rs. 1800—2000 or Rs. 1500—2000, who are not members of the ARS.
- (2) The position of Heads of the Division will normally be filled in by the Directors of the Institute for a period of three years from amongst the eligible scientists according to their total length of service in the eligible grades. If two people have joined S-2 or S-3, as the case may be on the same day, their entitlement for appointment as head of the Division|Department would be determined on the basis of the length of service they rendered in the previous grade before their appointment to the present grade. If for any reason, this principle is not proposed to be followed in any particular case, prior approval of the President of the Society will be obtained for such a departure.
- (3) If in any Division|Department no S-3 scientist is available, the position of the Head of that Division|Department may be filled from amongst S-2 scientists in the manner indicated in (2) above. The person holding the position of the Head of the Division, irrespective of the grade he is in will continue to hold the position until he completes the three years tenure although a S-3 scientist in the meanwhile has become available in the Division.
- (4) When the position of the Head of a Division is vacant or when the Head is by reason of illness, absence or any

other cause unable to perform his duties, the Director may appoint any other suitable scientist to act as the Head of the Division|Départment for the time being. The period of such appointment should not however, exceed 3 months.

- (5) The Heads of Divisions|Departments shall be responsible for the work relating to organisation and management of teaching and research work and extension education in their Divisions|Departments. They shall exercise such powers as may be necessary to discharge the functions of the position of a Head of Division|Department and perform such other functions and duties as may be assigned to them by the Director.
- (6) The eligible scientist may exercise his option not to accept the position of a Head of Division|Department in an Institute if offered to him by the Director. A Head of Division|Department may relinquish his position, during his tenure of 3 years' period by giving 3 months' notice to the Director of the Institute, but in the case of Institutes which are engaged in teaching programmes, the relinquishment shall take effect only at the beginning of the next semester.
- (7) The Project Coordinators of All India Research Projects should not be entrusted with the responsibility of Heads of Division|Department.

APPENDIX III

Summary of Recommendations/Observations contained in the Report

S No.	Reference to Para No. of the Report	Summary of Recommendations/Observations
1	2	3
		<i>Organisational set up</i>
1	1.7	<p>The Committee find that in spite of the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee (1973) to convert the ICAR into a Department of Agricultural Research and Education, the Government have allowed it to remain as a society. This, as many scientists have represented to the Committee, has deprived the employees of ICAR constitutional rights and safeguard of moving the courts of law in service matters which are available to employees of Government departments. The Committee agree with the findings of the Enquiry Committee that the society format for ICAR has created considerable confusion in public mind. They also feel that society format gives it no special advantage which it cannot have as a commission or a statutory body. The Committee also feel that if the ICAR is converted into a commission or a statutory body, while it will not lose its autonomy and flexibility in actual working, the employees of ICAR will gain legal right in service matters (which they do not have at present). The Committee desire that the Government may give serious consideration to this matter and convert the ICAR into a Commission or a Statutory Body as may be found to be most suitable for an organisation like ICAR.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recruiting agency</i></p> <p>The Committee find that the setting up of one Member Board for recruitment of Agricultural Scientists is contrary to the recommenda-</p>

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tion of the ICAR Enquiry Committee which did not favour the formation of a separate scientific body for recruitment of agricultural scientists. The Committee feel that if the large number of memoranda received from the scientists is any indication, the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board has not been able to win the confidence of the scientists of the ICAR and the dissatisfaction among scientists in regard to the system of recruitment, as mentioned in the Report of the Enquiry Committee, is still persisting. The Committee feel that if the agricultural scientists working in the institutes, under the ICAR, have little confidence in the present recruitment set up, the sooner it is replaced by another set up the better it would be for everyone. In the Committee's opinion what the Enquiry Committee said in 1973 about recruitment system holds good even today and that the ideal arrangement would be to entrust the task of recruitment of agricultural scientists to the U.P.S.C. For this purpose, if it is necessary to pass a suitable legislation, it should be brought forward without any further delay.

Assessment Committees

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2.22

The Committee need hardly emphasise that in order to ensure fair and objective assessment of the scientists and to generate confidence among them that their promotions will be based on merit and not on extraneous considerations, it is essential that the scientists appointed on assessment committees are experts in the specific fields of specialisation and that they are of reputed integrity. It also needs to be ensured that persons who have retired from ICAR and those who have lost touch with the academic activities for long are not made members of the assessment committees.

