

(Referred to in paragraph 2.2)

Post Office Act, 1953

Postmaster-General's privilege

Exclusive
Privilege
of
Postmaster-
General

3—(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the Postmaster-General shall within the British postal area have the exclusive privilege of conveying from one place to another, and of performing all the incidental services of receiving, collecting, despatching and delivering, all letters:

Provided that, subject to compliance with such terms, conditions and restrictions as the Postmaster-General thinks fit and to the concurrence of the Treasury, the Postmaster General may either generally or in the case of any particular person authorise—

- (a) letters to be sent, conveyed and delivered otherwise than by post;
- (b) the collection of letters otherwise than by an officer of the Post Office, whether to be despatched by post or otherwise.

(2) Nothing in the foregoing subsection shall make unlawful—

- (a) the conveyance and delivery of a letter personally by the sender thereof;
- (b) the sending, conveyance and delivery of a letter by means of a private friend who himself delivers that letter to the addressee;
- (c) the sending, conveyance and delivery of a letter concerning the private affairs of the sender or addressee thereof by means of a messenger sent for the purpose by the sender of the letter;
- (d) the sending, conveyance and delivery otherwise than by post of any document issuing out of a court of justice or of any return or answers thereto;
- (e) the sending and conveyance of letters from merchants who are the owners of a merchant ship or commercial aircraft, or of goods carried in such a ship or aircraft, by means of that ship or aircraft and the delivery thereof to the addressee by any person employed for the purpose by those merchants, so, however, that no payment or reward, profit or advantage whatsoever is given or received for the conveyance or delivery of the letters;
- (f) the sending, conveyance and delivery of letters by land by means of a common carrier, being letters concerning and for delivery with goods carried by him, so, however, that no payment or reward, profit or advantage whatsoever is given or received for the conveyance or delivery of those letters:

Provided that nothing in this subsection shall authorise any person to make a collection of letters for the purpose of their being sent or conveyed in any manner authorised by this subsection.

(3) Notwithstanding anything in the last foregoing subsection, the following persons are expressly forbidden to carry a letter or to receive, collect or deliver a letter, even if they receive no payment or reward for doing so, that is to say—

- (a) except for such letters as are mentioned in paragraph (e) of the last foregoing subsection, owners of, or any person on board, any ship or aircraft on a voyage or flight between, to or from places in the British postal area;
- (b) except for such letters as are mentioned in paragraph (f) of the last foregoing subsection, common carriers by land or their servants or agents;
- (c) save as provided in section forty-four of this Act or in section two of the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act (Northern Ireland), 1930 (which relates to the conveyance of mails by public service vehicles in Northern Ireland), owners, drivers or conductors of public service vehicles:

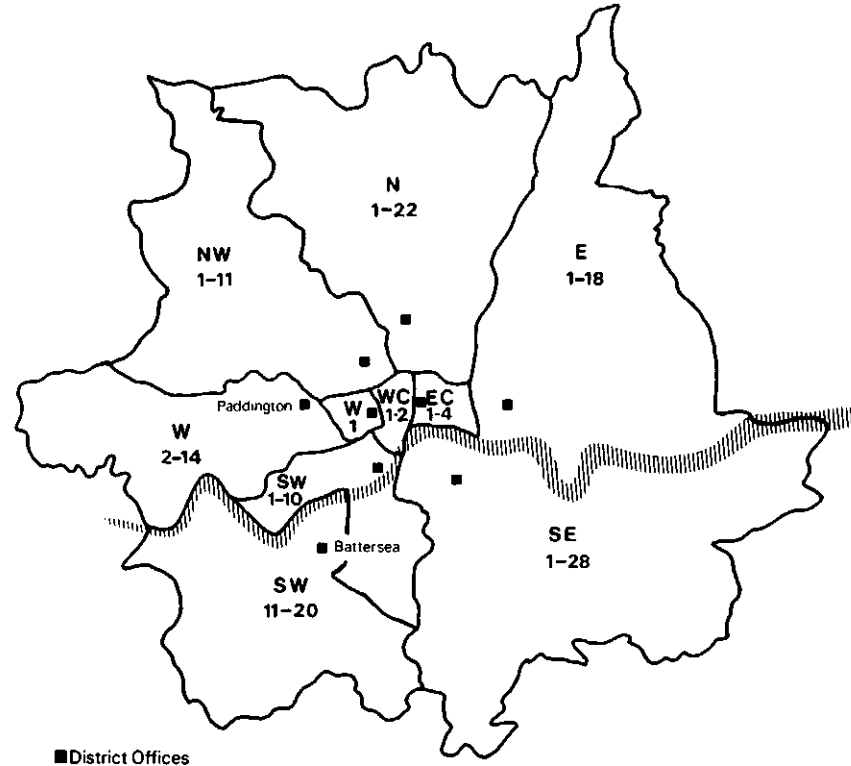
Provided that this subsection shall not make unlawful the receipt, carriage or delivery of letters between places in the British Postal area by any person which would otherwise be lawful by virtue of paragraph (a) or, if that person is a passenger, paragraph (b) or (c) of the last foregoing subsection.

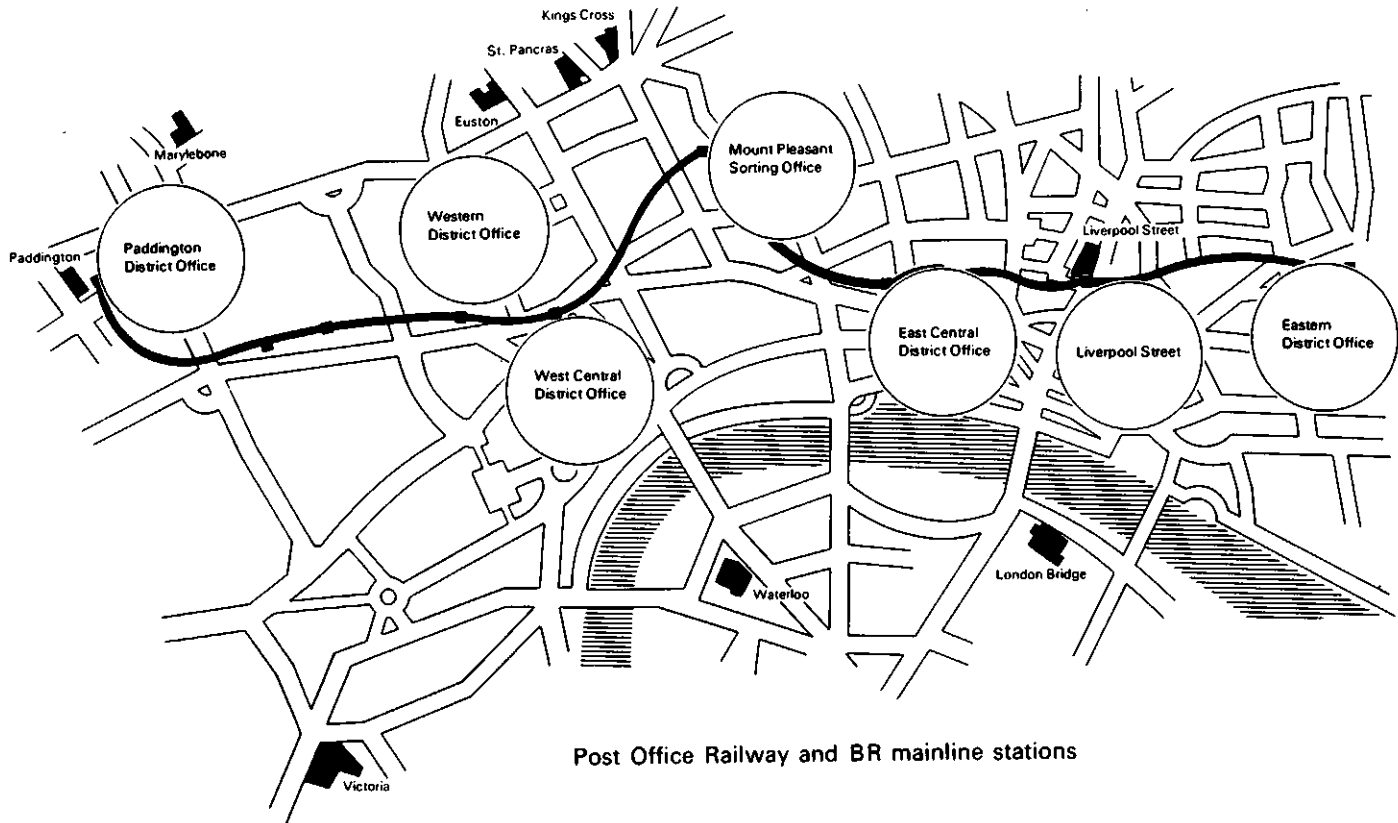
(4) For the purposes of this section, the expression "letter" includes a packet, so, however, as not to include a newspaper or a parcel unless a communication not forming part of a newspaper is contained therein.

