

Comments on Report Given by C. T. Warwick on the following subject: "My Idea of an Ideal District Organization as it Relates to Maintenance, Equipment, Traffic and Safety."

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At the very start I want to say that Mr. Warwick has done an admirable job with such a controversial subject. The fact that he has prepared and delivered a twelve page address without one disparaging remark about the department's present setup rates him a diplomat of the first degree. I hope that the Commissioner will keep a copy of this address in his files so that he can give serious thought to the suggestions offered. The thoughts set out are certainly ideal and are worth trying to attain.

All of us know there are only two requirements necessary for the Highway Department, or any organization, to function in an efficient manner, and that is adequate personnel and equipment. The experience that I have had, whether in a civil or a military field, has driven home to me one inconvertible fact; the man that has the shovel or wrench in his hand usually does his work, but that the supervisors and administrative employees fall down on their job. This goes back to the method of selecting the personnel. When this condition is corrected, you will see the department functioned in an efficient manner irrespective of the district setup.

Mr. Warwick mentioned a recent meeting in the Commissioner's Office. Since that meeting we can see reflected in all divisions the Commissioner's statement that he expects each District Engineer to run his own district in an efficient manner consistent with the policies of the department.

In our district setup of residencies, mention is made of a garage at the site of the residencies to make minor repairs. This is a fine suggestion and, in my opinion, we need to use such a setup in our present organization. Counties that are remote from the garage should have a mechanic in them that can make minor repairs. That would save considerable time, which is the same as money, and too, I believe it would be well to have an assistant district engineer in charge of all equipment. Let him be charged with knowing where the equipment is located and consult with him which equipment could best be utilized for each particular job. The equipment superintendent would

be directly under him and his job would be to properly co-ordinate the work within and between the different garages in the district. The idea of having one central district garage for heavy equipment and secondary garages located at each residency should solve the problem of the repair of the equipment. I think that some practical man within the department who knows from first-hand experience our problems should be assigned the job of studying our equipment setup from the standpoint of equipment rentals, replacements of equipment, and to standardize as nearly as possible the equipment used by the department. All of us know how troublesome it is to obtain parts for the present equipment. Let's standardize and just use two or three recognized graders, trucks, dirt loaders, and other equipment. This would make it much easier for us to obtain the necessary parts for repairs. Also think of the good will we would obtain from the public by it not being necessary to explain to them that our graders are in the garage for repair and that it will take six weeks to three months to obtain parts since the particular grader we have is one of the pre-fabricated ones in which parts for it are obtained from a dozen or more manufacturers, and in my cases these manufacturers have already gone out of business.

In any setup we have there should be a better method of contact between the Location Zones and the District Offices. It would certainly be advantageous to the department if our location engineers could be men of experience in construction and maintenance. Certainly the man who is the construction representative should be a man of experience in both construction and maintenance; however, the establishing of residencies should tend to correct this condition since our resident engineers are men of broad experience in the construction field.

I do not think it would be a good idea to rush headlong into the establishing of residencies throughout the state. To begin with, let's try possibly three pilot setups in each of the various sections of Kentucky. It would probably be well to let the resident engineers handle construction and maintenance at first. Since most resident engineers have not had any particular experience on maintenance, it will be necessary to work very closely with them to begin in this particular phase of highway work.

Mr. Warwick has mentioned dividing the state into three sections; such as the Eastern, Central, and Western Divisions. Perhaps it would be well to add another one to include the section from the Bluegrass to the Purchase. I believe this should be done in addition to the residencies suggested. Each division would be headed by an Assistant State Highway Engineer who would be directly under the Central

Office in Frankfort, and would be at all times familiar with the policies and efforts of the department. This would save considerable time in driving to and from Frankfort for the District Engineers and delegations that are interested in roads from the various counties. The Assistant State Highway Engineer would be in a position to give them the information they desire or else pass on to the State Highway Engineer and Commissioner the requests of the District Engineers and delegations.

The testing and control of the materials are just as important to the life of the road as is location, design, and construction. I believe the present testing division is one division of the Highway Department which is rendering full service. It does its work in an efficient and expeditious manner, and it merits full praise. In our resident setup I think that some member of the engineering party that is experienced in testing and taking samples should be assigned this job within the limits of the residency. I believe the necessary gradation tests should be carried out at the resident engineer's headquarters. If proper facilities do not exist for making these tests, then the resident engineers should submit the samples directly to the laboratory. The District Materials Engineer would be located at the district office and would be available to the various residencies when needed.

I think that the district office should have an office engineer in charge of the clerical workers. He would be a man who came up through the ranks and would have broad experience in all engineering phases. He would make up the various requisitions for materials and requests for delivery when the Assistant District Engineers of Maintenance or Construction ask him to do so. He would also be capable of giving information and advice concerning engineering problems to the various citizens, and also to highway employees that might request it. He should also be the personnel man for the district.

Let's have a personnel setup that is rigid and non-flexible in its recommendations. This should be particularly true where it relates to division heads, district engineers, and foremen. If these men are capable, you will find that construction and maintenance will operate efficiently.

While it would probably be an impossibility to attain this, all of us should certainly get away from the attitude that my division is absolutely and positively correct and that anyone else who proposes something contrary to our thinking is wrong. To me there is a bad tendency in the Highway Department to try and justify our own ideas instead of considering the other person's. I see no reason to take issue with or to attempt to justify any statement if the ideas put forth by someone else will be better for the department.

There is not enough time and effort given to safety. The district safety man should be required to make regular trips to each crew for the purpose of discussing safety as it relates to each man's job and to the crew as a whole. Resident engineers and foremen should be required to discuss at regular intervals with his crew the importance of proper safety at all times. This is important not only to the individual but from an economic point as well, as death and injury cost the state money, not only for doctor bills but for the time lost as well.

The department is at present letting considerable maintenance by contract. This saves money and inconvenience to the traveling public as the contractor in most instances can do the job more economically and speedy than can the state forces themselves. I hope that as time goes on we will arrange to let more of our maintenance by contract.

Mr. Warwick has stated that there are 15,000 miles of state maintained roads and 45,000 miles of rural county roads which makes a total throughout the state of approximately 60,000 miles, and that about 2,600 miles have been added to the state maintenance system in the last two or three years. He also stated that there is no doubt that in the future it will be necessary for the department to continue to increase their mileage for maintenance in the same proportion. If we continue to do this, it will be necessary to increase the funds for maintenance to make available more personnel and equipment to maintain this mileage. If more funds are not available, then we should not accept this additional mileage; however, it is my opinion that the saturation point in maintenance has already been reached with the funds that are now available.

Roads are our main artery of commerce. In our industrialized life of today it is vitally necessary that they be constructed and maintained in an adequate manner for the traveling public. This means that we should trim our sails to meet the public's demand and it is obvious that we should locate, construct, and maintain the roads in such a condition that they will be useful to the public at all times. The present commissioner and administrative heads of the department are men who have come up through the ranks. In my opinion they are capable of knowing what the department needs, in the way of organization and change. I personally had rather trust their judgment than some high-powered outfit from out of the state who usually does nothing more than write a report with language and charts that most of us can't understand.

I believe the last sentence in Mr. Warwick's address is the key to our whole problem. He stated it thusly; "today, we must all realize the closer we place administration and supervision to operations, the better results we will obtain, as operations is actually the man that is doing the work."