

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1969-70)**

(FOURTH LOK SABHA)

HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND REPORT

**MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, SHIPPING
AND TRANSPORT**

BORDER ROADS



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 1970/Vaisakha, 1891 (S)

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CORRIGENDA

to

122nd Report of Estimates Committee on Border Roads.

<u>Page</u>	<u>Para</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Correction</u>
5	1.12	5	<u>for</u> 'desireable' <u>read</u> 'desirable'
6	1.15	2	<u>for</u> 'Governments' <u>read</u> 'Government'
13	2.7	3	<u>after</u> '1967' <u>insert</u> '1968'
14	2.11	10	<u>for</u> '6-2-19' <u>read</u> '6-2-1968'
18	2.22	4	<u>for</u> 'promptly' <u>read</u> 'promptly'
21	2.31	5	<u>for</u> 'strength at' <u>read</u> 'conditions'
22	2.36	5	<u>for</u> 'protactive' <u>read</u> 'protective'
24	2.43	-	In the section heading above the para <u>omit</u> 'strength' and <u>insert</u> 'strength' as para heading.
26	2.50	Para	<u>for</u> 'civilisation' <u>read</u> 'civilialisation'
32	2.69	Heading Table	In second column, <u>for</u> 'Rs.25/-p.m.' <u>read</u> 'Rs.75/-p.m.'
35	2.75	7	<u>for</u> 'locality' <u>read</u> 'locally'
	2.76	4-5	<u>for</u> 'consistant' <u>read</u> 'consistent'.
37	2.86	Table	Under 'Sikkim' and against 'Mazdor (female)' <u>for</u> 'Rs.1.20' <u>read</u> 'Rs.120'
47	3.3	Table	(i) Against 'Improvement of existing roads' <u>for</u> '36.3' <u>read</u> '36.31'
			(ii) Against 'Additional sum adjusted during March, 1969' <u>for</u> '318.2' <u>read</u> '2.56'
			318.28

- 47 3.5 - (i) At the beginning of the Section heading above the para add 'B'.
(ii) In the Table, against 'Establishment' for '241.59' read '241.58'
- 48 3.6 Table Under 'capital outlay' for '3028.92' read '3098.92'
- 49 3.7 3 for 'o' read 'of'
- 55 4.5 12 Read the line in reverse
- 58 4.7 Para for 'Plain' read 'Plan'
Heading
- 61 4.15 2 after 'Government' insert 'to'
- 64 4.26 12 for 'no-a-days' read 'now-a-days'
- 65 4.29 Seco- Under 'Black Topping' -
nd (i) against '1966-67' for '63.5'
Table read '62.5'
(ii) against '1967-68' for '234.5' read '284.5'
- 66 4.30 Fir- Under 'Total' and against '1966-67'
st for '34053' read '3053'
Table
- 67 4.33 2 for 'were' read 'work'
- 68 4.35 11 for 'or' read 'of'
- 4.36 6 for 'Engineers' read 'Chief Engineers'
- 69 4.39 Ta- Under 'Project Deepak' -
ble (i) Against 'Road E' for '6.58' read '6.48'
(ii) Against 'Road F' for '4.44' read '3.44'
- 70 4.39 Ta- Under 'Project Beacon' and against
ble '(ii)' for 'Road I' read 'Road J'.
- 70 4.40 Ta- (i) Under 'Project Vartak' insert
ble the following:
- 'Project Sewak: The Committee were informed that the average cost of construction of class 9 road in the Project area was Rs.6.5 lakhs per mile.'

- In column one,
- 70 4.40 Table (ii)/for existing 'Project Sewak'
read 'Project' Pushpak'
- 74 4.47 11 for 'be' read 'the'
- 75 5.1 Table (i) In column two, for '3170'
read '2170'
(ii) In column three, for
'3587' read '3787'
- 76 Foot-note 3 For 'Rs.5.15 crores' read
'Rs.5.51 crores'
- 79 5.10 5 for the existing line read
'the Public Accounts Committee
that they had taken the following'
82 5.16 14 for 'atrgets' read 'targets'
- 85 5.23 5 for 'been' read 'made'
- 90 5.39 Table (i) In column one, for 'W.T.W.,
(a) read 'W.B.W.'
(ii) Against 'overall figure' and
in column five, for '65' read '66'
- Table Against 'overall figure' and in
(b) column one, for '21' read '321'
- 97 5.59 Table Against '1-4-1968' and in column
three, for '6' read '61'
- 100 5.72 Table Against '(c) Major Assemblies' and
in column two, for '18' read '18%'
- 102 - - for existing para number '5.75'
read '5.74'
- 105 5.81 line 2 (a) for 'idents' read 'indents'
- of Fo- (b) for 'of the interest' read
otnote 'in the indents'
- to the
Table(i)
- 118 12 14 for 'satisfaction' read
'satisfactory'
- 121 - - (i) Against '1960-61' and in
column four, for '339.72' read
39.72'
- (ii) Against '1961-62' in column
six, omit 'p' occurring before the
figures

121 - - (iii) Against '1968-69' in column
eight, for '48.39' read '38.39'.
(iv) Against 'Total' in column
six, for '21.433.01' read
'21,433.01'

123 1.23 14 for 'enrusted' read 'entrusted'

125 2.31 10 after 'as in the' insert 'field
in the'

126 2.49 12 for 'techncal' read 'technical'

129 2.85 3 for 'strength' read 'stretch'

130 2.97 5 after 'should' insert 'be'

2.100 12 for 'dropper' read 'dropped'

139 5.51 1 for 'samle' read 'sample'

141 5.61 2 for 'to' read 'and'

142 5.77 12 for 'Cordex' read 'Cardex'

5.78 1 for 'concern with' read
'concern the'

5 for '32:5' read '32.5'

13 for 'thereafter' read
'thereafter'

146 Sr.No. 3 for 'infourctuous' read
8 'infructuous'.

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(1969-70)

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**SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1969-70)
FOR THE EXAMINATION OF THE ESTIMATES RELATING
TO BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION**

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7. Shri G. G. Swell*.

*Resigned from Estimates Committee on 9-12-1969.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Estimates Committee, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Hundred and Twenty-second Report on the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport—Border Roads.

2. The Sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee appointed for the examination of the Estimates relating to Border Roads Organisation took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence and Border Roads Development Board on the 3rd and 4th November, 1969. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Defence Secretary, the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board, the Director General Border Roads and other officers of the Border Roads Development Board and Directorate General Border Roads for placing before them the material and information they desired in connection with the examination of the Estimates.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Sub-Committee on the 2nd and 21st April, 1970 and finally approved by the Committee on the 27th April, 1970.

4. A statement showing the analysis of recommendations contained in the Report is also appended to the Report (Appendix IV).

NEW DELHI;
April 27, 1970.

Vaisakha 7, 1892 (Saka).

M. THIRUMALA RAO,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

A. Historical Background

Genesis:

1.1. Soon after Independence, it was felt by Government that urgent steps should be taken to accelerate the economic development of the Northern and North-eastern border areas which was greatly handicapped by meagre and inadequate communications. Since immediate development of those areas involved coordination of resources and effort and the maximum utilisation of existing construction agencies, the Government decided to set up the Border Roads Development Board "in order to ensure such coordination and achieve economy in execution."

1.2. At the same time, construction of roads in the Northern and North-eastern border areas was necessary also from the security angle in view of the threatening postures adopted by two of our neighbours. This was explained by the Defence Secretary to the Committee during evidence as follows:

"Early in 1960 this Border Roads Development Board was set up. Its main aim was the economic development of border areas. But even in achieving this aim it is clear that defence angle was involved because our border areas, along Tibet particularly, had considerable dealings of trade and commerce with Tibet and it was felt that our border areas should look southwards to India and not to Tibet. Therefore, it was necessary that the border areas are developed and communications are developed on a high priority."

1.3. The Border Roads Development Board was set up by Government in March, 1960. This was followed by the setting up of the Directorate-General of Border Roads in May, 1960, which is the field organisation and subordinate agency of the Board for the construction, improvement and maintenance of Border Roads. The Border Roads Organisation (Board as well as the Directorate) is a civilian organisation, the funds for which are provided out of the Budget of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport.

1.4. The relationship of the Border Roads Development Programme with Defence was further spelt out by the Defence Secretary during his evidence before the Estimates Committee thus:

“The intention in setting up this Board with the Prime Minister as the Chairman and the Defence Minister as the Deputy Chairman was to find a method of taking very expeditious decisions as well as not to overlook the defence angle in the development of the border roads. Any road is good both for development and for defence because it provides communications, but the intention in constituting the Board was to ensure that highest priority is given to such roads of economic development which are also of interest to the General Staff, and that such roads will not be laid which are going to prejudice the interest of the General Staff and in fact a few roads have not been accepted even though they may be desirable from the economic development point of view but which would have prejudiced the security interests. In the Border Roads Board the greatest responsibility rests with the Deputy Chairman and the Deputy Chairman is the Defence Minister. So it is necessary that the Secretary of the Border Roads Board and his Secretariat functions within the premises of the Defence Ministry.....”

1.5. Describing the considerations on which roads are selected for development by the Border Roads Organisation, the Defence Secretary stated:

“Whenever a project comes up, if it has come up either from the Defence side or the Transport side or from the side of the State Government, it is examined in consultation with the General Staff and if there is no opposition from the General Staff from the security point of view and if there is support from them, then it is given priority. There are certain projects which have been taken up particularly because the interest was economic development and there are certain projects which were taken up particularly because there was defence interest. But it can be broadly said that all projects have helped both economic development and the defence interests.”

1.6. In the course of reply to another question during evidence, the Defence Secretary admitted that “higher priority is definitely given to those roads which are of defence interest,” and that “no road, to which the General Staff has an objection from the operat-

ional angle, is accepted." As to the utility of the Border Roads Programme to the Defence, he said:

"I can at once say that all these Border Roads or most of them are actively used by us and they have saved a lot of air-lift which had to be done in the beginning. They have enabled us to post a large number of forces on as-required basis; they have increased the flexibility of deployment. So, from our point of view, they have been positively useful."

Status of the Organisation

1.7. Asked to state the reasons for giving the Border Roads Organisation a civilian status under the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport even though the scope of its activity was mainly defence oriented requiring close coordination with the Army General Staff, the Defence Secretary stated during evidence that the budget for the Border Roads Organisation has been kept, with the concurrence of the then Minister of Transport in the Ministry of Shipping and Transport, in that Ministry "because development of roads was basically their responsibility and the Transport Ministry was fully represented on the Boarder Roads Development Board." He thought that the existing arrangement in respect of Border Roads Organisation had given "aim first priority and the formality, the second priority". Conceding that the Border Roads Organisation took the assistance of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport and holds discussions with them, he maintained: "it would be wrong functionally to have divided reponsibility; it has to be here or there. If it is divided responsibility, no organisation functions well."

1.8. In reply to another question, he stated that the Annual Report of the Border Roads Organisation was prepared by the Border Roads Organisation itself and included in the Annual Report of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport which was laid before Parliament. According to him, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport had no hand in the preparation of the Report of the Border Roads Organisation, and that, the Border Roads Development Board took full responsibility therefore. A point was thereupon raised that since the Annual Report of the Ministry of Defence did not contain any reference to the Border Roads programme, unless the subject was mentioned in the course of the general debate in Lok Sabha on the Budget, a member referring to the subject of Border Roads in the course of the debate on the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Defence could be told by the Chair that the subject was not under the purview of that Ministry.

1.9. The Committee note that the Demands in respect of the Border Roads Organisation are included in the Budget Estimates of

the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport. As the arrangement is working satisfactorily, the Committee do not wish to disturb it.

B. Economic Development of Border Areas

Economic Development of the Border Areas

1.10. As mentioned earlier, one of the avowed objects of undertaking the Border Roads Programme is the economic development of the border areas. The Defence Secretary was, during evidence, asked to state whether the local people of the State Governments were associated with the Border Roads Organisation in the matter of coming to a decision about the building of a particular road and whether any prior assessment was made of the economic benefits that were likely to flow to the local people as a result of building a road. In reply he stated:

"I think that we would probably not be the competent organisation to examine to what extent the roads are used for economic development. The roads are definitely selected in consultation with local administration and those persons who are responsible for economic development. As a person from outside I would say that a considerable amount of economic development has taken place in most of the areas, though it cannot be said that in every area the increase in economic development is of the same standard It is really for an outside authority like the Planning Commission to determine whether the plans which are produced for economic development are plans which are consistent with the construction of roads or improvement of communications in those areas. That is not for the Border Roads Organisation".

"As far as economic development is concerned, I am afraid it is not for us; it is better that the authorities who are concerned with economic development should look at that problem."

In this context, he amplified the aim of the Border Roads Programme and said that what was meant was "that the construction of the road would mean the economic development of the area; but we are not responsible for the economic development."

1.11. The Study Group of the Committee who visited Border roads in Ladakh, U. P. area, NEFA and Mizo Hills District of Assam found that the construction of roads in these areas has made considerable impact on the general economic development of the areas. The Border Roads Organisation have provided employment opportunities to the local population. The roads have opened up communications in areas which were hitherto inaccessible and cut off from

the rest of the country. At several places commercial transport has started playing giving a spurt to local trade and commerce. Due to the presence of the Army and the Border Roads Organisation on a large scale, the demand for local agricultural and dairy produce, particularly fresh vegetables, milk, eggs, poultry etc., has gone up considerably and the locals have an incentive to intensify and the diversify their produce. The development of border roads have also resulted in social development of the local people. Intermingling of the people is now easier. The presence of a large number of persons belonging to the Army and the Border Roads Organisation, coming of as they do, from almost all parts of the country and representing a cross section of cultures, has had a healthy influence on the local inhabitants and time is not far when they would be fully integrated in the national fabric. In places like NEFA, Nagaland and Manipur, the Committee found that the locals are not offering themselves for work with the Border Roads Organisation as they prefer to carry on with their traditional occupation, namely agriculture. The Committee noted that efforts were being made by the Border Roads Organisation to attract them to serve with the Organisation, partly because local casual labour is much cheaper than the regularly employed labour (Pioneers).

1.12. The Committee note that one of the avowed purposes of the Border Roads Programme is to contribute towards the economic development of the Northern and North-eastern border areas. Now that the Programme has been in operation for over ten years, it is desirable that there should be a review of the impact of the Programme on the economic development of those areas so as to assess as to how far this objective of the Border Roads Programme has been achieved. The Committee therefore recommend that Government may appoint a Committee preferably under the aegis of the Planning Commission consisting inter alia of the representatives of the State Governments concerned, to assess the impact of the Border Road Programme on the socio-economic development of the Northern and North-eastern border areas and to make recommendations as to the manner in which State Governments could integrate their plans for development of the border areas with the programme for the construction of Border Roads.

C. Scope of Activity

Scope of Activity

1.13. The scope of activity of the Border Roads Organisation extends to the construction and maintenance of the following roads:

- (i) Roads in the northern and north-eastern border areas and a few roads in the plains falling within the territorial jurisdiction of States;

(ii) Certain National Highways taken over from the Roads Wing of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport;

(iii) Works on behalf of other Ministries|Departments.

Consultation with States on taking over Roads for development

1.14. As already stated, the Border Roads are selected for development also on the suggestions of the State Governments. The suggestions of the States Governments are examined by the Border Roads Development Board in consultation with the General Staff before a final decision is taken in that regard. Government was asked to state whether they were experiencing any difficulty in regard to building roads within the jurisdiction of the States particularly where the proposal came from a source other than the State concerned. They have in reply stated that all State Governments are anxious to transfer the financial responsibility in respect of construction etc. of roads to the Board but of late they have been reluctant to hand over the responsibility for construction|maintenance to the General Reserve Engineer Force. They have also brought to the notice of the Committee some recent examples to illustrate the trend. They have further stated in reply to another specific question that there has been no occasion in the past to consider the adoption of the procedure of taking over areas for road construction work under the Army Act and that Government have always tried to arrive at a mutually agreed solution by discussion with the State Government.

1.15. The Committee recommend that, subject to strategic considerations, State Governments concerned should be more closely associated at the time of finalising the border road construction programme within its jurisdiction. This would, besides creating among the States a sense of participation in the programme, enable them to plan and coordinate their development programmes in the area more effectively.

National Highways

1.16. Apart from new roads in the northern and north-eastern border areas taken up by the Border Roads Organisation, the Organisation has taken over from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport (Roads Wing), three National Highways, namely: Jammu-Uri (NHIA), Simla-Poo (NH 22) and Siliguri-Gangtok (NH 31A). Asked to state the reasons therefor, the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board stated during evidence:

“.....it has been the experience of the Transport Ministry (Roads Wing) that they do not get enough funds for all the National Highways.....A very small amount of money, according to them is to be distributed over a large number of National Highways. So, these National Highways, which constitute a very important link, have

beentransferred....to the Border Roads Organisation and the responsibility for providing funds etc. is that of the Border Roads Development Board. To that extent, the Roads Wing has got relief in regard to all the (other) National Highways."

The Defence Secretary also stated that those Highways were taken over firstly because those were "of special interest to defence" and secondly, because the agencies of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport (Roads Wing) did not have "the equipment which is required to build or maintain these roads."

1.17. According to the information furnished to the Committee, the expenditure incurred by the Border Roads Organisation on these three National Highways upto 1968-69 amounted to a total of Rs. 27.65 crores (works; Rs. 22.59 crores and maintenance: Rs. 5.06 crores).

Works taken up on behalf of other Ministries

1.18. The Border Roads Organisation is also undertaking projects on behalf of certain other Ministries of the Government of India, the funds for which are provided by those Ministries e. g. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of External Affairs.

D. Future of the Organisation

Central Responsibility in respect of Roads other than National Highway

1.19. In a note furnished to the Committee, it has been stated that the expenditure incurred on the construction and maintenance of roads, other than National Highways in the States (as distinct from Union Territories) is reimbursed to the States in full. This assistance is given in the form of "Grant-in-aid". The States make a covering provision in their budget and get reimbursement as expenditure is booked and passed to the Central Government accounts. During the period 1960-61 to 1968-69, "Grant-in-aid" to the States amounted to Rs. 94.60 crores. A point was raised as to why Central Government are undertaking Boarder Roads Development Programmes in States and giving huge grants-in-aid to the States for the purpose when, according to Entries 4 and 23 of the List I (Union List) read with Entry 13 of List II (State List) contained in the 7th schedule to the Constitution, the development of Roads is the exclusive responsibility of the State Government unless they form part of military or airforce works or are declared to be National Highways. Government have in a note submitted to the Committee justified the expenditure as follows:

“The provision of the Constitution referred to in the question give a broad division of responsibilities between the Centre and States in regard to the development of land Communications. The Chinese threat to our 2,000 miles of border on the Himalayas and the subsequent collusion between China and Pakistan created an abnormal situation necessitating the speediest development of a reliable net work of roads in the border areas. These roads occupy a pivotal position in the General Staff plans for defence of our borders. They will also accelerate the economic development of the border areas and fill a vacuum inherited from the British. It is not feasible for the States to undertake or finance such projects on their own. It was, therefore, decided to plan, coordinate and finance the projects from the Centre. In view of the constitutional position, the roads are entrusted to the Centre by the State under article 258A of the Constitution. It may be added that similar grants-in-aid are being made by the Centre in respect of other roads required primarily for development of border areas in the States in the North and North-east but which the States are unwilling or unable to finance.”

Future of the Organisation

1.20. The commitments and responsibilities of Border Roads Organisation are gradually increasing with the completion of more and more projects. After construction or improvement, the roads continue to remain with the Border Roads Organisation for maintenance. The representative of the Government was, during evidence, asked to state whether Government had given a thought to the question as to how long would these roads remain the responsibility of the Central Government. The Secretary, Border Roads Development Board replied as follows:

“The maintenance of roads, other than the national highways, is normally the responsibility of State Governments. If it is possible we would like to transfer roads to State Governments for their maintenance; in fact, that was the idea with which this arrangement was evolved. But we found that the State Governments were unwilling to take over the responsibility for maintenance of these roads unless the Centre was prepared to give 100 per cent aid for that. In regard to that, there were certain difficulties. Meanwhile, an interim decision has been taken that, for a certain period of time, i. e., upto 1974, the Board will meet the entire cost of maintenance in respect of roads which have been developed as part of the Board's programme.”

The Secretary of the Board also stated that the question of financing the maintenance of these roads had to be considered against the background that, in the case of border roads which were in the hills, if the roads were not maintained properly, sooner or later very heavy capital expenditure would have to be incurred. The general problem, according to him, was "being looked into". In reply to the question whether the State Governments were ever approached for meeting a part of the cost of development/maintenance of roads within their jurisdiction in view of development of the areas and consequent rise in the revenue of the States, the Secretary of the Board stated that the States had maintained that they would not be able to spend money to the extent that was required out of their own funds. According to him, the Roads wing of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport "was looking into the problem with the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry." In a subsequent written reply Government have stated that, as the State Governments were not even willing to meet the expenditure on maintenance of roads constructed by the Border Roads Organisation, the question of approaching them to meet a part of Capital expenditure has not arisen. According to them, the Finance Commission was apprised of the position.

1.22. Dealing with the question as to whether the State Governments should at all shoulder the responsibility of maintaining Border Roads which were being used mainly by the Army, the Defence Secretary stated during evidence:

"There is no border road which has been constructed of which it can be said that it has no advantages for economic development. We would not like to accept the principle that any road in the country must be maintained by the Defence Ministry; it should finally be maintained by some civil agency. This is our view because once we start accepting such a commitment there will be no end and we will only be maintaining roads. That is not our job. The work relating to roads is given to the Transport Ministry; they or the State Administration should finally be responsible."

1.23. The Committee consider that the Central Government should not shoulder the responsibility for maintaining the Border Roads developed out of Central Funds indefinitely but should allow it to devolve in due course upon the State Governments concerned. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Government should in consultation with the State Governments concerned, evolve a programme for gradual transfer of the roads developed by the Border Roads Organisation to the State Governments for maintenance after their present commitment is over in 1974. To begin with, the

State Governments concerned may be entrusted with the maintenance of such of the border roads as may not be so vital for national defence and have economic and developmental use for the States. In the initial stage, the corresponding engineering organisations in the States would have to be provided technical and logistic assistance by the Border Roads Organisation in maintaining the Border Roads so as to enable them to acquire the expertise for the ultimate take over of the roads from the Border Roads Organisation.

CHAPTER II

ORGANISATION

A. Broad Structure of the Border Roads Organisation

2.1. The Border Roads Development Board is the apex body which lays down the policies and programmes for development of Border Roads, and exercises general control over the subordinate agencies responsible for the execution of the Border Roads Programme. The Board has a Secretariat to assist it which is headed by an officer of the status of a Joint Secretary to the Government of India. The Director General Border Roads is the technical adviser to the Board and is stationed in Delhi. He is in overall command of a civilian force called the General Reserve Engineering Force, raised specially for the construction of Border Roads and is responsible for carrying out the Border Roads Programme of the Board. He has a Directorate to assist him in discharging his functions known as the Directorate General Border Roads.

2.2. The entire Border Roads Programme is, at present, divided into seven Projects, each under the charge of a Chief Engineer. Each of the Projects has several Task Forces for construction and maintenance of Border Roads. Each Task Force has a certain number of units and other supporting formations e.g. for supplies, transport, workshop, security etc. There are two Base Workshops for carrying out major repairs/overhauls to vehicles and other machinery: one which caters for the Projects in the Western region, and the other which looks after the needs of the Projects in the Eastern region. There is a Recruiting Centre for centralised recruitment of subordinate staff and non-technical labour force called Pioneers at Roorkee. The Organisation is also maintaining two Liaison Offices—at Calcutta and Bombay.

B. Headquarters Organisation

(i) Border Roads Development Board

Setting up of the Board

2.3. The Border Roads Development Board was set up in March, 1960. No formal notification regarding the setting up of the Board was, however, issued nor were subsequent changes made in its composition or constitution notified for general information. During

evidence, the Defence Secretary stated that the Board was set up under a Memorandum issued from the Cabinet Secretariat on 14-3-1960.

Composition

2.4. When set up for the first time in March, 1959, the composition of the Border Roads Development Board was as follows:

- (1) Prime Minister (Chairman)
- (2) Defence Minister (Dy. Chairman)
- (3) Chief of Army Staff.
- (4) Chief of Air Staff
- (5) Lt. Gen. B. M. Kaul
- (6) Secretary, Kashmir Affairs
- (7) Secretary, Ministry of Transport
- (8) Secretary, Ministry of Defence
- (9) Consulting Engineer (Road Development)
- (10) Financial Adviser, Ministry of Defence
- (11) Director General Border Roads
- (12) Secretary, Border Roads Development Board
- (13) Joint Secretary (G), Ministry of Defence.

The Board was reconstituted in 1962 and in 1965. Changes in the composition of the Board have also been made—once in the Board as reconstituted in 1962 and twice in the Board as reconstituted in 1965. The present composition of the Board is as follows:

- (1) Prime Minister—Chairman
- (2) Defence Minister—Dy. Chairman
- (3) Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport
- (4) Secretary to the Cabinet
- (5) Secretary, Ministry of Defence
- (6) Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.
- (7) Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
- (8) Chief of the Army Staff
- (9) Chief of the Air Staff
- (10) Financial Adviser, Ministry of Finance (Defence)
- (11) Director General Road Development (Road Wing) Ministry of Shipping and Transport
- (12) Engineer-in-Chief, Army Headquarters
- (13) Director General Border Roads
- (14) Secretary, Border Roads Development Board.

The members of the Board are ex-officio.

2.5. It is stated that the composition of the Board is "sufficiently representative". As and when matters affecting other Ministries or departments are discussed, they are consulted before finalising the paper to be placed before the Board. Sometimes they are requested to send a representative to be present at the meeting of Board when an important item concerning them is considered. According to Government, this arrangement "has functioned satisfactorily." Except in the matter of formulation of programme and priorities (on which the States are consulted), the State Governments are, it is stated, not concerned with problems discussed at the meeting of the Board and as such they have not been represented on the Board.

Tenure of Members

2.6. Asked to state where there was any procedure or convention for reviewing the Membership of the Board after sometime, Government have stated that the composition of the Board is decided by the Prime Minister and that since February, 1965, the tenure of Members has been "between two and one year at a time." The tenure of present members is upto the 31st May, 1970.

Meetings

2.7. Total number of meetings held by the Board since its inception in 1960 is 27, averaging about three per year. During 1967 and 1969, the Board has met twice during a year. The attendance during meetings held in 1967, 1968 and 1969 has been more or less full, the abstentions varying from one to three per meeting.

Powers of the Board

2.8. It was stated in a note furnished to the Committee that the Board exercised the financial and the other powers of a Department of the Government of India. Government was asked to state the Administrative Ministry to whom matters beyond the powers of the Board were required to be referred for approval|sanction. They have in reply stated that the Board is competent to take final decisions on all matters. The Board, it is stated, was intended to be, and is, the highest policy making and deciding authority in respect of matters falling within its programme. In reply to the question as to what is the extent of administrative, financial and budgetary control exercised by the Ministry of Defence over the Border Roads Development Board, Government has stated that the Ministry of Defence do not exercise any control over Border Roads Development Board and the Board Secretariat functions as a self-contained unit and as Ministry in respect of Border Roads Organisation under the Deputy Chairman.

2.9. Stating the functional relationship between the Border Roads Development Board and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport, Government have stated:

“The Secretariat of the Board has been given ex-officio Secretariat status in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport to facilitate early issue of sanctions on behalf of the Department of Transport. The staff of the Secretariat of the Board are borne proforma on the strength of the Department of Transport. The budget of the Board is included in that of the Ministry of Transport. The Board Secretariat functions under the Deputy Chairman of the Board. Defence Secretary oversees the work of the Secretary of the Board on behalf of the Deputy Chairman.”

Expenditure

2.10. The annual expenditure on the Secretariat of the Border Roads Development Board has been as under:

(Rs. in lakhs)

1964-65	1965-66	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
3.67	4.21	4.57	4.76	5.09

Arrangements for O & M Study

2.11. In reply to the question whether the Board Secretariat has a system of O&M to keep their organisation and procedures under constant review, it has been stated:

“There is no separate O and M Cell functioning in the Board Secretariat. The organisation and procedure are however, subjected to review as and when there is a significant change in the load of work. The Finance Ministry examined the strength and composition of the Board Secretariat on the following dates:

20-4-1960, 7-2-1961, 19-2-1962, 18-2-1964, 21-1-1966 and 6-1-1967

In addition, the staff strength of the Secretariat was examined by the Economy Committee of the Ministry of Finance in June 1963. The Committee did not suggest any change in the strength of the Staff.”

It is held that the procedures in the Board are sufficiently streamlined. In reply to the question as to how it was ensured that delays and hold up of cases did not occur at any stage in the Board Secretariat, it has been stated that the progress of cases is watched through the system of monthly arrears report and reminder diaries.

Delays in Sanctioning of Estimates

2.12. During on-the-spot study tours of the Committee, it was brought to the notice of the Committee that it took a long time to get sanctions for works even though the work estimates were projected long before by the field authorities. In several cases, *ad hoc* sanctions were received on year to year basis. Even those *ad hoc* sanctions were received by the Project authorities very late, sometimes when the work-season was about to commence. It was represented to the Committee in almost all the Projects which they visited that late receipt of sanctions and consequent sudden switch over of men and machines over far-flung distances rendered the entire resource and material planning in the Project out of gear and unnecessarily increased the cost of haulage of machines, besides putting an undue strain all over. It was stated that if the sanctions for work were in the hands of the Chief Engineers one year in advance, they would have ample time to plan, procure and move the resources at the sites of work. Such a procedure would, according to the Chief Engineers, reduce cost and avoid undue strain on the Project formations.