ANNEX 2

(Referred to in paragraph 3.1)

London Postal Region Inner Area



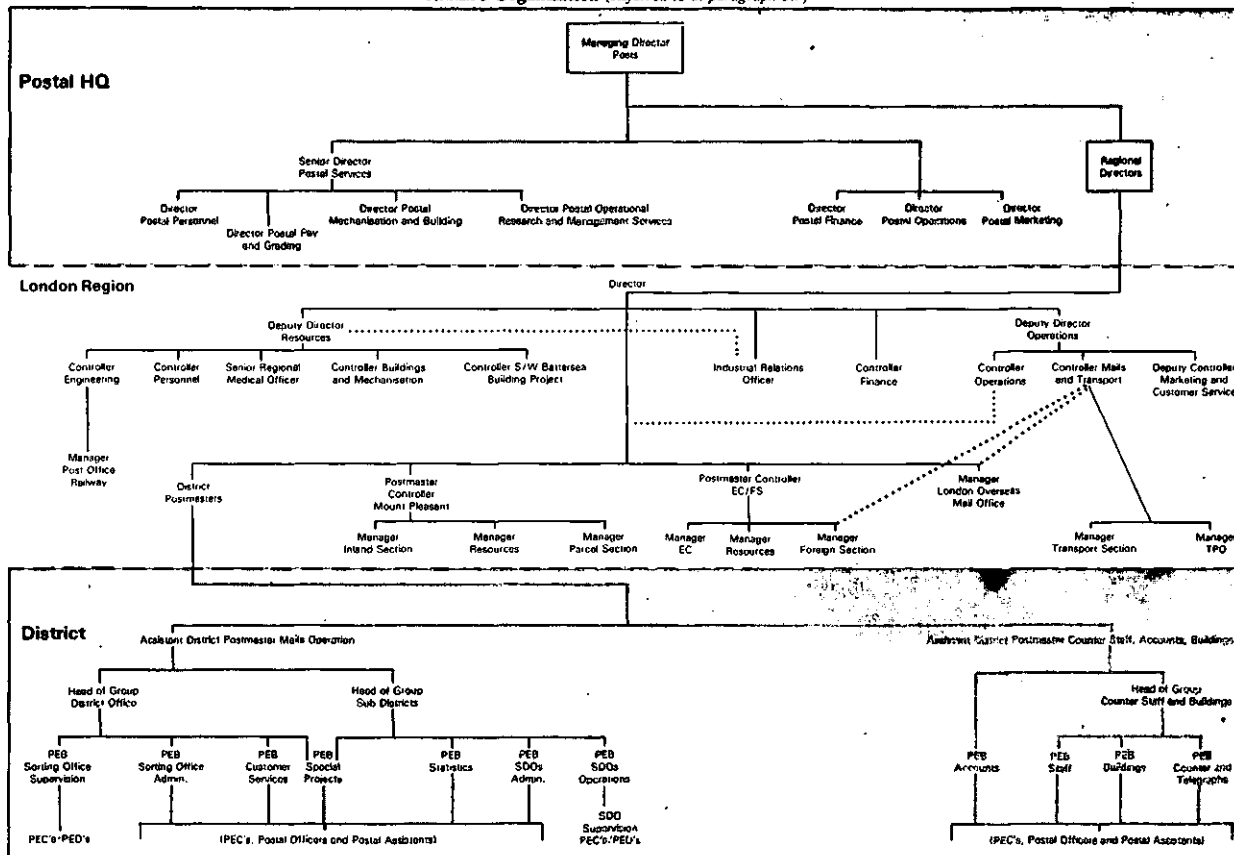


Post Office Railway and BR mainline stations

London Postal Region



ANNEX 3 Organisation (Referred to in paragraph 3.7)



ANNEX 4

(Referred to in paragraphs 3.8, 3.19, 3.28 and 8.31)

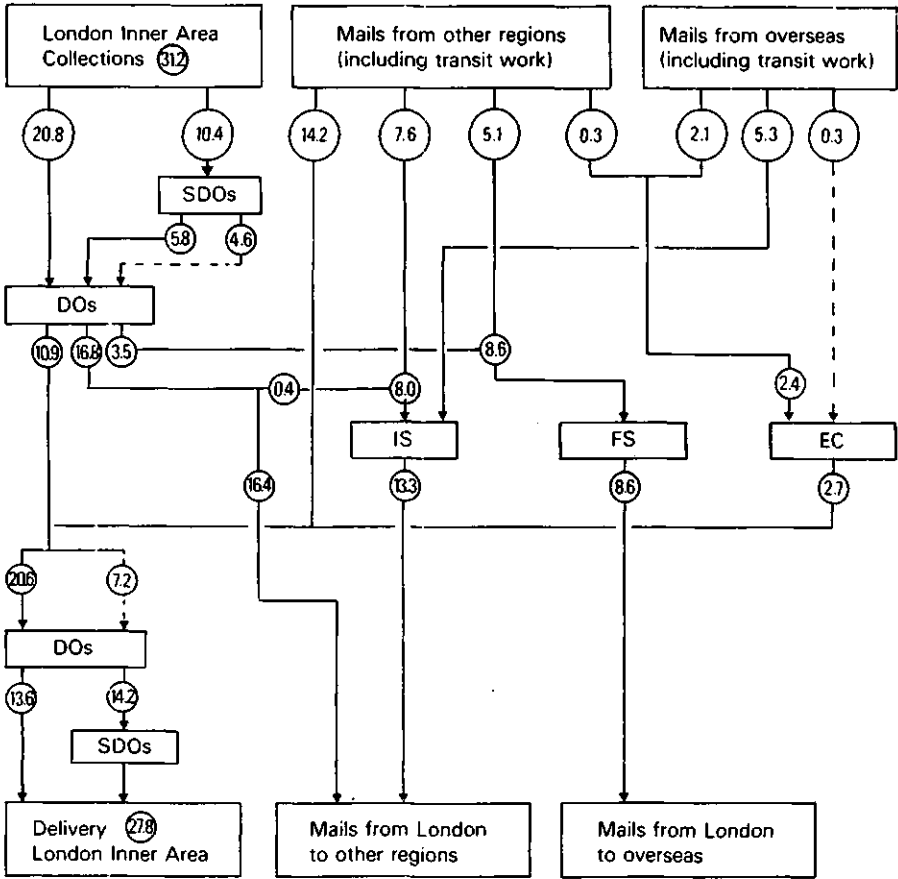
District and Other Offices

Unit	Traffic Weekly 000's				Establishment			
	Posted Totals	Delivered Totals	PED	Vacancies %	PHG	Vacancies %	Postmen	Vacancies %
IS (Inland Section) } FS (Foreign Section) }	5,179		214	7.0	1,768	25.3	1,265	7.6
			59	15.2	913	19.2	570	5.1
ECDO		4,198	147	7.4	576	14.6	1,612	6.8
EDO } NDO }	4,505	2,450	74	6.7	127	18.9	1,495	7.7
		2,483	80	10.0	408	14.5	1,641	7.4
NWDO	3,190	2,672	85	15.3	313	21.8	1,552	8.8
SEDO	4,348	3,478	101	4.0	345	12.2	1,773	6.0
SWDO	3,530	3,559	96	8.3	399	17.0	1,741	13.6
Battersea	2,259	1,772	44	—	160	7.5	1,028	9.6
WDO	3,282	2,824	85	5.8	372	20.7	1,325	8.4
Paddington	2,601	2,544	58	10.3	303	21.1	1,326	17.0
WCDO	2,274	1,794	73	13.7	237	17.3	749	7.7
TOTAL	31,168	27,774	1,116	8.4	5,921	19.6	16,077	9.0

ANNEX 5

(Referred to in paragraph 3.12)

Flow of letter mail in London Inner Area



- ⊙ 1978 levels of weekly traffic in millions
- Flow of mail to be sorted at next destination
- - -> Flow of mail (through bags) not requiring to be sorted at next destination
- IS Inland Section
- FS Foreign Section
- EC Eastern Central District Office
- DO District Office
- SDO Sub District Office

