EIGHTH PROGRESS REPORT
OF THE
ROYAL COMMISSION
ON THE
PUBLIC SERVICE
OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.

PERTH:
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No. 27.
EIGHTH PROGRESS REPORT.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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To His Exalted Highness the Prince of Wales, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor in and over the State of Western Australia and its Dependencies, etc., etc., etc.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the members of the Royal Commission appointed on the 1st July, 1903, to inquire into the work of the Royal Commission appointed on the 11th June, 1902, for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting upon matters connected with the Public Service of the State of Western Australia, and of the Commission's reports, examined the Department of Mines in Perth, and have the honour to submit the following report:

STAFF AND CLASSIFICATION.

1. In our classification (Appendix), we have not included employees at present in receipt of daily and weekly pay.

2. We have arranged the department in two divisions: (1) the administrative under a Secretary for Mines, and (2) the engineering, surveying, and mining inspection, under the control of the State Mining Engineer, and these two officers should be directly responsible to the Ministers for Mines. In the administrative division we have included the Secretary's correspondence, accounting, legal, and printing office, and in the engineering, surveying, and mining inspection division the surveying and drafting, erection of machinery, state batteries, mines' supply, and geological branches. One object in making this re-arrangement is to place the administration under the Secretary for Mines, and the professional and technical work under the State Mining Engineer.

3. After making a full examination of the present work of each officer, and considering the duties to be performed under the proposed re-arrangement, we find that the following suggestions can be carried out:

4. In the Secretary's office the secretary should be relieved of his position of inspector of mining surveys. In consideration of the duties which he now has to perform as officer of all mining outside proclaimed districts and of those which have now been, we have fixed his salary at £50 per annum more than the other secretaries to Ministers.
5. In the correspondence office the work of the chief correspondence clerk should be done by the chief clerk, and the position of the former dispensed with.

6. In the accounting office the staff can be reduced by one clerk at £150 per annum, and the office will then be fully manned.

7. In the registration office any general inspection found necessary can be done by the registering registrar, and the general inspections should be done on the Act. Department; this will enable the office of inspecting registrar unnecessary, as the work done by the register is to be done by that officer in future.

8. In the state's office the staff has recently been reduced by one officer, and the engineers' registers are kept in the inspection of machinery branch, the present officers are sufficient for the work which has to be done.

9. In the surveying and draughting branch one draughtsman can be dispensed with, and a further reduction of at least two draughtsmen can be dispensed with, and a further reduction of at least two draughtsmen can be made when the work is completed, and the records simplified as much as possible under the heading of "draughtsmen and accounting." In Queensland, South Australia, and New Zealand, the states have surveyed and draughted are done in the Surveyor General's staff. This system is the most economical, and should be suitably arranged as it is found in the Mines Departments of New South Wales, Victoria, and this State, where separate officers have charge of the work. The position of Surveyors-geologist is now held by the Register of Surveyors, who is in charge of the draughting, should be transferred to the office of Parliament. The work done by the typographical printer should be given to the Government Printer, and the position abolished.

10. In the inspection of machinery branch the staff will probably have to be reorganized and increased, if the Inspection of Machinery Bill, now before Parliament, becomes law.

11. There are six horses and six vehicles in the Public Works stable in charge of two grooms, one of whom is partly paid by the Mines Department. The stable should be abolished, and the two departments should hire as required.

12. In the State batteries branch the position of superintendent can be done away with, as only an inspector will be required.

13. In the water supply branch the recommendations contained in our third report have been practically carried out, and have resulted in considerable economies being effected in the goldfields staff, and the work is better done.

14. In the geological survey branch we have reduced the salary of the Government Geologist to £400 per annum, because in all the Eastern States except South Australia, the salaries paid for the work do not exceed that amount.

15. The elaboration of assistant books and other records is quite unnecessary in this as in the other departments examined by us. There are nearly four hundred books of record, and many of these are duplicated at the outstations to meet the requirements of

16. In the correspondence office, the present practice of giving separate register entries to files from other departments, and separate documents indexed in existing files, tends to prevent the absence of a file from the shadow being really discovered. The number of any document in the register should be the number of the file in which it is filed, and the subject index of the entries should be limited as far as possible to matters of importance, and the only reference numbers should be those on the index. The numerical index appears to be unnecessary, it only serves the purpose of giving correspondence by the name of the writer, and should be limited to the names of the number. The numbered register of files from other departments is a very useful record, but the form is capable of improvement. The separate correspondence register for the batteries branch is unnecessary, one set of records should be sufficient for the whole department, except the geologist branch, which has to be in another building.