2.13. The Defence Secretary during his evidence before the Committee also admitted that "one of the problems which exercised the mind of the Border Roads Secretariat was the delay in the sanction of Projects." Asked why such delays were occurring when the main purpose of setting up a High Powered Board with Prime Minister as Chairman and the Defence Minister as Deputy Chairman, was to avoid procedural and administrative delays in the matter of sanctioning of Border Road Projects, the Defence Secretary stated:

"...when a case comes up to me or the Deputy Chairman or the Board, they are decided very expeditiously, but the cases come up to us only when they have been examined in the Secretariat and the recommendations are put up to Finance for their concurrence or comments. If a matter lies within the competence of the Board and the Board is not likely to meet for some-time, the Deputy Chairman gives approval in anticipation of the Board's approval. Work estimates inherently take time, because we would be subjected to considerable criticism if money is sanctioned without adequate examination. Adequate examination has to take place."

He, however, maintained:

"...the time taken in the Border Roads Organisation is very considerably less than in the case of projects in CPWD or even in the Defence Ministry. Some delays are inherent because there has to be examination, queries have to be answered, but with the experience which has

been gained over the last few years and with the constant pressure that is exerted from the headquarters, both the Director General Border Roads and the Secretariat, I would say it is taking less time than three years ago, much less than in ordinary building organisations."

2.14. The question of delays in sanctioning of estimates was also brought before the Shanker-Kumaramangalam Committee (1967). In this connection, various proposals were submitted to that Committee by the Director General Border Roads. The Committee was, however, of the view that the existing procedures for sanctioning of works need not be changed.

2.15. In a subsequent written reply to the question as to what difficulties were being felt by the Director General Border Roads under the existing procedure in the matter of obtaining administrative approval of works and sanctioning of estimates. Government have merely furnished to the Committee the relevant extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Shanker-Kumaramangalam Committee held on the 8th August, 1967 wherein the difficulties felt by the Director General Border Roads were examined and the Committee finally came to the conclusion that the proposals of the Director General Border Roads could not be accepted. Government have, however, stated that various measures in administrative sphere have been taken to obviate delay in the preparation of estimates and for expediting the issue of sanctions.

2.16. The Committee are constrained to note that delays continue to occur in the issue of sanctions for works even under the existing procedure which is stated to have been streamlined to expedite them, with the result that the Project authorities are not in a position to properly plan and procure the necessary resources and move them to work sites well in time. Receipt of sanctions for works by the Project authorities when the work-season is close at hand, as is frequently the case at present, creates problems of logistics and increases transportation costs involved in sudden switch over of men and heavy machines to work sites spread over considerable distances. The Committee feel that there is scope for further improvement and, therefore, recommend that suitable administrative procedures should be devised so as to ensure that sanctions for works are in the hands of the Project authorities well before the work-season commences. The Committee are of the opinion that it would result in better planning and maximum utilisation of resources, and consequent reduction in the overall cost of construction, if the Project authorities are given firm programme and targets for a period of three, or at least two years.

Release of Foreign Exchange

2.17. Difficulties experienced by the Director General Border Roads in regard to the release of foreign exchange at Government level were brought by him to the notice of the Shanker-Kumaramangalam Committee (1967). He thought that the existing system was unsatisfactory and had requested for a clear cut demarcation of responsibilities and issue of a directive to provide necessary foreign exchange for the Border Roads Organisation. The Committee had suggested that the problem should be tackled in the manner it was dealt with on the Defence side. Government was asked to state the improvements made by them since then, in the procedure for release of foreign exchange to the Border Roads Organisation. They have stated that foreign exchange was previously being released after obtaining sanction from the Ministry of Finance but since September, 1968, Secretary, Border Roads Development Board has been delegated powers to release foreign exchange upto Rs. one lakh in free resources and non-convertible rupees, in respect of each indent for maintenance spares, direct without reference to Associate Finance or Department of Economic Affairs. According to them, this has expedited matters somewhat.

2.18. The Committee note the new procedure introduced in September, 1968 in regard to release of foreign exchange for the Border Roads Organisation upto Rs. one lakh and hope that it would help in meeting the requirements of the Organisation. The procedure should, however, be reviewed after its operation has been watched for a period of three years, and if the difficulties of the Director General Border Roads persist, it should be further revised in the light of experience.

2.19. Another fact that had come to the notice as a result of the study of the Shanker Kumaramangalam Committee Report (1967) was that a very large number of loss statements were pending disposal. The Government was asked to indicate the number of cases of losses which were awaiting sanction on the 1st April, 1967 and the progress made since then in clearing them off. The following information has been furnished by Government:

Competent Financial Authority	No. outstanding upto 31-8-67	No. sanctioned upto 31-3-68	No. sanctioned from 1-4-68 to 31-3-69	No. sanctioned from 1-4-69 to 31-12-69	Total sanctioned upto 31-12-69	Balance
Border Roads Development Board	141	38	27	13	78	63
Director General Border Roads	49	18	17	4	39	10
Chief Engineers	1,299	942	243	74	1,259	40

2.20. The total number of cases of losses during the last four years and the value thereof has been indicated by Government as follows:

Year	No. of cases	Amount
		(Rs. in lakhs)
1965-66	801	3.08
1966-67	2,262	12.87
1967-68	3,144	24.71
1968-69	2,595	26.92

2.21. The Committee note that the cases of losses have registered a sharp increase from 801 in 1965-66 to 3,144 in 1967-68. The amount involved in losses has also increased from Rs. 3.08 lakhs in 1965-66 to Rs. 26.92 lakhs in 1968-69. The Committee would like Government to analyse the reasons for losses and take necessary remedial measures.

2.22. The Committee recommend that concerted efforts should be made to systematically analyse and dispose of the accumulated loss statements. Action should also be taken to ensure that the loss statements are analysed promptly on receipt so as to take remedial measures without delay.

Revised Estimates for Works pending finalisation

2.23. The Committee learnt from the Shanker Kumaramangalam Committee Report (1967) on Border Roads Organisation that in the cases of a large number of works, revised estimates had yet to be prepared and finalised. Government were asked to indicate the total number of revised estimates for works pending finalisation and sanction as on the 1st April, 1967 and the progress made in their finalisation and sanction during 1967-68, 1968-69 and 1969-70 (upto 30.9.1969). The information furnished by Government is as follows:

(i) Total No. of revised estimates pending as on 1-4-1967	107
(ii) No. of revised estimates sanctioned during 1967-68	3
(iii) No. of revised estimates sanctioned during 1968-69	4
(iv) No. of revised estimates sanctioned during 1969-70 upto (30-10-1969)	3

2.24. The Committee are unhappy to observe that a large number of 'estimates' for works are required to be revised. In this connection

they find the observation of the Shanker-Kumaramangalam Committee (1967) quite apt, namely: "General Reserve Engineer Force, which has been on the ground for more than six years, is now familiar generally with the conditions of terrain etc. in which formation cutting is expected to be undertaken in the near future. With the experience gained, it should not be difficult for Engineers to give a fairly correct idea of nature and volume of work involved and furnish the data on the basis of which 'approximate estimates' can be prepared" This should apply with greater force now as the General Reserve Engineer Force has been in the field for nearly ten years. The Committee, therefore, stress the need for drawing up a realistic estimate for work at the initial stage so as to obviate, as far as possible, the need for revising the same in future.

2.25. The Committee are also constrained to note that a large number of 'revised estimates' for works are awaiting finalisation and sanction and that no significant progress has been made in clearing the backlog during the last three years. The Committee recommend that serious efforts should be made at all levels to prepare and finalise the 'revised estimates' for works which have accumulated over the years.

(ii) Directorate General Border Roads

Setting up of Directorate General Border Roads

2.26. Directorate General Border Roads was set up on the 12th May, 1960. The Director General Border Roads is the Head of the Directorate. The Director General Border Roads is the technical adviser to the Board. He is in overall command of a civilian force called the General Reserve Engineer Force raised specially for the construction of Border Roads with specialised equipment.

Functions and Responsibility of Director General Border Roads

2.27. The Director General Border Roads is responsible for—

- (a) the planning and execution of Border Roads projects entrusted for execution to General Reserve Engineer Force as well as the Public Works Departments;
- (b) examination of technical soundness of designs and specifications adopted in construction; examination of all projects which are submitted to the Board, irrespective of agency of execution, for approval;
- (c) the planning of manpower, vehicles and equipment required for execution of projects and obtaining necessary Government sanction;
- (d) the raising of units as authorised by the Border Roads Development Board;

- (e) procurement and maintenance of vehicles and equipment sanctioned by Government from time to time;
- (f) the overall control and administration of the General Reserve Engineer Force; and
- (g) ensuring liaison with Chief Engineers of State Public Works Departments.

Organisation of D.G.B.R. Headquarters

2.28. The Director General Border Roads is assisted by three Directors of the rank of Brig. Col., an Inspector of Border Roads Works of the rank of Col. and a Deputy Chief Engineer Vigilance.

Director of Personnel deals with personnel problems. He is also assisted by Assistant Director of Medical Services of the rank of Col. who looks after the medical units.

Director of Technical planning looks after the planning and progressing of works, budget and all connected work.

Director, Technical Administration deals with the procurement of machinery, equipment, clothing and logistic supplies. He is responsible for problems relating to the Base and Field repairs to vehicles and equipment.

Inspector of Border Roads Works does the inspection of works at site to ensure their technical soundness. He also does the work study of specific questions entrusted to him.

Deputy Chief Engineer looks after all vigilance cases.

The Directors are assisted by Staff Officers I (of the rank of Lt. Col. or Superintending Engineer), Staff Officers II (of the rank of Major or Executive Engineer or Civilian Officer Grade I) and Staff Officers III (of the rank of Capt. or Asstt. Executive Engineer/Asstt. Engineer or Civilian Officer Gd. II).

Annual Expenditure

2.29. The annual expenditure of D.G.B.R. Headquarters during the last three years has been as under:—

1966-67		Rs. 33.55 lakhs
1967-68		Rs. 34.89 lakhs
1968-69		Rs. 37.42 lakhs

Arrangements for O & M study

2.30. It is stated that no external agency has so far examined the staff strength or work procedures of D.G.B.R. Headquarters. Government maintain that a broad review of the work load is,

however, carried out periodically while determining the staff requirements. The establishment of D.G.B.R. Headquarters is sanctioned annually. Directorate General Border Roads do not have any O & M Organisation.

2.31. The Committee recommend that the Directorate General Border Roads should have an integrated O & M Organisation for the field and Headquarters. The Committee need hardly stress that it should consist of engineering personnel trained in O & M Work Study methods and having first hand experience of field strength at and work. It should systematically review the staff strength at the Headquarters as well as in the field in the light of workload and trends of construction and maintenance programme, to obviate over-staffing at all levels. It should lay down norms of work and yardstick for determining strength of staff of different categories for different types of work.

History of Projects

2.32. Discussing the desirability of projecting a more realistic estimate for a work, the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee on Border Roads Organisation (1967) had expressed the view that Director General Border Roads should introduce a system of compilation of history of each of the major Projects so that data obtained and problems encountered in a particular area might be on record and provide guidance to engineers in future when similar projects were under taken in the same area or elsewhere. Asked to state the action so far taken in pursuance of this view of the Committee, Government have stated that detailed instructions outlining the scope of the History of Projects were issued by Director General Border Roads to all GREF Chief Engineers on the 28th August, 1969 after showing them to Government. According to them, the first set of historical records of the completed roads is expected to be ready by the middle of the next year (1970).

2.33. The Committee commend the idea of preparation of history of projects undertaken by the Border Roads Organisation so that it may be useful to engineers who may be called upon to undertake further projects in the same or similar areas in future. They suggest that the history of projects should be in the shape of progressive history sheets maintained road-wise so that contemporaneous record of post-construction developments could also be added to it from time to time. They hope that before long history of all the projects executed by the Border Roads Organisation, written with due care and attention, would be available.

PARLIAMENT LIBRARY

C. Field Organisation

(i) Projects and Project Organisation

Project Organisation

2.34. The entire northern border is covered by seven Projects namely, Beacon, Deepak, Swastik, Dantak, Vartak, Sewak and Pushpak.

2.35. Each of the Projects is under the charge of a Chief Engineer. Chief Engineers are responsible for:—

- (a) detailed planning and preparation of estimates for individual projects for obtaining Government sanction;
- (b) expeditious execution of sanctioned projects;
- (c) economical utilisation of resources in manpower and equipment and maintenance and upkeep of vehicles and equipment allotted to them;
- (d) control and administration of units and formations in his area; and
- (e) ensuring that units and formations observe the prescribed procedure for the proper maintenance of accounts, safe custody of stores and equipment, etc.

For the discharge of the above functions, each Chief Engineer is allotted a certain number of Task Forces.

2.36. Task Forces are of two types: Construction Task Force and Maintenance Task Force. This, however, is only a question of bias. A Construction Task Force is generally employed where the nature of works planned is predominantly constructional i.e. formation cutting, initial protective works etc. A Maintenance Task Force is authorised where the main task is the maintenance of roads in an area where the roads have either been surfaced or are in the final stages of development. Construction Task Forces have also some maintenance responsibility and the Maintenance Task Forces have also to handle certain amount of construction work.

2.37. The total number of Task Forces attached to various Projects have been varying from year to year. The position during the last three years is indicated below:

	1-4-1967	1-4-1968	1-4-1969
Construction Task Force (ERTF)	20	15	17
Maintenance Task Force (MTF)	—	4	7

2.38. A Task Force is composed of Construction, Formation Cutting, Permanent Works, Surfacing and Road Maintenance Units, commanded by Executive Engineers/Majors. Other units like Field

Workshop, Transport Platoon, Composite Supply Platoon, Medical Staging Section, Postal unit etc. provide administrative cover. Where casual labour is not available or is insufficient, Pioneer Companies (composed of GREF unskilled labour) are employed.

2.39. The allocation of units to Chief Engineers is reviewed from time to time in the light of the work programme.

2.40. Apart from the Project Organisation, there are specialised units which deal with stores at the Base, a Recruitment and Training Centre at Roorkee for recruitment and training of GREF personnel on a centralised basis, two Liaison Offices—at Calcutta and Bombay and two Base Workshops—one in Eastern Region and one in Western Region.

Reorganisation of Units

2.41. Since the inception of the Organisation, the Task Forces and Units of the Border Roads Organisation were organised on the Army pattern. This pattern of organisation was later on considered unsatisfactory for administrative reasons as well as from the point of view of the economic deployment of resources. The Director General Border Roads, therefore, submitted to Government a reorganisation scheme wherein it was proposed to reorganise the Task Forces and Units on a functional basis. These were to be inducted according to the progress of construction work on the ground. When maintenance stage was reached, a separate set up was to take charge of the road. Under the new scheme a Maintenance Task Force was expected to look after a length of 250 miles while a Road Maintenance Unit was designed to look after stretches of about 75 miles. The suggestions of the Director General Border Roads came up for consideration by the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee in 1967 who desired the Director General to examine whether the set up of Public Works Departments could be adopted and a less expensive organisation evolved on the Border Roads side. The Director General expressed the view before that Committee that P.W.D. system could not be adopted for his organisation because their work was contract-oriented and they did not work under a strict time schedule for completion of projects as was required of the Border Roads Organisation. That Committee had, therefore, desired that the reorganisation plan of the Director General should be carried out as quickly as possible. They, however, felt that the reorganisation of units on functional basis would postulate a highly efficient system of planning and coordination and desired the Director General Border Roads to ensure that no idle time resulted during induction and withdrawal of various units.

2.42. During evidence the Defence Secretary was asked to state whether the reorganisation plan had been implemented. He stated that the sanction for units reorganised on a functional basis was

issued in March, 1968 and the units on the ground were reorganised in the next 6 months i.e. during April—October, 1968.

(ii) *The General Reserve Engineer Force Strength*

2.43. The General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) was set upon 16th June, 1960, for the construction of Border Roads. The authorised strength and actual strength of GREF as on 1st October, 1969 has been indicated as follows:—

	Authorised strength	Held	Deficiency
<i>Officers .</i>	1279	1078	201*
<i>Subordinates</i>			
Supervisory staff Non-Technical .	2711	2421	290
Supervisory staff Technical .	2271	1897	374
Clerical staff	3878	3479	399
Unskilled staff including Pioneers .	45280	39753	5527
Skilled and semi-skilled staff	19934	17404	2530
TOTAL	74074	64954	9120
GRAND TOTAL .	75353	66032	9321

* 59 candidates selected by UPSC in various grades, have been issued offer of appointment. The deficiency will be reduced as and when they join.

2.44. In reply to the question as to what was the system of reviewing the authorised strength of staff, it has been stated that reviews of establishment sanctions are made generally once a year. It is also stated that the units and formations have standard establishment and that the number of units and formations that would be required to execute the works departmentally are decided each year on the basis of the works plan and availability of machinery, equipment, and funds for that year. The current establishments of the reorganised units are stated to have been reviewed last in 1967-68 and sanctioned for the period upto 31st March, 1971.

Utilisation of manpower

2.45. Due to weather conditions, it is not possible for the Border Roads Organisation to continue road construction work throughout the year. In Eastern Region there is the problem of heavy monsoons whereas in the Western Region the work is interrupted due to heavy snow fall. The question therefore arose as to how the underused manpower during the slack season could be fully utilised.

2.46. This question came up for consideration by the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee also in 1967. According to the report of that Committee, this aspect of the matter was discussed by Border Roads Development Board at their meeting held on the 18th October, 1966 and in pursuance of their decision, certain proposals were under discussion between the Director General Border Roads and Assam Public Works Department and the Army. That Committee were of the view that the feasibility of taking up army projects of construction of technical and domestic accommodation should be examined first and finalised immediately. They felt that this problem needed to be pursued vigorously and on the basis of the highest priority.

2.47. During evidence the representative of the Government was asked to state what action had been taken or was proposed to be taken to utilise the underused manpower during the slack season. The Director General Border Roads, dealing with this question, admitted that there were "periods of more intensive work and less intensive work" but denied that any person was kept idle during the slack season. During monsoon in the Eastern Region, he said, the men remained busy in keeping the roads open to traffic. Further, the staff was encouraged to proceed on annual leave during this period, and this resulted in a reduction of staff strength by about 25 to 30 per cent. In case there was any excess staff which could not be gainfully employed, it was diverted to areas where work was possible during this period. In the Western Region also, the staff was encouraged to proceed on annual leave during the slack season and the reduction in the staff strength on that account was as much as 40 per cent. Excess staff was transferred to sites of work in the Srinagar Valley and on the National Highway. Besides, the Director General maintained, during the slack season the maintenance and repairs of machinery was attended to and the staff engaged on that work had their hands full.

2.48. Answering the query whether the question of utilising the under-used capacity of GREF during slack season, which had been under consideration of Government since October 1966 and in regard to which the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee had made certain recommendations, has been finally decided, Government have in a subsequent written reply, stated as follows:—

"After discussion with the Roads Wing, Engineer-in-Chief and GREF Chief Engineers, Director General Border Roads has come to the conclusion that by suitable adjustment within the organisation itself it is possible to eliminate the problem of under-utilisation of manpower. First, during the monsoons and Snow season, resources are employed on more intensive maintenance of roads, preservation of formation already cut, soling, metalling and collection of

stones and aggregate and field repairs of plant and equipment. A substantial quantity of equipment has to be retained in the areas on the far side of the passes which close down in winter so that the work may commence in the forward areas 2 to 3 months earlier than would otherwise be possible

Secondly, the Chief Engineers have been directed to discharge local labour and allow maximum number of GREF personnel to proceed on leave.

In view of the above, no special steps are being taken at present."

2.49. The Committee stress the need for optimum utilisation of men so as to bring down the cost of construction and maintenance of roads by the Border Roads Organisation which is admittedly high. They agree with the observation contained in the Report of the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee (1967) that the problem of under utilisation of staff during slack seasons needs to be pursued vigorously and on a priority basis. The Committee would like Government to re-examine the matter thoroughly and ensure that the staff, technical as well as non-technical, remain gainfully employed during the slack season also.

Civilisation of GREF

2.50. General Reserve Engineer Force is composed of the following:—

- (i) Army Officers|Junior Commissioned Officers| Other Ranks seconded to the Border Roads Organisation for a normal tenure of three years.
- (ii) Civilian Officers and subordinates including supervisory personnel on deputation to GREF from other offices.
- (iii) Civilian Officers and supervisory and other personnel directly recruited.

2.51. As on the 25th December, 1969, the General Reserve Engineer Force consisted of 1076 officers: 321 Service Officers and 755 Civilians including deputationists. The position in regard to subordinate posts, category-wise, as on 1st April, 1969, is indicated as under:

(a) Held against stroke appointments

	Army	GREF	Total
Supervisory staff Non-Technical	277	2,136	2,413
Supervisory Technical staff	60	1,828	1,888
Clerical staff	485	2,949	3,434
Skilled and semi-skilled staff	296	16,738	17,034
Unskilled staff	36	38,036	38,072
TOTAL	1,154	61,687	62,841

(b) *Held against appointment at present tenable only by Army personnel*

	Army	GREF	Total
CD Staff	680		680
Clerical Staff	144	..	144
TOTAL	824	..	824
GRAND TOTAL	1,978	61,687	63,665

2.52. Asked to state whether there was any fixed quota of posts of different categories for being filled out of Service Officers and, if no such quota was laid down, how it was decided that a particular vacancy should be filled by a Service Officer or by fresh recruitment or promotion of a GREF Officer, Government have stated that as and when appointments are filled, a decision is taken in consultation with the Director General Border Roads as to the number of officers who may be recruited through the Union Public Service Commission taking into account all factors like number of vacancies, number of military officers serving, number of military officers due to revert to the Army, number of non-military officers serving and due to revert.

2.53. In reply to the query as to what are the Government's views in regard to the question of gradually expanding the GREF element in the Border Roads Organisation so as to make it a purely civilian force, Government have stated that the broad policy followed so far is that GREF officers should be employed in increasing numbers. They have maintained that, while every attempt will be made to build up the GREF cadre, it will not be feasible to civilianise it completely in the near future, considering the nature of the Organisation and its deployment in border areas and its close working with the Army in peace and war, which demands that an element of the Army Officers, especially in the higher cadres, should remain for a fairly long period. In reply to another question, it has been stated that all posts of Class II Gazetted Officers are tenable by civilians and that a civilian cadre is being built up for the Class I appointments.

2.54. As regards subordinate posts, it is stated that almost all such posts in GREF are tenable by GREF civilians. The Director General Border Roads has, however, been authorised to obtain Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks on loan from the Army to fill up 2000 posts. The reason given for such an arrangement is that there are some technical and supervisory appointments for which no suitable civilians are readily available. Further, it is also stated to be necessary to have a nucleus of army Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks in the Border Roads Organisation.

2.55. The Committee consider that while it may not be desirable to make the GREF a completely civilian force, with the expertise the Border Roads Organisation have built up, it should be possible for them to entrust larger responsibility to civilians so as to release the maximum number of Service Personnel for normal army duties.

2.56. The Committee are unable to appreciate the need for non-technical staff being drawn from the army to man subordinate GREF posts. They recommend that manning of subordinate GREF posts by Junior Commissioned Officers|Other Ranks should, as far as possible, be confined to cases where suitable civilians are not available or where strategic or security considerations so require.

2.57. The GREF civilian cadre consists of (i) officers and (ii) supervisory and other personnel. The GREF officer cadre on the civil side consists of the following:

Superintending Engineer	(Civil)
Superintending Engineer	(Mech.)
Executive Engineer	(Civil)
Executive Engineer	(Mech.)
Asstt. Executive Engineer	(Civil)
Asstt. Executive Engineer	(Mech.)
Asstt. Engineer	(Civil)
Asstt. Engineer	(Mech.)
Civilian Officer Grade I, II and III.	
Medical Officer Grade I, II and III.	

Recruitment Rules have been framed and notified in respect of all these posts. It is noted from the information supplied by Government that the Force has one Civilian Deputy Chief Engineer who, as the rules stand at present, is not included in GREF civilian cadre.

2.58. Recruitment Rules have been framed in respect of 119 categories of 'Supervisory and other personnel'.

2.59. The Committee consider that as a post of Deputy Chief Engineer is held by a civilian, it may also be included in the civilian GREF officer cadre and Recruitment Rules therefor framed.

Terms and Conditions of Service

..

2.60. The terms and conditions of service of civilian personnel have been revised and brought into force on the 20th November, 1969. These are given in Appendix I. It is stated that any matter not specifically covered by these terms and conditions and by the Border Roads Regulations will be dealt with under the rules applicable to "Non-Industrial" civilians of the Defence Services.

Terms of Conditions of Defence Service Officers

2.61. The following category of Defence Services Officers and Personnel, while serving their term with GREF, continue to be governed by the terms and conditions applicable to them in the Defence Services:

- (i) Service Officers for whom no corresponding civilian posts are prescribed in GREF (i.e., Maj. Gl., Brigadier and Colonel)
- (ii) All combatant service personnel (i.e. J.C.Os./O. Rs. holding supervisory and other posts).

Defence Services Officers for whom corresponding civilian posts are prescribed in GREF and whose services are placed at the disposal of the Border Roads Development Board (i.e. Lt. Col., Maj., Capt. and Lt.) are allowed the option either to retain the terms and conditions applicable to them in the Defence Services or to elect to be governed by the terms and conditions applicable to the corresponding civilian officers in the GREF. The option has to be exercised immediately on assuming the appointment in GREF and once exercised is final. Those opting for the conditions of service applicable to corresponding civilian officers in GREF are not permitted to keep any military concessions.

Terms and Conditions of Deputationists

2.62. Civilian Officers and subordinates, including supervisory personnel, on deputation to GREF from other departments including State Governments, are governed by normal terms and conditions of deputation as applicable to such civilian officers and personnel deputed to civil posts in the Defence Services. They serve for a period mutually agreed upon between the lending and borrowing departments.

Tenure of Service of GREF Personnel

2.63. According to the terms and conditions effective from the 20th November, 1969, GREF officers and personnel are initially appointed for a period of three years out of which for the first two years they remain on probation. During the initial period of three years, they do not have the option to resign except with the prior permission of the appointing authority. The officers appointed on an ad hoc basis for a period of one year do not have the option to resign during this period and the period of probation in their case is six months. The service rendered by all officers and other personnel recruited directly is governed by the provisions of the Central Civil Service (Temporary Service) Rules, 1965.

2.64. Previously, after the completion of their initial term of appointment, the services of GREF officers and personnel were renewable for one year at a time. Now after completion of three years of service, a review is made on the basis of past performance whether the individual should be retained in the Organisation or not and if it is decided to retain him, his services are continued 'until further orders' and he becomes subject to the Central Civil Services (Temporary Services) Rule, 1965. If and when a member of the General Reserve Engineer Force is made permanent in any of the permanent cadres of the General Reserve Engineer Force, he is governed by normal terms and conditions of service as applicable to non-industrial civilians in the Defence Services.

2.65. According to the Annual Report of the Border Roads Organisation for 1966-67, it was decided by Government during that year to create a permanent cadre of officers and subordinates in the GREF. To start with, a permanent cadre of 209 officers, 5400 subordinates, and 4,000 unskilled personnel including pioneers, was approved. It was then also decided that the tenure of the officers and subordinates would, after the first three years, be regulated by normal rules applicable to Civil Central Government servants and that they would also be eligible for the grant of quasi-permanent status. They were, however, to continue to be subject to certain provisions of the Army Act and Rules for disciplinary purposes. Asked to state the progress made in declaring the staff permanent/quasi-permanent, the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board stated during evidence before the Committee that for declaring them as quasi-permanent and also for declaring them as permanent "certain administrative action is already in progress".

2.66. Government was asked to state the number of officers and subordinates who had completed between three and eight years of service and were yet temporary. They have furnished the information as follows:—

*Statement Showing the length of Service of GREF Officers
as on 1-9-1969 and subordinate as on 1-4-1969*

Category	With 8 years or more of service		With 5 years or more of service		With 3 years or more of service	
	Total No.	Declared Perma- nent/ Q. per.	Total No.	Declared Perma- nent/ Q. Per.	Total No.	Declared Perma- nent/ Q. per.
I	2	3	4	5	6	7
S.Es. . . .	6	Nil	3	Nil	1	Nil
EEs/SW . . .	63	„	45	„	15	„
AEES/ASW. . .	139	„	103	„	20	„
AEs	150	„	116	„	13	„

I	2	3	4	5	6	7
Medical Officer Gde I	6	Nil	I	Nil		Nil
Medical Officer Gde II	..	„	..	„	..	„
Medical Officer Gde III	3	„	2	„	..	„
Civilian Officer Gde I	8	„		„		„
Civilian Officer Gde II	II	„	4	„	I	„
Civilian Officer Gde III	39	„	25	„	6	„
TOTAL . . .	425		299		56	
<i>Subordinates</i>						
(as on I-4-69) .	33,433	..	20,109	..	5,301	

2.67. The Committee are unhappy to note that although a decision was taken to apply the provisions of the Central Civil Services (Temporary Service) Rules, 1965 to the GREF officers and subordinates and also to create a permanent GREF cadre as early as 1966-67, no GREF Officer or subordinate has so far been declared as permanent or even quasi-permanent. They recommend that expeditious action should be taken to implement the decision taken in 1966-67 and declare the eligible staff permanent or quasi-permanent, as the case may be, by the end of 1970.

2.68. The Committee further recommend that the strength of permanent GREF cadre should be reviewed at least once in two years if not once a year in the light of trends of construction and maintenance programme of the Border Roads Organisation with particular reference to transfer of responsibility for maintenance of roads to the State Governments.

