

GCHQ Ref: X/5225

wpy for MTH

Government Communications Headquarters
Oakley,
Priors Road,
Cheltenham, Glos.

COPY

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[Original circulated
① DIR; ② MTH]

Will look into all aspects
and let you know when
we are ready for session [MTH] 22nd July, 1955.

[Comments copied from
original]

SUKO
DSB

Letter from Kenneth Sachse
suggest I send a copy to
MT (have now done this)
[SUKO]

MTH to see any views?
Suggest we have
a session on this,
together with the
Mrs letter which
DIR has sent to
you [SUKO]

Dear John,

Colorob Engineering Maintenance and Operation.

The imminent return to Australia of Robinson and Watson in August makes it necessary for me to emphasize our doubt and concern on the question of installing and maintaining the equipment when it reaches you. The reason for this worry is the simple one: the initial stage of installing and bringing into service complicated equipment of this type, is most important and most difficult. This was originally recognised and it was the original intention that the Australian engineers should go back with it. Partly because development took time, partly because DSB could not confirm their actual requirement for the equipment until this year, there will now be about two years delay after their return.

2. We believe that it will be quite wrong to hope to be able to despatch the various components for DSB as they are ready, and hope that DSB will have it running effectively in a short time after receipt, unless you make further definite arrangements to ensure that you have engineers to undertake the installation and initial bringing into service, who have a current and detailed knowledge and operational experience of this type of equipment.

3. It seems essential that DSB should:

(a) select an engineer of at least experimental officer level, who should be attached to G.C.H.Q. from say, January, 1956, to gain direct operational experience. This man should then return to DSB in time to receive the equipment as it arrives and to assist in its installation. He will then also be a suitable Kingpin of the maintenance staff there and should be able to give material help to the programmers.

we were thinking
of 1/57 for (b)
below. This is
an "extra" [SUKO]

(b) Plan to send either Robinson or Watson back to G.C.H.Q. for the six months before the expected date of completion of deliveries to familiarise himself with developments and operations. There are bound to be changes in the equipment you will receive in two years time as a result of our own operational experience, and as you know, neither has yet had the chance of seeing Colorob in operation.

I think (a) should
be from the DSB
(MLE) staff, but
we'll have to
work it out with
MT [DIR] 4.

4. I am quite sure that my recommendations above are a minimum. At the first stage you will have to have not only one good and currently informed engineer, but also at least one good trained assistant fully familiar with the equipment, to hope to get good results out of it within any reasonable time. Once it is installed and running effectively, the needs, of course, can be reduced, but the initial period is the worrying one.

5. I don't know if this is the best channel to raise the question: Robinson and Watson are naturally fully aware of the troubles and can dilate on the needs when they arrive back, but we do feel here a very definite need for assurance that some action on the lines suggested will be taken, and moreover, not be delayed too long. I must emphasize that January 1956 (mentioned above) is the very latest date for the suggested experimental officer otherwise there is a danger of missing the first and most awkward stages of experience on our model.

6. New Subject.

Your request to B in your letter 4/2 of 19th May, 1955. We

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delayed answering this until we had a chance to talk to Eastway. Frankly, I do not think there is any point in trying to supply a CIV/V from X with Hagelin and Ram experience. Though I am not absolutely clear on this, I presume you mean a programmer and we are short of such people; there is certainly no hope of sparing anybody we have at present. Secondly, I am doubtful if there is any need for it yet. Eastway should have learnt enough on the operation and programming of Colorob to be able to deal with the likely demands himself initially. The best thing to help him at this stage is to ensure there is available locally an engineer of good quality, fully familiar with the instrument and its capabilities.

Later as our own knowledge of our own machines and how to use it builds up, and the likely demands of DSB as theirs become clear through practice, it may well be necessary to reinforce Eastway on the programmer side: but it is too early by at least a year to state this definitely. I do think though that DSB should plan to leave Eastway at G.C.H.Q. until very shortly before the DSB equipment is due to be set up and tested.

Yours ever,

(SIGNED) KENNETH SACHSE.

This should be feasible, as long as Tony doesn't object too strongly. Glad to see that we (probably) won't have to send a "programmer" to GCHQ (as well as Eastway). [DIR]

6. Re: Subject.

Your request to ~~TOP SECRET~~ 4/2 of 19th May, 1950. We

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