17. In the registration office, the present practice is to have a number of subsidiary registers connected with the base registers, which are required to be kept under the Mining Acts. A simpler plan, and one which would entail considerably less labor, would be to file all original documents in general books, and make the registers the only means of all dealings and transactions with regard to leases. This system should be adopted by all the mining registries, but before it can be brought into operation it will be necessary to make legal the production of courts of law of certified copies of the writing documents placed in the general books. The number of places outside of Perth in which copies of base registers are required to be kept might be considerably reduced if the copies were confined to certain centres, instead of compounding every register to keep a copy for each district. For the convenience of the public the files plans are kept in the registration office; there is, however, no proper record of the stock, and no check is kept on the sales.

18. In the statistical office, the registers of engineers' registers should be in the alphabetical form, and the indexes to these registers, which are now being prepared, should be made into complete registers, and the two sets of records will thus be unnecessary. The registers should be kept in the inspection of machinery branch.

19. In the accounting office, the work of the clerks and of the clerks' lodgers should be reorganized, and the outstation ledgers should be simplified, by writing the entries paid of the register of orders into the register of orders, as shown in the field. The State battery registers and ledgers can be abolished, and the work in the Treasury and departmental expenditure accounts should, as far as possible, be brought into agreement. The register, alphabetically arranged for checking expenditure accounts, as to previous payments, is kept; and if a personal ledger were substituted for these registers, at least one of the clerks should be used, and the recording and checking would be much more effectively done.

The register of vouchers which might be dispensed with by giving certain additional information in the various expenditure accounts. There are two revenue and one mining office books, one for mining receipts and the other for all other receipts. Only one book is necessary, especially as the details are always classified in the classification of receipts. All revenue accounts should be made up for each calendar month instead of the half-monthly periods, as this causes the accounts of the State bank at Geraldton to be on a system of double entry, and to remove all the entries as the books are kept, at one at Perth and the other at the head. The duplication
5. In the correspondence office the work of the chief correspondence clerk should be done by the chief clerk, and the position of the former dispensed with.

6. In the accounting office the staff can be reduced by one clerk at £120 per annum, and the office will then be fully manned.

7. In the registration office any special inspection found necessary can be done by the examining registrar, and the general inspection should be done by the Assistant Registrar; this will reduce the cost of inspecting registrar unnecessary, as all duties now performed by that officer are superfluous.

8. In the stock office the staff has recently been reduced by one officer, and if the engineer-estimator's registers are kept in the inspection of machinery branch, the present officers are sufficient for the work, which has to be done.

9. In the surveying and draughting branch one draughtsman can be dispensed with, and a further reduction of at least two draughtsmen can be made when the standard plans are completed, and the records simplified as we suggest under the heading of "surveying and accounting." In Queensland, South Australia, and New Zealand, the states surveying and draughting are done by the Surveyor General's staff. This practice is generally the most economical, and should be quite as efficient as that in force in the Mines Departments of New South Wales, Victoria, and this State, where separate staffs have charge of the work. The position of Surveyor-Engineers now held by one of the draughtsmen, should be transferred to an officer of Parliament. The work done by the typographical printer should be given to the Government Printer, and the position abolished.

10. In the inspection of machinery branch the staff will probably have to be reorganized and increased, if the inspection of Machinery Bill, now before Parliament, becomes law.

11. There are six horses and six vehicles in the Public Works stable in charge of two clerks, one of whom is partly paid by the Mines Department. The stable should be abolished, and the two departments should hire as required.

12. In the State Estates branch the position of superintendents can be done away with, as only an inspector will be required.

13. In the supply branch the recommendations contained in our third report have been partially carried out, and have resulted in considerable economies being effected in the goldfields staff, and the work is better done.

14. In the geological survey branch we have reduced the salary of the Government Geologist to £400 per annum, because in all the Eastern States except South Australia, the salaries paid for the same work do not exceed that amount.

**RECORDS AND ACCOUNTING.**

15. The demolition of account books and other records is quite as noticeable in this as in the other departments examined by us. There are nearly four hundred books of record, and many of these are duplicated at the outstations to meet the requirements of the Mining Acts. The whole of the records kept in the various branches and offices have been inspected by us, and we suggest that the following alterations and improvements should be made.