Pay & Allowances of Pioneers

2.69. At the base of the ground formations of the Border Roads Organisation is the unskilled labour which is employed on a regular basis, known as Pioneers. At places where local labour is not available or the conditions are such that no reliance could be placed on local labour for completing the work schedules in time, it is the Pioneers who are employed for the road construction work. Out of a total staff of 66032 in position as on the 1st October, 1969 with the

Border Roads Organisation, the number of unskilled labour (the bulk of which consists of Pineers) was 39753. They along with other members of the GREF are subject to discipline under the Army Act.

Scale of Pay.—The Pioneers draw pay in the scale of Rs. 55—1—70

Dearness Allowances:—The rate of Dearness Pay and Dearness Allowance admissible to all the Members of the Force who are in receipt of pay of less than Rs. 110 are Rs. 47.00 and Rs. 24.00 respectively, per month. Those in the scales of pay of Rs. 55—1—70 are, however, in receipt of a Dearness Allowance of Rs. 71.00 only as, in their case, the amount of Dearness Pay is yet to be decided. Thus, the initial consolidated salary of a Pioneer is Rs. 126.00 per month. However, the personnel in this scale of pay, who are in receipt of free rations and free accommodation, are entitled to only 80 per cent of the full Dearness Allowance, and the initial consolidated salary in their case is Rs. 112.00 only. It is noted that in the case of officers and other categories of subordinates in the GREF, there is no similar deduction if they are in receipt of free rations and free accommodation.

Special Compensatory Allowance.—Special Compensatory Allowance is admissible to Members of the GREF while serving in difficult areas at the following rates:—

<i>For Officers</i>	<i>For Subordinates</i>
In Bhutan, Sikkim, Nagaland Mizo Hills and specified places in J&K, Himachal Pradesh, UP, NEFA	In Bhutan, Sikkim and specified places in J&K, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and U.P.
33-1/3 of basic pay subject to a:	50% of basic pay subject to a:—
(a) Minimum of Rs. 250/- and maximum of Rs. 400/- for Class I Officers, and	Minimum of Rs. 25/- p.m. in the case of Class III and Rs. 50/- p.m. in the case of Class IV, and a maximum of Rs. 200/- p.m.
(b) Minimum of Rs. 200/- and Maximum of Rs. 250/- for Class II Officers.	In Nagaland, Mizo Hills and specified places in NEFA.
	40% of basic pay subject to a minimum of Rs. 75/- in the case of Class III and Rs. 50/- in the case of Class IV and a Maximum of Rs. 200/- p.m.

The Special Compensatory Allowance is, however, not admissible to personnel employed on the scale of pay of Rs. 55—1—70 even though they may be deployed in such areas.

2.70. The Committee are unable to appreciate why in the case of members of the GREF in the scale of Rs. 55—1—70 (the bulk of whom

are the Pioneers) a deduction of 20 per cent of the Dearness Allowance is made in lieu of free rations and accommodation made available to them while in the case of GREF officers and other subordinate personnel in receipt of similar amenities no such deduction is made. They also note that GREF personnel in the aforesaid scale of pay are denied the Special Compensatory Allowance admissible to GREF officers and other subordinate staff posted to certain difficult areas. The Committee recommend that Government should reconsider the justification for this discriminatory treatment meted out to the lowest paid members of the GREF on whose toil and sweat primarily, depends the progress and achievements of the Border Roads Organisation.

Rations and Accommodation

2.71. As per their terms and conditions, while on duty, GREF officers and subordinate including Pioneers are entitled to free rations in accordance with a scale prescribed by Government and free single accommodation of simple type together with lighting and domestic water supply. These concessions are however not admissible at present to those members of the Force who are employed in—

DGBR Headquarters
GREF Centre, Roorkee
Liaison Offices, Bombay & Calcutta
Chief Engineers' Headquarters
Base Workshops,
Transit Depots.

Members of GREF in the pay scale of Rs. 55—1—70, when not in receipt of the concession of free rations and accommodation, can draw House Rent Allowance and Compensatory (City) Allowance.

2.72. The Committee during their on-the-spot Study Tours noticed that the scales of free rations supplied to Civilian GREF officers and subordinate were much less as compared to those admissible to their counterparts belonging to the Army working in the same organisation at the same place and under similar geographical conditions. This was not only discouraging to the Civilian GREF staff but also caused embarrassment to Army personnel, as the staff at all levels was mixed comprising of civilian as well as Army personnel and the arrangements for messing were common. The Committee had also noticed during their Study Tours that in certain areas at high altitudes, accommodation provided to the GREF personnel was not properly insulated to protect them from the rigours of the climatic conditions in the area.

2.73. During their Study Tours, it was also complained to the Committee that the quantity of food supplied to Civilian GREF staff, namely four thin chapatis, two spoonfulls (Karchi) of rice,

plus some dal and vegetable, was not adequate for a person and much less so for a worker who was doing hard manual labour under inhospitable conditions. It was suggested that at least two more chapatis and some more sugar should be made available.

2.74. Government was asked to state the reasons for the scale of ration fixed for civilian GREF staff being at a lower level as compared to that available to Army officers and men, when the duties of civilian GREF staff and of the Army personnel with the Border Roads Organisation were the same and both worked under similar conditions. Government have, in their reply, stated that it is the policy of the Government not to equate the terms and conditions of service of GREF personnel with those of the Army officers, Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks. The pattern of pay and allowances and terms and conditions of the GREF officers and personnel are, according to them, modelled on those which are admissible to the corresponding trades and categories of Defence Civilians. In addition, certain special concessions have been sanctioned, keeping in view the terrain and conditions under which the GREF civilians have to work. One of the concessions sanctioned, as a special case, is the provision of free cooked rations in certain specified areas. The reasons for giving this concession, according to Government, are (i) difficulty in individuals making suitable arrangements and (ii) need for giving an incentive to these personnel for volunteering for service in difficult areas. The present scale of rations, which is the same for officers and men was, it is stated, evolved in consultation with the Director of Medical Services (Army). It is further stated that those who wish to have meat or other items, can have them by paying to the mess a small amount out of their emoluments. It is held that many personnel find the food adequate and have not felt the need for supplementing it by contributing to regimental mess fund.

2.75. The question of inadequacy of rations provided to the civilians GREF staff was also raised during evidence. The Secretary, Border Roads Development Board stated that it was intended that out of the cash emoluments which were received by the GREF personnel they would supplement the free ration issued to them to the extent necessary. He also stated that, even it is, a GREF Pioneer cost the Border Roads Organisation something like Rs. 13-14 a day but the total work got of him was hardly of the value of Rs. 7-8 per day. According to him, the GREF Pioneer was costly because, as a regular member of the Force, he was entitled to a whole series of privileges which were not given to casual labour. Asked why were Pioneers employed when the work by casual labour would be cheaper, he stated that it was so firstly because casual labour was not available in sufficient numbers whenever the Border Roads Organisation required them and secondly all casual labour went home for a definite period of time. According to him:

"If we were hundred percent dependent on labour over which we have no statutory control—no Army Act applicable to them—and if they want to leave us...and we cannot do a thing about it....then we would be in serious trouble. But it is our endeavour constantly to keep the number of Pioneer Labour under check—in fact to reduce it—and to keep on increasing the locality employed labour or casual labour."

2.76. The Committee are of the view that since the Government have assumed responsibility for providing free cooked rations to the civilians GREF personnel in certain field areas, it is imperative that the scale of rations should not only be adequate but also consistent with the physical requirement of a worker doing hard manual labour under abnormal conditions. The Committee need hardly stress that the civilians GREF staff should be kept in a state of fitness to face the rigours of weather and give maximum output. The Committee feel convinced that there is need for an urgent review of the scale of rations provided to the civilian GREF staff and recommend that it should be undertaken without delay in consultation with the Army medical authorities and leading nutritional experts who should be well conversant with the difficult conditions in border areas.

2.77. The Committee also feel that there is need for improving adequately the living accommodation facilities for GREF personnel working at high altitudes.

Clothing and Outfit

2.78. Civilian GREF officers are on appointment to the Force given an Outfit Allowance of Rs. 500 towards expenditure to be incurred by them to equip themselves with such items of clothing as may be prescribed. Officers recruited initially for one year only are, however, paid Rs. 250 on appointment and the balance in the second year, if their services are extended for another minimum period of 2 years. With effect from the 1st April, 1969, the officers with 4 years of service as Gazetted Officers on that date also receive a Renewal Outfit Allowance of Rs. 100 every year.

2.79. All supervisory and other personnel are entitled to free uniform as per scale prescribed from time to time by Government. Replacement of personal clothing due to fair wear and tear is also free. Extra clothing required in view of climate conditions in the area of work is issued on loan to the members of the Force. Government have stated that the scale of clothing and outfit is necessity oriented.

2.80. During on-the-spot Study Tours of Projects, the Committee noticed that the condition of the clothing of Pioneers was extremely poor. Some of them had not received a full complement of clothing admissible to them even once. The clothes rendered unserviceable as a result of fair wear and tear were not replaced for considerably long time. On enquiry from the officers of the organisation as to the reasons for this state of affairs and their replies, the Committee came to the conclusion that the system of procurement and distribution of items of clothing and outfit had completely failed. The Projects were not allowed to keep the clothing etc. in reserve for issue/replacement when due and the supplies took a very very long time to arrive. The result was that the Pioneers continued to work in difficult conditions with very poor and insufficient clothes. In one project, the Group noted that about 4,000 Mosquito nets were short and the GREF personnel had to do without them. It was suggested in every Project that there should be advance procurement of clothing etc. on an *ad hoc* basis and the Projects should be authorised to keep some clothing in reserve for replacement when necessary.

21.81. The Committee regret that there is no proper system of issue of various items of clothing and outfit to the civilian GREF subordinate staff to which they are entitled free of charge. Although there is a provision also for replacement of these items on fair wear and tear basis at Government cost, it has been observed that in actual practice, far from receiving replacements, many members of staff do not get the full complement even once. The Committee feel that this state of affairs is due to faulty provisioning at the Central level. They recommend that there should be advance provisioning on annual basis of items of clothing and outfit to which the civilians GREF subordinates are entitled at Government cost and the Projects should be allowed to keep essential items in stock so that there is no avoidable delay in replacements in case of fair wear and tear.

Hours of Work and effect of High Altitude

2.82. During their tours of the Projects, the Committee were informed that the daily hours of work for the GREF personnel and the casual labour were from dawn to dusk at some places and from 6.30 A.M. to 4.30 P.M. at other places, with an hour's break during the day for lunch. The Committee, however, noticed that so far as Pioneers were concerned, there were no fixed hours of work in actual practice. They saw the Pioneers working even when it was quite dark with the aid of lights.

2.83. While touring at very high altitudes, the Committee also met GREF personnel who had been at the same place for an inordinately long time with visibly adverse effects on their health.

2.84. The Committee recommend that Government may examine the feasibility of issuing suitable instructions regulating the weekly and daily hours of work and observance of holidays by the field staff for general information.

2.85. The Committee consider that a person may not be posted at high altitude for more than two years at a stretch. However, they would like Government to fix a reasonable tenure of posting at high altitudes in consultation with medical authorities and strictly observe the same.

Casual Workers

2.86. The rates of wages (all inclusive) paid to casual non-technical workers, employed on 'as required' basis in different areas have been indicated as under:—

Area	Rate per diem
<i>Jammu & Kashmir</i>	
Mate	Between Rs. 3·25 and Rs. 4·50.
Mazdoor (male)	Between Rs. 3 and Rs. 4.
Mazdoor (female)	Between Rs. 2·25 and Rs. 3·25
<i>Himachal Pradesh</i>	
Mate	Rs. 4·90
Mazdoor (male)	Rs. 4·60.
Mazdoor (female)	Rs. 4·00.
<i>Bhutan</i>	
Mate	Rs. 4·00.
Mazdoor (male)	Between Rs. 3·00 and Rs. 3·25.
Mazdoor (female)	Between Rs. 2·50 and Rs. 2·75.
<i>Sikkim</i>	
Mazdoor (male) 2	Rs. 105 to Rs. 140 per month.
Mazdoor (female)	Rs. 90 to Rs. 1·20 per month.
<i>N.E.F.A.</i>	
Mazdoor (male)	Rs. 90 to Rs. 95 per month.
Mazdoor (female)	Rs. 85 per month.
<i>Nagaland</i>	
Mazdoor	Rs. 90 to Rs. 105 per month
<i>Mizo Hills</i>	
Mazdoor	Rs. 95 to Rs. 130 per month.

2.87. In addition to daily wages, the following facilities|amenities are provided to the casual employees:—

- (i) Used tents, tarpaulins, etc., are issued for construction of cheap shelters.
- (ii) Basic items of ration, viz., cereals, salt, sugar, tea, kerosene oil and hydrogenated oil are issued at specified scales on payment.
- (iii) Old cape, water-proof, blanket, razai, cap|comfortor, gloves and jersy|pullover are also issued on payment when they are employed in very cold areas or in snow season.
- (iv) Medical treatment is provided to the extent admissible under the normal rules.
- (v) Injury|death benefits under Workmen's Compensation Act are admissible.

The labour, which is inducted from other areas under arrangements of the Chief Engineers, is entitled to the following additional facilities:—

- (a) The cost of warrant for journey by rail from the place of recruitment to the project is recovered in three monthly instalments. After satisfactory completion of six months' service, a warrant for return journey is issued free.
- (b) Out-of-pocket allowance @ Re. one per head per day is paid for the period of onward journey.
- (c) During first month of service, rations are issued on credit.

D. Recruitment and Training

(i) Recruitment

Recruitment of GREF Officers:

2.88. The GREF Officers are recruited through the Union Public Service Commission. The number of GREF officers of various categories recruited yearly during 1966—1969 is given below:—

Category	1966	1967	1968	1969 (upto 30-10-1969)
1	2	3	4	5
Supdtg. Engrs. (Civil)	2	2	..	..
Ex. Engrs. (Civil)	22	15	2	10
Asst. Ex. Engrs. (Civil)	67	28	15	..
Asst. Engrs. (Civil)	43	29	1	..

	2	3	4	5
Ex. Engrs. (Mech)	2	3	4	2
Asst. Ex. Engrs. (Mech)	16	32	6	18
Asst. Engrs. (Mech)	10	11	1	..
Civilian Officer (Grade I).	4	5	5	14
Civilian Officer (Grade II)	28	26	21	10
Civilian Officer (Grade III)	58	45	5	..
Med. Officers (Grade I)	4	2	..	4
Med. Officers (Grade II)	..	1	7	1
Med. Officers (Grade III)	4	1	2	1

Recruitment of Subordinates:

2.89. The Border Road Organisation have a centralised arrangement for recruitment of GREF subordinates. For this purpose they have set up a Recruitment-cum-Training Centre at Roorkee. The Recruitment Wing of this Centre is composed of 9 officers and 307 subordinate and other personnel. Work done by this Wing during the last three years has been as follows:—

Recruitment of Subordinates

1967	6042
1968	12731
1969 (upto Sept.)	4887

Raising of New Units

1967	18
1968	25
1969 (upto 30-10-60)	4

2.90. It is stated that a period 60 days has been allowed to raise and despatch units to Project locations and in the case of all the Units raised during 1967, 1968 and 1968, the units were raised and despatched within 60 days.

2.91. It was noted from the statement showing the staff position furnished to the Committee that there were large shortages of different categories of staff year after year. Explaining the position in writing, Government have stated that the vacancies are mostly on

account of non-availability in adequate number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates and also due to difficult conditions in Project areas. It is stated that the following steps are being taken to meet the deficiencies:

- (a) Recruitment Teams are sent to out-stations and to bring projects which have surplus manpower, to carry out recruitment apart from recruiting personnel at GREF Centre, Roorkee.
- (b) Other agencies like employment exchanges and army recruiting centres are contacted to sponsor suitable ex-servicemen.
- (c) Constant liaison is kept with Technical institutions, universities and State Medical Councils, etc.

2.92. During evidence the representative of the Government was asked to state the manner in which the vacancies among the GREF subordinates were publicised so that candidates from all places might be attracted and selection could be made out of a wider field. The Director-General Border Roads replied that the Border Roads Organisation did not normally advertise for recruitment to subordinate posts. Vacancies were, however, notified to all Employment Exchanges. Besides, recruiting parties were sent to different parts of the country. Publicity was sometimes given to the vacancies through the State Governments. He, however, admitted that advertisement of the vacancies "may not be as much as we ought to do."

2.93. The Committee note that although the Border Roads Organisation are regularly recruiting quite a large number of subordinate GREF personnel of various technical and non-technical categories and a substantial number of vacancies in various trades remain unfilled, there is no regular system of publicising the vacancies. Instead Recruiting Parties are sent to various parts of the country causing avoidable expenses. In this connection the Committee would like to make the following recommendations:

- (i) Vacancies occurring in the subordinate GREF posts should, in the first instance, be intimated to all the Regional Employment Exchanges and recruitment made out of candidates recommended by them.
- (ii) In case recruitment through the Employment Exchanges fails, vacancies should be advertised in the leading national and regional newspapers and direct recruitment should be made out of the candidates who apply in response thereto.

- (iii) If suitable candidates are still not available then other sources may be tapped and only as a last resort Recruitment Parties may be sent to different parts of the country to make on the spot recruitment.

(ii) *Training*

Training:

2.94. The Recruitment-cum-Training Centre at Roorkee, as its name suggests, is also responsible for the training of the GREF officers and subordinates. The Training Wing of the Centre comprises of 2 officers and 14 subordinate and other personnel. The number of GREF officers and subordinates trained by the Centre during the last three years is stated to be as follows:

	Number trained		
	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
<i>Officers</i>			
Asstt. Executive Engineers	.	.	} 41
Asstt. Engineers	.	.	
Civilian Officers Grades I, II and III	.	.	 62
<i>Subordinates</i>	795	297	703

2.95. The representative of the Government was, during evidence asked to state the scope of training imparted to the GREF officers and subordinates at the Training Centre at Roorkee. He said that as far as officers and supervisory categories were concerned, only persons who were qualified in the trade were recruited and as such were retained in the Centre for two weeks mainly to acquaint themselves with the Border Road Regulations and Accounting and Works Procedures. Skilled tradesmen were given a short period of training so as to familiarise them with the types of equipment that was being used in the Organisation. The GREF Pioneers, according to him, needed no training except marching, pitching the tents and for looking after themselves in the areas. "Apart from this", he said, "there is a whole series of courses that we run ourselves or take advantage of the courses run by other institutions to train our people. For example we send our people to two different courses run by the Central Road Research Institute and a number of officers are also sent to the Army College of Military Engineering at Kirkee. We also send certain medical officers to army medical corps.

2.96. The Committee note that although a large number of officers and subordinates were recruited during 1966, 1967 and 1968, no officer was imparted any training during 1966-67 and 1967-68 while the number of subordinate imparted training during 1966-69 was extremely small.

2.97. The Committee feel that there is need for organising the training programme of GREF personnel on systematic lines. They recommend that suitable training syllabi for different categories of personnel should be chalked out and implemented.

E. Vigilance and Technical Audit

Vigilance Organisation:

2.98. Prior to 1st April, 1968, vigilance matters in the Border Roads Organisation were being dealt with by the Director of Personnel in the Director General Border Roads Headquarters, in addition to his own duties. With effect from the 1st April, 1968, a separate Vigilance Cell has been created in the Director-General Border Roads Headquarters with the following staff:

Vigilance Officer	I
U.D.C.	I
Stenographer	I

The present Vigilance Officer is of the status of a Deputy Chief Engineer. Government have in writing confirmed that the Vigilance Organisation of the Director-General Border Roads is subject to the supervision of the Central Vigilance Commissioner and follows the Rules and Regulations laid down by that authority in dealing with vigilance cases.

2.99. As for the vigilance cases investigated during the years 1966, 1967 and 1968, on the basis of complaints received from various sources, it is stated that during these three years a total of six cases were investigated out of which two were dropped after enquiry and three were cleared in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commissioner while one case is under examination by Ministry of Defence.

2.100. The Committee are surprised that the Directorate General Border Roads had upto March, 1968 no separate vigilance organisation although by that time the total expenditure on the development of Border Roads through the Border Roads Organisation had been of the order of over Rs. 272 crores. They also note that the number of cases investigated during the period of three years from 1966 to 1968,

for which specific information was called for by the Committee, was only six out of which two were dropped and another three cleared in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commissioner. Border Roads Organisation has an annual budget of more than Rs. 55 crores, a bulk of which is spent on procurement of stores of various type and employment of casual labour. It is, therefore, an extremely sensitive organisation from the vigilance angle and it is imperative that it should have an efficient and well-organised system of vigilance. In this context, the Committee note that the Vigilance Organisation set up in 1968, consists of only one Vigilance Officer who has no organisation except a Stenographer and an Upper Division Clerk. The Committee find it difficult to believe that he alone would be able to organise and handle vigilance and anti-corruption work in an organisation extending from NEFA in the East to Ladakh in the West. They, therefore, recommend that Government should, in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commissioner, evolve a suitable and effective Vigilance Organisation for the Border Roads Organisation and properly define its scope of work and functions.

2.101. They also recommend that the annual report of the Vigilance Organisation indicating its activities and achievements during the year should be compiled which should also be placed before the Border Roads Development Board for their information.

Inspectorate of Border Roads Works:

2.102. Technical audit of works in the Projects is carried out by the Inspector of Border Roads Works. The main duties of the Inspector are indicated as follows:

- (a) Inspection of works in progress and completed works including test check of measurements, to see whether the works are being or have been executed economically and in accordance with the approved estimates, designs and specifications.
- (b) Percentage check of Casual Personnel, bills, Muster Rolls in respect of works carried out departmentally and of accepted contracts and amendments thereto.
- (c) Technical examination of a percentage of works bills.
- (d) Examination of Bills for Stores purchased locally under emergency powers from the point of view of urgency.

- (e) Systematic qualitative and quantitative analysis of performance and techniques, with a view to formulate suggestions of productivity and cost control.
- (f) Introduction of works study.
- (g) Advice as regards the most economical combination of men and machines for given job so as to secure maximum output from available resources.
- (h) Suggestions for improvement of works procedures and technique of construction, with a view to reduce costs and speed up works.

2.103. The Inspector functions directly under the Director-General Border Roads and is required to submit to him quarterly, a programme of both inspection of works and other items of work. Every half year, he is required to submit a report to Director-General Border Roads setting out his findings, suggestions, advice, etc. The Director-General Border Roads has to bring to the notice of Government in good time, any important matters brought out by the Inspector. The implementation of the suggestions, etc., and the responsibility for follow-up action is, however, of the Director-General Border Roads and not of the Inspector.

2.104. The organisation of the Inspector of Border Roads Works consists of the following cells at the headquarter level:

Works Study Cell.

Tech. Exam. Cell.

Coordination and Inspection Cell.

The Inspector is assisted by three Regional Field Teams for the purpose of detailed site investigations, checks of measurements, etc., located in Projects Beacon, Vartak and Sewak.

2.105. The Committee have, in para 2.31, already recommended the setting up of an integrated O&M Organisation for the field and Headquarters. The existing functions of the Inspector of Border Roads Works would, in that event, need revision and rationalisation.

2.106. The Committee recommend that the work of the Inspector of Border Roads Works, which is similar to that of the Chief Technical Examiner on the civil side, should be activised. They further

recommend that annual reports on its activities and achievements should be compiled on the lines of the Report of the Chief Technical Examiner's Organisation which should also be placed before the Border Roads Development Board for their information.

2.107. The Committee consider that the field of vigilance is akin to that of administrative and technical audit being performed by the Inspector of Border Roads works. They therefore consider that there is need for a very close coordination between the Vigilance Organisation and the Inspectorate of Border Roads Works. This could be achieved by bringing the two organisations under a common officer who should be directly under the Director General Border Roads. In this connection, the Committee would like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that the Chief Technical Examiner's Organisation is under the Central Vigilance Commissioner.

CHAPTER III

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

A. Expenditure on Development of Border Roads

Expenditure on development of Border Roads

3.1. Government have, between the period 1960-61 and 1968-69, spent a sum of Rs. 318.28 crores on the development of Border Roads in the northern border areas. If the sanctioned budget estimates of expenditure for the year 1969-70 amounting to Rs. 55.53 crores are added, the total expenditure by the end of that financial year on development of roads in the northern border areas would be of the order of about Rs. 373.81 crores.

3.2. A statement showing the break-up of the expenditure incurred between 1960-61 and 1968-69 under various heads is at Appendix II. It would be seen from the statement that expenditure incurred annually has been as follows:

		(Rs. in crores)
1960-61	.	16.71
1961-62	.	24.31
1962-63	.	29.51
1963-64	.	37.42
1964-65	.	39.81
1965-66	.	36.88
1966-67	.	41.87
1967-68	.	45.81
1968-69	.	45.96
TOTAL	.	<u>318.28</u>

3.3. The break-up of the expenditure upto 1968-69 under broad heads has been indicated as follows:

	(Rs. in crores)
<i>General Administration</i>	
(BRDB and Hdqr. DGBR)	2.50

<i>Establishment</i>		14.24
(Pay & Allowances of ground organisations i.e. Hqs. Chief Engineers, Base/ Transit Depots, GREF Centre, Base Workshops, Liaison Cells etc.)		
<i>Works</i>		
(i) Improvement of existing roads	36.3	} 200.09
(ii) New construction	163.78	
<i>Maintenance</i>		19.30
<i>Equipment</i>	2	79.59
GRAND TOTAL		<u>315.72</u>
Additional sum adjusted during March, 1969.		318.2

3.4. A further classification of the gross total expenditure of Rs. 318.28 crores upto 1968-69 has been indicated as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

	Works	Mainten- ance
National Highways	22.59	5.06
Other Roads	193.74	14.59
Machinery Equipment, Vehicles, Spares, Clothing etc.	79.76	..
General Admn. (BRDB & Hdqr. DGBR)	2.54	..
TOTAL	<u>298.63</u>	<u>19.65</u>

Budget Estimates for 1969-70

Budget for 1969-70

3.5. The Budget Estimates for 1969-70 provide for an expenditure of Rs. 5552.73 lakhs including a charged expenditure of Rs. 2.60 lakhs. The break-up of the budgeted expenditure (excluding charged expenditure) is indicated as follows:

(Rs. in lakhs)

(i) Works		
(a) Improvement of existing Roads	776.27	} 3592.98
(b) New construction	2816.71	
(ii) Maintenance		54.01
(iii) Equipment		1115.57
(iv) Establishment		241.59
(v) General Admn. (BFDB and Hdqrs. DGBR)		45.99
		<u>5550.13</u>

Notes

- (i) The provision under works covers expenditure on pay, allowances and other charges on account of the GREF and Army personnel deployed by the Task Forces on Works Projects. It also includes charges incurred for purchase of Category 'B' stores i.e. constructional stores like cement, explosives, steel, POL etc.
- (ii) The provision under 'Equipment' covers Category 'A' stores i.e. investment made from time to time in machines, equipment, vehicles, spares therefor, clothing and other capital items. This expenditure is debited direct to the Capital Outlay and the projects are debited proforma with their uses at a rate fixed by the DGBR with the approval of the Government.
- (iii) The provision under 'Establishment' covers pay and allowances of staff in Hqrs, GREF Chief Engineers, Base Depots, 2 Base Workshops, Recruiting and Training Centre, Roorkee, Defence Accounts Department staff (internal audit charges) and L.O. staff at Calcutta and Bombay.

3.6. The Maintenance and Capital Budget for 'Works' has been divided according to the executing agencies as follows:

	Maintenance	Capital outlay	Total
	(Rs. in lakhs)		
G.R.E.F.	501.77	3028.92	3600.69
P.W.Ds	52.24	494.06	546.30
TOTAL	554.01	3592.98	4146.95

3.7. The project-wise provision of funds for 'works' allocated for GREF are indicated as follows:

	Works	Maintenance	Total
	(Rs. in lakhs)		
Project A	593.53	144.04	737.57
Project B	484.99	96.77	581.76
Project C	413.50	46.30	459.80
Project D	330.17	59.67	389.84
Project E	431.03	85.78	516.81
Project F	284.82	15.31	300.13
Project G	560.03	43.15	603.18
TOTAL	3,098.07	491.02	3,589.09

Notes

- (i) The budget provision on 'Works' covers expected expenditure on formation cut, protective works, surfacing, bridges (temporary and permanent), accommodation etc. The provision under maintenance includes the requirement of funds for snow clearance etc. where required.
- (ii) The expenditure under 'works' does not cover an expenditure for Rs. 0.85 lakhs in respect of Recruitment-cum-Training Centre at Roorkee.
- (iii) The expenditure under 'Maintenance' does not cover the following items:
- Rs. 8.00 lakhs on account of Minor Works.
 - Rs. 1.85 lakhs on account of Centrally Adjusted Items.
 - Rs. 0.89 lakhs pertaining to Recruitment-cum-Training Centre, Roorkee.
 - Rs. 0.01 lakhs pertaining to Liaison Office, Bombay.

3.8. A study of the Budget provisions for 1969-70 and the actual expenditure incurred under different general headings during the proceeding three years has been made in the following statement:

(Rs. in crores)

	Works	Maintenance	Equipment	Estab.	Gen. Admn.	Total
1966-67	28.90	3.85	6.73	2.01	0.38	41.87
1967-68	32.52	4.51	6.41	1.97	0.40	45.81
*1968-69	32.07	5.30	6.43	1.73	0.43	45.96
*1969-70 (B.E.)	35.93	5.54	11.16	2.42	0.46	55.51
Percentage of increase over 1968-69 figures	12	5	74	40	7	21

As indicated in the above statement, there is an increase in the overall budgeted expenditure by 21 per cent over the 1968-69 figures. Particular marked is the increase under the heads 'Equipment' and 'Establishment' which is to the extent of 74 per cent and 40 per cent respectively.

