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FIRST LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

under the

British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961.

SECOND SESSION

1962 - 1963

MEMORANDUM ON THE INTEGRATION AND REORGANIZATION OF THE
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES RESTYLED MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE, FORESTS AND LANDS WITH EFFECT FROM 1ST
JANUARY, 1963.

The Ministry of Natural Resources absorbed the Land Development Department in April, 1961. This memorandum is submitted for information of Members of the Legislative Assembly of decisions taken for the restyling of the Ministry to that of "Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands" and the full integration with the Ministry the following Departments:-

Agriculture;
Forests; and
Lands and Survey Divisions of the Department of Lands and Mines.

2. It is considered that this is primarily an agricultural country and one would suppose that one of the main Ministries of any Government of British Guiana would be styled and would predominantly concern itself with matters particularly appropriate to the style of Ministry of Agriculture - or some name indicating the use of the soil. Notice of this restyling of the Ministry and designation of the Minister was published in the Official Gazette on Saturday, 22nd December, 1962.

3. The Minister has been charged under Article 33(1) of the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961, with responsibility for:-

<u>Departments</u>	<u>Subjects</u>
Agriculture	Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Health.
Lands	Administration of Crown and Colony Lands; Land Development.
Forest	Forestry.

The Minister and his staff are accommodated in the Agriculture Department building which has been extended for this purpose.

4. The Lands and Surveying Divisions of the former Lands and Mines Department fall within the purview of the Ministry and will continue to be accommodated in the Law Courts' building until such time as suitable accommodation can be found elsewhere. The Headquarters of the Forest Department is located in Kingston together with a lumber seasoning yard and milling machines for the purpose of popularising the lesser known species of good local timbers.

5. Arrangements for integration have made necessary -

- (i) the removal of the Ministry staff to the Department of Agriculture building, Vlissengen Road;
- (ii) the centralization of all research staff of the Agriculture Department at the Central Agricultural Station, Mon Repos, where new laboratories have been built;
- (iii) the separation of 'Lands' and 'Mines' and the removal of the latter division from the Victoria Law Courts' building and integration with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Brickdam;
- (iv) the transfer of the Ministry staff dealing with the selection of settlers for land to that part of the Victoria Law Courts' building formerly occupied by the "Mines" section of the Lands and Mines Department; and
- (v) the centralization of all accounting staff of the Agriculture and Forest Departments and the Lands Section of the Lands and Mines Department at the Ministry Headquarters, Agriculture Building, Vlissengen Road.

6. Integration and reorganisation of the Components of the Ministry are designed to organise efficiently the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands into three Administrative divisions, viz -

- (a) Agriculture and Forestry;
- (b) Lands and Land Development;
- (c) Common Services -
 - (i) Accounts, Field Audit, Stores, Supplies, etc.;
 - (ii) Establishment and personnel; and
 - (iii) Central Records, typing and office management generally,

each under the charge of a Principal Assistant Secretary. Each of these Administrative Divisions will have its technical and executive arm (unit), the professional head of which will be responsible for the technical efficiency of the service and for professional advice in his field within the Ministry.

7. Administrative Division I - Agriculture & Forestry

The professional and technical staff of the Department of Agriculture will continue to be divided into separate sections dealing, respectively with Research, Extension, Veterinary and Animal Husbandry and Development. The Development Section will assume responsibility for planning and execution of future agricultural development. Schemes (presently known as Land Development Schemes). Administration of existing Schemes and new Schemes when completed will fall to Administrative Division II - Lands and Land Development. The posts of Director, Deputy Director and four Assistant Directors of Agriculture have been restyled, respectively, Chief Agricultural Officer, Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer, Principal Agricultural Officer - Research, Principal Agricultural Officer - Extension, Principal Veterinary Officer and Principal Agricultural Officer - Development.