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The Committee also consider that the letter addressed to the scientists nominated to the assessment panels needs to be modified. Instead

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of merely drawing their attention to the convention that "a member of the Interview Board should not have any relation or any one else in whom he may be interested as a candidate appearing in the interview" they should be asked to furnish a written declaration that "none of the candidates being assessed for promotion is|has been his relation, student, ex-colleague or subordinate."

Representations

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The Committee find that the letter issued by the ICAR on 23 August, 1978 provides for disciplinary action being taken against employees who make "allegations and representations against the Board." This has created an impression in the minds of scientists that they have been prohibited from making any representations against selections, assessments etc. carried out by ASRB whereas according to the Ministry the intention of the management was that the scientists should "desist from making any observations or insinuation in their representations or otherwise against the functioning of the ASRB", and that there was no intention of preventing them from making any representations against the decisions of the Board. The Committee suggest that a letter clarifying the position may be issued by ICAR to allay the apprehensions in the minds of scientists on this account.

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The Committee are not satisfied with the procedures followed by the ASRB for dealing with the representations received from the scientists. From the reply furnished by the Ministry it is apparent that no action is taken on such representations by the ASRB. The Committee suggest that all representations against the decisions of the Board in regard to induction of a scientist into the Agricultural Research Service or promotion of a scientist to the next higher grade should be considered by the President of

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the Council. If after going through the representation, it is found that there are facts in the representation which *prima facie* justify a review of the decision arrived at by the ASRB the matter should be referred to the Board for reconsideration. The recommendation made in such cases by the Board should be recorded in writing along with the reasons therefor, and the scientist making the representation informed of the final decision in the matter.

Working conditions

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3.15

The Committee find that it was in 1973 that the ICAR Enquiry Committee had made several recommendations to improve the working conditions of Agricultural Scientists. But even after six years many of these recommendations have either not been implemented at all or are still in the process of examination/implementation. The guidelines for appointment of the Heads of Divisions on rotation basis have been issued only on 23rd March, 1979. No action has been taken to appoint Divisional Committees having composition and functions as suggested by the Enquiry Committee. Similarly inspite of the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee that powers be delegated to the actual scientists, no financial powers have been delegated to them even to purchase small items needed for research work causing hinderance in their work. In the circumstances it is not surprising that the frustration and unrest among the agricultural scientists in regard to their working conditions is still persisting. Such a dilatory approach towards such simple but important recommendations of the Enquiry Committee which were intended to improve the working conditions of the agricultural scientists and to bring about their participation in administration cannot be too strongly deprecated. The Committee would urge that this matter should now receive immediate attention of the Council and recommendations of the Enquiry Committee implemented in letter and spirit without any further loss of time under intimation to this Committee.

Centralised instrument section

- 6 3.17 The Committee desire that the details of the scheme to have for major equipments a Centralised instrument section under the charge of a technical supervisor should be finalised and it may be introduced soon in all the Institutes of ICAR to solve the difficulties of the Scientists in regard to the equipment needed for their research work. Proper guidelines should also be laid down for making the instruments available to the scientists without giving any one of them any cause for complaint.

Annual assessment

- 7 3.25 The Committee are not satisfied with the present system of annual assessment of the work of the scientists. A perusal of the headings in the annual assessment form in use at present shows that many of the headings under which a senior scientist is required to give his assessment of the work of a scientist working under him are vague, overlapping and have no relevance for assessing the professional competence of the scientist. Instead of an objective assessment of the achievements of the scientist during the year it leaves considerable scope for subjective judgement by reporting scientist. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the present assessment form may be reviewed with a view to simplifying it and only such columns should be kept in the form as are strictly relevant to assess the performance of the scientist during the year as an individual scientist and as a member of the team.

- 8 3.26 The Committee also regret to note that in spite of the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee that the Director in consultation with the Executive Council should have a panel consisting of three expert members for each discipline from
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the institute itself to assess the work of the scientists and to take follow-up action on the basis of such assessment, no such procedure has yet been introduced and the annual assessment of the work of the scientists is being made by Heads of Divisions as before. The Committee feel that instead of brushing aside the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee, the Government should give careful thought to its implementation so as to ensure that there is fair and objective assessment of the work of a scientist during the year and follow up action is taken on the basis of such assessment.

Research papers

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3.33

The Committee have received complaints from scientists that senior scientists pressurise junior scientists to insert their names even in those research papers in which they (senior scientists) have not made any contribution. The Committee would expect the senior scientists to be generous enough to allow their juniors to claim sole credit for the research papers in which they (senior scientists) have made no contribution and thus establish a healthy climate of goodwill in their units.