ANNEX 6

*(Referred to in paragraph 4.10)***Delivered Traffic****First Class—By Day B****UK — DO's (LPR Inner)**

<i>1977</i>	<i>BAT</i>	<i>EDO</i>	<i>ECDO</i>	<i>NDO</i>	<i>NWDO</i>	<i>PAD</i>	<i>SEDO</i>	<i>SWDO</i>	<i>WDO</i>	<i>WCDO</i>
September	95	92	97	94	89	96	97	96	93	97
October	98	94	96	93	91	92	97	95	91	97
November	97	93	96	94	92	93	96	95	91	97
December	97	88	97	93	83	90	94	95	94	96
<i>1978</i>										
January	95	95	97	94	92	94	97	95	93	99
February	95	92	97	94	91	93	96	94	93	95
March	95	90	98	91	86	80	95	91	92	95
April	94	94	95	95	89	88	98	96	88	98
May	95	93	95	91	90	86	91	92	90	99
June	96	92	95	94	90	90	96	93	92	97
July	96	86	91	92	81	84	94	92	88	96
August	92	88	NA	94	83	92	95	89	77	NA
September	95	91	90	93	78	93	91	88	86	NA
October	91	88	94	92	87	88	96	90	86	NA
November	96	91	95	94	94	96	96	88	86	95
December	84	90	96	87	86	77	94	87	78	83
<i>1979</i>										
January	75	80	84	81	70	79	82	74	72	85
February	93	82	89	90	87	89	91	86	83	93
March	83	83	90	88	91	89	87	81	73	85
April	78	77	88	81	77	70	79	NA	73	78
May	89	88	90	88	81	84	90	NA	77	91
June	74	72	87	69	71	77	79	66	69	67
July	84	72	84	76	69	81	90	77	78	52
August	89	77	91	90	83	82	88	79	79	83
September	86	81	87	86	81	71	89	81	69	79

ANNEX 6—Continued

Posted Traffic

First Class — By Day B

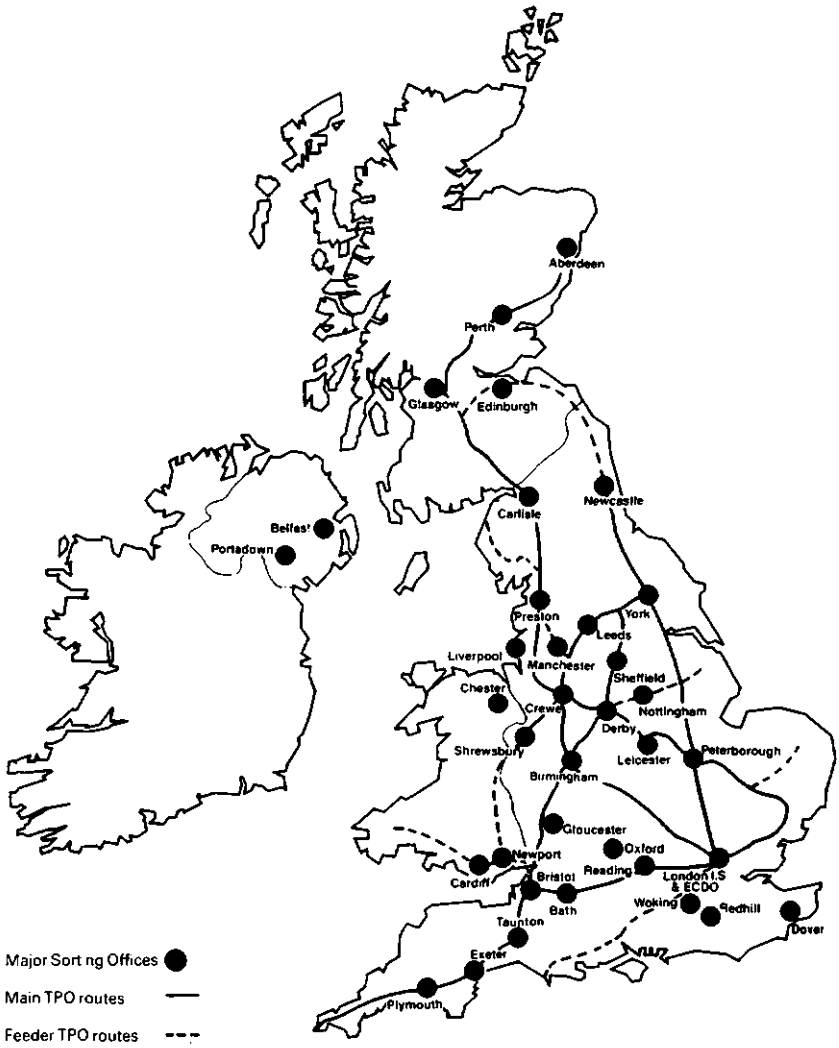
LPR DO's — UK (LPRI)

	BAT	EDO	ELCO	NDO	NWDO	PAD	SEDO	SWDO	WDO	WCDO
<i>1977</i>										
September	96	96	93	94	95	95	95	95	90	93
October	93	94	93	95	95	96	95	95	90	90
November	92	96	95	96	94	95	96	92	86	92
December	97	91	92	93	94	95	93	92	80	87
<i>1978</i>										
January	92	94	95	95	94	96	96	95	88	92
February	95	96	94	94	95	95	97	93	87	90
March	94	96	93	95	90	95	93	90	88	88
April	96	96	94	96	95	95	94	93	89	89
May	96	95	91	95	94	90	95	90	85	89
June	93	93	92	94	93	96	93	93	79	91
July	90	92	90	92	84	96	91	90	77	88
August	90	93	91	90	89	96	94	90	77	NA
September	93	92	89	93	81	89	91	89	81	80
October	96	95	88	93	92	94	94	90	80	79
November	96	96	93	95	92	92	94	94	90	88
December	98	98	96	95	92	98	98	94	95	98
<i>1979</i>										
January	81	84	77	82	85	81	86	75	66	70
February	86	93	89	93	87	92	94	89	84	79
March	88	90	88	87	85	90	88	82	78	83
April	86	78	82	73	84	85	82	65	78	69
May	91	89	86	89	86	90	90	82	79	77
June	83	67	78	69	75	82	82	71	64	64
July	85	66	81	67	71	85	87	71	75	58
August	90	84	90	86	77	87	91	82	81	69
September	84	89	85	84	81	85	84	81	77	67

ANNEX 7

(Referred to in paragraph 7.8)

Travelling Post Office Network



(Referred to in Paragraph 9.8)

Productivity and the influence of changing traffic levels

Definitions of productivity

1. The term productivity generally denotes the volume of physical output achieved by a given amount of resources over a given period of time, eg output per man hour. Movements in productivity so measured help to determine the efficiency of the process under review. The measurement is most reliably applied to manufacturing processes involving the continuous production of standard items on a controlled basis. The concept of productivity is however less easily applied to service industries such as the postal business which have no measurable output. The essence of the mail service is to process a fluctuating volume of traffic in accordance with a stated speed of service at a minimum resource cost. But the traffic is not predictable in detail, nor is it homogeneous: for example, from the moment of posting to the point of delivery a parcel takes about six times more work than a letter; and within the letter mail packets and large flat envelopes require more handling than ordinary letters. Nor can labour resources be geared quickly to meet changes in the volume and mix of the incoming mail. Labour, including blocks of overtime, has to be contracted in advance of need, and may prove greater or less than the optimum requirement. Because of all these factors the measurement of productivity in the postal business and particularly the conclusions to be drawn from apparent changes over time, need handling with special care.

2. The Post Office itself aims to measure productivity by means of an efficiency index which relates the time actually taken to process the mail to the time it ought theoretically to have taken:

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{No. of hours required theoretically to process mail}}{\text{No. of hours used to process mail}}$$

The number of hours required theoretically to process the mail is expressed in 'work units' defined as:

$$(\text{No. of items processed}) \times (\text{No. of handlings per item}) \times (\text{Time per handling}).$$

Productivity is then represented by:

$$\frac{\text{Aggregate of work units for each type of mail processed}}{\text{Number of man hours used in processing}}$$

or algebraically:

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\sum_i W_i}{\sum_i M_i} = \frac{\sum_i N_i \times h_i \times t_i}{\sum_i M_i}$$

- W = Work units
- N = No. of items
- h = No. of handlings
- t = Time for one handling
- M = Man hours used in processing
- i = Type of mail

3. In the absence of special factors, this index should be close to unity since both the numerator and denominator refer to the time associated with the same activity: the index is sensitive to the rate at which work is done but not to changes in the level or the mix of traffic.