*At the time of factual verification, Government have furnished the following revised figures in respect of 1968-69 and 1969-70:

(Rs. in lakhs)

	Works	Maintenance	Equipment	Establishment	Gen. Admn.	Total
1968-69 (Actuals)	3272.70	532.44	639.59	177.57	42.53	4664.83
1969-70 (Final grant)	3202.96	560.17	495.88	210.78	45.49	4515.28
Percentage of increase/decrease over 1968-69 figures	(—)2.1%	(†)5%	(—)22%	(†)18%	(†)8%	(—)3.2%

3.9. The Committee note that the provisions for expenditure in the Budget estimate of the Border Roads Development Board for the year 1969-70 are at a markedly liberal scale as compared to the actual expenditure during the preceding three years. Particularly noticeable is the increase in the expenditure provided for 'Equipment' and 'Establishment'.

The Committee have, in para 4.9 commented upon the increase in expenditure on new construction of roads while the annual performance in this respect had actually declined since 1966-67. In para 5.25 they have commented upon the provision of Rs. 4.25 crores in the Budget Estimates for 1969-70 for the purchase of new machinery and equipment. They hope that the other provisions of the Budget are based on a realistic assessment of the requirements with reference to the projected work-load.

3.10. In this connection, the Committee would like to point out that they do not favour a sudden spurt in the scale of expenditure, as is the case with the provision for 'Equipment' in the Budget Estimates of the Board for 1969-70, unless it is fully justified on account of unforeseen circumstances.

C. Financial Arrangements with States

Financial Arrangements with States

3.11. Except the National Highways which is a Central subject, communications including Roads and Bridges is a State subject. As no direct expenditure can be incurred by the Central Government on a State subject, the construction and maintenance of the Border Roads in the States, other than National Highways, has been entrusted to the Central Government by the State Governments under Article 258A of the Constitution. The present financial arrangement between the Union and the States is that, so far as such roads are concerned, both in respect of Capital Expenditure on account of new construction as well as for maintenance which is revenue expenditure, provision is made in the Central Budget as Grant-in-aid to the States under Article 282 of the Constitution. The State Governments are asked to make a covering provision in their own Budget Estimates for an expenditure on this account which is reimbursed to them to the extent of 100 per cent out of the provision for Grant-in-aid to States in the Central Budget.

3.12. It is stated that expenditure on construction and maintenance of the roads in the Union Territories is not being treated as Grant-in-aid.

Grants-in-aid to States

3.13. The details of Grants-in-aid to different States during the period from 1960-61 to 1968-69 have been indicated as follows:

	(Rs. in crores)
(i) Assam and Nagaland	33·19
(ii) Jammu & Kashmir.	27·35
(iii) Uttar Pradesh . . .	20·69
(iv) Punjab/Himachal Pradesh	10·42
(v) West Bengal .	2·95
	94·60

D. Expenditure on Roads in Sikkim and Bhutan**Roads in Sikkim.**

3.14. The entire expenditure on construction and maintenance of roads undertaken by the Border Roads Organisation in Sikkim is directly met out of Central Funds by debiting it to Capital Outlay and Revenue in the budget of the Board. The expenditure on roads in Sikkim upto 1968-69 has been of the order of Rs. 15.81 crores as indicated below:

	(Rs. in crores)
Construction of Roads . . .	13·85
Maintenance of Roads	1·96
TOTAL	15·81

Roads in Bhutan.

3.15. It is stated that in Bhutan, the construction of roads was taken over by the Border Roads Development Board at the request of the Bhutan Government and the Ministry of External Affairs as an integral part of the plan for development of Bhutan. Government have further stated that it has been decided, in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India, that the expenditure on these projects should be treated as 'Grant for development' and written back to revenue over a period of 15 years.

3.16. The expenditure on maintenance and construction of roads in Bhutan upto 1968-69 has of the order of Rs. 28.94 crores as indicated below:

	(Rs. in crores)
Construction of Roads .	26.87
Maintenance of Roads .	2.07
TOTAL	28.94

CHAPTER IV

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE

A. Programme Planning

Programme and National Plan

4.1. The Border Roads Development Programme administered by the Border Roads Development Board is outside the National Plan even though the Programme as well as the Board are under the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport. During evidence, the Defence Secretary was asked to state the reasons for keeping the Border Roads Development Programme outside the National Plan. He replied:

“I would say broadly that it is the same reason for which the defence budget has been kept outside the national plan. In other words, when you put something in the national plan, you have limited resources made available, and the projects have to compete with each other and many of them have to be squeezed down, and many of them have to be dropped on the basis of priorities. We feel that border roads have such a priority that they should not be under such pressures. You will also notice that limited amounts only have been spent on border roads, and the work has been speedily done. If they were put in the plan, then there will be argument on each project and a lot of time will be spent in coming to conclusions, etc., That is why it has been kept out.”

It was pointed out during evidence that a general impression prevailed in the country that the money granted by Parliament for the development of Border Roads had not been efficiently or properly spent and one of the reasons therefor could be that the Plan for the development of Border Roads was not properly drawn up and scrutinised. The Defence Secretary was asked whether, in the circumstances, it would not be in the interest of the Border Roads Organisation as well as the country to bring the Programme under the National Plan and to submit it to the normal checks that other Plan Projects were required to go through. In reply he stated:

“I have explained the reason why..... the border roads should not be in the National Plan even though it has to be paid from the Transport Ministry Budget. If you put

that under the National Plan then there is so much of scrutiny of the projects—whether it should be done by the State or by the Centre. I can say this with confidence that if this kind of scrutiny was also imposed on border roads, we would not have been able to complete even half the roads that we have done.....”

“As far as the scrutiny is concerned, it is subject to examination as any other department of the Government—by Finance—and is subject to the same kind of audit. Sometimes even on border roads, one gets somewhat irritated by the delays on account of the detailed scrutiny. But, on the whole, I think that the work of scrutiny has been carried out adequately. We are quite prepared to prove in detail that we are not over-spending on these roads.”

Review of Programme and Annual Plan of Work

4.2. Describing the procedure of taking up the work of development of Border Roads. Government have, in a note furnished to the Committee, stated that the works taken up relate to the projects included in the immediate programme of the Board. The immediate programme of the Board is normally reviewed once a year. The programme is decided by the Board after considering proposals evolved in consultation with the Defence and other concerned Ministries and State Governments. Additions are made to the immediate programme after examination of various proposals, which are received from time to time from the State Governments, Defence, Home and External Affairs Ministries. The Defence Ministry consult C.O.A.S. Chiefs of Staff Committee before projecting a road for inclusion in the programme. When there is emergent need, a road, required on the basis of the highest priority, is included in the programme without waiting for the annual review and priorities are refixed, if necessary.

4.3. In answer to another question regarding scrutiny and finalisation of the tentative plan for development of Border Roads and allocations therefor, Government have stated that the annual plan of works is decided on the recommendation of the Director-General Border Roads, who consults GREF and PWD Chief Engineers before formulating his proposals. The recommendations of the Director-General Border Roads are examined by the Board Secretariat. These constitute the basis of annual budget, which is examined in detail by the Finance Ministry and approved by the Board. The estimates are then forwarded to the Department of Economic Affairs for final acceptance.

Future Programme

4.4. Government were asked to indicate the financial and physical targets for the development of Border Roads for the next five years. They have stated that physical target planned during the period from 1970 to 1974 is about 1,400 miles of formation cut, 2,400 miles of surfacing and 18,800 rft. of permanent bridges. The year-wise approximate financial outlay is expected to be as under:—

(Rs. in crores)

1970-71	.	52.00
1971-72		53.50
1972-73	.	55.00
1973-74	. . .	57.00

It is, however, stated that these targets are “for the purposes of broad planning” and, should therefore be viewed as tentative as this stage. In reply to the question whether the details of expenditure and the schemes/projects which will be taken up during 1970—74 have been worked out, Government have stated that the forecast was made on the basis of likely programme of construction during 1969—74. The programme and performance are, it is stated, reviewed from time to time.

4.5. The Committee note that the tentative physical and financial targets for the next four years involving a total capital outlay of Rs. 217.50 crores, have been fixed on an ad hoc basis without working out the details of the specific schemes or projects that may be taken up during that period. Government have themselves admitted that the Border Roads Organisation works on the basis of an ‘immediate programme’ approved by the Board from time to time. Even this ‘immediate programme’ is subject to change if new priorities show up while it is in operation. This method of undertaking the Border Roads development works is, in the opinion of the Committee, defective as it leads to perpetual uncertainty in regard to the progress of the work. Besides, under this method, there is always the chance of some works being taken up by the Border Roads Organisation without full consideration of their need or utility. They recommend that, if it is not feasible to include the Border Roads Development Programme in the National Plan, the Border Roads Development Board should draw up a separate Border Roads Development Plan covering a period of three to five years which should lay down the targets, financial as well as physical, on the basis of specific scheme or projects that would be taken up during that period. The Plan would facilitate the work of the Board and also, by introducing an element of

firmness in the Border Roads Development Programme, go a long way in facilitating the resources planning and procurement on a long term basis by the executing agencies. The specific schemes laid down in the plan and their inter se priority could always be reviewed and changed where necessary by the Board in the light of developments. The Committee would like Government to furnish to them a copy of the first Border Roads Development Plan when ready.

B. Performance

(i) Performance of General Reserve Engineer Force.

Performance of GREF

4.6. The bulk of the Border Roads Programme of the Board falls to the share of the General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF), which has been specially constituted for its execution. The physical achievement of the GREF in regard to different types of works during the last three years has been indicated as follows.

(a) *New Construction/Improvement of Roads*

(In Miles of Class 9 or equivalent Roads)*

	Formation cutting/ improvement	Soling	Metalling	Black topping
1966-67	355.8	426	545	639
1967-68	387.5	480	466	515**
1968-69£	383.00	367	463	509@
	(—)18.16	(—)3	(—)1.63	—

*The roads have varying width in the formation cutting stage. The mileage has been assessed as equivalent of 20 ft. by applying the following factors:

Class III (8 ft.) . . . = .4 of Class 9.

Class V (16 ft.) . . . = .6 of Class 9.

**14 miles $3\frac{1}{2}$ " thick premix.

@23.75 miles $3\frac{1}{2}$ " thick premix.

£The achievements during 1968-69 include 18.16 miles of formation cutting, 3 miles of Soling and 1.63 miles of Metalling done against "Deposit Works" the cost of which is not included in the statement of expenditure given in Appendix II.

(b) *Improvements to Roads (excluding Widening)*

	Permanent works (in lakhs Cubic feet)	Culverts (Nos.)	Bridges above 100 ft. (Nos.)	Remarks
1966-67	143.35	2,992	15	A large number of minor bridges have also been constructed. The figures are not readily available.
1967-68	140.49	2,496	5	
1968-69	135.76	1,986	6	

(c) *Maintenance*

Length of Roads Maintained in Miles:

	Class IX	Class V
1966-67	2341	96
1967-68	2759	102
1968-69	3023	132

(d) *Construction of Accommodation*

	Details of accommodation constructed (Square feet)				Total area
	Residential	Storage	Office	Other misc. work such as kitchen, bath etc.	
1966-67	2,47,028	44,575	83,826	42,563	4,17,992
1967-68	2,92,784	65,293	32,527	72,508	4,63,112
1968-69	6,22,909	35,999	81,546	66,291	8,06,745

(e) *Snow Clearance*

(Rs. in lakhs)

Project	Yearwise expenditure		
	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
Beacon .	27.10	23.00	30.05
Deepak .	1.00	5.00	10.00

Project	(Rs in Lakhs)		
	Yearwise expenditure		
	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
Swastic .	..	8.00	8.00
Vartak . . .	..	4.00	4.00
TOTAL .	28.10	40.00	52.05

(f) *Telephone Lines Laid*

1966-67 .	28.16 miles
1967-68 .	28.00 miles
1968-69	24.00 miles

(g) *Other Important Items of Works*

- (i) surfacing (soling, metalling and black topping) of helipads in the Mizo Hills area.
- (ii) Construction of a school including hostel and staff quarters in the Eastern Bhutan.
- (iii) Construction of an air strip in Western Bhutan including terminal building, domestic and technical accommodation.

Plain and achievement in respect of Construction Work

4.7. The targets planned* and achieved during the last three years in respect of road construction work are given below:

(In Miles)

Formation Cut		Soling		Metalling		Black Topping	
Planned	Achieved	Planned	Achieved	Planned	Achieved	Planned	Achieved
(1966-67)							
412	356 (-14%)	640	426 (-33%)	640	545 (-15%)	640	639
(1967-68)							
358	388 (+8%)	597	480 (-20%)	514	466 (-9%)	556	515 (-7%)
(1968-69)							
353	383 (+8%)	402	367 (-9%)	526	463 (-12%)	517	509 (-2%)

*The targets planned for the year have been taken from the Table given in the Report of the Director, Scientific Evaluation, Ministry of Defence, on Utilisation of Resources in Border Roads Organisation (1969).

4.8. An analysis of the above Statement shows the following position:—

Formation Cutting: The target planned for 1966-67 was 412 miles of formation cutting. The physical achievement during that year was, however, 14 per cent short of the planned target. The annual targets for 1967-68 and 1968-69 were reduced to 358 miles and 353 miles respectively, perhaps keeping in view the achievement during 1966-67. The excess achievements during 1967-68 and 1968-69 to the extent of eight per cent were with reference to the reduced targets for those years. The overall achievement has, however, improved from 356 miles during 1966-67 to 383 miles during 1968-69, registering an increase of seven per cent.

Soling: The target planned for 1966-67 was 640 miles of soling. The achievement during that year, however, shows a shortfall of 33 per cent against the planned target. The planned target for 1967-68 was reduced to 597 miles; but the achievement during that year again indicates a shortfall of 20 per cent. The target for 1968-69 was further reduced to 402 miles. Even then, the achievement during 1968-69 shows a shortfall to the extent of nine per cent. The overall fall in the achievement has been from 426 miles during 1966-67 to 367 miles during 1968-69, registering a decline of 14 per cent.

Metalling: In the field of metalling also, planned targets have been reduced from 640 miles for 1966-67 to 514 miles for 1967-68 and 526 miles for 1968-69. The annual achievements have consistently fallen short of the targets—15 per cent during 1966-67, nine per cent during 1967-68 and 12 per cent during 1968-69. The achievement has fallen from 545 miles during 1966-67 to 463 miles during 1968-69, registering a decline of 15 per cent.

Black Topping: The annual targets for black topping have also been reduced from 640 miles for 1966-67 to 517 miles during 1968-69. The achievement has fallen from 639 miles during 1966-67 to 509 miles during 1968-69, showing a decline to the extent of 20 per cent.

4.9. The Committee are distressed to note that there has been a decline in the annual performance of GREF in respect of construction|improvement of roads since 1966-67 and yet the expenditure on new construction of roads has increased from Rs. 22.36 crores in 1966-67 to Rs. 24.28 crores in 1968-69.

4.10. The Committee are also unhappy to note that there have been major shortfalls in the physical achievements in various fields connected with road construction work during 1966-67, 1967-68 and

1968-69 with reference to the planned targets for those years, even though the targets for 1967-68 were fixed at lower level and those for 1968-69 were further reduced.

4.11. The Committee recommend that Government should examine in detail the justification for the increase in expenditure on new construction of roads during the period 1966—69. They also desire that Government should inquire into the reasons for consistent shortfall in the performance of GREF with reference to the planned targets and fix up responsibility therefor. Suitable steps should be taken to ensure that the annual targets for GREF are planned realistically keeping in view the performance capability of the Organisation, that the planned targets are by and large fulfilled by the Force and that the performance of GREF improves as the Force gains experience, rather than declines as happens to be the case during the last three years.

Compensation for Land Acquired

4.12. During on-the-spot tour of the Committee, a complaint was made to them in certain areas that there were delays in payment of compensation for the land acquired for road construction. In this connection Government have stated that the payment of compensation is made on the basis of assessment and verification of land records by revenue officials of State Governments. In most cases, it is stated, the actual payment is also made by the State Governments and it is reimbursed to them by the Central Government. During evidence before the Committee, the Director General Border Roads admitted that "in many cases" there was "a good deal of delay." According to him, it was because the revenue authorities were very much occupied with their own problems and had little time to attend to this work. He admitted that this was a constant problem. Another reason adduced for the delay was that some time was taken because certain legal formalities and provisions of Land Acquisition Act (1894) had to be observed and notifications had to be issued by the State Government.

4.13. Describing the steps taken in this regard, Government have stated that in some cases, procedural and avoidable delays were observed and the matter was taken up with the State Government. Further, the Director General Border Roads stated during evidence that in certain cases, where the problem became unmanageable, Central Government even agreed to pay for the extra revenue staff to be employed to clear the accumulated work. Replying to a question during evidence, the Defence Secretary stated that the assessment of compensation being the responsibility of the State Government, the Central could only "exert pressure" and that during the last one or two years there has been improvement in this regard.

4.14. According to information readily available with the Government, the total amount of compensation for land paid upto 31st March, 1969 is Rs. 16.05 lakhs and the amount pending payment on that date is Rs. 12.70 lakhs.

4.15. The Committee urge that concerted steps should be taken by Government expedite the payment of compensation for land acquired for construction of roads.

Work by Contract

4.16. The bulk of the work of the Border Roads Organisation is being carried out departmentally. A part of the work is got done by the Border Roads Organisation through contractors also. It is stated that contracts are entered into for the construction of specialised items of work like bridges or construction of buildings like offices, workshops in rear areas and also for the supply of stores and material and for transportation of personnel and stores. In areas, where local/tribal contractors are available, items of road work like jungle clearance and cutting of trees, protective works like construction of retaining/breast walls, small culverts, causeways, drains and parapets and breaking of stones for soling and metalling, not exceeding Rs. 20,000 individually, could be got done through contractors at the discretion of the Chief Engineer. From February, 1970, this limit has been enhanced to Rs. 50,000 in certain areas. Director General Border Roads and Chief Engineers have full powers of acceptance of contracts in respect of construction of bridges or ancillary buildings such as offices, workshop, living accommodation or for the supply of stores and materials and for transportation of personnel and stores.

4.17. Value of the contracts awarded to private contractors during 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69 for works of different types is indicated as follows:

(Value in lakhs of Rupees)

	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
(i) Handling and conveyance of different types of stores	48.68	32.65	36.77
(ii) Supply of building materials and other stores like stone metal, timber, sands, Hume pipes, Armco culverts etc.	38.35	29.57	123.98
(iii) Construction of protective works like, retaining walls, breast walls, culverts etc. . .	36.01	1.11	22.92
(iv) Construction of Basha type accommodation	3.10	0.91	0.84
(v) Construction of bridges and other specialist structures like snow shed	46.38	102.02	59.93

	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
(vi) Construction of accommodation		0.54	0.86
(vii) Construction of approach roads, provision of water bound macadam etc.	29.51	0.33	..
TOTAL .	202.03	167.13	245.30

4.18. Value of contracts awarded by a system other than open competitive tenders (i.e. by single tender) during 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69 is stated to have been as under:—

Year	Value in lakhs
1966-67	32.51
1967-68	1.70
1968-69	NIL

4.19. The Study Group of the Estimates Committee who visited Border Roads in the Sikkim area received a local representation that the Border Roads Organisation should get their work done through contract system on the pattern of C. P. W. D. so as to provide work to the professional contractors who, after the Border Roads Organisation took over border road work from C.P.W.D., had gone out of business, and also to sustain the local economy. Government were asked to state whether similar demands had been made in other Projects and areas also and if so, what was the reaction of the Government to the demand. They have in reply stated that Government have not received such demands from any area other than Sikkim and that they have no objection in principle to Small road works being done through contract if the contractors are available locally. Previously also, according to Government, when Jammu and Kashmir National Highway 1A (from Jammu to Srinagar) was taken over, all P.W.D. or Jammu and Kashmir contractors were invited to work on the basis of P.W.D. Schedule of Rates. In the case of Sikkim, however, it is stated that Director General Border Roads has reported that local contractors in Sikkim either do not tender, or quote very high rates. Dealing with this issue, the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board during evidence stated:

“Subject to our normal rules of accepting the lowest tender, we have been trying to accommodate not only in Sikkim but in other areas also so that the economy of the area may be benefited.....”

4.20. The Committee observe that a sizeable amount of work is being got done by the Border Roads Organisation through private contractors. They would like the Border Roads Organisation to make an assessment of the work of private contractors from the point of view of quality, observance of time schedules and cost, before the work is awarded to them. They would also like Government to ensure that the contractors employ local labour as far as possible.

4.21. The Committee feel that the award of work to contractors on 'single tender basis' should be rarely done and confined to cases where it is absolutely justifiable by some special circumstances.

Roads abandoned

4.22. The Public Accounts Committee had, in para 1.13 of their 18th Report (Fourth Lok Sabha), commented upon the infructuous expenditure of Rs. 19.63 lakhs incurred on two roads in Jammu and Kashmir which were taken up for construction by the Border Roads Organisation in 1964 but were abandoned in 1965 due to change in the Defence plan of the General Staff. Government were asked to furnish particulars of all such cases where the roads were taken up for construction but were later on abandoned. The information furnished by them reveals the following:—

- (i) There have been in all 14 cases where roads were taken up for construction but were later on abandoned. In the majority of the cases, the works were started in 1960-61 and were given up in 1962 and 1963. In two cases, the works were abandoned after 1965.
- (ii) The total length of roads—of width varying from 8 to 20 feet—abandoned was about 230 miles.
- (iii) The expenditure rendered infructuous on this account has been of the order of about Rs. 1.72 crores.
- (iv) The abandonment of the roads was primarily due to change in overall plans for Defence after 1962.

4.23. Government were asked to state whether in all cases of roads abandoned by the Border Roads Organisation, the State Government concerned was approached to take over the roads for construction| maintenance. Answering the question in the affirmative, they have indicated four such instances where the question arose and the State Governments concerned were approached to take them over. Out of the four roads mentioned, only two roads are stated to have been taken over by the State Governments.

4.24. The Committee feel that so far an expenditure of Rs. 1.72 crores on the construction of Border Roads has been rendered infructuous on account of certain roads taken up for construction at the instance of General Staff being subsequently abandoned due to changes

in the Defence Plans. The Committee wish that in future the requirements of the General Staff would be projected after due assessment of all factors and a 'go-ahead' signal would be given only after the Government are reasonably sure of the utility of the road in the context of the Defence Plan.

4.25. The Committee also recommend that in future in all cases where the roads under construction are proposed to be abandoned, State Governments concerned should invariably be approached to take over the roads for further construction|maintenance.

Widening of Roads

4.26. It was noticed from the information furnished to the Committee that in many cases roads were initially constructed according to inferior classification and immediately thereafter the work of widening and improving them to a higher classification was taken in hand. During evidence, a point was raised that, in view of the fact that widening of a road in hill areas involved considerable expenditure sometimes as much as that on constructing the road *de novo*, would it not be economic to plan the construction of the road according to appropriate classification in the very first instance? The Secretary, Border Roads Development Board replied that although it was so during the early stage, i.e. between 1960 and 1962, it was not so no-a-days. According to him, the main emphasis of the General Staff during the early stages was that we should try to reach as near the border as possible so that at least there might be some road and the dependence on the airlift might be reduced. But in 1962 and 1963, Government took the decision that most of the roads that would be built would be 20 ft. wide three ton roads and, except in places where it was not necessary, these should be properly surfaced. It was also then decided that the roads should be all-weather roads except where there was practically no private traffic and the Military traffic was also occasional.

4.27. The Committee note the statement made by the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board that new roads are now being constructed according to appropriate classification and specifications in the very first instance and that the road widening work is now reduced to the minimum.

(ii) Performance of P.W.Ds.

Allocation of work between GREF & other agencies

4.28. As stated earlier, after the roads are selected for development, the Border Roads Development Board decides the agencies to which the projects are to be entrusted for execution. It is stated that the consideration on which the Board takes this decision are the nature of the project, the targets laid down for their completion and the resources. It is further stated that most of the work in forward

areas "with rather unsatisfactory rear links or means of communication" is entrusted to the GREF while the improvement and maintenance of roads in the rear areas which are "fairly well connected with the rest of the country" are normally entrusted to the P.W.Ds. It is also stated that when a P.W.D. is not in a position to undertake the work, it is assigned to the GREF for departmental execution.

Performance of P.W.Ds.

4.29. *Construction work:* The Annual Reports of the Ministry of Shipping and Transport for 1967-68 and 1968-69 indicate the volume of work of construction of new roads and improvement of existing roads entrusted to the Public Works Department as follows:

	1967-68		1968-69	
	Immediate Programme of the Board (Progressive total)	Assigned to P.W.Ds. (Progressive total)	Immediate Programme of the Board (Progressive total)	Assigned to P.W.Ds. (Progressive total)
New Roads .	4273 Miles	539 Miles (13%)	6900 Kms.	840 Kms. (12%)
Improvements .	2863 Miles	1637 Miles (57%)	4700 Kms.	2500 Kms. (53%)

The physical achievements of the C.P.W.D./P.W.D. in construction of Border Roads during the last three years are stated to be as follows:

(Class*9 Roads in Miles)

	Formation cutting	Soling	Metalling	Black Topping
1966-67 .	54.8	79	93	63.5
1967-68 .	36.10	133	207.5	234.5
1968-69	11.00	94	106.5	150.5

*No class 5 or Class 3 roads were constructed by the P.W.Ds. during these years.

4.30. *Maintenance Work*: The volume of maintenance work handled by the P.W.Ds. as against the total during the last 3 years has been as follows:

		(Roads maintained in miles)	
		Total	PWDs.
1966-67	.	34053	616 (20%)
1967-68	.	3353	492 (15%)
1968-69	.	3750	595 (16%)

Agency-wise break-up of the performance of the P.W.Ds. has been indicated as follows:

Name of Department	Length of roads maintained (in miles)		
	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
CE PWD Kashmir	114	114	114
CE PWD Himachal Pradesh	96	96	148
Addl. CE UP PWD	114	119	141
CE PWD West Bengal	43	43	43
CE PWD Assam	125	..	25
Addl. CE II CPWD Delhi	67	67	67
Addl. CE (Calcutta), CPWD	51	51	51
NEFA PWD	6	6	6
TOTAL	616	496	595

4.31. *Financial allocation*.—According to the value of work assigned, the share of the P.W.Ds. has been as under:

		(Rs. in crores)	
		Total Expenditure on Works and Maintenance	Amount Paid to P.W.Ds.
1966-67	.	34.76	3.61 (10%)
1967-68	.	39.00	4.26 (11%)

1	2	3
1968-69	39.83	4.71 (12%)
1969-70 (BE)	39.74	4.08 (10%)

Control over works executed by P.W.Ds.

4.32. In reply to certain questions regarding the financial arrangements entered into with the Central Public Works Department and State Public Works Departments Government have stated that the C.P.W.D./State P.W.Ds. place their demands for funds for the maintenance of roads entrusted to them. These are scrutinised at the Director General Border Roads Headquarters specially with reference to expenditure incurred on such maintenance in the previous years. The funds are then provided in the budget as Grant-in-Aid. The accountability of the P.W.Ds. in respect of the Projects entrusted to them is stated to be broadly as under:

- (i) Sanctions for works are accorded by the Board on the basis of estimates prepared by the CE PWD and scrutinised by Director General Border Roads. If these estimates are exceeded beyond 20 per cent or the scope of works is changed, PWDs. have to obtain a revised administrative approval.
- (ii) The annual allotment of Funds to P.W.D./C.P.W.D. is determined by the Government of India.
- (iii) PWDs are required to render expenditure return and monthly progress report to the Director General Border Roads.

It is further stated that the execution of Border Roads Projects entrusted to CP.W.D./State P.W.Ds: is carried out by them in accordance with the Departmental rules and procedures applicable to the Projects of the C.P.W.D./State P.W.Ds. The technical control of the Projects is stated to be primarily the responsibility of the C.P.W.D./State P.W.Ds. Director General Border Roads has, however, issued instructions laying down the procedures as to how the estimates for issue of administrative approval are to be submitted.

Quality etc. of work done by P.W.Ds

4.33. Government were asked to state their experience of the Border Roads were done by CP.W.D. and State P.W.Ds. particularly in respect of cost of construction/maintenance, quality of work done, and adherence to the time schedules. They have stated that the quality of work done by CPWD and State PWDs has been on the whole

satisfactory. But, according to Government, they have not been able to adhere to the time schedule. During the monsoons, the PWDs, it is stated, are not able to clear landslides and slips expeditiously and the roads entrusted to them, therefore, remain closed continuously for long periods. Asked to state whether, in the light of their experience, Government had formulated any policy in regard to utilising the agencies other than the Border Roads Organisation for the execution of Border Roads work, it is stated that it continues to be the policy of the Board that PWDs should be utilised whenever they are in a position to undertake a project.

4.34. The Committee feel that there is scope for more work, both construction|improvement as well as maintenance, being assigned to the Central and State Public Works Departments and recommend that the Border Roads Development Board should, subject to the considerations of quality, urgency and timely completion of work where necessary, utilise these agencies for executing their programme to a greater extent than hitherto.

Assistance to PWDs.

4.35. Government were asked to state whether after it was decided that a particular Border Road construction|maintenance work should be entrusted to the State PWD or C.P.W.D., the Border Roads Organisation extended any kind of assistance to them by way of loaning or giving on hire their specialised equipment in the area for use by them. In reply, they have stated that a procedure of assistance by Director General Border Roads to Central and State PWDs for execution of projects included in the programme of the Border Roads Development Board has been laid down and intimated to Central and State PWD Chief Engineers in April, 1962. As per this procedure, the request for assistance has to come from the Chief Engineer or Central|State PWD to Director General Border Roads for a particular type of plant|equipment required on hire. According to them, such requests have been coming in the past and items have been issued on hire, but owing to low availability of machinery and equipment, requests received in the last one year or so could not be acceded to. Moreover, it is held, PWDs. carry out work by contract and the loan of equipment with operations and maintenance personnel of GREF to PWD contractors presents practical difficulties.