8. Administrative Division II - Lands and Land Development

The Minister of Agriculture, Forests & Lands considers that the management of Crown and Colony lands is a difficult business and there are not enough professional nor technical officers to waste on jobs which call for duties principally of an administrative nature. In the case of the Lands Section of the former Lands and Mines Department it is common knowledge that there was need for major reorganisation and the Minister feels that with an administrative officer of the necessary experience in charge of the Lands Division the Ministry should be able to look after land matters better than the former arrangement, where a professional officer supervised such matters. The Government has therefore made provision for Land matters to be supervised by an administrative officer of the level of Principal Assistant Secretary as the Minister is satisfied that in present Constitutional circumstances there is no good reason for supposing that an administrative officer would not be as effective for carrying out the Government's responsibility for land matters, as would a professional officer. The Minister feels that such an arrangement is more appropriate for the Lands Division of the Ministry. The general trend is for professional officers to be progressively withdrawn from administrative duties.

9. The technical staff of the Lands and Surveys Section will be divided into three separate sections dealing with Lands, Surveys and Mapping, each under the supervision of -

- (a) Superintendent of Lands;
- (b) Superintendent of Surveys; and
- (c) Cartographer

respectively.

10. Administrative Division III - Common Services

- (i) Audit and Treasury reports on the Department of Agriculture in recent years have disclosed an increasingly unsatisfactory state of affairs in the accounts section of that department. This is attributable to very inadequate supervision and the absence of regular stock verification. Further, on the absorption of the Land Development Department by the Ministry of Natural Resources unsatisfactory arrangements for maintenance and supervision of stores and accounts were discovered. Modified arrangements since implemented are still not satisfactory. It is essential at this stage that adequate arrangements for the safe-guarding of Government money and stores should be instituted as a matter of urgency, particularly as more accounting responsibility is now placed on the Permanent Secretary;
- (ii) More responsibility has been delegated to the Ministries for work formerly carried out by the Public Service Commission and the Establishment Division of the Ministry of Finance. The Governor has also delegated to Permanent Secretaries powers of employment and discipline of certain categories of officers and the Permanent Secretary has been appointed Accounting Officer under the provisions of Ordinance No. 39 of 1961;
- (iii) It is desirable that the technical unit (for accounting procedures) should be under a Chief Accountant and that this should fall within an administrative section under charge of a Principal Assistant Secretary, who will be Finance Officer, immediately responsible for financial control of all the expenditures of the integrated Ministry, and thus enable the Permanent Secretary to carry out his personal responsibility for financial control efficiently. The Principal Assistant Secretary should take immediate charge of financial control and to enable him to devote his main efforts to this he should have under him an Assistant Secretary to relieve him of the brunt of the other two charges (i) Establishment, Etc. (ii) Records etc. For the Personnel Section it is proposed that a Senior Personnel Officer should be provided to take immediate charge and the Records Etc. Section should be under a Senior Woman Secretary;
- (iv) All the general executive and clerical staff formerly shown under the estimates of the Agriculture, Forest, Land Development and Lands and Mines Department would now be included under the Head Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands - General Administration.

11. A summary of the financial effect of integration is given hereunder:-

<u>Post</u>	<u>Increases</u>	<u>Decreases</u>
1 Commissioner of Lands and Mines Scale F8:	-	\$ 9,600
1 Deputy Commissioner of Lands and Mines Scale F3:	-	8,160
1 Executive Officer A7	-	5,280
1 Accountant A13	-	4,586
1 Assistant Accountant A19	-	3,288
2 Secretaries (Woman) A25	-	6,912
1 Class I Clerk A25	-	2,664
9 Class II Clerks A32	-	14,518
1 Senior Clerical Assistant A31	-	2,028
7 Clerical Assistants A34	-	8,064
1 Messenger C4	-	1,338
1 Principal Assistant Secretary F12	8,400	
1 Chief Accountant A7	5,040	
1 Senior Personnel Officer A7	5,040	
1 Senior Clerk A19	3,288	
2 Stock Verifiers A25	5,328	
1 Receptionist C2	1,392	
	<u>\$28,488</u>	<u>\$56,438</u>

The integration proposals for the Ministry will result in a net reduction of 19 staff posts and a net savings of \$27,950 per annum on emoluments for staff as compared with the 1962 Estimates provision for the Departments under the purview of the Ministry.

12. All these proposals have been considered and approved by the Council of Ministers at a meeting held on Wednesday, 14th November, 1962 and the 1963 Estimates of the Ministry have been prepared in an integrated form along these lines.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTS & LANDS

(M.P. LM: S. 58/47 II)

23rd January, 1963.