4. A comprehensive index of this kind could be constructed for the whole of the mail service if the appropriate data were available for each type of traffic and for each process of delivery, collection, sorting etc. Such indices might also be used for comparing different individual processes or for investigating productivity changes over time for a specific process by substituting the appropriate data for that process alone.

Modified forms of the productivity index

5. The Post Office uses modified forms of the productivity index, either for simplicity or because of the lack of appropriate work study data. For example, when it can be assumed, for all practical purposes, that the handling time for any category of traffic is constant, the index can be simplified as follows:

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{(\text{A constant}) \times \text{the aggregate of [No. of items} \times \text{No. of handlings] for each type}}{\text{Number of man hours used in processing}}$$

or

$$\frac{K \times \sum_i N_i \times h_i}{\sum_i M_i} \text{ where } K = \text{a constant handling time}$$

Sometimes it can be assumed that both the number of handlings and the time per handling is constant over the traffic types of interest, and a further simplification can be made:

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{(\text{A constant}) \times \text{the aggregate number of items for each type}}{\text{Number of man hours used in processing}}$$

or

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{C \times \sum_i^i N_i}{\sum_i M_i}$$

C = a constant derived from the constant handling time K and the constant number of handlings

and one can believe the assessments underlying them,

Clearly if one is interested in relative productivity rather than an absolute level, it is not necessary even to evaluate the constants 'K' and 'C'.

Productivity index used in Chapter 9

6. Because of the absence of relevant work measurement data the productivity trends described in Chapter 9 are based on a simplified efficiency index calculated by reference to 'evaluated traffic processed' in the numerator and 'gross paid hours' in the denominator, viz

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{Evaluated traffic processed}}{\text{Gross paid for hours during processing}}$$

$$= \frac{(\text{No. of letters posted}) + 2.5 \times (\text{No. of parcels handled})}{(\text{Direct hours used in processing} + \text{Other paid for hours})}$$

or formally

$$= \frac{(N_1 + 2.5N_2)}{(M_1 + M_2) + M_0}$$

N₁ = No. of letters posted.

N₂ = No. of parcels handled.

M₁ = Man hours processing letters.

M₂ = Man hours processing parcels.

M₀ = All other paid hours.

7. The concept of 'evaluated traffic' allows the Post Office to use data which is collected continuously in each office, ie posted letters and parcels handled. However, to be consistent it is necessary to convert 'parcels handled' to the equivalent number of 'parcels posted' and then to weight each parcel to reflect the fact that the relative work content of letters and parcels is approximately 1 to 6. A multiplier of 2.5 is sufficient for this conversion because at the point of counting, the number of parcel handlings is already 2.4 times the number of parcels posted.

8. The value of the index described above will be sensitive to changes in the rate of work, but will also change with traffic mix and traffic level even if the work rate remains constant. This is because evaluated traffic does not discriminate the various types of letter mail which involve differing work contents, and does not include delivered letters which also have a different work content, whereas the number of hours used in processing will reflect these differences. Figure 1 tabulates the variations in work content of letter mail, in terms of average number of handlings and percentage of letter packets, for Inner London, Outer London and the provinces. The higher the percentage of packets and the greater the number of handlings the greater the work

content. Moreover, the gross hours in the denominator contain an element which is independent of the amount of traffic processed and can be regarded as fixed; a consequence of this is that efficiency, as measured by this index will fall when the volume of traffic declines. Figure 2 shows the trend of evaluated traffic between 1967-78 for Inner London, Outer London and the provinces.

FIGURE 1 Variation of Work Content of Letter Mail

	<i>Outward Letter Mail</i>		<i>Inward Letter Mail</i>	
	<i>Handlings per Letter and per Packet</i>	<i>Percentage of Packets</i>	<i>Handlings per Letter and per Packet</i>	<i>Percentage of Packets</i>
Inner London	1.73	17.4	1.64	12.7
Outer London	1.40	11.6	1.26	10.6
Provinces	1.40	11.6	1.34	12.9

Note: Each packet handling takes three times as long as each letter handling.

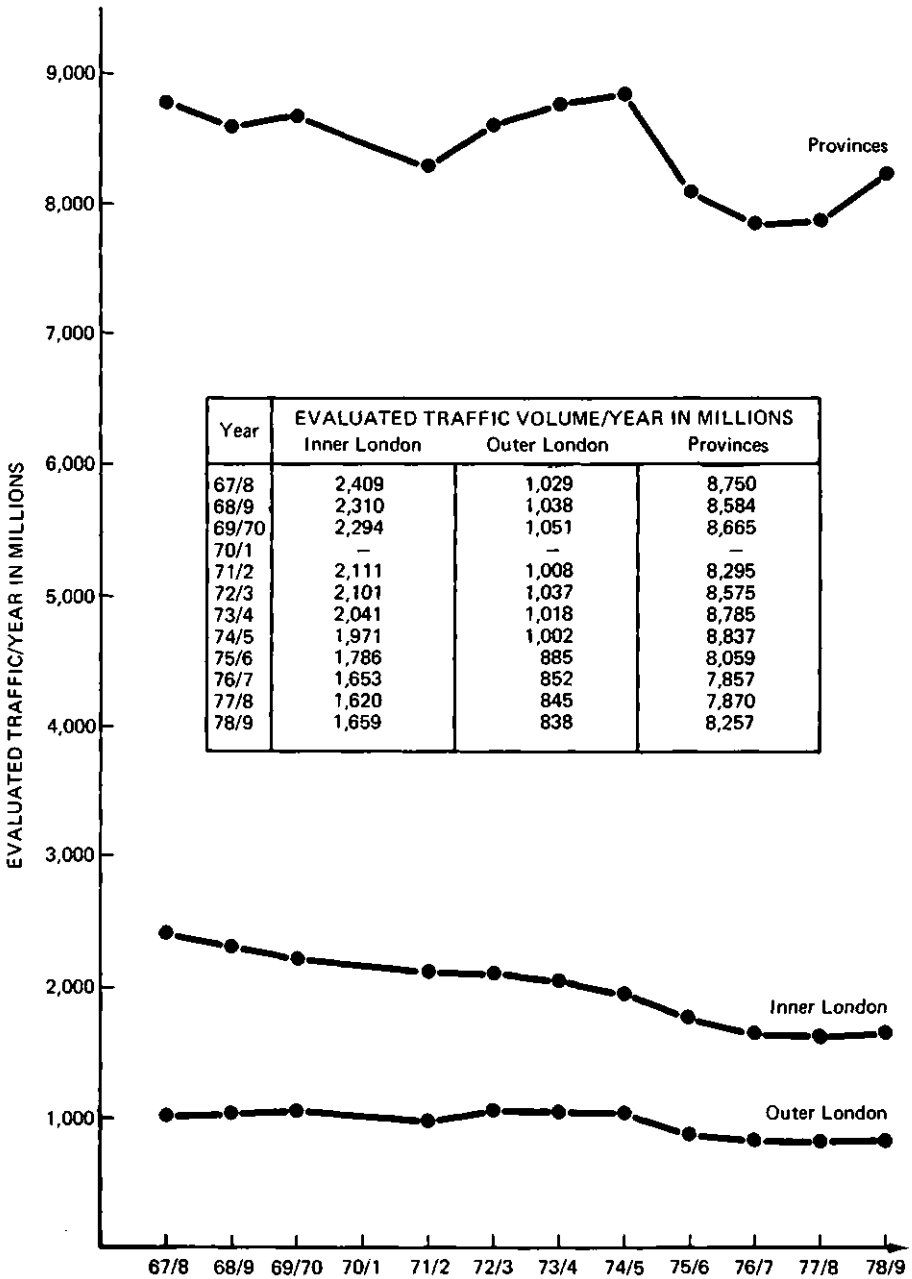
Source: MMC Study

9. It should also be emphasised that the figures presented in this annex are not based on full traffic measurement. The Post Office obtains totals daily of the number of letters passing through the stamp cancelling machines and special bulk postings by firms of mail into sorting offices. In the Inner Area this amounts to some 54 per cent of the posted traffic. The remaining 46 per cent of posted traffic is made up of meter franked, hand-stamped, and registered mail and this element, along with the delivered traffic, is only counted once a year for one week in accordance with nationally laid down instructions. Regular sampling of parcel traffic provides statistics of posted, delivered, and forwarded parcels, with an annual count in October if this is considered to be necessary. Therefore traffic and hence productivity estimates are subject to a significant level of uncertainty.