16. In the correspondence office, the present practice of giving a separate register number to each entry from other departments, and separate documents included in existing files, tends to prevent the absence of a file from the shadow being readily discovered. The number of documents in the register should be the only number of the register, and its subject index has to be limited as far as possible as matters of importance, and the only reference numbers should be those on the captions. The numerical index appears to be unnecessary. It may serve the purpose of tending correspondence by the mass of the writer, and should be limited to the names that get the file numbers. The numerical register of files from these departments is a very useful record, but the form is capable of improvement. The separate correspondence register for the batteries branch is unnecessary, one set of records should be sufficient for the whole department, except the geologist's branch, which has to be in another building.

17. In the registration office, the present practice is to have a number of subsidiary registers associated with the issue register which are required to be kept under the Mining Acts. A simpler plan, and one which would entail considerably less labour, would be to file all original documents in grand books, and make the registers the only record of all dealings and transactions with regard to leases. This system should be adopted by all the mining registrars, but before it can be brought into operation it will be necessary to make legal the production in courts of law of certified copies of the mining documents placed in the grand books. The number of places outside of Perth in which copies of leases are required to be kept might be considerably reduced if the copies were confined to certain centres, instead of covering every registrar to keep a copy for each district. For the convenience of the public the grand plans are kept in the registration office; there is, however, no proper record of the stock, and no check is kept on the sales.

18. In the statistical office, the registers of registrations' conditions should be in alphabetical form, and the indexes to these registers, which are now being prepared, can only be made into complete registers, and the two sets of records will thus be unnecessary. The registers should be kept in the inspection of machinery branch.

19. In the accounting office the field orders register and field orders ledger should be amalgamated, and the outstanding entries checked by writing the entries paid of the orders drawn in the field. The state orders register and ledger can be continued in one ledger, and the debits in the Treasury and departmental expenditure accounts should, as far as possible, be brought into agreement. The register, alphabetically arranged for checking expenditure accounts, as to previous payments, is kept.

20. A personal ledger was substituted for these registers at least on the clerical side, but it was not intended that the recording and checking would be much more effectively done.

The register of transfers should be dispensed with by giving certain additional information in the mines expenditure notebook. There are too many revenue books, one for mining receipts and the other for all other receipts. Only one book is necessary, especially as the details are always classified in the classification register. All revenue accounts should be made up for each calendar month instead of the half year, of each month, so as to bring receipts and payments into the same period. The accounts of the State at Grains are on a system of double entry, and the same plan is adopted for the Supplies, but these accounts are not kept up to date.
appears to be absent. The register of accounts forwarded to the authorities for payment is only required to show when the accounts are sent out and the date of their receipt; the register is unnecessary, because this information can be readily obtained if a single annotation is made in the advance account card book. The number of the card book is to be marked to each entry in the card book.

20. In the surveying and designing branch, the survey registers should show the number of each diagram and the date of preparation of each base map, as well as the date of preparation of each base map, as well as the date of preparation of each base map.

21. In the honorable branch the lists of the documents are kept, and the account register in the survey’s office, and the register of the water supplies should be consulted in our ledger.

22. In the geological survey branch the nominal and subject indices of correspondence should be unclassified and simplified.

23. The two books are kept in every office and branch, but some of the entries which are not shown should be made, and the actual time of arrival and departure should be recorded.

24. The revenue of the State and the inspection of machinery, mines, water supplies, and geological survey branches is collected by separate clerks who keep the cash books and pay over to the accountant’s office; but the payments are not always made in the same manner as in the office where the money is kept. The clerks who keep the cash book in the accountant’s office should also be the clerks, and in whose name the money should be kept. The present practice of allowing the accountant to charge the cash while another officer keeps the cash book and keeps all the accounts, is unsatisfactory.

25. An officer from the Audit Department attends regularly, and checks the revenue accounts, and we have noticed that the registers of certain officers have not been examined by the accountant, and that the officers have not been checked by the Audit Department, and that the balances of the balances are not kept with the proper officers. We suggest that the balance sheets for rents and taxes should be prepared in the same manner as in the office where the money is kept. For the officers who attend the accounts, it is impossible to keep the account book, and the officers who keep the account book in the accountant’s office should also be the clerks, and in whose name the money should be kept.

26. The following is a statement of the revenue of officers from July 1st, 1884:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Position of Officer</th>
<th>Amount of Revenue</th>
<th>Date of Payment</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manager Register</td>
<td>$12,345</td>
<td>July 1st</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sub Register</td>
<td>4,567</td>
<td>July 2nd</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Engineer Register</td>
<td>3,456</td>
<td>July 3rd</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Surveyor Register</td>
<td>2,345</td>
<td>July 4th</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>6,789</td>
<td>July 5th</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. The main objective of any important are in the registration of correspondence in the geological survey branch. These were caused by the neglect of two clerks not long in the service, and they can be overcome without additional assistants.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.

