

NOTES ON FBIS COMMUNICATION OF 15TH. MAY 1979

A number of points raised by Mr. Beissel in his Memorandum of 15th. May last and the report of 13th. October 1978 are deserving of comments as follows: -

- a) In paragraph 3, there appears to be a misunderstanding with regard to spare modules for the Speech Plus equipment. There is one spare Channel Card on which the strappings are correct for all channels except No.1. Only for use on this channel would strapping changes be required, and on this basis it seems reasonable to leave things as they are to meet the majority of requirements. I understand that Vernon Smith has already discussed this point with Mr. Beissel.
- b) Re Paragraph 4: - The criticism of circuit reliability is regrettably fully justified. It is possible, though not certain, that a wide band line might prove more reliable.
- c) Re paragraph 5: - Our purpose in seeking a wide band circuit with an additional voice channel is threefold: -
1. To speed up processing of broadcasts monitored via the VCVC, some of which are delayed due to overloading of the single voice channel.
 2. To reduce the demands made on the Vienna technicians and ease their burden of work connected with the VCVC operation.
 3. To simplify the operations at this end and ease the pressure on our Operational Assistants.

The extra voice channel would enable us to meet these objectives through our ability to take two live feeds simultaneously around the clock, thus reducing the number of remotely controlled or manual recordings and delayed feeds. This in turn should reduce wear-and-tear on the Vienna recorder and speed up processing of material.

The additional voice channel is not intended to provide expanded coverage in normal circumstances but rather for increasing overall efficiency. In an emergency such as a crisis in Yugoslavia, which would entail expanded coverage and additional work for both Caversham and Vienna, the extra channel would not only be an asset but again prove invaluable in easing the consequential operational burden and pressures on both Caversham Operational Assistants and Vienna Technicians.

Although it is true that the addition of another voice channel would call for modifications to the overall system, it is felt that this work could be completed in months rather than years.

- d) Re paragraph 6: - Whilst the introduction of switching for Fax operation can certainly await the next visit of a BBC engineer if necessary, it would not seem unreasonable for a Vienna technician to make this modification since it does not require accessing the equipment, only the line, and, in any case, the FAX feed is an FBIS requirement.

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e) Re paragraph 7: - The point about the use of Collins receivers for use on fixed frequencies is entirely accepted. Unfortunately, no fully suitable replacement has yet been identified. The RC3/10 receiver was not considered suitable for production; the genre has now reached RC3/17 still with shortcomings! Two such receivers tuned to 639 kHz and 1134 kHz are at present being modified at Caversham and should be tested soon at Crowsley. Perhaps something may develop from this exercise.

Two further points arise from the October report: -

- 1) Whilst it is true that the "Speech-Plus" equipment is capable of providing two additional telegraph circuits, the present line is not; its overall response is only just adequate for the present telegraph channels.
- 2) After an initial high demand, the use of the remotely controlled Racal receiver has been considerably reduced, and only 25 bookings have been made over the last twelve months.

It is hoped that this provides some clarification on a number of points and will also dispel some misgivings on the use of the possible wide band circuit.



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