Alignment of staff hours to traffic level

10. After allowing for the degree of sensitivity of the index as described in paragraph 8, the level and variations in performance revealed by the index will be closely related to the ability of management to align staff hours to the different amount of work required by the changes in traffic.

FIGURE 2 Traffic Trends 1967-1978



Source: Post Office Study

(a) Alignment of staff hours to long-term traffic changes

11. The Post Office assumes that for any particular operational policy the appropriate level of hours has two components, a fixed element that is independent of traffic level and a variable element that is linearly related to traffic.

Thus

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total Hours required for given level of Traffic} &= (\text{Level of Traffic}) \times (\text{Constant Sensitivity of Hours to Traffic}) \\ &+ \text{A fixed level of Hours} \end{aligned}$$

or Algebraically

$$H_T = (S \times T) + H_0$$

- H_T = Total Hours required for Traffic
- T = Level of Traffic
- H_0 = Fixed level of Hours
- S = A constant representing the Sensitivity of Hours to Traffic

Sensitivity is defined as the change in hours associated with a unit change in traffic. However, in the absence of reliable work measurement the Post Office has to present the relationship in the form of an elasticity which provides for relative changes but neglects the fixed element. Elasticity of staff hours to traffic is expressed as:

$$\frac{(\text{Change in hours})}{(\text{Current level of hours})} \div \frac{(\text{Change in traffic})}{(\text{Current level of traffic})}$$

or

$$\frac{(\text{Change in hours})}{(\text{Change in traffic})} \times \frac{(\text{Current level of traffic})}{(\text{Current level of hours})}$$

which can be expressed in terms of the linear sensitivity 'S' as

$$\text{Elasticity} = (\text{Sensitivity}) \times \frac{(\text{Current level of traffic})}{(\text{Current level of hours})}$$

or formally

$$S \times \frac{T}{H_T}$$

This is referred to as the 'staff hours to traffic sensitivity ratio' which takes the form 1:Y, indicating that a 1 per cent change in traffic should be associated with a Y per cent change in man hours. The elasticity can be taken as constant for 'normal levels of traffic variation' only.

12. The sensitivity ratios which have been estimated for different work activities and for postal operations are shown in paragraph 9.13 in the main report. Using these formulae the Post Office has calculated that total hours should be reduced by 1.8 million per year in the Inner Area to restore the relationship between hours and traffic that obtained in 1973. However, this should be regarded as a minimum. Firstly there can be no certainty that the level of productivity in 1973 was adequate, and secondly it is not clear that the extent of the decline in traffic since 1973 can be regarded as a 'normal level of traffic variation'. With such a large variation of traffic one may reasonably expect that elasticity will not be constant and that the structure of 'fixed costs' H_0 would be subject to change.

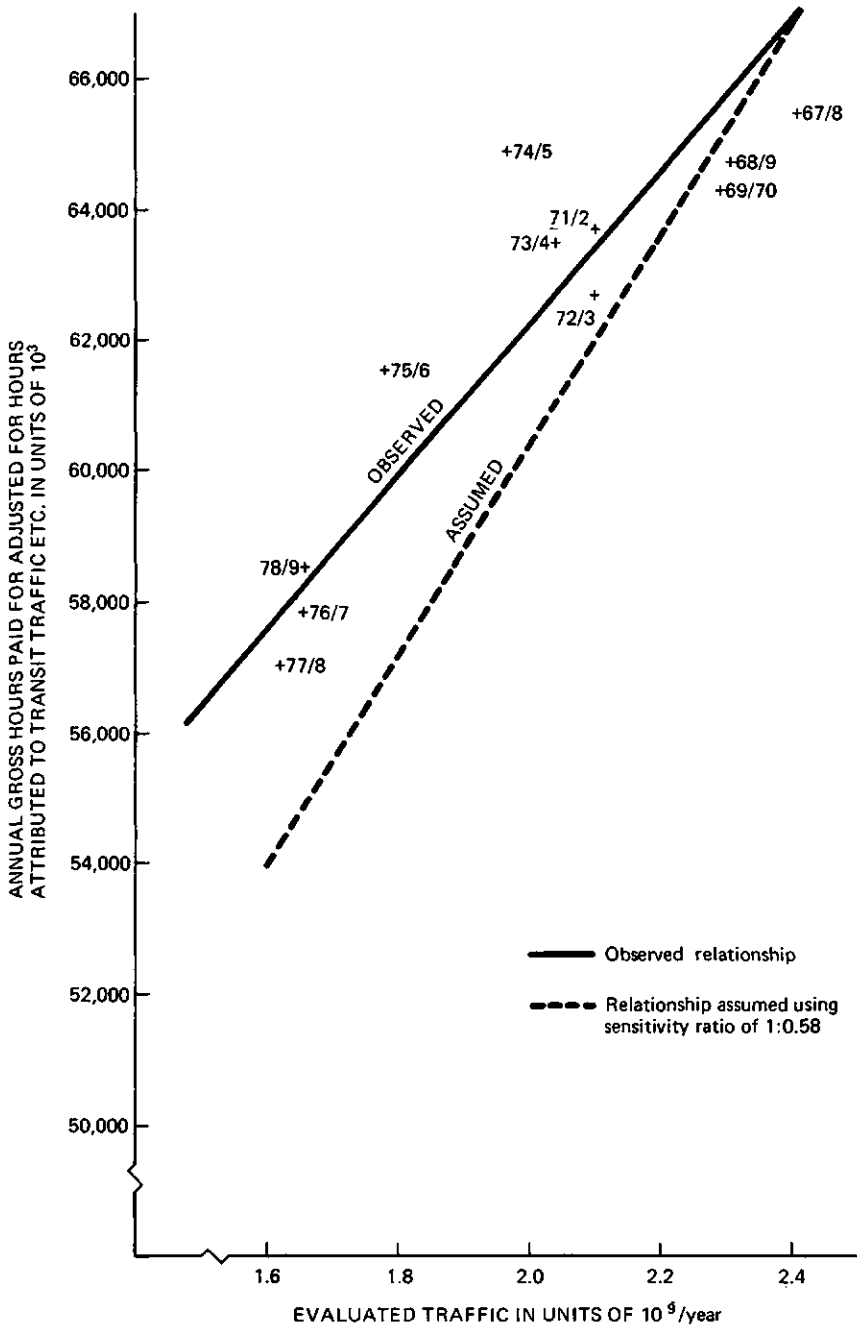
13. Figures 3-5 show the observed relationship between changes of traffic level and changes in staff hours for Inner London, Outer London and the provinces, compared with that expected by using the Post Office overall sensitivity ratio of 1 : 0.58. The observed relationship represents the average reaction of staff hours to levels of traffic.

For any given level of traffic, the difference in hours indicated between the observed line and the assumed line represents the shortfall of performance measured against the Post Office's own standard. The figures show that staff hours have not reacted as rapidly to traffic changes as would be indicated by the Post Office's own working ratios.