28. The cost of preparing, printing, and posting reports, stationery, and other publications which are issued from the department is a very considerable item. The circulation of useful information without interfering with the benefits to be derived from the circulation of useful information, without interfering with the benefits to be derived from the circulation of useful information, without interfering with the benefits to be derived from the circulation of useful information.
appears to be absent. The register of accounts forwarded to estimators for payment is only required to show when the accounts are sent out and the date of their receipt, the register is unnecessary, because this information can be readily obtained if a slight alteration is made in the advance account handbooks. The number register and the former authority lodger for mines water supply and development of mines can be replaced without interfering with the usefulness of the record. The stock of numbered rent, fines, and receipts in the custody of the cashier are properly secured, as they are accessible to other officers of the Department.

20. In the surveying and drafting branch, the survey registers should show the total number of diagrams and the date of preparation of any loose documents. This will enable the registers of diagrams and loose documents, consisting forty volumes, to be kept in the survey and drafting rooms. This is unnecessary, as can be used by both.

21. In the water supply branch the two counters should be in the same room, and the maintenance and revenue lodgers and the register of water sales should be kept in the same room.

22. In the geological survey branch the nominal and subject indices of correspondence should be unclassified and simplified.

23. Two books are kept in every office and branch, but some of the offices where the register is kept, there should be only one book, and the actual time of arrival and departure should be recorded.

24. The revenue of the registration office and the inspection of machinery, mine, water supply, and geological survey branches is collected by separate clerks who keep cashbooks and pay over to the accountant’s office, but the receipts are not always made to the same receiving office. The officers who keep the cashbook in the accountant’s office should also be the receiver, to whom all monies should be paid. The present practice of allowing the accountant to charge the cash while another officer keeps the cashbook and several sets as receiving officers, is unsatisfactory.

25. An officer from the Audit Department attends regularly, and checks the revenue accounts, but we noticed in the accountant’s office that the registers of sales, free payable, and sales, non-payable (A columns) have not been examined with the revenue cashbook, and in the registration office the lease registers are not checked by the Audit Department, and no balancing of the results payable with those paid and outstanding has been attempted. We suggest for the future that the total results payable on the lease registers should be agreed with the total receipts for rents shown in the Treasury books. The registers should be examined at least six months from the date of issue of the lease, and the audit officer should visit the office at least once a year.

26. The following is a statement of the shortage of officers from July 1st, 1906—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Position of Officer</th>
<th>Amount of Officers</th>
<th>Amount of the Officers</th>
<th>Amount of Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Warden, Registrar</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. The only errors of any importance are in the registration of correspondence in the geological survey branch. These were caused by the neglect of two checks not now in the service, and they can be avoided without additional attendance.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.

28. The cost of paying, printing, and posting reports, stationery, and other materials which are issued free by the department amounts to a very considerable sum without interfering with the benefits to be derived from the circulation of useful information. At present the practice is to send the papers all
over the world without sufficient discretion being exercised. The total number of publications sent away during the year ended June 30th, 1903, was 15,000, of which 12,913 were forwarded to places in Western Australia, 1,342 in other States of the Commonwealth, 196 to New Zealand, and 1210 to other countries.

29. The present charges for treating ore at the State batteries were, according to the annual report of the Mines Department for 1902, sufficient to meet the cost of working and maintenance, and leave a profit of £1,054 for the year on the treatment of 30,317 tons. Prior to 1902 the batteries are said to have been worked at a loss to the State. The above result is, however, very misleading, because neither interest on capital cost (£109,094) nor depreciation has been taken into account. Our object in printing this out is to show that either the present charges are too low or the cost of working is too high.

30. The mining plant should be entirely under the control of the Engineer for Mines' Water Supply, and should be separately stored at a railway siding, so that they may be readily available and properly cared for.

31. As in other departments reported on, the office accommodation is both insufficient and unsatisfactory. These defects increase the work and the staff of the department.

CONCLUSION

32. Our third report on the offices outside Perth includes those under the Minister for Mines, and should be read in connection with this report.

33. Having completed the examination of the departments under the Minister for Mines, we are pleased to be able to state that, under the present management, great improvements have been made, but the organization and working of the whole department can be still further improved by the adoption of the suggestions contained in this report.

34. We now propose to undertake the examination of the departments under the control of the Attorney General.

We have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

P. WHITTINGTON, 
ERNEST BLACK,

Commissioners.

Perth, 1st October, 1904.
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