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3.34

As regards forwarding of research papers for publication, the Committee consider that normally it should not be difficult for the Head of the Division or the Director of the Institute to clear the manuscript of a scientific paper for publication within a month from the date of submission of the manuscript by a scientist and in fact as the Committee have been informed out of 2289 papers submitted by the scientists during 1978, 2117 papers were cleared within the prescribed period. In cases, however, where there is delay in their clearance by the Director/Head or where the Head of the Division|Director considers that

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the paper does not merit publication but the individual scientists does not agree with that view, the scientists concerned may be allowed to forward the paper for publication after making it explicit in the forwarding letter to the Editor of the Journal that "the views expressed in the paper are those of the author and not necessarily of the Institute."

Transfers

- 11 3.39 The Committee are not averse to the idea of posting scientists to backward areas or to other places where their services can be gainfully utilised. In fact the scientists themselves should welcome such an opportunity as a challenge to carry on research in the field in realistic conditions and help the cause of agriculture, in backward and hitherto neglected areas in national interest. The Committee would, however, like the ICAR to ensure that the scientists are not transferred to work on projects unrelated to their field of specialisation and that they are provided adequate facilities to carry on their work. The guidelines laid down for making such transfers should also be followed uniformly in all cases to avoid any cause of complaint.

Grievance Committees

- 12 3.43 The Committee desire that the membership of the Grievance Committees for agricultural scientists may be enlarged to include the elected representatives of the scientists. It should also be ensured that these committees are actually set up in all the Institutes of ICAR and are allowed to function effectively.

Deputation abroad

- 13 4.10 The Committee find that a large number of agricultural scientists (261 in 1978) are sent abroad for training/study tours and for parti-

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cipation in conferences/meetings/workshops/symposia etc. and they are mainly from ICAR Headquarters or from the institutes under the ICAR. The Committee, however, regret to note that the procedure followed for the selection of scientists for deputation abroad is not satisfactory. According to the scientists adequate time is not given to them for submitting their applications.

The Committee suggest that in the case of training programmes, which are of regular nature, e.g., under the Colombo Plan and bilateral agreements etc. and even in the case of conferences which are held at regular intervals, it is desirable to invite names of qualified candidates periodically and maintain an up-to-date panel of eligible scientists to ensure that the scientists are not deprived of the chance of going abroad for training etc. because of late receipt of the proposals from the ICAR Headquarters or because of delay in processing and forwarding of applications by the Institutes/Agricultural Universities to the Headquarters of ICAR. In the case of *ad hoc* training course and conferences/seminars it should be ensured that the circulars in this regard are sent to various research institutes and Agricultural Universities well before the last date for submission of applications and these are processed expeditiously by the Institutes/Universities and sent to the Headquarters of ICAR in time for final decision.

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4.11

The Committee also suggest that all the scientists who apply for foreign assignments/deputations or training should be informed by the Institutes in which they are working as to whether or not their applications have been forwarded to ICAR; and the scientists whose appli-

cations are forwarded to ICAR should be informed in due course as to whether or not they figure in the final list of selected candidates so that they do not remain in dark about the fate of their applications. The Committee desire that suitable instructions should be issued by the ICAR to the Institutes under it.

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The Committee regret to note that there are no specific guidelines laid down for the preliminary selection of scientists for foreign assignments/deputation either at the Institute level or for final selection at the Headquarters level in ICAR. The selection of scientists, it appears, depends upon the Director of the Institute concerned and the subject matter specialist at the Headquarters of ICAR.

The Committee stress that the selection of scientists for foreign assignments/deputation/training should be fair and objective and it would be better if instead of leaving the judgement to the Head of an institute, the selection is made by a Committee of scientists. It should also be ensured that only those scientists are sent abroad who have the requisite qualifications and experience and who on return from abroad will be able to serve the Government/, Institute in the specialised field for a certain minimum period to be fixed by ICAR. Similarly, for participation in conferences seminars/, symposia the selection of scientists should be made keeping in view the subject for discussion and only the scientists working on those subjects should be sent. In case of any relaxation the reasons for it should be recorded in writing.

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The Ministry have stated "that the Directors of the Institutes have been advised to restrict their foreign visits as far as possible and to suggest names of suitable younger scientists for participation in international conferences, meetings etc. in their places." The Committee would like the detailed procedure in this regard to be finalised expeditiously and the Committee informed.