(b) Alignment of staff hours to short-term traffic variations

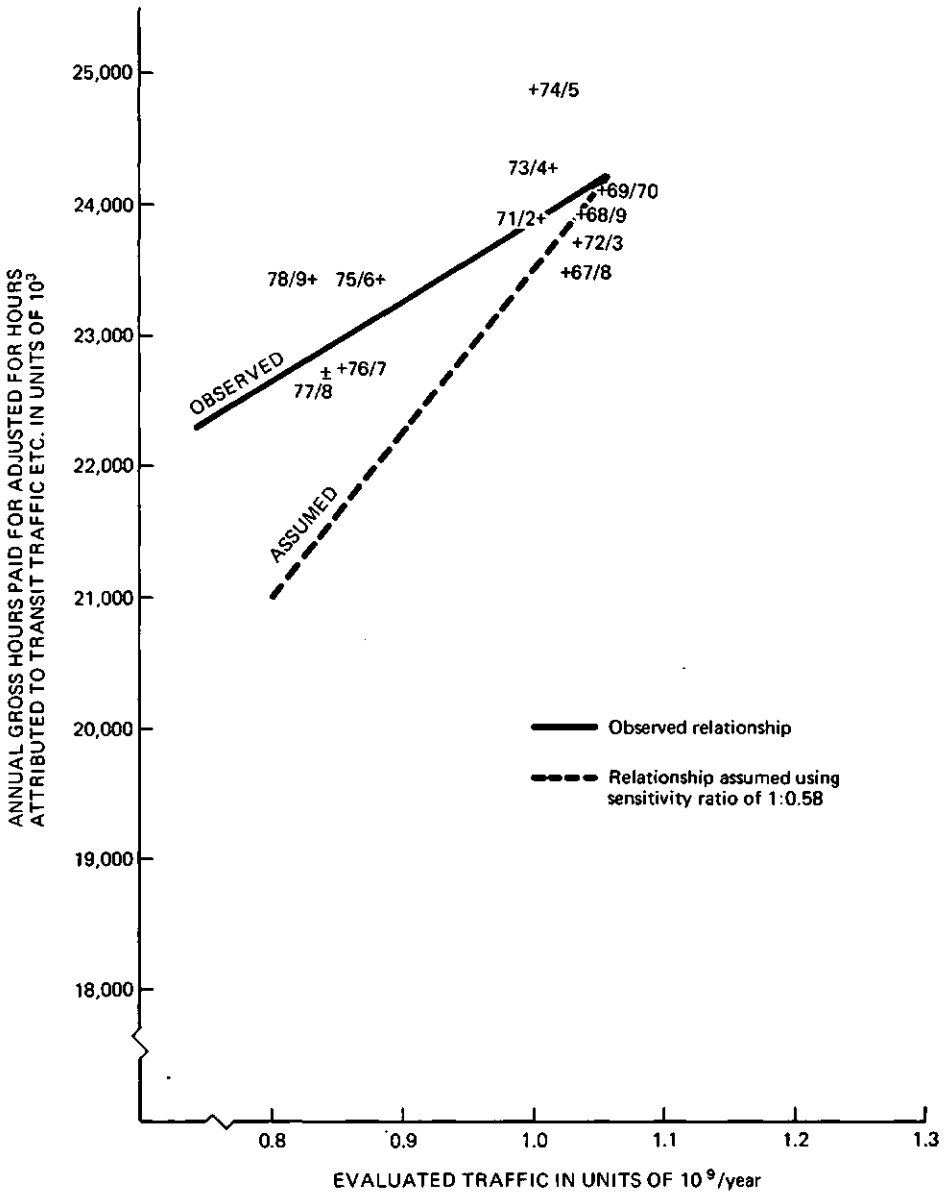
14. Since the Post Office has little control over weekly, daily, or indeed hourly fluctuations in traffic through an individual office, it has to allow for such variations by establishing reserve duties not allocated in advance as specific tasks, and by the use of overtime or part-time staff. The greater the variability of traffic, the greater is the number of reserve hours required to maintain quality of service and the lower is the achievable productivity level, since when traffic is low, staff cannot be fully occupied. Figure 6 shows the mean outward traffic level for each day of the week and the associated variability for two London Offices. The variability is shown in terms of the 'coefficient of variation' which has the following meaning: On about 70 per cent of the days the actual traffic will vary by up to X per cent of the mean value above or below the mean. The magnitude of the numbers involved may reflect the difficult task that the Inner London Manager has in controlling staffing levels in the short term.

FIGURE 3 Relationship Between Traffic and Paid for Hours in Inner London



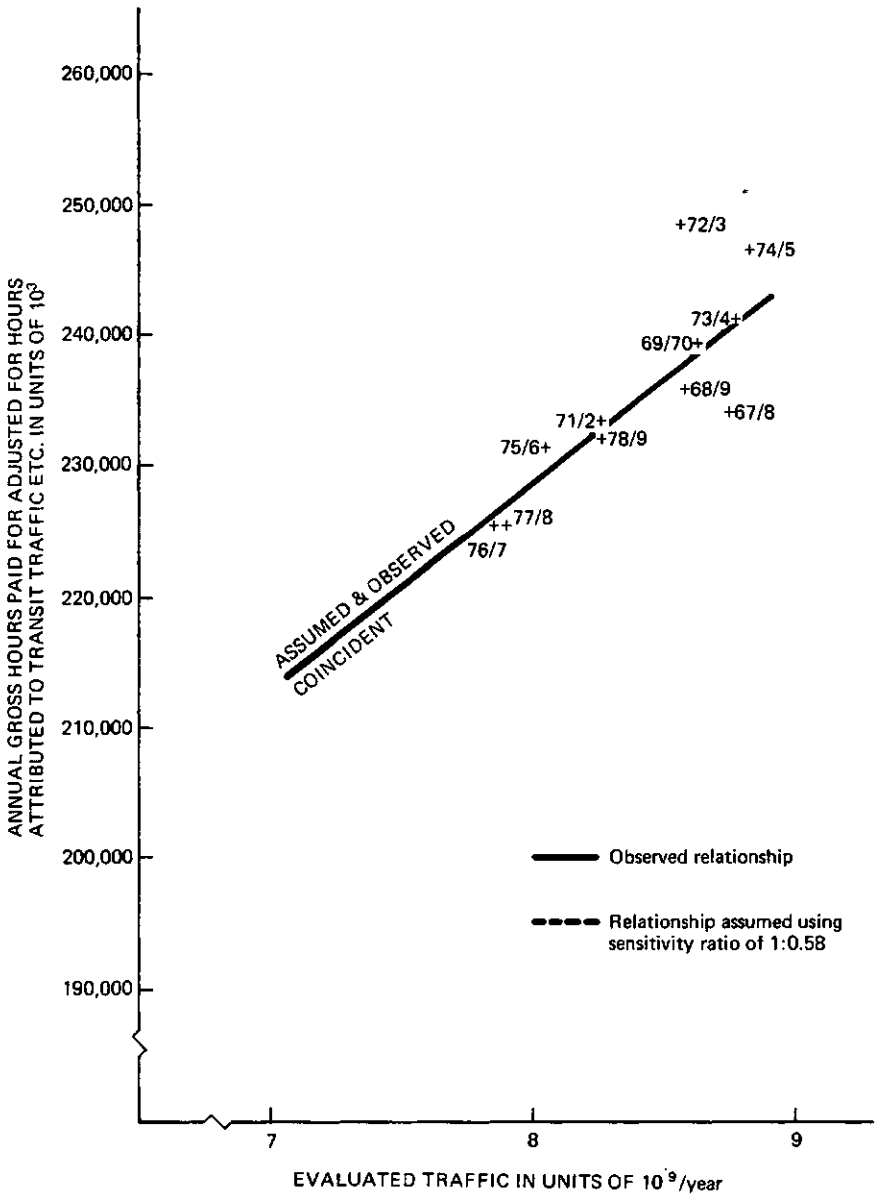
Source: MMC Study

FIGURE 4 Relationship Between Traffic and Paid for Hours in Outer London



Source: MMC Study

FIGURE 5 Relationship Between Traffic and Paid for Hours in the Provinces



Source: MMC Study

15. The significance of the Figures 3–6 must be seen against the background that productivity varies considerably both within and between District Offices in London. Figures 7–9 show the relative performance for inward, outward and letter delivery work for Inner London Offices for the period 1973–76, as measured by items processed per hour. The most significant feature is that the range of performance between offices is large compared with the changes over time. Most offices show a similar downward trend for delivery and inward letter work, but the pattern is more mixed for outward letter work.