4.36. As regards coordination between the GREF and the PWDs., the Director General Border Roads stated during evidence that conference of the GREF Chief Engineers was held once a year, which the Chief Engineers of the PWDs. were also requested to attend. Moreover, according to him, a fairly regular contact was maintained with the Engineers of P.W.Ds. by personal visits.

4.37. Government have admitted that it has not been possible for them to accede to the requests of the P.W.Ds. for loan of mechanised equipment received by them during the last one year or so, and that

even otherwise the loan of such quipment with operations and main-
tenance personnel of GREF, to the P.W.Ds. presents practical difficul-
ties. The Committee recommend that the practical difficulties experi-
enced in this regard may be sorted out with the Chief Engineers of
the P.W.Ds. concerned and the procedure for issuing the equipment
on hire to the P.W.Ds. may be liberalised so that the spare capacity,
if any, could be put to effective use in public interest.

C. Cost of construction|maintenance of Border Roads

Cost of Maintenance of Roads

4.38. There was a general impression that the cost of construction and maintenance of roads by GREF was on the high side as compared to the cost of construction and maintenance of roads by CPWD|State PWDs. Government was therefore asked to furnish the average cost of construction|maintenance per 'representative mile' of class 9 and class 5 roads in different areas being constructed|maintained by Border Roads Organisation and the PWDs. In this connection Govern-
ment have stated that the cost of construction of roads in hilly region depends upon many factors, such as geological strata of the region through which the road is passing, proportion of rock and soil, nature of rock, cross slopes, altitude, rainfall|snow-fall, glaciers, etc. According to them, the concept of average cost of construction has there-
fore not much significance. This observation, it is held, applies with greater force to the improvement works. It is further stated that, according to the experience of the Border Roads Organisation so far, there are considerable variations of the factors as enumerated above even in a restricted area in a Project.

4.39. Government have furnished to the Committee the actual cost of construction|improvement of some of the roads in various areas by GREF as follows:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Project Vartak

Class IX (i) Road A	6.66 per mile
(ii) Road B	8.40 „
Class V Road C	2.56 „

Project Deepak

Class IX (i) Road D ²	7.04 „
(ii) Road E	6.58 „
Class V Road F	4.44 „

1	2	3
<i>Project Swastik</i>		
Class IX	Road G	6.84 „
Class V	Road H	7.45 „
<i>Project Beacon</i>		
Class IX	(i) Road I	4.96 „
	(ii) Road I	6.64 „

4.40. During their on-the-spot study tours, the Committee had collected information about the cost of construction of roads by the GREF in the Projects visited by them. The information collected is as follows:

Project Beacon	. During discussion, the Chief Engineer Beacon stated that the cost of construction in the Project was Rs. 8 to 9 lakhs per mile for class 9 road when the surfacing was one inch thick and Rs. 11 to 12 lakhs when the surfacing was three inches thick.
Project Swastik	. The Chief Engineer admitted before the Committee during discussion that the cost of construction of roads by his organisation was much higher as compared to the cost of construction of roads in the project area by the CPWD or the State P.W.D.
Project Vartak	The Chief Engineer stated during discussion that the average cost of construction of class 9 road in the Project area was between Rs. 5 lakhs and Rs. 6 lakhs per mile, though occasionally it might be higher for various reasons.
Project Sewak	. The Committee were informed that the average cost of construction of class 9 road in the Project area was Rs. 14 lakhs per mile.

4.41. The cost of construction of roads by P.W.Ds. in some areas, based on the actual payment made to the P.W.D., has been indicated to the Committee as under:

UP PWD

(i) Class IX—Road K	. Rs. 4.00 lakhs
(ii) Class IX—Road L	. Rs. 3.41 lakhs

Himachal Pradesh PWD

Class IX—Road M	Rs. 2.48 lakhs
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Cost of construction of roads

4.42. There are two scales of maintenance laid down. The scale of maintenance of a particular road is decided according to the importance of roads "for the number of days it is required to be kept

open". The cost of the two scales of maintenance of roads under Border Roads Organisation has been indicated as follows:

- (i) Scale I . . . Rs. 10,800 per mile including proforma cost of Rs. 1650 for usage of machinery and equipment.
- (ii) Scale II . . . Rs. 6400 per mile including proforma cost of Rs. 450 for usage of machinery and equipment.

It is stated that, in addition, there are "establishment (overhead) charges" which are assessed at 50 per cent of the above cost. Thus the cost of maintenance of roads by GREF was Rs. 16200 per mile for Scale I maintenance and Rs. 9600 per mile for Scale II maintenance.

4.43. The average cost of maintenance per mile of class 9 roads maintained by the CPWD|PWDs has been indicated as under:

	Per mile
	Rs.
CE PWD Kashmir (J&K National Highway from Srinagar to Uri)	8000/-
CE PWD Himachal Pradesh (NH 22 from Simla to Jeori)	8300/-
Addl. CE UP PWD (Road N)	9250/-
CE PWD West Bengal (NH 31 A from Sevoke to Teesta)	15000/-
CPWD Calcutta (NH 31 A from Teesta to Gangtok).	15000/-
	} Since taken over by GREF.

Comparative cost of Works by GREF and PWDs.

4.44. It is stated that a comparison of the cost of construction|main-tenance of Border Roads by GREF and P.W.Ds. would not be apt be-cause of the following factors:—

"(a) Terrain|Geological conditions

.....each road has its own peculiarities depending upon terrain, geological and climatic conditions. There is no area where different organisations are working on the same road. The road construction on hills in different sectors is "typical" and cannot be compared even broadly with roads of adjoining area due to different types of formation of hills, slopes of hills, geological formations and climatic conditions which all contribute to construc-tion cost.

(b) *Area of working*

GRES is generally deployed in forward areas which are either developed or under-developed. Efficiency of man and machines is affected by altitudes, difficult terrain, and severe climatic conditions. CPWD|PWD are deployed, except in two cases, in the rear areas.

(c) *Long Lines of Communications*

Since GRES is deployed in more forward areas, their maintenance over long distance in un-developed|under-developed areas is expensive in cost and human efforts.

(d) *Method of working*

Works in Border Roads Organisation are generally executed departmentally through specially recruited skilled|unskilled personnel with the support of sophisticated plant and machineries. In such areas neither any local labour is generally available nor any contractors are willing to operate. On the other hand, CPWD|PWD work in areas where both contractors and local labour are available.

(e) *Time*

GRES work to a more tight time schedule. In fact many of the roads were taken up by GRES because PWD are unable to achieve targets required."

4.45. The question of high cost of construction and maintenance of Border Roads by GRES came up for discussion during evidence also. The Director General Border Roads mentioned before the Committee the following additional features in respect of the working of the GRES:

- (i) Some of the areas in which GRES was operating had law and order problem also which effected the over-all cost of work.
- (ii) GRES was an organised force and the conditions of service of its personnel corresponded to standards laid down by Parliament and by public opinion. The logistics costs of GRES were therefore high.

According to the Director General "there are no examples where the GRES and the PWD are working on indential or even near-identical stretches." He held that the cost of Border Roads constructed and maintained by GRES was "reasonable", but at the same time maintained: "This is not to imply that the organisation is not capable of improvement."

4.46. Asked to state the steps taken or proposed to be taken to reduce the cost of construction and maintenance of Border Roads by GREF, Government have, in a note furnished to the Committee, stated:

“The question of bringing down the cost of construction of roads has been engaging the attention of the Government. Some of the measures taken in this direction are given below:—

- (a) The largest area of improvement lies in increasing the effectiveness of the equipment and its utilisation. For this purpose a Committee consisting of Master-General of Ordnance and Secretary Border Roads Development Board was formed. All aspects of the problems viz. forecasting, provisioning of spares, recovery resources, base overhaul repairs, discard policy, standardisation of equipment, measures to accelerate declaration of Class ‘D’ equipment and measures to improve operation, maintenance and utilisation of equipment were placed before this Committee, who were assisted by Director General Border Roads, Director of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Engineer-in-Chief, Additional Financial Adviser and experts from the Army. The recommendations of the Committee are being examined. It is expected that a significant improvement in the effectiveness of plant and machinery would be achieved after the recommendations of the Committee have been implemented with such modifications as may be found necessary.
- (b) Chief Engineers have been directed to be specially watchful of the output of GREF personnel and casual labour. A general reduction in labour element is not envisaged at this stage due to shortage of plant and equipment. However, a drive is being launched to increase the use of casual personnel to the maximum extent so that flexibility in the adjustment of labour cost may be ensured.
- (c) Chief Engineers have been directed to study cost control returns and utilisation returns critically so that the elements increasing the cost of the work can be identified and reduced.
- (d) Chief Engineers have been asked to find ways and means towards reduction of expenditure on Category ‘B’ stores.
- (e) The possibility of economy in overhead expenditure continues to remain under periodical and strict scrutiny.”

4.47. The Committee observe that the Border Roads constructed and maintained by GREF are costlier than those constructed or maintained by the P.W.Ds. The Committee agree that some part of the higher cost could justifiably be attributed to the difficult terrain, long lines of communications, higher cost of labour employed on regular basis etc. They are, however, convinced that the cost could be reduced by better and firm forward programming, improved material management, lesser dependence on mechanised equipment where operational costs of the equipment is heavy, resort to work by contract wherever feasible, reducing overheads and administrative expenditure to be extent practicable and a general cost control. The Committee therefore recommend that a high powered committee consisting inter alia of technical and financial experts should be appointed to examine in detail the factors responsible for the high cost of construction and maintenance of Border Roads by GREF and to suggest measures to bring it down as far as possible, without sacrificing speedy execution.

CHAPTER V

STORES, EQUIPMENT AND WORKSHOPS

A. Equipment

Inventory of equipment, vehicles etc.

5.1. The Border Roads Organisation have furnished to the Committee the inventory of mechanised equipment, vehicles etc. held by them during the last 3 years. It indicates the following position:

Statement showing Holdings of Equipment

	31-5-1967	31-5-1968	31-5-1969
Earth moving and construction equipment	3170	2208	2132
Other machinery/equipment	3801	3794	3587
Vehicles (including cranes, Trailers and other vehicles)	6291	6343	6092

Value of Machines

5.2. The approximate value of Earth Moving/construction machines and vehicles held by the Border Roads Organisation as on 31st May, 1967, 31st May, 1968 and 31st May, 1969 was as under—

(Based on AT values—Rs. in crores)

	31-5-1967	31-5-1968	31-5-1969
Earth Moving/construction machines	16.50	20.00	19.40
Vehicles	15.25	16.60	16.00
TOTAL	31.75	46.60	35.40

Machinery indented during last three years

5.3. The cost of plants, machinery and vehicles and of spares indented during the last three years has been indicated as follows:

	(Rs. in crores)		
	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
Plants, Machinery and Vehicles	5.49	1.51	0.81
Spares (including those for Signal Equipment)	3.36	2.51	2.37

It is stated that the actual payments made against the indents "are not available."

Provision in the Budget for 1969-70

5.4. While furnishing broad details on which the estimates of expenditure for the year 1969-70 are based, Government have indicated the following provision having been made for the purchase of Capital plant and machinery and spares thereto:

Major items of Machinery and Equipment for which individual provision is for Rs. 10.00 lakhs and above

New Equipment

S.No.	Description	Number	Value in lakhs of Rupees
1.	3 ton vehicles.	225	124.03
2.	wheeled Tractors	38	62.28
3.	Tractors Crawler	20	75.69
4.	Car 5 Cwt.	150	32.35
5.	Compressor 250 cfm	72	33.53
6.	Snow Blast	2	13.13
7.	Bailey Bridges	75	60.45
8.	Snow Blowers	8	23.60
			<u>425.06</u> (A)
	Spares		385.34 (B)
	GRAND TOTAL	A 425.06 B 385.34	
		<u>*810.40</u>	

7

Capacity under|awaiting Repairs

5.5. According to the information furnished to the Committee, the Border Roads Organisation had the following net holdings (ex-

*At the time of factual verification, government have stated that on a review of requirements carried out at the revised estimates stages, the provision was reduced to Rs. 5.15 crores including Rs. 1.78 crores for purchase of equipment. This is stated to have been further reduced to Rs. 4.96 crores including Rs. 1.58 crores for purchase of equipment due to delay in materialisation of supply anticipated at the time of revised estimates stage.

cluding Class D) of machines and vehicles with them on the 31st March, 1969.

Earth Moving and construction machines	1966
Other machines	3636
Vehicles	5546

5.6. The following statement indicates the number of machines and vehicles which were under|awaiting repairs as on the 31st March, 1969:

	Total number of machines/vehicles	Number under or awaiting repairs			Percentage of vehicles awaiting repairs.
		Under repair in work-shops.	Awaiting evacuation from work sites.	Total	
Earth moving and construction machines.	1966	523	162	685	35%
Other machines	3636	582	118	700	19%
Vehicles	5546	818	257	1075	19%

5.7. The above statement shows that 35 per cent of the earth moving and construction machines and 19 per cent of other machines and vehicles were off the roads as on the 31st March, 1969 and were awaiting repairs either in the workshops or at work sites.

5.8. The following statement indicates the break up of the machines and vehicles awaiting repairs as on the 31st March, 1969 according to the period for which they were under|awaiting repairs:

	Number under repairs in Workshops for				
	Over 3 years	Over 2 years	Over 1 year	Less than 1 year	Total
Earth moving and construction machines	47	115	168	193	523
Other machines	74	102	213	193	582
Vehicles	96	59	188	475	818
TOTAL	217 (11%)	276 (14 %)	569 (30%)	861 (45%)	1,923

It is seen from the above statement that out of the machines and vehicles awaiting repairs, about 11 per cent were lying in workshops for more than three years, 14 per cent were under repairs for more than two years, while those under repairs for more than one year were about 30 per cent

Comments of Public Accounts Committee

5.9. The Public Accounts Committee also in their 42nd Report (Fourth Lok Sabha), which was presented to Lok Sabha in February, 1969, had observed that the proportion of machinery and equipment awaiting repairs as on the 31st May, 1967 varied from 14 per cent to 23 per cent of the holdings and that about one-third of the equipment under repairs in workshops was in workshops for more than one year. This led the Public Accounts Committee to conclude: "Border Roads Organisation carry a very heavy inventory of machinery and equipment and vehicles costing over Rs. 31 crores, all of which obviously is not being put to optimum use." Since the question of resources utilisation and operational efficiency of Border Roads Organisation was then under the examination of the Director Scientific Evaluation, the Public Accounts Committee had made the following suggestions:

"... that performance in the workshops should cope efficiently with the heavy backlog of repair work. The Border Roads Organisation should also enlist the active assistance of the Army Base Workshops for carrying out repairs to machinery to the maximum extent feasible. Government may also like to examine whether adequate use has been made of the power delegated by them to the local formations for getting the repair work done through the civil trade where this is a more advantageous and expeditious alternative.

The Committee suggest that, before Government sanction the purchase of additional machinery and equipment for the Border Roads Organisation they should examine the extent to which such expenditure can be obviated by pressing into service the very large stock of machinery and equipment which is at present awaiting repair in the workshops or in the field."

5.10. Replying to the Public Accounts Committee in regard to their above observations and recommendations in September, 1969, Government had stated that the Director General Border Roads had attributed the accumulation of equipment in the Base Workshops mainly to (i) the inability of the General Reserve Engineer Force Base Workshops to cope with the arisings of Class 'C' equipment

and (ii) the non-availability of spares in balanced quantities over the entire range required. Since the report by the Director Scientific Evaluation had not been submitted by the time the reply was sent to the Public Accounts Committee, Government had informed the entire range required. Since the report by the Director Scientific steps in the meanwhile:

- (i) The staff in the Base Workshop had been increased with effect from 1st April, 1969. The question of introducing a second shift was also under consideration.
- (ii) The holdings of 'Bank of Spares' for Komatsu tractor was being reviewed.
- (iii) The manufacturers of TMB and DODGE vehicles had agreed to hold stock of spares at or near the Base Workshops exclusively for the Border Roads Organisation.
- (iv) The feasibility of getting more equipment and vehicles overhauled by the Army Base Workshops or by contract with private of State Workshops was being examined.

Utilisation of machines, vehicles etc.

5.11. Government were asked to state whether the optimum rate of utilisation of machines and vehicles during a year had been fixed and, if so, how it was ensured that these were put to optimum use and that there was no under-utilisation or non-utilisation. They have, in a note furnished to the Committee, stated that the machinery and equipment in the Organisation are assumed to work for 1,200 hours per year in the Western Sector and for 1,500 hours per year in the Eastern Sector. In the case of vehicles, the optimum rate of utilisation is 10,000 miles annually in all sectors. The allocation of machinery and vehicles in the Projects for the annual works plan is, it is stated, made on the basis of the actual work-load involved and out put of machines and vehicles in terms of the optimum annual rate of utilisation.

5.12. The optimum rate of utilisation is, the Government maintain, ensured through—

- (i) Quarterly utilisation returns for plant, machinery and vehicles submitted by Task Forces to Chief Engineer's Headquarters and Headquarters Director General Border Roads.
- (ii) Inspections carried out by IBRW which bring out the pattern of utilisation of plant, machinery and vehicles in the project.
- (iii) Ground inspections carried out by Task Force Commanders and officers from Chief Engineer's Headquarters.

Observations by Public Accounts Committee

5.13. The non-utilisation and under-utilisation of machines and equipment with the Border Roads Organisation came in for adverse criticism by the Public Accounts Committee also. Para 1.66 of their 18th Report (4th Lok Sabha) reads as follows:—

“The Committee are constrained to observe that as many as 289 machines valued at Rs. 70 lakhs had not been utilised ever since their purchase|receipt from workshops after overhaul and that two-thirds of 1,037 earth moving and construction machines valued at Rs. 4.5 crores were utilised for less than the optimum hours fixed for them. These statistics are symptomatic of the manner in which machines are acquired by Government departments without critically examining whether it is essential to purchase them and whether these will be put to optimum use. The Committee note that Government have taken some action now to constitute a high powered Committee consisting of the Secretary, Ministry of Defence, the Chief of the Army Staff and the Director General Border Roads to go into the matter. They hope that this high powered Committee will critically review the existing inventory of machinery available with the Border Roads Organisation and lay down guide-lines to ensure optimum utilisation of the existing machinery and to avoid purchases of excess machinery in future.”

5.14. Replying to the above recommendation in October, 1968, Government had informed the Public Accounts Committee as follows:—

“The high powered Committee consisting of Secretary, Ministry of Defence and Chief of Army Staff which was assisted by the Director General Border Roads, Secretary, Border Roads Development Board and Additional Financial Adviser considered the question of streamlining the procedure for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organisation and various proposals made by Director General Border Roads in this connection.

On the recommendations of the above high powered Committee it has been decided to entrust to the Director of Scientific Evaluation, Ministry of Defence, a works study of output|efficiency of plant and machinery. On receipt of the recommendations of the Director of Scientific Evaluation, Ministry of Defence, the above Committee would decide what further measures should be taken to ensure maximum optimum utilisation of plant, machinery and equipment etc. in the Border Roads Organisation.

In order to exercise greater and more effective control, Director General Border Roads has now reviewed the form and content of the census return and replaced it by a 'Utilisation Return.' A copy of the instructions issued by Director General Border Roads is enclosed.

In the past, indents for purchase of equipment had been initiated by Director General Border Roads keeping in view the programme and priorities of projects entrusted to General Reserve Engineer Force, the terrain in which work would be carried out. As construction of motorable roads in the Himalayas at the required speed had not been undertaken in the past, the assessment both of number and nature of equipment purchased in the initial period had to be made largely on the basis of best available technical advice and experience in other countries. As experience was gained, the utility and actual capacity of equipment used had been taken into account before deciding on further investment in machinery and equipment. In all these cases, there had been detailed discussions on each case in consultation with Finance Ministry. The observations of the Public Accounts Committee will however be kept prominently in view while considering proposals for further purchase of equipment for Border Roads Organisation."

Observation of the Director Scientific Evaluation

5.15. The Director Scientific Evaluation, Research and Development Organisation, Ministry of Defence to whom the task of assessing the resources utilisation and operational efficiency of the Border Roads Organisation was assigned in February, 1968, submitted his report to the Director General Border Roads in September, 1969. Based on the study of the utilisation of machinery in Projects Beacon, Dantak and Deepak during the years 1967-68 and 1968-69, the Report states:

"Taking the total hours run by tractors, compressors, stone crushers and road rollers it is observed that even the usable machine hours (i.e. of class 'A') have not been utilised to the maximum (that is 1200 hours and 1500 hours per year in Western and Eastern Sectors, respectively) showing under-utilisation. In a very few cases these machines have worked more than these hours.

*Average utilisation of class 'A'
Machinery in two years (1967-68, 1968-69)*

'Sl. No.	Machinery	Beacon	Dantak	Deepak
1	Tractors	96.5	106.3 %	81.1%
2	Compressor	44.0 %	56.1%	83.0%
3	Stone Crusher	43.7 %	48.3%	61.7%
4	Road Roller	70.8 %	103.9 %	77.5 %

only in Dantak, tractors and road rollers in class 'A' were fully utilised."

5.16. The Report makes the following observations in regard to overall resources and their efficiency:

"Considering the achieved work, it is seen that total machinery held in most of the cases by the projects had been 40 per cent to 200 per cent more than what is required by norms except in three cases where it had been 30 per cent less. Machines held in 'A' State (that is, on-road) on the average have been about 30 per cent to 40 per cent less than what is required by the norms for the achieved work. In two cases it has been 40 per cent and 15 per cent more It is interesting to see that when machinery available in 'A' state had been on an average 30 per cent to 40 per cent less than what is required by the norms and even that has not been fully utilised, the targets have been achieved."

5.17. On the basis of his study, the following conclusions had been reached by the Director of Scientific Evaluation in regard to 'utilisation' of machinery and equipment and the 'causes for non-utilisation' thereof:

"Utilisation

Non-utilisation of machines is mainly due to its being in class 'C' state which amounted to 65 per cent in April, 1969, including the unaccounted for machinery in the utilisation reports.

About 5 per cent of the total machinery resources is in class 'B' state which is well-within the capacity of repair of the field workshops except where it is held up because of the non-availability of spares. Such instance are quite frequent.

There is under-utilisation of 'on road' (i.e. class 'A') machinery which in some cases amounts to 30-40 per cent of the available time.

Some of the under-utilisation of class 'A' machinery may be due to non-availability of labour in the area, inaccessibility of the site and lack of operable areas. These factors however, require careful examination and planning.

Taking the terrain factors into account and machine combinations, a variation of 10-15 per cent in the total hours of the utilisation per year may be acceptable in case of compressors and stonecrushers as compared to tractors and road rollers.

Causes of non-utilisation

The main cause of non-utilisation is the inability to get class 'C' machinery repaired which is attributable to:

- (i) Non-availability of spares;
- (ii) Non-arrival of arisings at base workshops;
- (iii) Non-availability of capacity."

5.18. The Report *inter alia* makes the following recommendations:

"As the class 'C' holdings are very large it is desirable that it should be put back in circulation after repairs. A crash programme should be made to repair this machinery either by temporary expansion of the base workshop or sharing the programme with the Army workshops and the civil trade. Import of major sub-assemblies may be considered to execute this programme in a given period of time. It should be worthwhile to hunt for spares from indigenous sources of foreign countries to make the crash programme of repairs meaningful.

An assessment should be made as to what machinery held by Director General Border Roads cannot be repaired either for want of spares or for being beyond economical repair. Keeping of this machinery on charge showing inflated figures of resources availability is of no use. Disposal of machinery which is considered beyond economical repairs should be made on its merits.

The evacuation period of machinery/equipment to base workshop should be reduced. It may be necessary to consider creating a separate evacuation unit or by making it the responsibility of the base workshop."

5.19. The Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation together with the comments of the Director General Border Roads thereon is under the consideration of Government.

Committee on Machinery and Equipment

5.20. In view of the fact that the accumulation of equipment awaiting Base repairs had increased and a sizeable percentage of equipment otherwise in usable condition continued to remain "off road" mainly on account of non-availability of spares, it was decided by Government in July, 1969 that all problems connected with the overhauling and maintenance of equipment and vehicles should be examined by a Committee consisting of the Master General of the Ordnance, Army Headquarters and the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board.

5.21. The Committee on Machinery and Equipment has examined the following questions:—

- (i) Short and long term measures required to accelerate the move of Class 'C' equipment from projects to the Base Workshops.
- (ii) Existing system of provisioning of spares with a view to decide changes, if any, required in the light of experience gained; Review of ceiling limits for procurement of spares.
- (iii) Streamlining of the procedure for down-grading the equipment and vehicles to Class 'D'.
- (iv) Targets and programme of overhaul in General Reserve Engineer Force Base Workshops for the period upto 31-3-1971. Extent of assistance, which can be given by the Army Base Workshop to overcome the arrears in overhaul. Steps to be taken for the overhauling of items which are likely to remain unrepaired after fully utilising the capacity of General Reserve Engineer Force and Army Base Workshops.
- (v) Discard policy in respect of equipment and vehicles.
- (vi) Standardisation of equipment and vehicles to be purchased in future.

5.22. Director General Border Roads had, in his paper placed before the Committee, informed the Committee that, in his opinion, the targets of utilisation laid down and the actual utilisation of equipment were fairly satisfactory having regard to the peculiar problems which were faced by the Border Roads Organisation in the projects. He, however, stated that there was scope for further improvement in utilisation by the standardisation of equipment, improvement of field repair and base overhaul facilities, improvement of standard of operation|maintenance and planning.

5.23. The Committee on Machinery and Equipment has submitted its Report in November, 1969. The Report contains recommendations of the Committee on the various questions. In regard to some questions however, on which the Committee was unable to arrive at a final decision on account of insufficient data, it has been suggestions as to how the problems may be tackled. Apart from the recommendations in regard to improving the arrangements for major repairs|overhaul of machinery, provisioning and stocking of spares, standardisation of machinery, discard policy for equipment etc., which have been dealt with separately in subsequent paragraphs, this Committee has made the following recommendations:—

“There should be adequate incentives to the men responsible for operating and maintenance of equipment. Financial consideration should not stand in the way of introducing schemes suited to the conditions obtaining on the ground.

Director General Border Roads should examine and assess immediately the number of equipment which are reported ‘to have not been adequately used in the past and are not likely to be utilised in future’. If the number is found to be large, the reasons for their procurement and non-utilisation would need to be looked into. How such equipment could be profitably used now could also be examined simultaneously.

A complete list of auxiliary items of equipment, which can be used only as and when required should be prepared and norms of their utilisation laid down. The usage rates in respect of these equipment should also be reviewed.”

The measures to achieve optimum utilisation of equipment recommended by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment are being examined by Government and they expect to take decisions on all important recommendations within two or three months.

5.24. The Committee are distressed to note that percentage of equipment awaiting repairs has increased from 14 to 23 per cent of the total holdings as on 31st May, 1967 to 19 to 35 per cent of the holdings as on 31st March, 1969. They also note with concern that the proportion of equipment under repairs in workshops for more than one year to the total equipment under repairs in workshops has increased from about one-third as on 31st May, 1967 to 55 per cent as on 31st March, 1969.

5.25. The Committee are further constrained to observe that in spite of the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee in para 2.14 of their 42nd Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) cautioning Government against further additions to the inventory of the Border Roads Organisation without proper scrutiny, the Budget estimates

of the Border Roads Development Board for 1969-70 show a provision of Rs. 4.25 crores for purchase of new machinery and equipment while the question of how best to ensure optimum utilisation of the existing equipment is still under examination.

5.26. The Committee note that Government had asked the Director Scientific Evaluation, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Ministry of Defence in February, 1968 to assess the resources utilisation and operational efficiency of the Border Roads Organisation. In July, 1969, Government referred for examination to a Committee consisting of the Master General of the Ordnance and Secretary, Border Roads Development Board, "all problems connected with over-hauling and maintenance of the equipment" held by the Border Roads Organisation. The Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation was submitted in September, 1969 and that of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment was submitted in November, 1969. Both the Reports are stated to be under the consideration of Government. The Committee also note that the Director Scientific Evaluation has in his report attributed the non-utilisation of a sizeable part of equipment mainly to its being in Class 'C' state requiring major repairs|overhaul at the Base Workshops. The Committee on Machinery and Equipment has also in its report dealt with this problem in detail and has made various recommendations and suggestions in regard to improving the arrangements for major repairs|overhaul of machinery, provisioning and stocking of spares, standardisation of machinery, discard policy for equipment etc., which have been dealt with separately in subsequent paragraphs. In view of the fact that these reports, which have come in the hands of the Government only recently, have already dealt with the question of optimum utilisation of equipment with the Border Roads Organisation comprehensively, the Committee only trust that Government would take expeditious decisions on the various recommendations and suggestions made in those reports and make a concerted effort to tide over the problem in the shortest possible time.

5.27. The Committee would, however, like to reiterate in particular, the recommendation of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment that an immediate assessment should be made of the number of equipment which are reported to have not been adequately used in the past and are not likely to be utilised in future and if it is found to be large, reasons for their procurement and non-utilisation should be looked into and it should be examined as to how such equipment could be profitably utilised in future.

5.28. The Committee also join in the recommendation of that Committee that a complete list of auxiliary items of equipment which can be used only as and when required, should be prepared and norms of their utilisation laid down.

5.29. The Committee further recommend that until the various measures for augmenting the utilisation of the existing equipment suggested by the Director Scientific Evaluation and the Committee on Machinery and Equipment have been implemented and allowed to operate for sometime to bear fruit, Government should observe utmost restraint in further adding to the already heavy inventory of the Border Roads Organisation.

