

of testing the performance of our activities and we also have a number of internal communications.

The management information system for the Post Office Department involves the exchange of information and provision of management control for a world-wide postal system. The management information system is based upon three levels of management in the postal system: national (headquarters), regional and local post offices. The postal service is administered by the headquarters through the regional offices.

One of the most important aspects of management information is the regularly scheduled monthly meetings which the Office of Regional Administration holds with the regional directors. The Department's telephone system, especially the telecon, is also a vital part of the information system. The telecon permits headquarters to convey information not only to regional directors but to all regional staffs promptly and at the same time. Postal Bulletins, issued weekly, provide management information as do a variety of routine directives which are sent from headquarters to the regions and from the regions to the postmasters of local post offices.

Mr. BROOKS. All postmasters?

Mr. BELEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. BROOKS. In an effort to update them on the current status of your management program?

Mr. BELEN. Yes. And it also is a very popular item with the large mailers. It allows them to learn of our administrative procedural changes.

Mr. REID. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. BROOKS. Mr. Reid.

Mr. REID. Mr. Belen, I would like to welcome you and your associates warmly here this morning. I am sorry I wasn't here earlier.

On this point of management, might I just ask what you are doing vis-a-vis the morale of the postal clerks and carriers, because I think the morale is getting relatively low in some areas.

One specific suggestion that has been made to me is whether it would be possible for someone after a relatively brief period as a carrier to reach the top level. Many tell me now that to get to whatever grade it is, is a matter of a number of years, whereas this is no longer the case, we will say, in the New York City Police Department or Fire Department or other areas.

As a result a number are not now going into the postal service. In terms of overall management, I just wondered how you feel you are faring around the country on attracting the kinds of career ability that is so important.

Mr. BELEN. Of course, the postal clerks and carriers are paid based on the way the pay schedules are set up. Congress goes into some detail on that through another committee. The employee leaders are the ones who prefer this kind of stratification or development based strictly on seniority or time in service. The only other way would be an opportunity for promotion.

We have tried several promotion plans. We are now trying a region-wide promotion plan whereby everybody in that region can be considered for a promotion, but that in itself creates a lot of controversy, since the people in a particular post office know when someone plans