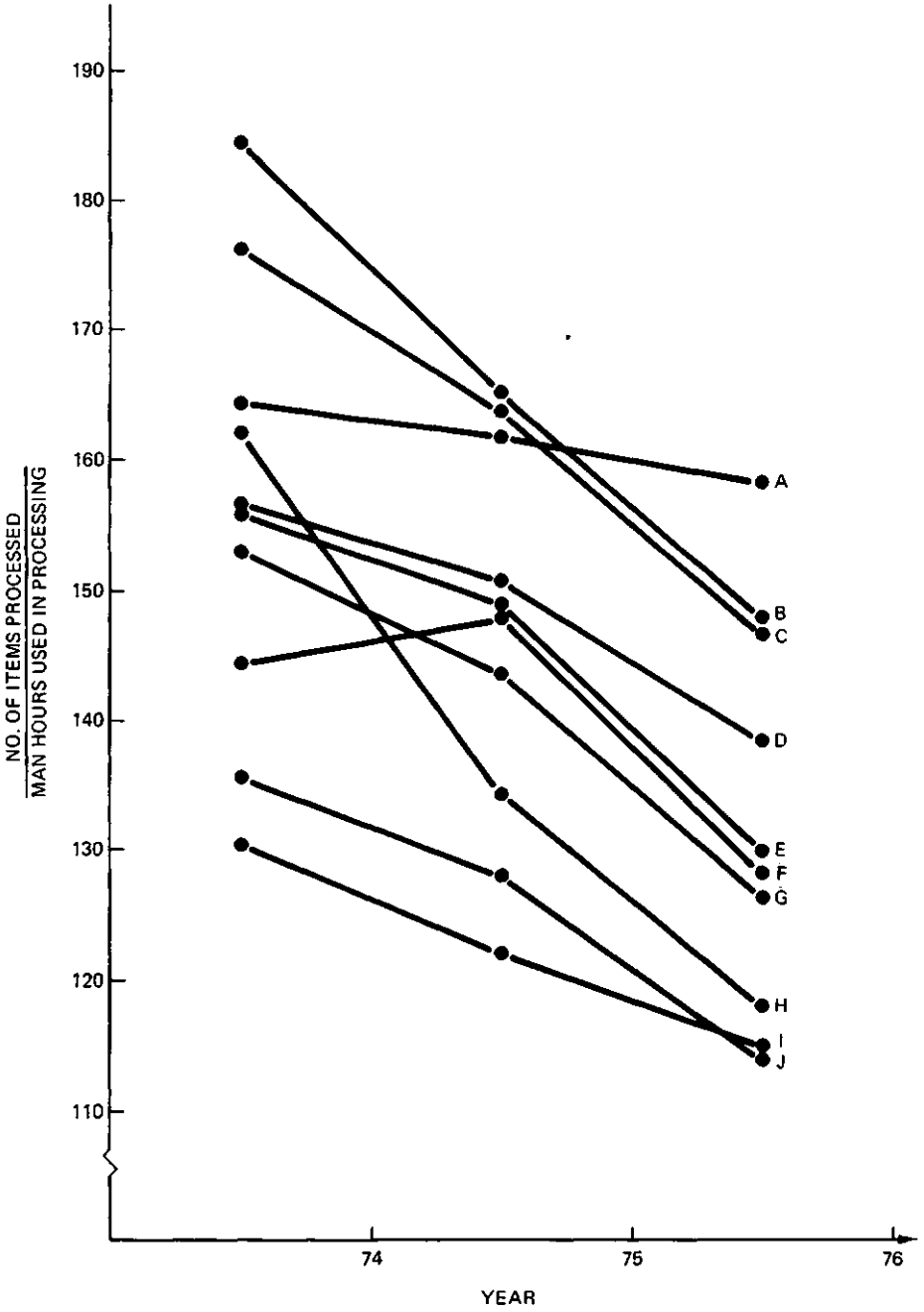
16. It should however be stressed that the performance estimates for individual offices make no allowance for different working environments nor for the composition of traffic or changes in composition over the period.

FIGURE 6 Mean Daily Variation of Traffic in an Office

<i>Day</i>		<i>Average Daily Traffic as percentage of Weekly Average</i>	<i>Coefficient of Variation</i>
		<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Office 1	Outer London		
1st Class	Monday	20.7	9.36
	Tuesday	19.3	8.07
	Wednesday	18.3	8.79
	Thursday	18.8	14.44
	Friday	17.9	16.81
	Saturday	4.9	17.20
	Week Total	100.0	6.77
2nd Class	Monday	19.2	14.75
	Tuesday	20.4	19.35
	Wednesday	19.0	14.12
	Thursday	17.5	16.66
	Friday	19.5	18.16
	Saturday	4.4	92.44
	Week Total	100.0	10.86
Office 2	Inner London		
1st Class	Monday	20.2	20.89
	Tuesday	18.4	23.19
	Wednesday	17.0	22.69
	Thursday	18.4	39.77
	Friday	21.9	52.40
	Saturday	4.1	48.64
	Week Total	100.0	19.08
2nd Class	Monday	22.6	53.77
	Tuesday	19.2	41.31
	Wednesday	18.3	39.40
	Thursday	21.3	74.84
	Friday	16.6	43.06
	Saturday	2.0	225.68
	Week Total	100.0	28.63