5.30. The Committee are distressed to note the observation of the Director of Scientific Evaluation in his Report that there is under-utilisation of machinery in Class 'A' state i.e., "on road", amounting, in some cases, to 30-40 per cent of the available time. The Report however suggests that this may be due to non-availability of labour in the area, inaccessibility of the site and lack of operable area. The Committee consider that any significant under-utilisation of "on road" machinery is a serious matter and would like Government to investigate the same thoroughly and take remedial steps to ensure optimum utilisation at least in the case of machinery which is in class 'A' state.

Usage Rate

5.31. In the Border Roads Organisation all machinery and equipment is purchased centrally and the cost is debited to the Capital Head. These are then issued to different projects and the accounts of different projects are debited at a usage rate which is fixed by Government. The usage rate of machinery and equipment is fixed on the basis of the optimum utilisation which is, in the case of machines, 1200 hours per year in the Western Region and 1500 hours per year in the Eastern Region. The usage rate of vehicles is based on the optimum utilisation of 10,000 miles annually in all sectors.

5.32. The usage rate of all Class 'A' (i.e. on the road) and Class 'B' (in local repairable condition) machinery, equipment and vehicles is charged to the Task Force irrespective of whether the equipment is used or not but once an equipment is declared as Class 'C' i.e. requiring major repairs or overhaul which can be done only at the Base Workshop, the usage rate is not charged. The usage rate charged to a Task Force on the basis of equipment allocated to it, is spread over the various Projects being executed by the Task Force.

5.33. The question of refixation of usage rate was considered by the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee on Border Roads Organisation also. According to the Report of the Committee (1967), Director General Border Roads was of the opinion that the existing usage rate for machinery and equipment was on the high side and had proposed that the usage rate should be worked out on 'daily' basis and that the rate should be levied only for the days the machine was used for eight hours in a day. Another opinion before the

Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee was that the usage rate was fixed on the basis of certain assumptions in regard to cost of spares required for maintenance and overhaul, life of machines etc. which have changed materially warranting an upward revision of the usage rate. That Committee had then agreed that the matter should be considered further in consultation with the Finance Ministry keeping in view the following two considerations:

- (i) Depreciation|wear and tear should be taken into account fully;
- (ii) The rates should be realistic and such as should ensure maximum utilisation of equipment.

5.34. It is also stated in that Report that the Director General Border Roads had then undertaken to have the usage rate revised before the 31st March, 1968 and the new rates were to be effective from the 1st April, 1968. On being asked to indicate the latest position in regard to the refixation of the usage rate, Government have, in a communication to the Committee dated the 12th March, 1970 stated as follows:—

“A set of proposals containing revised usage rates in respect of a limited range of equipment was submitted by the Director General Border Roads on 30-3-1968. These were examined at length by this Ministry and by the Ministry of Finance (Def|BR), and were found to be inadequate. Revised proposals have now been received and the same are under consideration.”

5.35. The Committee regret that the revised usage rates of machinery and equipment have not yet been finalised although the question has been under consideration at various levels since 1967. They feel that the matter merits urgent attention of the Government and hope that a final decision will be taken in this regard before long.

B. Base Workshops

Arrangements for Repairs

5.36. The composition of a Task Force includes a Field Workshop. Servicing and minor repairs to the machinery, equipment and vehicles with the Task Force are attended to by the Field Workshop attached to the Task Force. The machinery, equipment and vehicles requiring major repairs or overhauls are attended to on a centralised basis in the two Base Workshops—one for the

Projects in the Eastern Region and the other for the Projects in the Western Region. The establishment of both the Workshops was sanctioned on the 3rd May, 1961.

Capacity of Base Workshops

5.37. The initial capacity of the Eastern Base Workshop when it was set up in 1961 was 5.12 lakhs manhours per year while that of the Western Base Workshop was initially 3.93 lakhs manhours per year. With effect from the 1st April, 1969, the capacity of both the Workshops has been increased. The capacity of the Eastern Base Workshop has been increased from 5.12 lakhs manhours per year to 5.50 lakhs manhours per year. The capacity of the Western Base Workshop has been increased from 3.93 lakhs manhours per year to 5.00 lakhs manhours per year. The overall increase with effect from 1st April, 1969 in the Workshop capacity has been from 9.05 lakhs manhours per year to 10.50 lakhs manhours per year. Government have stated that the expanded capacity would be reached by the 31st March, 1970.

Accumulation of Work

5.38. During on-the-spot visits to the Base Workshops, the Committee had noticed that a large number of vehicles and other machinery had accumulated in the Workshops for repairs which was far beyond the capacity of the Workshops to handle. Government were, therefore, asked to furnish to the Committee a statement showing, month-wise during 1969, the workload and output in respect of the two Base Workshops. The statement furnished by Government indicates the following workload with the two Base Workshops:

Vehicles and other Machinery awaiting under repairs in Base Workshops

	Vehicles			Other Machinery		
	I-I-69	I-4-69	3I-IO-69	I-I-69	I-4-69	3I-IC-69
Eastern Base Workshop	231	204	211	415	390	431
Western Base Workshop	499	510	491	642	649	670
TOTAL :	730	714	702	1057	1039	1101

5.39. The monthly output of the Base Workshops as against the fresh jobs received during the month covering the period January-October, 1969 has been compiled from the statement furnished by Government as follows:

(a) *Equipment received for Repairs and that Repaired during January—March, 1969.*

	Received for Repairs			Repaired		
	Veh.	Other Mech.	Total	Veh.	Other Mech.	Total
E.B.W						
Over all figure	52	44	96	41	37	78
Average per month	17	15	32	14	12	26
W.T.W,						
Overall figure	39	23	62	65	48	114
Average per month	13	8	21	22	16	38
<i>Total for both Workshops</i>						
Over all figure	91	67	158	107	85	192
Average per month	30	23	53	36	28	64
<i>(b) Equipment received for Repairs and that Repaired during April—October, 1969.</i>						
E.B.W.						
Overall figure	181	118	299	129	85	214
Average per month	26	17	43	19	12	31
W.B.W.						
Overall figure	140	125	265	133	84	217
Average per month	20	18	38	19	12	31
<i>Total for both Workshops.</i>						
Overall figure	21	243	564	262	169	431
Average per month	46	35	81	38	24	62

5.40. The above figures show that the equipment accumulated in the Workshops for repairs has increased from a total of 1753 (vehicles—714; other Machinery—1039) at the beginning of April, 1969 to 1803 (vehicles—702; other Machinery—1101) at the end of October, 1969. It is also observed that during the same period, while the fresh jobs received by the Workshops averaged 81 per month, the quantity repaired averaged only 62 per month. Thus, far from any diminution, there is a recurring addition to the backlog.

5.41. During evidence, the representative of the Ministry was asked to state the reasons for the accumulation of such a large number of machinery for repairs in the Workshops which, remaining idle so long as it was in the Workshops, involved huge financial loss. In reply the secretary, Border Roads Development Board stated:—

“This figure does not represent the total net repairable equipment for vehicles. There is a certain percentage of this number which, when opened up, would be found beyond economical repair. Until such time as a committee of technical officers have really opened up and declared them as beyond economical repair, they continue to be in Class C or repairable condition and keep the number inflated. Then there is a fairly large number of vehicles and tractors which have reached the second overhaul stage. We are considering to have these vehicles and tractors repaired for the second time. We will take a decision quite soon on that.”

5.42. Asked to state how it was proposed to clear huge backlog when the output of the Workshops was hardly more than the current workload, the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board, while admitting that the two Workshops were not able to cope up with the work, stated that this matter also was examined by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment consisting of the Master General of the Ordnance, Army Headquarters and the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board. According to him, in the discussion by the Committee, to which the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Army Headquarters and other specialists were invited, “it was found that by suitable utilisation of the expanded facilities of the GREF Base Workshops and a certain number of Equipment being taken over by the Army Base Workshops, it should be possible for us to reach by 1st April, 1971 a stage where we shall have the repairable equipment by and large with the rated capacity of the two GREF Base Workshops”.

5.43. The Director General Border Roads further explained the arrangements arrived at in this regard as follows:—

“We have been doing some very detailed discussions with the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering in the Army who owns and runs a large number of major workshops for the Army. We found that there is need for a substantial quantity of workshop capacity. But instead of setting up a third base workshop we have been able to persuade the Army to help us out for a period of two to three years by taking over some load

from us. It will certainly involve a little more expenditure on moving the equipment but, I think, that expenditure will be insignificant compared to the cost of setting up a new workshop."

5.44. In regard to the question whether it was possible to save a considerable part of the expenditure involved in haulage of machinery over long distance for Base Repairs by setting up more Base Workshops at suitable locations, the Director General Border Roads stated:

"To some extent this long travel cannot be helped because each Base Workshop involves a tremendous lot of investment. Roughly, a new Base Workshop would cost us something between Rs. 70 lakhs and Rs. 80 lakhs and would take anything up to three to four years, not only to build but to purchase and instal the machinery."

Recommendations of Director Scientific Evaluation

5.45. The Director Scientific Evaluation in his Report on Utilisation of Resources in Border Roads Organisation (September 1969) has, while stressing the desirability of putting back into circulation the large number of class 'C' holdings, recommended that a crash programme should be made to repair this machinery either by temporary expansion of Base Workshops or sharing the programme with the Army Workshops and the Civil trade. The Report also recommends that import of major sub-assemblies may be considered to execute this programme in a given period of time and that it should be worthwhile to hunt for spares from indigenous sources of foreign countries to make the crash programme of repairs meaningful. Apart from this, the Report recommends that the capacity of Field Workshops should be investigated to undertake some overhaul, particularly of vehicles.

5.46. As regards discarding of machinery which is beyond economical repairs, the Report recommends that an assessment should be made of such machinery held by the Director General Border Roads which only inflates figures of resources availability. Disposal of such machinery, according to the Report, should be made on its merits.

Recommendations of Committee on Machinery and Equipment

5.47. The Report of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment (November, 1969), dealing with the problem of a large number of machinery awaiting repairs in the workshops, recommends that the Director General Border Roads and the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Army Headquarters should finalise immediately the extent of recovery assistance which can

be rendered by the Army to clear accumulation of Class 'C' equipment in the Project. The Report goes on to suggest that the Army Headquarters may be requested to accommodate an additional number of 400 three-Tons vehicles and 30 Road Rollers for completion by 31st March, 1971. That Committee has also recommended that the feasibility of getting TMB engines and P-six Perkins engines by M/s Telco and Simpson & Co. respectively, may be explored.

5.48. The Committee has laid down an 'agreed overhaul programme' for the period upto 31st March, 1971 for base repairs to be undertaken by two GREF Base Workshops and Army Base Workshops. The achievement of these targets, however, according to the Report of the Committee, will depend largely on the availability of balanced quantity of spares over the entire range. The Committee has also recommended the introduction from the next year (1970) a system of inspection of output of GREF Base Workshops with personnel to be borrowed from the Army.

5.49. As regards the discard of machinery and equipment which may be beyond economical repair, the Report of the Committee has made the following recommendations:

"Powers upto Rs. 15,000 for write off of equipment sentenced to class D may be delegated to Chief Engineers and those of DGBR enhanced to Rs. 25,000 where down-gradation is due to fair wear and tear. In other cases, DGBR may be vested with powers upto Rs. 25,00.

It will not be desirable to arrive at a policy decision regarding discard of the entire range of equipment and vehicles on the basis of assumptions and general principles and without examining the economics of second overhaul. In consultation with the DEME, DGBR may examine and lay down data which should be collected in this connection. Thereafter decision should be taken, equipment-wise, in accordance with a fixed time-table to be prescribed as early as possible.

As an *ad hoc* measure, 160 TMB 3½ ton vehicles, 47 International Harvester 1 ton vehicles, 1 Ingersoll Rand 365 cfm and 16 Ingersoll Rand 250 cfm compressors which are awaiting second overhaul may be discarded, provided, this will not render a large quantity of spares surplus to the requirements of DGBR."

5.50. The Committee note that the total number of equipment awaiting under repairs at the Base Workshops stood at 1753 on the 1st April, 1969 when a decision was taken by Government to increase the capacity of the workshops from a total of 9.05 lakhs manhours per year

to 10.50 lakhs manhours per year. Since the average monthly arisings and output of the Base Workshops during January to March, 1969 was no more than 53 and 64 respectively, the huge accumulation of equipment awaiting repairs at the Workshops has obviously been built up gradually over a long time. The Committee are surprised how the inadequacy of the capacity of the Base Workshops as against the arisings of the class 'C' equipment continued to be overlooked by Government until the accumulation of work in the Base Workshops had reached alarming proportions. Since large number of machinery awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops for long time involved considerable financial loss to the Government in terms of work hours lost, the Committee would like Government to investigate as to how and where the lapse had occurred and provide guidelines for an effective inventory control in future.

5.51. From a sample study of the figures relating to the workload and monthly arising in, an output of, the two Base Workshops during April-October, 1969, the Committee note that there has been a sizeable increase in the number of equipment awaiting under repairs in the Base Workshops from 1753 at the beginning of April, 1969 to 1803 at the end of October, 1969. The monthly average of arising and output of the Base Workshops during the same period indicates that there has been a consistent shortfall in the output as against the arisings. Thus, even with the increased capacity, the Base Workshops might hardly be able to handle even the new arisings, much less tackle the backlog. The Committee therefore recommend that a constant and strict watch should be kept on the arisings and outputs in respect of the two Base Workshops and corrective steps should be taken as soon as any imbalance is noticed. In this connection, the Committee consider that, in addition, a system of inspection of GREF Base Workshops with personnel borrowed from the Army, as suggested by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment, would be a step in the right direction.

5.52. Appreciating the explanation furnished by the representative of the Government during evidence that the number of equipment awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops includes equipment which might, upon technical examination, be ultimately found to be beyond economical repair/overhaul, the Committee recommend that immediate steps should be taken in this regard on the lines recommended by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment and a rigid time table laid down for completing the technical appraisal of all equipment awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops and its final classification.

5.53. In regard to the problem of clearing the large backlog of class 'C' equipment awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops, the Committee note that, with the assistance of the Army Workshops, who have agreed to take over some of the equipment for repairs

overhaul, the Government hope to clear the backlog by the end of March, 1971. The Committee stress the need for launching a meaningful crash programme of repairs|overhaul to put back into use maximum number of machines in shortest possible time. They join with the Public Accounts Committee in their observation contained in para 1.29 of their 86th Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) that, apart from stepping up the output of the workshops, sustained measures will have to be taken on urgent basis to get as much of the equipment repaired|overhauled through Army Workshops and civil trade, as possible.

5.54. The Committee would also like Government to examine the possibility of Field Workshops undertaking some overhaul, particularly of vehicles, as recommended by the Director of Scientific Evaluation.

Delivery of Repaired Machinery

5.55. Government were asked to furnish a statement indicating the delivery position of the repaired machinery in the Base Workshops. From the statement furnished by them the following figures have been compiled in respect of Eastern Base Workshop. The figures indicate the total number of machinery including vehicles:

	Ready for delivery at the beginning of the month	Repaired during the month	Despat- ched during the month	Ready for delivery at the end of the month
May, 1969	40	31	16	55
June, 1969	55	32	35	52
July, 1969	52	33	20	65
August, 1969	65	30	31	64
September, 1969	64	29	54	39
October, 1969	39	31	26	44

The above statement indicates that there is some time lag between the completion of repairs to a vehicle and its despatch to the destination.

5.56. The Committee were informed during their visit to the Western Base Workshop that "Issue Orders" for vehicles and other machinery were issued by the Director General Border Roads Headquarters which were complied with by the Base Workshops.

5.57. The Committee feel that the procedure for issue and despatch of repaired equipment from the Base Workshops needs review to ensure that the equipment ready for use does not remain idle in the Workshops unnecessarily.

Staff Strength

5.58. One of the main problems facing the workshop, it is stated, is the shortage of certain categories of highly skilled tradesmen. The staff strength of the Eastern Base Workshop during the last three years has been as follows:

	Authorised	Posted 1-4-67	Posted 1-4-68	Authorised as on 1-4-69	Posted as on 1-4-69
Officers	19	15	13	20	15
Subordinate and other personnel	736	662	569	854*	564
TOTAL	755	677	582	874	579

There were therefore the following vacancies in the regular staff strength of the Eastern Base Workshop as on 1st April of 1967, 1968 and 1969:

	Officers	Others
1-4-1967	4	74
1-4-1968	6	167
1-4-1969	5	290

5.59. The staff strength of the Western Base Workshop during the last three years has been as follows:

	Authorised	Posted 1-4-67	Posted 1-4-69	Authorised as on 1-4-69	Posted as on 1-4-69
Officers	17	14	15	19	16
Subordinate and other personnel	608	564	547	743*	549
TOTAL	625	578	562	762	565

*In addition, 50 Artisans have been sanctioned for employment on casual basis.

Vacancy position in the Western Base Workshop has therefore been as follows:

	Officers	Others
1-4-1967	3	44
1-4-1968	5	6
1-4-1969	3	194

5.60. Asked to state the reasons for large number of vacancies in the Base Workshops, the Director General Border Roads stated during evidence that firstly it was because there was an increase in the authorised staff strength of the Workshops with effect from 1st April, 1969 and secondly, according to him:

“There is no doubt that there is a shortage of technical people coming forward to work in these workshops. In fact while the shortage in the Western Base Workshop is less, the difficulties of finding technicians coming and joining us in the East are greater.....The highly skilled worker, the type of person we want, can perhaps get the same or better pay and live in more settled parts.

We are trying all sorts of ways and means to recruit more. In fact we have a large Labour force in both the workshops. It is a problem which we are constantly keeping in view.”

5.61. In view of the country-wide unemployment among qualified engineers and technicians, the Committee are unable to appreciate the statement of the representative of the Government during evidence that the Base Workshops, which are located at well connected cities in the plains, were under-staffed because there was shortage of technical hands offering themselves for work in the Workshops. The Committee have earlier, in para 2.93, recommended certain procedures to be observed in the recruitment of subordinate and other personnel. They feel that with proper publicity of the vacancies through Employment Exchanges etc., the problem could be minimised to a great extent.

Qualification and Training of Staff

5.62. It is stated that the technical staff in the Base Workshops is qualified and trained. However, certain amount of orientation is stated to be necessary for newly posted staff to learn repair techniques of different types of vehicles and equipment used in the Border Roads Organisation.

Introduction of Cost Accounting System

5.63. Government were asked to state whether it was feasible to introduce cost accounting system in the Base Workshops. They have in reply stated that the Director General Border Roads is of the considered view that it is not desirable at present to introduce cost accounting in GREF Base Workshops and that even in Army Base Workshops, it has not been possible to introduce this system. Government maintain that this matter requires detailed consideration. According to them, at this stage, priority is being given to the reorganisation and the strengthening of the system of provisioning and inventory control. They have, however, assured that the feasibility and implication of the introduction of cost accounting system in full will be examined after the measures suggested by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment (1969) have been implemented.

5.64. The Committee note the assurance given by Government to the Committee that, after the measure suggested by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment have been implemented, the feasibility of introducing the system of cost accounting in the Base Workshops will be examined.

C. Provisioning of Stores and Material

Provisioning of Category A Stores

5.65. All equipment and stores required by the Border Roads Organisation are classified as Category A and B. Category A stores comprise vehicles, earth moving equipment, spares and clothing articles. Category B stores are stores of consumable nature such as cement, steel, timber etc., and of expendable nature such as shovels, pick axes etc. The method of procurement of stores centrally and by the Project Chief Engineers is laid down in the Border Roads Development Board Regulations.

5.66. Category A stores are procured centrally by the Director General Border Roads Head-quarters. The Chief Engineers have no power to purchase Category A stores except in the case of spares for Category A stores except in the emergency. It is stated that the indents for these stores are put up by the Director General Border Roads to Border Roads Development Board who, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance accord the administrative approval. The approved indents are then placed on Director General of Supplies and Disposals, Bharat Earth Movers Ltd., or Director General Ordnance Factories, as the case may be. The expenditure on Category A stores during 1968-69 is stated to have been of the order of Rs. 6.43 crores.

5.67. It is further stated that the stores centrally procured are sent to the Base Depots of the Projects and to GREF Centre based on the assessed requirements in each area. These are stored in semi-permanent storage accommodation constructed at Base Depots and

temporary Basha type accommodation|stores tents in forward areas. The Government consider the existing storage arrangements as adequate. Since the consignees under the Chief Engineers receive the centrally procured stores directly from the suppliers, it appears that no separate storage accommodation on a centralised basis exists or is required for housing the stores procured centrally.

Procurement of Category B Stores

5.68. Category B stores can be procured directly by the Chief Engineers normally by operating Rate Contract and Running Contracts of Director General of Supplies and Disposals wherever available. In case of emergency, however, stores may be obtained from other sources. Demands for stores other than those of local origin which are not covered by Rate Contract are placed on Director General of Supplies and Disposals if the Value of any category exceeds Rs. 25,000. Stores|materials may also be procured by Chief Engineers through local purchase if they are urgently required and delay in obtaining them will be detrimental to work. Except for articles of proprietary nature purchased from accredited agents, purchases are made on the basis of competitive tenders, whenever possible. Before placing supply orders, on firms, quotations are usually called for and the lowest accepted. This procedure can be dispensed with in exceptional cases, for reasons to be recorded in writing. Purchase of stores involving foreign exchange or where the grant of import licence certificate to the supplier is involved, is effected with the approval of the Board Secretariat, which controls the allocation of foreign exchange centrally.

5.69. The Committee observe that 'clothing articles' are at present classified as category 'A' stores and are therefore required to be procured centrally by the Director General Border Roads Headquarters. Since 'Clothing articles' are also stores of an 'expendable nature' the Committee would like Government to examine the feasibility of decentralising the provisioning of these articles with a view to obviate complaints regarding provisioning of clothing articles at the Central level referred to in para 2.81.

Stocking of Spares

5.70. As already mentioned, spare parts for maintenance and overhaul are classified as Category A stores and are procured centrally by the Director General Border Roads Headquarters. In emergency, however, the Project Chief Engineers and the Commanders of Base Workshops have been authorised to purchase the spares directly to a limited extent. The powers of Chief Engineers for emergent local purchase of spares are to the extent of Rs. 20,000 on each occasion and of the Commander of a Base Workshop is to the extent of Rs. 7,000 on each occasion.

5.71. It is stated that the Director General Border Roads has assessed the value of spares indented during 1968-69 at Rs. 2.54 crores. Out of this the value of imported spares indented has been assessed at Rs. 0.49 crores.

5.72. It is further stated that the extent up to which spare parts for maintenance and overhaul of equipment, machinery and vehicles could be provided by Director General Border Roads was fixed in July, 1962 as follows:

Provision of spares	Percentage value
Initial maintenance spares for 18 months requirement with the equipment	15%
First bulk indent based on Initial Stocking Guide for—	
(a) 2 years maintenance (including initial spares)	5% (excluding the above 15%)
(b) Overhaul spares for 100% equipment	12%
(c) Major assemblies	18
TOTAL	50%
Second bulk indent for the number of equipment in service out of the lot after review of the Initial Stocking Guide for 2 years maintenance	25%
TOTAL	75%

Conclusions and Recommendations of Director Scientific Evaluation

5.73. The Director Scientific Evaluation, Research and Development Organisation, Ministry of Defence to whom the job of assessing the resources utilisation and operational efficiency of the Border Roads Organisation was assigned, has in his Report submitted in September, 1969 arrived at certain conclusions in regard to spares, some of which are reproduced below:

"Initial Spares"

It is seen that there are no proper records of receipts of initial spares. From whatever could be traced out it is observed that the spares at times arrive from 2 to 3 years after the induction of the equipment which leaves a big gap to overcome the maintenance problem which arises within six months of putting the machinery into use. Non-availability of records confirms that the initial spares indents have not been watched and progress properly.

Bulk Spares

Situation of first bulk spares is not very much better. The time analysis made from the past records reveals.

Events	Average
(i) Time from the indenting for equipment to the date of arrival of equipment	15.4 months
(ii) Time from the date of arrival of equipment to the date of arrival of initial spares	2-3 years (data insufficient)
(iii) Time from the date of arrival of equipment to the date of indenting of first bulk	9.8 months
(iv) Time from indenting of first bulk to the date of Acceptance of Tender (AT)	13.9 months
(v) Time from AT to the date of delivery	8.8 months (50% delivery)
(vi) Time from arrival of equipment to the delivery of first bulk	32.5 months (50% delivery)

Hence in most of the cases the spares are not in hand when required for maintenance or overhaul. The need for maintenance must have been met by cannibalisation or local purchase where possible.

In the initial stages from 1960-63, the machinery acquired was mostly of foreign origin and from different countries. No proper assessment of the spares requirement was made, may be either due to inexperience or oversight or circumstantial inability to lay stress on spares on the supplier of the equipment. This has proved to be a major handicap in the subsequent years. But even in the case of indigenous machinery condition is though somewhat better but far from satisfactory.

The spares provisioning system needs complete reorganisation to reduce procedural delays and ensure better supplies.

Unused Spares

Large stocks of spares were seen at base workshops and field workshops which seem to have lost their utility as some equipments have become obsolescent or have finished their life.

All types of machines are inducted in each project resulting in piling up of a variety of spares for various machines in field workshops which may or may not be held by the project. It is observed that the projects are holding stocks of spares for machines which are not held by them.

Repair Reserve

In view of the non-availability of spares and state of machinery, the repair reserves allowed in planning resources are inadequate."

5.75. Some of the recommendations contained in the Report on the subject of stocking and provisioning of spares are reproduced below:

"The spares provisioning system needs complete reorganisation to reduce procedural delays and ensure better supplies. Following suggestions are made in this connection:

- (i) Supply of initial spares should be ensured along with the equipment.
- (ii) Suppliers of equipment should be bound to supply spares for the life of the equipment ensuring first bulk supply within fifteen months of receipt of equipment.
- (iii) Rate running contracts for two years should be endeavoured and the final bid for the second bulk should be made within two years of the arrival of the equipment.
- (iv) If these ideal facilities|arrangements cannot be achieved from the manufacturer, the stocking for the second bulk (critical items) should be done along with the first bulk. This will, no doubt, block the money but has to be accepted and resorted to for the sake of operational efficiency.
- (v) Scales need to be revised every two years and ISG should be broken on the basis of VED analysis (very critical, essential and desirable items) and indents should be made accordingly to enable easy watch and ensure availability of critical spares for probable repair requirement.
- (vi) Procedural delays in indenting should be cut down to give more lead time to the manufacturers.
- (vii) Cardex system should be introduced at base workshops and DGBR HQ.

- (viii) At the moment, no information regarding availability of spares is compiled or maintained at DGBR HQ and this is one of the reasons that repair planning is unrealistic.
- (ix) Base Workshops and DGBR should make periodic reviews of the spares availability in stock, machine wise, to determine the capability of over-hauling the machines to evolve a realistic repair plan with certain amount of confidence.

Task forces should be allowed 5 per cent of reserve to cover the off-road machinery in 'B' state and projects should be allowed 10 per cent reserve to cover the 'C' state machinery in the projects and DGBR should have 15 per cent reserve to cover the entire organisation.

Heavy stock of spares lying with these workshops and field workshops, which have lost their utility on account of machines having finished their life, should be examined for their interchangeability for other machinery in use."

The Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation is, as already stated, under the consideration of the Government.

Recommendations of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment

5.75. The question of stocking and provisioning of spares for the machinery and equipment held by the Border Roads Organisation has been examined by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment consisting of the Master General of the Ordnance and Secretary, Border Roads Development Board also. It is stated that Government are tackling the matter on the lines suggested by that Committee in their Report submitted in November, 1969.

5.76. The Report of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment contains *inter alia* the following recommendations in regard to stocking and provisioning of spares:

"The Government may accept the modified system of provisioning, proposed by DGBR, under which spares required for 3 years' maintenance and overhaul of 50 per cent of equipment will be ordered within 9/12 months of their delivery and thereafter orders for spares will be placed annually after periodical 'provision review'.

Three 'groups'—one for holding centrally and issuing all spares, second for carrying out Provision Review and the third for 'scaling', at present done at HQs.—should be

formed alongside Base Workshops. The initial requirement of staff may be sanctioned (as suggested in the Report).

Field Workshops will, in future, hold spares for one year's requirement and have stock replenished on the basis of actual consumption.

On the establishment of the Central Stores Group, no local purchase of spares will be made by CEs and Base Workshops without obtaining a non-availability certificate from Stores Group stocking spares of the concerned equipment.

Before moving 'unwanted' spares from the Field Workshops to the Central Stores Group, a census of surplus spares should be made with a view to determine the extent of the problem and take urgent remedial measures. This census should be completed before 1st April, 1970. If as a result of the census large surplus is discovered, the reasons for this accumulation will need to be looked into.

A review of the ceiling limits of spares prescribed in 1962 should be carried out in November, 1971 on the basis of reliable statistics of consumption of spares both for maintenance and over-hauling. Meanwhile, for procurement of spares after devaluation, the ceiling limit of spares for equipment imported and paid for at pre-devaluation rates may be raised from 75 per cent to 145 per cent of capital cost.

The need for intermediate engine overhaul in respect of vehicles, crawler tractors and motor graders (to the extent indicated in the Report) may be accepted. As regards engines of other construction equipment, there are no adequate data for arriving at a decision."

5.77. The Committee are surprised to learn from the Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation that the records regarding procurement and availability of spares are not being maintained properly due to which it is not only difficult to properly watch the progressing of indents but, as the Report maintains, this is one of the reasons that repair planning in the Border Roads Organisation is unrealistic. The Committee stress the need for records in respect of spares being maintained properly and recommend that the feasibility of introducing the Cardex system at the Base Workshops and Director General Border Roads Headquarters suggested by the Director Scientific Evaluation may be examined on an urgent basis.