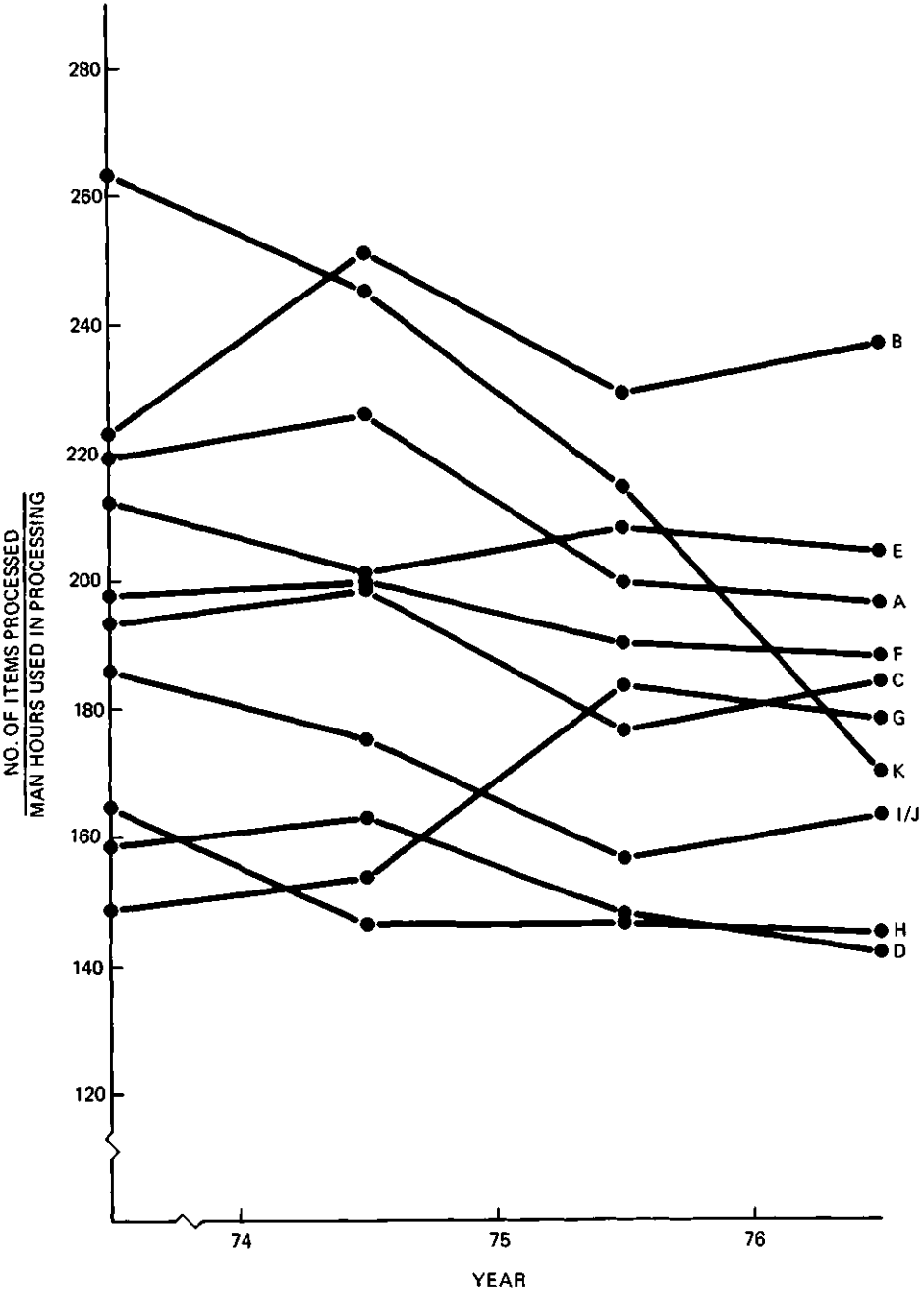
Source: MMC Study

FIGURE 7 Inner London Offices Productivity Trend for Inward Letter Work



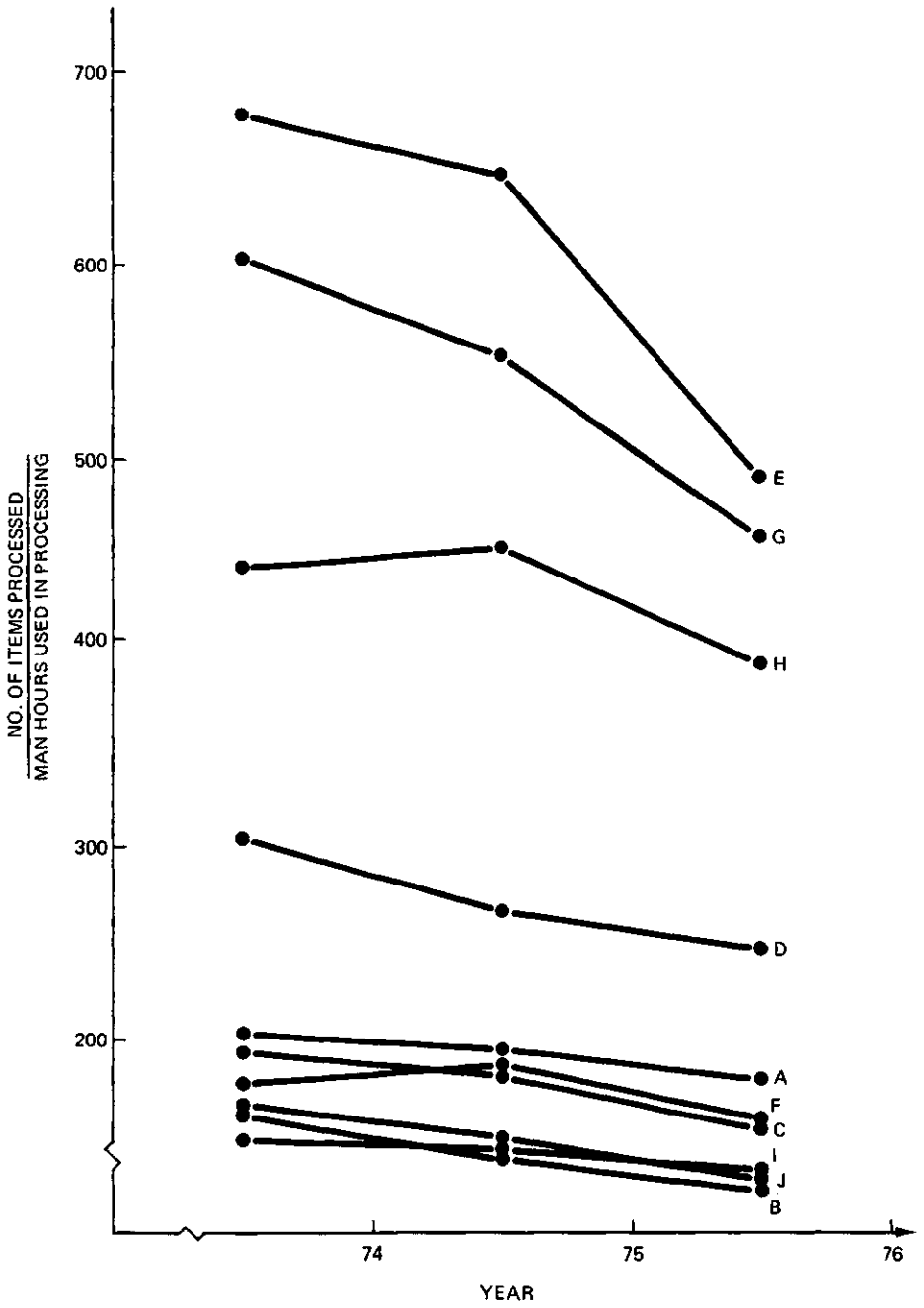
Source: Post Office Study

FIGURE 8 Inner London Offices Productivity Trend for Outward Letters



Source: Post Office Study

FIGURE 9 Inner London Offices Productivity Trend for Delivery Work



Source: Post Office Study

ANNEX 9

(Referred to in paragraph 9.31)

Sorting of Airmail

<i>Country</i>	<i>Outward</i>		<i>Inward</i>
	<i>Despatches</i>	<i>Sortings</i>	<i>Arrivals</i>
Belgium	5	11	8
Denmark	4	7	11
France	15	22	22
Germany	8	9	11
Italy	12	23	2
Netherlands	4	5	10
Spain	6	7	2
Sweden	4	4	7
Switzerland	8	17	4
Australia	8	21	8
New Zealand	5	14	5
Republic of South Africa	6	14	8
Nigeria	8	21	4
Canada	13	27	10
USA	9	44	4
India	8	18	5
Japan	2	5	2
17 Countries	<u>125 mails</u>	<u>269 sortings</u>	<u>123 mails</u>

ANNEX 10

(Referred to in paragraph 11.42)

**Union of Post Office Workers
London District Council
Sectional Council '3'**

Prince Consort House
109 Farringdon Road
London EC1R 3BT

11 December 1979

To: ALL Branches LDC '3'
No: 27/79

Dear Colleague

27th December 1979

LDC '3' Committee are concerned at the feed back that we are getting from some Branches following the advice given by UPW Headquarters asking UPW members not to attend for duty on 27th December.

It is our understanding that some Branches have interpreted the UPW Headquarters Circular as meaning that they can please themselves as to whether or not members report for duty on that day. That was not the intention of the UPW Headquarters Circular, and the LDC '3' Committee strongly appeal to Branches who have already held meetings and have decided to attend for duty on 27th December to now reconsider very seriously their position.

It is our view that the Post Office is using the argument of the 27th December as a vehicle to directly challenge the authority of our Executive Council, and to show the Government and the public that the Post Office, and not the Union of Post Office Workers, control the workers in the Post Office.

Let us look at the position we are in. We have had a statement from our E.C. asking us not to attend for duty on the 27th December. This statement was quickly followed by a statement from the Managing Director Posts who in a roundabout way asked the membership of our Union to ignore the Executive Council statement and appealing to the membership of our Union to attend for duty.

In these circumstances, if our Branches carry out the wishes of the Managing Director Posts, and ignore our E.C.'s advice, then we will have seriously undermined our Executive Council's negotiating powers for the future, and the consequences flowing from this could be enormous.

There is little doubt that the Post Office feel that the Union has much too much to say in the running of the Post Office services, especially in the London area, and they are, no doubt, at present overjoyed at the prospect of seeing a chink in the UPW armour, with the possible revolt of the UPW

membership against the advice given by the Executive Council. To quote the Managing Director Posts, 'It has, however, been reported to me that staff at some offices may decide to attend on the 27th December to provide services. I hope this is right.'

In these circumstances, the LDC '3' Committee feel that the argument concerning the 27th has now become secondary to the bigger question of who are the masters in giving advice to our members—the Union or the Post Office?

LDC '3' delegates will not need reminding of the necessity for our Union to remain united, especially in view of the challenge to the Monopoly in London, and the connivance by the Post Office and the Government to use the Monopolies and Mergers Commission as a guise to attack the UPW from another angle, with the intention of pressurising us to accept conditions that the Post Office have never been able to impose upon London, or the UPW in general, in the past.

This, many of us believe, will be a further major attack upon our conditions that we will be facing in March 1980, when the Monopolies Commission make their report, and it is imperative that our members are seen as being controlled by the UPW, and not by the Post Office, if we intend to retain the conditions we have fought for over the years. A further attack upon our conditions will come from the Post Office's Two Year Plan, when it will be their intention to attack concessions, end of duty releases and to enforce diversions of work, besides cuts in duties and more flexible staffing arrangements, etc. These are items that the Post Office would love to steamroller through and introduce in their own way without the type of negotiations which we have at present, and if we give them the opportunity and show that we are disunited, then the Post Office will play on our weakness.

There would seem little doubt to the LDC '3' Committee that if any real weakness is shown by our Branches in that they fail to take industrial action on 27th December, then the Post Office will have won a major victory in dividing the membership of our Union and the Post Office will exploit this to the full.

This sort of weakness will give courage to the Post Office in bringing in measures that they have been afraid to bring in in the past. The question to be asked now is do we want a real Union with a strong Executive Council prepared to fight for our conditions, or do we want to belong to just a talking shop?

THE LDC '3' COMMITTEE HAVE NO HESITATION IN URGING THAT ALL BRANCH COMMITTEES IN LONDON DO THEIR UTMOST TO ENSURE THAT THE 27th DECEMBER IS A WIN FOR THE UPW, AND NOT FOR THE POST OFFICE.

Yours sincerely,

D. W. Walsh

J. L. Taylor

On Behalf of LDC '3' Committee