5.78. The Committee note with concern the findings contained in the aforesaid Report that the time-lag between the arrival of the equipment and arrival of initial spares is two to three years while it takes 32.5 months from the time of arrival of equipment, for the first

bulk of spares to arrive. The Committee consider that the recommendation of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment for modifying the system of provisioning to provide that "spares required for three years' maintenance and overhaul of 50 per cent of equipment will be ordered within 9/12 months of their delivery and thereafter orders for spares will be placed annually after periodical provision review, if accepted and implemented strictly, would go a long way in solving the problem.

5.79. The Committee take a serious view of the findings of the Director Scientific Evaluation that large stocks of spares are lying at the Base and Field Workshops which have lost their utility as some machinery and equipment have become obsolescent or have finished their life. Besides, according to the Report, the Projects are holding stocks of spares for machines which are not held by them. The Committee agree with the recommendation of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment that a census of surplus spares should be made with a view to determine the extent of the problem and if a large surplus is discovered, the reasons for accumulation should be looked into and urgent remedial measures taken.

5.80. The Committee also commend the suggestion of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment that Field Workshops will, in future, hold spares for one year's requirements and have stock replenished on the basis of actual consumption.

Pendency of Indents

5.81. At the instance of the Committee, Government furnished a statement showing the position as on 1st April, 1969 of pendency of indents for spares for machinery and equipment with the Border Roads Organisation. The statements are reproduced below:

(i) Statement showing pendency of indents

Total No. of Indents raised (still pending)	Pending for over 3 years	Pending for over 2 years	Pending for over 1 year	Pending for less than 1 year	Remains
No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
(Approx. value—Rupees in lakhs of outstanding items),					
128	28 34.84	32 41.01	34 48.00	34 240.36	****

****The value of indents worked out on a proportionate basis taking the proportion of number of items pending in the indents to the total number of items of the indent.

(ii) Statement showing where the indents were pending

Procurement Agency	Out- standing over 3 years	Out- standing over 2 years	Out- standing over 1 year	Out- standing less than 1 year	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
Director General of Supplies and Disposals	21	19	23	24	87
Bharat Earth Movers Ltd.	5	8	8	10	31
Director General Ordnance Factories	2	5	3		10
TOTAL	28	32	34	34	128

5.82. The above statements indicate that, as on 1st April, 1969, as many as 128 indents for spares for machines and equipment, raised by the Border Roads Organisation with the Director General of Supplies and Disposals, Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. and Director General Ordnance Factories were pending. The value of items outstanding against the pending indents is assessed at Rs. 3.64 crores. Out of the 128 indents, 60 were pending for over two years.

The following reasons have been indicated for the pendency of the indents:

- (i) Non-finalisation of "Accepted Tender".
- (ii) Delay in placing orders on principals|supplies by Bharat Earth Movers Ltd.|Director General Ordnance Factories.
- (iii) Belated supplies by suppliers due to varied reasons.

5.83. The Committee are alarmed to note that as on the 1st April, 1969 as many as 128 indents for spares for machinery and equipment raised by the Border Roads Organisation were pending out of which no less than 60 were pending for over two years. The Committee consider the situation as extremely unsatisfactory meriting closer examination at high level to determine the causes of delay in supplies and to take appropriate steps in this regard including, if necessary, a change in the procedure and sources of procurement.

5.84. The serious position in regard to pendency of indents raised with the Director General Ordnance Factories with Headquarters at Calcutta, also to some extent reflects on the efficient functioning of the Liaison Offices being maintained by the Border Roads Organisation, particularly at Calcutta. The Committee feel that there is need to reorganise and activise these offices if they are to serve the purpose for which they have been set up.

Standardisation of Machinery and Equipment

5.85. It was noticed that there was multiplicity of models of various types of machinery, equipment and vehicles with the Border Roads Organisation which was complicating the problem of procurement of spares resulting in a sizeable portion of machinery remaining "off-road" for a long time. Government were therefore asked to state the steps taken by them to standardise the machinery in the interest of rationalisation. They have in reply stated that the Border Roads Organisation holds over 100 different makes and models of vehicles, earth-moving plant, construction machinery, compressors, rock drills, generating sets and many others. According to them, the procurement of equipment was primarily based on the considerations of specifications, availability and cost. Government admit that due to lack of experience, requisite data and limited flexibility in selection, it has not been possible for them to take a decision on standardisation of equipment and vehicles except in the cases of crawler and wheeled tractors, one-ton vehicles and jeeps. It has, however been decided by Government to standardise on two makes for indigenous equipment and one make for imported equipment. It is stated that the policy of the Government is that, as far as possible, the future requirement should be restricted to equipment produced indigenously.

5.86. The Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation has also dealt with the question of standardisation of equipment with the Border Roads Organisation. The Report recommends:

"At present there are four different manufacturers who have of these makes are obsolete and spare parts are difficult to supplied different types of earth moving machinery. Some produce. These equipments should be allowed to waste out and disposed of when they are rendered class 'C'.

Komatsu tractors and machinery is the one which is being indigenously manufactured at BEML, Bangalore. The hold-

ings of these tractors are also the largest in DGBR. Although some models are obsolete, Komatsu have indicated to provide life time spares for equipment which have been in service for seven years. This class of tractors should be repaired and put in circulation in the DGBR. Effort should be made to get all the spares which are pending against the indents for this make of tractors.

Attempts should be made to assign only particular type and make of machines to each project which will have a localised standardisation effect ensuring availability of spares in the area and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of spares for machines not held in the project."

5.87. Government have stated that the question of standardisation has been recently examined by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment consisting of Master General of the Ordnance, Army Headquarters and Secretary, Border Roads Development Board also and that the problem is being tackled on the lines recommended by that Committee. The observations of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment in regard to the question of standardisation of equipment with the Border Roads Organisation have been summarised in their Report submitted in November, 1969 as follows:

"The available data are neither comprehensive nor adequate as a basis on which a decision can be taken on the standardisation of equipment for future purchases. Guidelines for examination of this question have been laid down. In consultation with AHQ, DGBR may lay down data required and how evaluation should be carried out. This should be completed by 15th December, 1969 in respect of 3-ton vehicles, heavy compressors, Road Rollers, Stone crushers and crawler tractors and decisions taken as early as possible."

5.88. The Secretary, Border Roads Development Board stated during evidence that requirement of Jeeps and one-ton vehicles would be met out of Director General Ordnance Factories vehicles being produced in collaboration with Nissan. As for three-ton vehicles, the Secretary said, the decision was to standardise not on 'Shaktimans' which were at present in short supply, but on two of the three types which were in use, namely TMB, Bedford and Dodge. The Defence Secretary added that the decision in regard to three-tonners would be reviewed when the factory producing 'Shaktimans' has developed capacity surplus to the requirements of Defence.

5.89. The question of standardisation of equipment with the Border Roads Organisation assumes importance in view of the fact that the idle machinery and equipment awaiting repairs in workshops for long periods is mainly because of non-availability of spare parts and the problem of procuring spare parts in adequate quantity is aggravated on account of multiplicity of makes and models. The Committee therefore recommend that, as desired by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment in their Report, the requisite data should be compiled and evaluated and a decision taken expeditiously in regard to the items which remain to be standardised. .

NEW DELHI;
April 27, 1970.

Vaisakha 7, 1892 (Saka).

M. THIRUMALA RAO,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

APPENDIX I

(See Para 2.60)

Terms and conditions of the Members of the General Reserve Engineer Force

1. Defence Services Officers whose services are placed at the disposal of the Border Roads Development Board will be allowed to retain the terms and conditions applicable to them in the Defence Services or to elect the terms and conditions applicable to the corresponding civilian officers in the General Reserve Engineer Force. The option will be exercised immediately on assuming the appointment in the Force and once exercised will be final. Those who opt for civilian terms and conditions will come over to the civilian scales of pay and allowances *in toto* and they will not be permitted to keep any military concessions.

Services officers for whom no corresponding civilian posts are prescribed in General Reserve Engineer Force and all combatant service personnel other than officers whose services are placed at the disposal of the Force will continue to be governed by the terms and conditions applicable to them in the Defence Services.

2. For purposes of these orders, the members of the Force will fall in two categories namely (i) officers and (ii) supervisory and other personnel. The designation of the posts and the pay scales applicable to them are contained in the Schedule (not printed).

General

3. (i) Civilian Officers and subordinates, including supervisory personnel, on deputation to GREF from other departments including State Governments, will be governed by normal terms and conditions of deputation as applicable to such civilian officers and personnel deputed to civil posts in the defence services. They will serve for a period mutually agreed upon between the lending and borrowing departments.

(ii) The initial period of appointment of officers, supervisory and other personnel recruited directly will be for a period of 3 years, out of which the first 2 years shall be the period of probation. If at any time during the period of probation the appointing authority does not consider any member suitable for continuance, he shall be discharged from GREF and no notice will be given. Where, however, it is found that a member is suitable only for lower appointment or lower stage in the time scale applicable to him, the

appointing authority may offer him in the appropriate grade or stage in the time scale as the case may be. If the individual is not willing, he will be permitted as a special case to resign his appointment or will be discharged from service. After the probationary period of 2 years the appointment may be terminated at any time either by giving a month's notice by the appointing authority without assigning any reason or by reverting the individual to his parent department in case he is holding a lien. The appointing authority also reserves the right of terminating his services forthwith or before the expiry of the stipulated period of the notice by making payment to him of a sum equivalent to the pay and allowances for the period of notice or the unexpired period thereof. The appointing authority reserves the right of termination of his services without notice or pay in lieu of notice, if he is declared medically unfit by the Medical authority for service in the General Reserve Engineer Force. During the initial period of service of 3 years, no member of General Reserve Engineer Force shall have option to resign from the service under the GREF except with the prior permission of the appointing authority.

Similarly, officers appointed on an *ad hoc* basis for a period of one year under the powers vested in this Ministry will have no option to resign during this period. The period of probation in their case will, however, be six months.

(iii) Subject to the provisions of para 3 (ii) above service rendered by all officers and supervisory and other personnel recruited directly will be governed by the provisions of Central Civil Services (Temporary Service) Rules, 1965.

(iv) If and when a member of the General Reserve Engineer Force is made permanent in any of the permanent cadres of the General Reserve Engineer Force, he shall be governed by normal terms and conditions of service as applicable to non-industrial civilians in the Defence Services.

Scales of Pay

4. (i) Officers and supervisory and other personnel on deputation from other departments, including State Governments, will have option to draw pay in the scales applicable to them in their parent department or that prescribed in the schedule* for the posts to which posted subject to the general rules governing deputation. The option once exercised shall be final.

(ii) Officers and supervisory and other personnel recruited direct shall draw pay in the scales prescribed in the attached schedule.*

*Not printed.

Fixation of Pay

5. (i) Initial pay of officers and supervisory and other personnel on deputation, who opt to draw pay in the scales prescribed in the attached schedule,* will be fixed in accordance with the normal rules.

(ii) Directly recruited officers appointed on the recommendation of UPSC would draw an initial pay as recommended by the Commission. The initial pay of officers other than those who have been recommended by the UPSC shall be as fixed by the appointing authority. Directly recruited supervisory and other personnel may be granted an initial pay at a stage higher than the minimum of the prescribed scale upto the maximum limit indicated in col. 3 of the attached schedule depending on their proficiency and experience to be determined as far as possible by trade test. The Director-General Border Roads or any other officer not below the rank of Lt. Col. Supdtg. Engineer authorised by him in this behalf will decide the stage at which the higher initial pay should be granted.

(iii) Initial pay of re-employed pensioners will be fixed in accordance with the normal rules subject to any special relaxations or restrictions which may be agreed to by Government from time to time.

Allowances

6. A. (i) *Dearness Allowance*|*Dearness Pay*.—Except as provided in sub-para (ii) below, officers, supervisory and other personnel shall draw dearness allowance|dearness pay at rates applicable to the corresponding categories of civilians in the Defence Services.

(ii) Members of GREF on the pay scale of Rs. 55—1—70, when not in receipt of the concessions of free rations and accommodation, will draw dearness allowance at the rate applicable to the corresponding categories of non-industrial civilians in Defence Services (as it existed prior to the treatment of a part of it as dearness pay); and those who are in receipt of the concessions of free rations and accommodation, at 80 per cent. thereof.

B. *Deputation Allowance*.—Officers and supervisory and other personnel appointed to the force on deputation and who elect to be governed by the scale of pay in their parent department shall be entitled to such deputation allowance as may be prescribed under the general orders governing deputation as applicable to civilians in Defence Services PROVIDED that:

(i) to those who are entitled to deputation allowance in accordance with the rules mentioned above, the minimum

*Not printed.

allowance admissible will be Rs. 50/- and maximum of Rs. 300/- per month.

- (ii) no deputation allowance will be admissible to officers and supervisory and other personnel transferred from Defence Services establishments while serving at Headquarters DGBR.
- (iii) no deputation allowance will also be admissible to any officer, supervisory and other personnel who is in receipt of special compensatory allowance under clause (C) below.

(C) *Special Compensatory Allowance.*—(a) Special Compensatory Allowance at the following rates shall be admissible to the members of the Force while serving in areas which may be determined from time to time, by the Government.

(i) Officers at the rate of 33-1 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. of the basic pay subject to a minimum of Rs. 250/- p.m. and a maximum of Rs. 400/- p.m. provided that the minimum and maximum in respect of officers who correspond to Class II Officers in the Defence Services, shall be Rs. 200/- p.m. and Rs. 250/- p.m. respectively.

NOTE.—Civilian Officers Grade II who have been categorised as Class I officers in GREF will be eligible to SCA at the rate admissible to class I officers.

(ii) Supervisory and other personnel (Class III and IV) at the rate of 40 per cent. of the basic pay while serving in classified areas of NEFA, Nagaland and Mizo Hills District and 50 per cent. in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Bhutan and Uttar Pradesh, subject to a minimum of Rs. 75/- p.m. and maximum of Rs. 200/- p.m. except to Class IV employees for whom the minimum will be Rs. 50/- per month.

(b) Special Compensatory Allowance shall not, however, be admissible—

- (i) In addition to deputation allowance.
- (ii) to personnel employed on the scale of pay of Rs. 55—1—70.
- (iii) On leave other than casual leave.
- (iv) during absence for period exceeding 15 days at a time outside the area on temporary duty or on other grounds:

NOTE.—Special Compensatory Allowance may be drawn during joining time or transfer from one unit/formation to another, within the same CE's organisation provided that

the person is entitled to such allowance at both the stations and the joining time is not intervened by other kinds of absence such as leave of any kind. If the rates differ in the two appointments stations, he will draw the lower rate only.

(D) *Children Education Allowance and Reimbursement of Tuition Fees.*—Members of the Force will be entitled to Children Education Allowance and Reimbursement of Tuition fees at the rates and under the conditions applicable to non-industrial civilians in Defence Services.

Other Concessions

7. (i) All members of the force shall, while on duty be provided with—

- (a) free rations in accordance with the scale which may from time to time, be prescribed by Government;
- (b) free single accommodation of simple type together with lighting and domestic water supply;

NOTE 1.—Except where provided by specific orders of Government the concession of free rations and free accommodation will not be admissible to members of the Force who are employed in HQrs DGBR, GREF Centre, Roorkee, LOs Bombay and Calcutta, HQrs Chief Engineers, Base Workshops, Transit Depots and such other formations as may be prescribed by Government from time to time.

NOTE 2.—GREF personnel (other than those on the pay scale of Rs. 55—1—70) who are not entitled to the concession of free rations and free accommodation and allied services, will be eligible to the grant of those of the local allowances as may be admissible at the stations to the non-industrial civilians of Defence Services under the various orders issued by Government of India, Ministry of Defence. The above local allowances will not, however, be admissible in addition to Special Compensatory Allowance.

NOTE 3.—Members of GREF on the pay scale of Rs. 55—1—70 when not in receipt of the concession of free rations and accommodation, may draw House Rent Allowance and Compensatory (City) Allowance as admissible to corresponding categories of non-industrial civilians in Defence Services.

- (c) Free medical treatment (for self only) both as out-patients and in hospital to the extent feasible and free dental treatment as provided in the Central Services (Medical Attendance) Rules, 1944 (for self only).

NOTE.—Members of the General Reserve Engineer Force who are not eligible for the concession of free rations and accommodation are eligible for the re-imbursement of medical expenses incurred in connection with the medical treatment of their families in accordance with the provisions contained in the Central Government Services (Medical Attendance) Rules, 1944 as amended from time to time.

- (d) Free facility for remittance of money to the families subject to a maximum of two remittances per month. The total amount of remittance shall not exceed the net monthly emoluments due to the individual after deduction of obligatory charges.

(ii) Supervisory and other personnel on appointment, may be given an advance equal to one month's pay which shall be recovered in six equal monthly instalments commencing from the month in which full pay is first drawn.

(iii) (a) Officers shall, on appointment to the Force be given an outfit allowance of Rs. 500/- towards expenditure to be incurred by them to equip themselves with such items of clothing as may be prescribed by the Director-General Border Roads provided that an officer who is recruited initially for one year only, will be paid Rs. 250/- on appointment and the balance in the second year, if his services are extended for another minimum of two years.

(b) Officers shall also receive a Renewal Outfit Allowance @ Rs. 100.00 every year with effect from 1st April, 1969 after four years of service commencing from the date of their appointment as Gazetted Officer. Those who have already completed four years or more on 1st April, 1969 will be eligible for the grant with effect from that date. This Allowance will, however, not be admissible to those who become eligible to it whilst on leave pending retirement.

(c) Officers who are permitted to leave the service at their own request or at the request of their parent department will be required to refund Initial or Renewal Outfit Allowance drawn by them as under:

- (1) Refund of initial Outfit Allowance by officers recruited| extended for 3 years:—

(i) Officers who leave after 12 month but less than 25% of the total allowance drawn 2 years of service.

(ii) Officers who leave after 1 year but less than 18 months service. 50% of the total allowance drawn.

(iii) Officers who leave before serving for 1 year Full amount.

(2) officers who are recruited for a period of one year only will be required to refund full amount if they leave the service before completion of 6 months.

(3) officers who draw Renewal Outfit Allowance *vide* para (iii) (b) above, will also be required to refund the entire amount if they leave service before completion of 6 months from the date of grant of Renewal Outfit Allowance.

(d) No part of initial or Renewal Outfit Allowance would be refundable if an officer dies or is invalidated out of service on medical grounds.

(e) All supervisory and other personnel shall be given free uniform as per scale prescribed from time to time by the Government. Replacement of personal clothing due to fair wear and tear will be free.

(iv) Extra clothing required in view of the climatic conditions in area of work, shall be issued, on loan to the members of the Force.

Leave

8. (i) Members of the Force shall be governed by the leave rules as prescribed for the corresponding (non-industrial) civilians in the Defence Services. Leave will commence from the date on which rail accommodation becomes available at the nearest rail-head from the place of duty and will terminate on the date on which he reports for duty at the railhead. Those who are on deputation may elect to be governed by the normal rules of their parent departments. The option once exercised shall be final.

(ii) Casual leave may be granted at the discretion of the officer commanding and shall be limited to ten days in a year.

Travelling Allowance

9. *A Journeys at the time of joining and on termination of service in the General Reserve Engineer Force.*—(i) Members joining the Force on deputation shall draw travelling allowances at the rates admissible under the normal rules of their parent department on first posting as well as on reversion to their parent department.

(ii) (a) Directly recruited officers shall be paid a single second class railway fare by the shortest route from their ordinary place of residence to the place where they are required to report for duty.

(b) Supervisory and other personnel shall be allowed free conveyance by road/rail on joining the Force from the place of recruitment to the place of duty. On completion of engagement or on proceeding on leave pending such completion, they will be entitled to free conveyance from the place of duty to the place of recruitment, or to selected place of residence provided no extra expenditure to the State is caused.

For the journeys by rail, the personnel will be provided with warrants of the appropriate class of accommodation.

NOTE.—The term 'normal rules' referred to above would in the case of personnel belonging to the Defence Services such as M.E.S. personnel, be the rules applicable in the area concerned.

(c) In cases where directly recruited members of the General Reserve Engineer Force are discharged from service directly from hospitals on the recommendation of the medical authorities, free conveyance, will be admissible to them upto their respective home towns. The O.C. of the hospital may also detail attendant where considered necessary on medical grounds.

B. Other journeys while serving in the General Reserve Engineer Force.—(i) Civilian officers of the GREF, whether directly recruited or on deputation, will be governed by the rules applicable to the non-industrial civilians of the Defence Services.

(ii) Supervisory and other personnel, whether they are directly recruited or whether they join the force on deputation will perform all journeys, other than those mentioned in (a) above on warrant.

C. Leave Travel Concessions (i) *Directly recruited members of the General Reserve Engineer Force.*—They will be entitled to leave travel concessions under the same terms and conditions as are applicable to the non-industrial civilians of Defence Services. They will, however, be issued military warrants for both the onward and return journey from the rail-head nearest to the place of duty to their home stations and back. Families of such of the members who are not eligible for the grant of free rations and accommodation will also be eligible for the grant of Leave Travel Concessions.

(ii) *Deputa­tionists from State Government and their families.*—They will be governed by the provisions in clause (i) above subject to the following conditions:

(a) The successive blocks of two calendar years shall be reckoned from the actual dates of their joining posts

under the Centre. If, however, an officer has joined a Central Government post before 1-1-56, the first block should be reckoned from 1-1-56 to 31-12-57.

- (b) The appropriate administrative authority certifies at the time the Government servant/his family avails himself/itself of the Leave Travel Concessions that the Government servant is likely to continue to serve in the Force for a period of 2 years from the date of his joining. The admissibility of the concessions during the subsequent 2 years period will also be subject to the similar conditions.

(iii) *Deputationists from other Central Government Departments.*—They will continue to be eligible for the concession under the rules of their respective parent departments. Families of such of the deputationists who are not eligible for free rations and accommodation will also be eligible for Leave Travel Concessions.

Death|Injury Benefits

10. Death|injury benefits and gratuity will be regulated in accordance with the provisions of Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 or the Central Civil Services (Extra-ordinary Pension Rules) as the case may be.

Leave and Pension Contributions

11. Normal rules will apply.

Terminal benefits

12. (a) Directly recruited members of the Force, other than those who are entitled to any other terminal benefits will be eligible on release, otherwise than as a disciplinary measure or on resignation, to the following grant of Meritorious Service Grant provided they have completed satisfactory service for a minimum period of three years. In cases where the individuals who became entitled to this grant but died while in service in GREF or after release before the grant is actually disbursed to them, this grant will be paid to the next of kin on their behalf provided the other conditions governing the payment are fulfilled.

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| (i) <i>Officers</i> | Fifteen days' basic pay for each completed year of service. |
| (ii) <i>Supervisory and other personnel.</i> | Fifteen days' basic pay for each completed year of service subject to a minimum of Rs. 50/- per year. |

NOTE: The payment of the above grant will be subject to the certification of satisfactory service by the following officers :

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|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| (i) <i>Officers</i> | Director General Border Roads. |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|

- (ii) Supervisor and other personnel Head of the office, not below the rank of Lt. Col./Supdtg. Engineer of the unit in which the individual was serving immediately before his release. Director General Border Roads will sanction the grant in the case of Personnel serving in formation directly under his control commanded by officers below the rank of Lt. Col./Superintending Engineer.

(b) Members of the Force other than deputationists who are declared quasi-permanent will from the date of such declaration be eligible for non-effective benefits under the normal rules contained in the C.C.S. (Temporary Service) Rules, 1965. They will not be eligible for Meritorious Service Grant.

(c) Permanent members of the General Reserve Engineer Force other than deputationists will be eligible for non-effective benefits under the rules applicable to the corresponding categories of the civilians in Defence Services.

Discipline

13. (a) Members of the General Reserve Engineer Force will be governed by the provisions of the Central Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1965 as amended from time to time.

(b) Notwithstanding the above, all members of the General Reserve Engineer Force will be subject to certain provisions of the Army Act, 1950, and rules made thereunder, as laid down in SROs 329 and 330 of 1960, for purpose of discipline only. When the offence is such that the provisions of Army Act, 1950 as extended to GREF, apply for purposes of discipline it will be open to the appropriate disciplinary authority under the Army Act, 1950 to proceed under its provisions. In all other disciplinary cases, the provisions of C.C.S. (C.C.A.) Rules, 1965 will apply.

Applicability

14. These rules shall have effect from the date of issue and shall apply to all members of the General Reserve Engineer Force recruited on or after that date. The Members of the GREF who have been recruited prior to the date of issue of this letter will have the option:

- (a) to be governed by the terms contained in this letter from the date of its issue;

OR

- (b) to retain the terms in force immediately prior to the issue of this letter, till the expiry of their existing term of

engagement, when they will be brought under the terms contained in this letter.

The option should be exercised within a period of two months from the date of this letter and will be final, once exercised. Those who fail to exercise any option within the prescribed time will be deemed to have opted for the terms contained in this letter on expiry of their present term of engagement.

APPENDIX II

(See para 3.2)

Statement showing Expenditure incurred on the Development of Border Roads

(In lakhs of Rupees)

Year	Equipment	*Establishment	WORKS Improvement of existing roads	New construc- tion of road	Total (cols. 3 to 5)	Maintenance	General Administration BRDB & Hqrs. DGBR	Gross Total
I	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1960-61	1,302.89	6.18	339.72	314.52	360.42	..	8.02	1,671.33
1961-62	870.32	114.19	262.52	1,127.36	1,504.07	39.23	16.90	2,430.58
1962-63	656.53	190.73	253.96	1,800.88	2,245.57	27.89	21.07	2,951.06
1963-64	1,420.38	173.58	300.28	1,779.35	2,253.21	45.54	22.45	3,741.58
1964-65	1,145.49	182.50	394.84	2,045.53	2,622.87	180.15	32.68	3,981.19
1965-66	622.50	188.02	644.41	1,894.81	2,727.24	305.95	32.36	3,688.05
1966-67	673.29	201.20	653.67	2,236.18	3,091.05	384.64	38.13	4,187.11
1967-68	640.85	197.14	500.63	2,751.04	3,448.80	450.96	39.82	4,580.43
1968-69	627.12	170.01	581.46	2,428.31	3,179.78	495.12	48.39	**4,340.41
TOTAL	7,959.43	1,423.55	3,631.49	16,377.98	21,433.01	1,929.48	249.82	**31,571.74

*Pay and allowances of ground organisations (HQ CEs, Base/Transit Depots, GREF Centre, Base Workshops, Liaison Cells etc.).

**It is stated that a further sum of Rs. 2.56 crores has been booked in the accounts for March, 1969. Thus, the total expenditure during 1968-69 was Rs. 45.96 crores while the Gross Total expenditure upto 1968-69 was Rs. 318.28 crores.

APPENDIX III

Statement showing summary of Recommendations|Conclusions

S. No.	Reference to para No. in the Report	Summary of Recommendation/Conclusions
1	2	3
1.	1.9.	The Committee note that the Demands in respect of the Border Roads Organisation are included in the Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Shipping and Transport. As the arrangement is working satisfactorily, the Committee do not wish to disturb it.
2.	1.12.	The Committee note that one of the avowed purposes of the Border Roads Programme is to contribute towards the economic development of the Northern and North-eastern border areas. Now that the Programme has been in operation for over ten years, it is desirable that there should be a review of the impact of the Programme on the economic development of those areas so as to assess as to how far this objective of the Border Roads Programme has been achieved. The Committee therefore recommend that Government may appoint a Committee preferably under the aegis of the Planning Commission consisting <i>inter alia</i> of the representatives of the State Governments concerned, to assess the impact of the Border Road Programme on the socio-economic development of the Northern and North-eastern border areas and to make recommendations as to the manner in which State Governments could integrate their plans for development of the border areas with the programme for the construction of Border Roads.
3.	1.15.	The Committee recommend that, subject to strategic considerations, State Government

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concerned should be more closely associated at the time of finalising the border road construction programme within its jurisdiction. This would, besides creating among the States a sense of participation in the programme, enable them to plan and coordinate their development programmes in the areas more effectively.

4. 1.23. The Committee consider that the Central Government should not shoulder the responsibility for maintaining the Border Roads developed out of Central Funds indefinitely but should allow it to devolve in due course upon the State Governments concerned. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Government should in consultation with the State Governments concerned, evolve a programme for gradual transfer of the roads developed by the Border Roads Organisation to the State Governments for maintenance after their present commitment is over in 1974. To begin with, the State Governments concerned may be entrusted with the maintenance of such of the border roads as may not be so vital for national defence and have economic and developmental use for the States. In the initial stage, the corresponding engineering organisations in the States would have to be provided technical and logistic assistance by the Border Roads Organisation in maintaining the Border Roads so as to enable them to acquire the expertise for the ultimate take over of the roads from the Border Roads Organisation.
5. 2.16. The Committee are constrained to note that delays continue to occur in the issue of sanctions for works even under the existing procedure which is stated to have been streamlined to expedite them, with the result that the Project authorities are not in a position to properly plan and procure the necessary resources and move them to work sites well in time. Receipt of sanctions for works by the Project authorities when the work-season is close at hand, as is frequently the case at present, creates problems of logistics and increases transportation costs involved in sudden switch over of men and heavy
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- machines to work sites spread over considerable distances. The Committee feel that there is scope for further improvement and, therefore, recommend that suitable administrative procedures should be devised so as to ensure that sanctions for works are in the hands of the Project authorities well before the work season commences. The Committee are of the opinion that it would result in better planning and maximum utilisation of resources, and consequent reduction in the overall cost of construction, if the Project authorities are given firm programme and targets for a period of three, or at least two years.
6. 2.18. The Committee note the new procedure introduced in September, 1968 in regard to release of foreign exchange for the Border Roads Organisation upto Rs. one lakh and hope that it would help in meeting the requirements of the Organisation. The procedure should, however, be reviewed after its operation has been watched for a period of three years, and if the difficulties of the Director General Border Roads persist, it should be further revised in the light of experience.
7. 2.21. The Committee note that the cases of losses have registered a sharp increase from 801 in 1965-66 to 3,144 in 1967-68. The amount involved in losses has also increased from Rs. 3.08 lakhs in 1965-66 to Rs. 26.92 lakhs in 1968-69. The Committee would like Government to analyse the reasons for losses and take necessary remedial measures.
8. 2.22. The Committee recommend that concerted efforts should be made to systematically analyse and dispose of the accumulated loss statements. Action should also be taken to ensure that the loss statements are analysed promptly on receipt so as to take remedial measures without delay.
9. 2.24. The Committee are unhappy to observe that a large number of 'estimates' for works are required to be revised. In this connection they
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find the observation of the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee (1967) quite apt, namely: "General Reserve Engineer Force, which has been on the ground for more than six years, is now familiar generally with the conditions of terrain etc. in which formation cutting is expected to be undertaken in the near future. With the experience gained, it should not be difficult for Engineers to give a fairly correct idea of nature and volume of work involved and furnish the data on the basis of which 'approximate estimates' can be prepared....." This should apply with greater force now as the General Reserve Engineer Force has been in the field for nearly ten years. The Committee, therefore, stress the need for drawing up a realistic estimate for work at the initial stage so as to obviate, as far as possible, the need for revising the same in future.

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2.25.

The Committee are also constrained to note that a large number of 'revised estimates' for works are awaiting finalisation and sanction and that no significant progress has been made in clearing the backlog during the last three years. The Committee recommend that serious efforts should be made at all levels to prepare and finalise the 'revised estimates' for works which have accumulated over the years.

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2.31.

The Committee recommend that the Directorate General Border Roads should have an integrated O & M Organisation for the field and Headquarters. The Committee need hardly stress that it should consist of engineering personnel trained in O & M/Work Study methods and having first hand experience of field conditions and work. It should systematically review the staff strength at the Headquarters as well as in the light of workload and trends of

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		construction and maintenance programme, to obviate over-staffing at all levels. It should lay down norms of work and yardstick for determining strength of staff of different categories for different types of work.
12.	2.33.	The Committee commend the idea of preparation of history of projects undertaken by the Border Roads Organisation so that it may be useful to engineers who may be called upon to undertake further projects in the same or similar areas in future. They suggest that the history of projects should be in the shape of progressive history sheets maintained road-wise so that contemporaneous record of post-construction developments could also be added to it from time to time. They hope that before long history of all the projects executed by the Border Roads Organisation, written with due care and attention, would be available.
13.	2.49	The Committee stress the need for optimum utilisation of men so as to bring down the cost of construction and maintenance of roads by the Border Roads Organisation which is admittedly high. They agree with the observation contained in the Report of the Shankar-Kumaramangalam Committee (1967) that the problem of under utilisation of staff during slack seasons needs to be pursued vigorously and on a priority basis. The Committee would like Government to re-examine the matter thoroughly and ensure that the staff, technical as well as non-technical, remain gainfully employed during the slack season also.
14.	2.55.	The Committee consider that while it may not be desirable to make the GREF a completely civilian force, with the expertise the Border Roads Organisation have built up, it should be possible for them to entrust larger responsibility to civilians so as to release the maximum number of Service Personnel for normal army duties.

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15.	2.57.	The Committee are unable to appreciate the need for non-technical staff being drawn from the army to man subordinate GREF posts. They recommend that manning of subordinate GREF posts by Junior Commissioned Officers Other Ranks should, as far as possible, be confined to cases where suitable civilians are not available or where strategic or security considerations so require.
16.	2.59.	The Committee consider that as a post of Deputy Chief Engineer is held by a civilian, it may also be included in the civilian GREF officer cadre and Recruitment Rules therefor framed.
17.	2.67.	The Committee are unhappy to note that although a decision was taken to apply the provisions of the Central Civil Services (Temporary Service) Rules, 1965 to the GREF officers and subordinates and also to create a permanent GREF cadre as early as 1966-67, no GREF Officer or subordinate has so far been declared as permanent or even quasi-permanent. They recommend that expeditious action should be taken to implement the decision taken in 1966-67 and declare the eligible staff permanent or quasi-permanent, as the case may be, by the end of 1970.
18.	2.68.	The Committee further recommend that the strength of permanent GREF cadre should be reviewed at least once in two years if not once a year in the light of trends of construction and maintenance programme of the Border Roads Organisation with particular reference to transfer of responsibility for maintenance of roads to the State Governments.
19.	2.70.	The Committee are unable to appreciate why in the case of members of the GREF in the scale of Rs. 55—1—70 (the bulk of whom are the Pioneers) a deduction of 20 per cent of the Dearness Allowance is made in lieu of free rations and accommodation made available to them while in the case of GREF officers and other

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subordinate personnel in receipt of similar amenities no such deduction is made. They also note that GREF personnel in the aforesaid scale of pay are denied the Special Compensatory Allowance admissible to GREF officers and other subordinate staff posted to certain difficult areas. The Committee recommend that Government should reconsider the justification for this discriminatory treatment meted out to the lowest paid members of the GREF on whose toil and sweat primarily, depends the progress and achievements of the Border Roads Organisation.

20. 2.76.

The Committee are of the view that since the Government have assumed responsibility for providing free cooked rations to the civilian GREF personnel in certain field areas, it is imperative that the scale of rations should not only be adequate but also consistent with the physical requirement of a worker doing hard manual labour under abnormal conditions. The Committee need hardly stress that the civilian GREF staff should be kept in a state of fitness to face the rigours of weather and give maximum output. The Committee feel convinced that there is need for an urgent review of the scale of rations provided to the civilian GREF staff and recommend that it should be undertaken without delay in consultation with the Army medical authorities and leading nutritional experts who should be well conversant with the difficult conditions in border areas.

21. 2.77.

The Committee also feel that there is need for improving adequately the living accommodation facilities for GREF personnel working at high altitudes.

22. 2.81.

The Committee regret that there is no proper system of issue of various items of clothing and outfit to the civilian GREF subordinate staff to which they are entitled free of charge. Although there is a provision also for replacement of these items on fair wear and tear basis at Government cost, it has been observed that in actual practice, far from receiving replacements, many

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members of staff do not get the full complement even once. The Committee feel that this state of affairs is due to faulty provisioning at the Central level. They recommend that there should be advance provisioning on annual basis of items of clothing and outfit to which the civilian GREF subordinates are entitled at Government cost and the Projects should be allowed to keep essential items in stock so that there is no avoidable delay in replacements in case of fair wear and tear.

23. 2.84. The Committee recommend that Government may examine the feasibility of issuing suitable instructions regulating the weekly and daily hours of work and observance of holidays by the field staff for general information.

24. 2.85. The Committee consider that a person may not be posted at high altitude for more than two years at a strength. However, they would like Government to fix a reasonable tenure of posting at high altitudes in consultation with medical authorities and strictly observe the same.

25. 2.93. The Committee note that although the Border Roads Organisation are regularly recruiting quite a large number of subordinate GREF personnel of various technical and non-technical categories and a substantial number of vacancies in various trades remain unfilled, there is no regular system of publicising the vacancies. Instead, Recruiting Parties are sent to various parts of the country causing avoidable expenses. In this connection the Committee would like to make the following recommendations:

- (i) Vacancies occurring in the subordinate GREF posts should, in the first instance, be intimated to all the Regional Employment Exchanges and recruitment exchanges and recruitment made out of candidates recommended by them.

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(ii) In case recruitment through the Employment Exchanges fails, vacancies should be advertised in the leading national and regional newspapers and direct recruitment should be made out of the candidates who apply in response thereto.

(iii) If suitable candidates are still not available then other sources may be tapped and only as a last resort Recruitment Parties may be sent to different parts of the country to make on the spot recruitment.

26. 2.96. The Committee note that although a large number of officers and subordinates were recruited during 1966, 1967 and 1968, no officer was imparted any training during 1966-67 and 1967-68 while the number of subordinate imparted training during 1966—69 was extremely small.
27. 2.97. The Committee feel that there is need for organising the training programme of GREF personnel on systematic lines. They recommend that suitable training syllabi for different categories of personnel should chalked out and implemented.
28. 2.100 The Committee are surprised that the Directorate General Border Roads had upto March, 1968 no separate vigilance organisation although by that time the total expenditure on the development of Border Roads through the Border Roads Organisation had been of the order of over Rs. 272 crores. They also note that the number of cases investigated during the period of three years from 1966 to 1968, for which specific information was called for by the Committee, was only six out of which two were dropper and another three cleared in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commissioner. Border Roads Organisation has an annual budget of more than Rs. 55 crores, a bulk of which is spent on procurement of stores of various

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		type and employment of casual labour. It is therefore, an extremely sensitive organisation from the vigilance angle and it is imperative that it should have an efficient and well-organised system of vigilance. In this context, the Committee note that the Vigilance Organisation set up in 1968, consists of only one Vigilance Officer who has no organisation except a Stenographer and an Upper Division Clerk. The Committee find it difficult to believe that he alone would be able to organise and handle vigilance and anti-corruption work in an organisation extending from NEFA in the East to Ladakh in the West. They, therefore, recommend that Government should, in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commissioner, evolve a suitable and effective Vigilance Organisation for the Border Roads Organisation and properly define its scope of work and functions.
29.	2.101.	They also recommend that the annual report of the Vigilance Organisation indicating its activities and achievements during the year should be compiled which should also be placed before the Border Roads Development Board for their information.
30.	2.105.	The Committee have, in para 2,31, already recommended the setting up of an integrated O&M Organisation for the field and Headquarters. The existing functions of the Inspector of Border Roads Works would, in that event, need revision and rationalisation.
31.	2.106.	The Committee recommend that the work of the Inspector of Border Roads Works, which is similar to that of the Chief Technical Examiner on the civil side, should be activated. They further recommend that annual reports on its activities and achievements should be compiled on the lines of the Report of the Chief Technical Examiner's Organisation which should also be placed before the Border Roads Development Board for their information.

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32.	2.107.	The Committee consider that the field of vigilance is akin to that of administrative and technical audit being performed by the Inspector of Border Roads Works. They therefore consider that there is need for a very close co-ordination between the Vigilance Organisation and the Inspectorate of Border Roads Works. This could be achieved by bringing the two organisation under a common officer who should be directly under the Director General Border Roads. In this connection, the Committee would like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that the Chief Technical Examiner's Organisation is under the Central Vigilance Commissioner.
33.	3.9.	The Committee note that the provisions for expenditure in the Budget estimates of the Border Roads Development Board for the year 1969-70 are at a markedly liberal scale as compared to the actual expenditure during the preceding three years. Particularly noticeable is the increase in the expenditure provided for 'Equipment' and 'Establishment'. The Committee have, in para 4.9 commented upon the increase in expenditure on new construction of roads while the annual performance in this respect had actually declined since 1966-67. In para 5.25 they have commented upon the provision of Rs. 4.25 crores in the Budget Estimates for 1969-70 for the purchase of new machinery and equipment. They hope that the other provisions of the Budget are based on a realistic assessment of the requirements with reference to the projected work-load.
34.	3.10	The Committee would like to point out that they do not favour a sudden spurt in the scale of expenditure, as is the case with the provision for 'Equipment' in the Budget Estimates of the Board for 1969-70, unless it is fully justified on account of unforeseen circumstances.
35.	4.5.	The Committee note that the tentative physical and financial targets for the next four years involving a total capital outlay of Rs. 217.50

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crores, have been fixed on an *ad hoc* basis without working out the details of the specific schemes or projects that may be taken up during that period. Government have themselves admitted that the Border Roads Organisation works on the basis of an 'immediate programme' approved by the Board from time to time. Even this 'immediate programme' is subject to change if new priorities show up while it is in operation. This method of undertaking the Border Roads development works is, in the opinion of the Committee, defective as it leads to perpetual uncertainty in regard to the programme permeating down to the level of field formations. Besides, under this method, there is always the chance of some works being taken up by the Border Roads Organisation without full consideration of their need or utility. They recommend that, if it is not feasible to include the Border Roads Development Programme in the National Plan, the Border Roads Development Board should draw up a separate Border Roads Development Plan covering a period of three to five years which should lay down the targets, financial as well as physical, on the basis of specific scheme or projects that would be taken up during that period. The Plan would facilitate the work of the Board and also, by introducing an element of firmness in the Border Roads Development Programme, go a long way in facilitating the resources planning and procurement on a long term basis by the executing agencies. The specific schemes laid down in the plan and their *inter se* priority could always be reviewed and changed where necessary by the Board in the light of developments. The Committee would like Government to furnish to them a copy of the first Border Roads Development Plan when ready.

36.

49.

The Committee are distressed to note that there has been a decline in the annual performance of GREF in respect of construction|improvement of roads since 1966-67 and yet the expen-

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		diture on new construction of roads has increased from Rs. 22.36 crores in 1966-67 to Rs. 24.28 crores in 1968-69.
37.	4.10	The Committee are also unhappy to note that there have been major shortfalls in the physical achievements in various fields connected with road construction work during 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69 with reference to the planned targets for those years, even though the targets for 1966-67 were fixed at lower level and those for 1968-69 were further reduced.
38.	4.11.	The Committee recommended that Government should examine in detail the justification for the increase in expenditure on new construction of roads during the period 1966-69. They also desire that Government should inquire into the reasons for consistent shortfall in the performance of GREF with reference to the planned targets and fix up responsibility therefor. Suitable steps should be taken to ensure that the annual targets for GREF are planned realistically keeping in view the performance capability of the Organisation, that the planned targets are by and large fulfilled by the Force and that the performance of GREF improves as the Force gains experience rather than declines as happens to be the case during the last three years.
39.	4.15.	The Committee urge that concerted steps should be taken by Government to expedite the payment of compensation for land acquired for construction of roads.
40.	4.20.	The Committee observe that a sizeable amount of work is being got done by the Border Roads Organisation through private contractors. They would like the Border Roads Organisation to make an assessment of the work of private contractors from the point of view of quality, observance of time schedules and cost, before the work is awarded to them. They would also like Government to ensure that the contractors employ local labour as far as possible.

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41.	4.21.	The Committee feel that the award of work to contractors on 'single tender basis' should be rarely done and confined to cases where it is absolutely justifiable by some special circumstances.
42.	4.24.	The Committee feel that so far an expenditure of Rs. 1.72 crores on the construction of Border Roads has been rendered infructuous on account of certain roads taken up for construction at the instance of General Staff being subsequently abandoned due to changes in the Defence Plans. The Committee wish that in future the requirements of the General Staff would be projected after due assessment of all factors and a 'go-ahead' signal would be given only after the Government are reasonably sure of the utility of the road in the context of the Defence Plan.
43.	4.25.	The Committee also recommend that in future in all cases where the roads under construction are proposed to be abandoned, State Governments concerned should invariably be approached to take over the roads for further construction maintenance.
44.	4.27.	The Committee note the statement made by the Secretary, Border Roads Development Board that new roads are now being constructed according to appropriate classification and specifications in the very first instance and that the road-widening work is now reduced to the minimum.
45.	4.34.	The Committee feel that there is scope for more work, both construction improvement as well as maintenance, being assigned to the Central and State Public Works Departments and recommends that the Border Roads Development Board should, subject to the considerations of quality, urgency and timely completion of work where necessary, utilise these agencies for executing their programme to a greater extent than hitherto.
46.	4.37.	Government have admitted that it has not been possible for them to accede to the requests

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of the P.W.Ds. for loan of machanised equipment received by them during the last one year or so, and that even otherwise the loan of such equipment with operations and maintenance personnel of GREF, to the P.W.Ds. presents practical difficulties. The Committee recommend that the practical difficulties experienced in this regard may be sorted out with the Chief Engineers of the P.W.Ds. concerned and the procedures for issuing the equipment on hire to the P.W.Ds. may be liberalised so that the spare capacity, of any, could be put to effective use in public interest.

47.

4.47.

The Committee observe that the Border Roads constructed and maintained by GREF are costlier than those constructed or maintained by the P.W.Ds. The Committee agree that some part of the higher cost could justifiably be attributed to the difficult terrain, long lines of communications, higher cost of labour employed on regular basis etc. They are, however, convinced that the cost could be reduced by better and firm forward programming, improved material management, lesser dependence on mechanised equipment where operational costs of the equipment is heavy, resort to work by contract wherever feasible, reducing overheads and administrative expenditure to the extent practicable and a general cost control. The Committee therefore recommend that a high powered committee consisting *inter alia* of technical and financial experts should be appointed to examine in detail the factors responsible for the high cost of construction and maintenance of Border Roads by GREF and to suggest measures to bring it down as far as possible, without sacrificing speedy execution.

48.

5.24.

The Committee are distressed to note that percentage of equipment awaiting repairs has increased from 14 to 23 per cent of the total holdings as on 31st May, 1967 to 19 to 35 per cent of the holdings as on 31st March, 1969. They also note with concern that the proportion of equipment under repairs in workshops for more than one year to the total equipment under repairs in workshops has increased from about one-third as on 31st May, 1967 to 55 per cent as on 31st March, 1969.

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49.	5.25.	The Committee are further constrained to observe that in spite of the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee in para 2.14 of their 42nd Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) cautioning Government against further additions to the inventory of the Border Roads Organisation without proper scrutiny, the Budget estimates of the Border Roads Development Board for 1969-70 show a provision of Rs. 4.25 crores for purchase of new machinery and equipment while the question of how best to ensure optimum utilisation of the existing equipment is still under examination.
50.	5.26.	The Committee note that Government had asked the Director Scientific Evaluation, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Ministry of Defence in February, 1968 to assess the resources utilisation and operational efficiency of the Border Roads Organisation. In July, 1969, Government referred for examination to a Committee consisting of the Master General of the Ordnance and Secretary, Border Roads Development Board, "all problems connected with overhauling and maintenance of the equipment" held by the Border Roads Organisation. The Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation was submitted in September, 1969 and that of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment was submitted in November, 1969. Both the Reports are stated to be under the consideration of Government. The Committee also note that the Director Scientific Evaluation has in his report attributed the non-utilisation of a sizeable part of equipment mainly to its being in Class 'C' state requiring major repairs/overhaul at the Base Workshops. The Committee on Machinery and Equipment has also in its report dealt with this problem in detail and has made various recommendations and suggestions in regard to improving the arrangements for major repairs/overhaul of machinery, provisioning and stocking of spares, standardisation of machinery, discard policy for equipment etc., which have been dealt with separately in subsequent paragraphs. In view of the fact that these reports, which have come in the hands of the Government only recently, have already dealt with the question of

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		optimum utilisation of equipment with the Border Roads Organisation comprehensively, the Committee only trust that Government would take expeditious decisions on the various recommendations and suggestions made in those reports and make a concerted effort to tide over the problem in the shortest possible time.
51	5.27	The Committee would, however, like to reiterate in particular, the recommendation of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment that an immediate assessment should be made of the number of equipment which are reported to have not been adequately used in the past and are not likely to be utilised in future and if it is found to be large, reasons for their procurement and non-utilisation should be looked into and it should be examined as to how such equipment could be profitably utilised in future.
52	5.28	The Committee also join in the recommendation of that Committee that a complete list of auxiliary items of equipment which can be used only as and when required, should be prepared and norms of their utilisation laid down.
53	5.29	The Committee further recommend that until the various measures for augmenting the utilisation of the existing equipment suggested by the Director, Scientific Evaluation and the Committee on Machinery and Equipment have been implemented and allowed to operate for some-time to bear fruit, Government should observe utmost restraint in further adding to the already heavy inventory of the Border Roads Organisation.
54	5.30	The Committee are distressed to note the observation of the Director of Scientific Evaluation in his Report that there is under-utilisation of machinery in Class 'A' state i.e., "on road", amounting, in some cases, to 30-40 per cent of the available time. The Report however suggests that this may be due to non-availability of labour in the area, inaccessibility of the site and lack of operable area. The Committee consider that any significant under-utilisation of "on road" machinery is a serious matter and would like

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		Government to investigate the same thoroughly and take remedial steps to ensure optimum utilisation at least in the case of machinery which is in class 'A' state.
55	5.35	The Committee regret that the revised usage rates of machinery and equipment have not yet been finalised although the question has been under consideration at various levels since 1967. They feel that the matter merits urgent attention of the Government and hope that a final decision will be taken in this regard before long.
56	5.50	The Committee note that the total number of equipment awaiting under repairs at the Base Workshops stood at 1753 on the 1st April, 1969 when a decision was taken by Government to increase the capacity of the workshops from a total of 9.05 lakhs manhours per year to 10.50 lakhs manhours per year. Since the average monthly arisings and output of the Base Workshops during January to March, 1969 was no more than 53 and 64 respectively, the huge accumulation of equipment awaiting repairs at the Workshops has obviously been built up gradually over a long time. The Committee are surprised how the inadequacy of the capacity of the Base Workshops as against the arisings of the class 'C' equipment continued to be overlooked by Government until the accumulation of work in the Base Workshops had reached alarming proportions. Since large number of machinery awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops for long time involved considerable financial loss to the Government in terms of work hours lost, the Committee would like Government to investigate as to how and where the lapse had occurred and provide guidelines for an effective inventory control in future.
57	5.51	From a samle study of the figures relating to the work-load and monthly arising in, an output of, the two Base Workshops during April-October, 1969, the Committee note that there has been a sizeable increase in the number of equipment awaiting under repairs in the Base Work-

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shops from 1753 at the beginning of April, 1969 to 1803 at the end of October, 1969. The monthly average of arising and output of the Base Workshops during the same period indicates that there has been a consistent shortfall in the output as against the arisings. Thus, even with the increased capacity, the Base Workshops might hardly be able to handle even the new arisings, much less tackle the backlog. The Committee therefore recommend that a constant and strict watch should be kept on the arisings and outputs in respect of the two Base Workshops and corrective steps should be taken as soon as any imbalance is noticed. In this connection the Committee consider that, in addition, a system of inspection of GREF Base Workshops with personnel borrowed from the Army, as suggested by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment, would be a step in the right direction.

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5.52

Appreciating the explanation furnished by the representative of the Government during evidence that the number of equipment awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops includes equipment which might, upon technical examination, be ultimately found to be beyond economical repair|overhaul, the Committee recommend that immediate steps should be taken in this regard on the lines recommended by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment and a rigid time-table laid down for completing the technical appraisal of all equipment awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops and its final classification.

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In regard to the problem of clearing the large backlog of class 'C' equipment awaiting repairs in the Base Workshops, the Committee note that, with the assistance of the Army Workshops, who have agreed to take over some of the equipment for repairs|overhaul, the Government hope to clear the backlog by the end of March, 1971. The Committee stress the need for launching a meaningful crash programme of repairs|overhaul to put back into use maximum number of machines in shortest possible time. They join with the Public Accounts Committee in their observation contained in para 1.29 of their 86th

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		Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) that, apart from stepping up the output of the Workshops, sustained measures will have to be taken on urgent basis to get as much of the equipment repaired/overhauled through Army Workshops and civil trade, as possible.
60.	5.54	The Committee would also like Government to examine the possibility of Field Workshops undertaking some overhaul, particularly of vehicles, as recommended by the Director of Scientific Evaluation.
61	5.57	The Committee feel that the procedure for issue and despatch of repaired equipment from the Base Workshops needs review to ensure that the equipment ready for use does not remain idle in the Workshops unnecessarily.
62	5.61	In view of the country-wide unemployment among qualified engineers to technicians, the Committee are unable to appreciate the statement of the representative of the Government during evidence that the Base Workshops, which are located at well connected cities in the plains, were under-staffed because there was shortage of technical hands offering themselves for work in the Workshops. The Committee have earlier, in para 2.93, recommended certain procedures to be observed in the recruitment of subordinate and other personnel. They feel that with proper publicity of the vacancies through Employment Exchanges etc., the problem could be minimised to a great extent.
63	5.64	The Committee note the assurance given by Government to the Committee that, after the measures suggested by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment have been implemented, the feasibility of introducing the system of cost accounting in the Base Workshops will be examined.
64	5.69	The Committee observe that 'clothing articles' are at present classified as category 'A'

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		stores and are therefore required to be procured centrally by the Director General Border Roads Headquarters. Since 'clothing articles' are also stores of an expendable nature, the Committee would like Government to examine the feasibility of decentralising the provisioning of these articles with a view to obviate complaints regarding provisioning of clothing articles at the Central level referred to in para 2.81.
65	5.77	The Committee are surprised to learn from the Report of the Director Scientific Evaluation that the records regarding procurement and availability of spares are not being maintained properly due to which it is not only difficult to properly watch the progressing of indents but, as the Report maintains, this is one of the reasons that repair planning in the Border Roads Organisation is unrealistic. The Committee stress the need for records in respect of spares being maintained properly and recommend that the feasibility of introducing the Cordex system at the Base Workshops and Director General Border Roads Headquarters suggested by the Director Scientific Evaluation may be examined on an urgent basis.
66	5.78	The Committee note with concern with findings contained in the aforesaid Report that the time-lag between the arrival of the equipment and arrival of initial spares is two to three years while it takes 32.5 months from the time of arrival of equipment, for the first bulk of spares to arrive. The Committee consider that the recommendation of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment for modifying the system of provisioning to provide that spares required for three years' maintenance and overhaul of 50 per cent of equipment will be ordered within 9½ months of their delivery and thereafter orders for spares will be placed annually after periodical provision review, if accepted and implemented strictly, would go a long way in solving the problem.

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67	5.79	The Committee take a serious view of the findings of the Director Scientific Evaluation that large stocks of spares are lying at the Base and Field Workshops which have lost their utility as some machinery and equipment have become obsolescent or have finished their life. Besides according to the Report, the Projects are holding stocks of spares for machines which are not held by them. The Committee agree with the recommendation of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment that a census of surplus spares should be made with a view to determine the extent of the problem and if a large surplus is discovered, the reasons for accumulation should be looked into and urgent remedial measures taken.
68	5.80	The Committee also commend the suggestion of the Committee on Machinery and Equipment that Field Workshops will, in future, hold spares for one year's requirements and have stock replenished on the basis of actual consumption.
69	5.83	The Committee are alarmed to note that as on the 1st April, 1969 as many as 128 indents for spares for machinery and equipment raised by the Border Roads Organisation were pending out of which no less than 60 were pending for over two years. The Committee consider the situation as extremely unsatisfactory meriting closer examination at high level to determine the causes of delay in supplies and to take appropriate steps in this regard including, if necessary, a change in the procedure and sources of procurement.
70	5.84	The serious position in regard to pendency of indents raised with the Director General Ordnance Factories with Headquarters at Calcutta, also to some extent reflects on the efficient functioning of the Liaison Offices being maintained by the Border Roads Organisation, particularly at Calcutta. The Committee feel that there is need to reorganise and activate these offices if they are to serve the purpose for which they have been set up.

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71.	5.89.	The question of standardisation of equipment with the Border Roads Organisation assumes importance in view of the fact that the idle machinery and equipment awaiting repairs in workshops for long periods is mainly because of non-availability of spare parts and the problem of procuring spare parts in adequate quantity is aggravated on account of multiplicity of makes and models. The Committee, therefore, recommend that, as desired by the Committee on Machinery and Equipment in their Report, the requisite data should be compiled and evaluated and a decision taken expeditiously in regard to the items which remain to be standardised.

APPENDIX IV

(Vide Introduction)

Analysis of recommendations|conclusions contained in the Report.

I. CLASSIFICATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations for improving the Organisation and work-

Serial Nos. 6-9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 64-66, 68-71.

B. Recommendations for effecting economy:

Serial Nos: 4, 5, 11, 13, 33-35, 38, 41-44, 47, 49-54, 59, 63,

C. Miscellaneous Recommendations:

Serial Nos. 1-3, 10, 16, 19-21, 23, 24, 26, 36, 37, 39, 40, 45, 46, 48, 55, 56, 58.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS DIRECTED TOWARDS ECONOMY.

Sl. No.	S. No. as per Summary of Recommendations (Appendix III)	Particulars
1	2	3
1	4	Central Government should not continue to shoulder the responsibility for maintaining the Border Roads indefinitely.
2	5	Project authorities should be given firm programme and targets for a period of three or at least two year so that there may be better planning and maximum utilisation of resources and consequent reduction in overall cost of construction.
3	11	D.G.B.R. should have an O & M Organisation which should review staff strength and lay down norms of work and yardstick for determining staff strength.
4	13	Staff should be gainfully employed during slack season also.
5	35	A 3-5 year plan should be drawn up for development of Border Roads.
6	38	The justification for increase in expenditure on construction of new roads during 1966-69 without any increase in the achievements should be examined.

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7	41	Award of work to contractors on 'Single Tender' basis should be done only rarely.
8	42	Army General Staff should assess their requirements carefully before giving a go-ahead signal to the Border Roads Organisation so as to avoid inopportune expenditure.
9	43	Before abandoning any road, State Government should be asked to take it over.
10	47	A high-powered Committee should be appointed to examine in detail the factors responsible for high cost of construction/maintenance of roads by Border Roads Organisation.
11	51	Assessment should be made of equipment which has not been adequately used and it should be examined as to how such equipment could be profitably used.
12	53	Utmost restraint should be observed in purchasing new machinery until measures to augment the utilisation of existing equipment are implemented and bear fruit.
13	54	There should be no under-utilisation of machinery in class A State.
14	59	A meaningful crash programme of repair/overhaul of machinery should be launched to put back into use maximum number of machines in shortest possible time.
15	65	Feasibility of introducing cost accounting system in Base Workshop needs to be examined.
16	67	Census should be made of the spares lying idle and remedial measures should be taken.

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

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