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08 Staff, Line and Auxiliary Agencies

09 Staff Agencies -

10 The term 'Staff Agency' has been borrowed
 11 from military terminology and is commonly
 12 used in contrast to the term 'line agency'. The system took its roots
 13 first in the private business managements
 14 and later on, travelled to the government
 15 organizations. The Chief Executive has
 16 to perform diverse type of functions.
 17 If these functions are to be performed
 18 efficiently, the head of the service
 19 must have full information about the
 20 problems which has to be met.

As Willoughby points out for
 17 this advice reliance cannot be placed
 18 entirely upon the officers subordinate
 19 to the head of the service because
 20 these officers are:

19 Firstly, the one who for the most part
 20 raise questions to be answered, they
 are interested parties seeking something
 which is the duty of the head of the
 to determine whether to grant it
 or not.

Secondly, these officers know only their
 own side of the question and

are not usually aware of the other side.

Thirdly, to reach a decision, a careful investigation of the question of the factors involved in the experience shows that only necessary extent it is desirable to a limited officers these investigations.

These officers may not have time, ability and the equipment which is required for the work. Naturally it follows from those considerations that special organizations to make research and act as the technical advisers or aid the head of the service should be setup. These special organizations are ~~designed~~ designated as 'staff agencies'. It is a help or reinforcement a sort of extension of the manager's personality.

Characteristics / Features of Staff Agency -

- (1) They have no responsibility or authority for the actual performance of the duties for the performance of which the services are created and maintained.
- (2) Their function is exclusively of a research, consultative and advisory character.
- (3) They possess no power to give orders.

08 Functions of Staff Agencies -

- (1) To ensure that the Chief Executive is adequately and correctly informed,
- (2) To assist him in foreseeing problems and planning future programmes;
- (3) To ensure that matters for his decision reach his desk promptly, in condition to be settled intelligently and without delay, and to protect him against hasty or ill-considered judgements.
- (4) To execute every matter that can be settled elsewhere in the system;
- (5) To protect his time;
- (6) To secure means of ensuring compliance by subordinates with established policy and executive direction.

The functions of the staff agencies have broadly been termed by Piffner as follows -

- (a) Advising, teaching and consultation.
 - (b) Co-ordination not merely through plans but also through human contacts.
 - (c) Fact-finding and research.
 - (d) Planning
 - (e) Contact and liaison.
 - (f) Assisting the line
 - (g) Sometimes exercising delegated authority from the line commander.
- According to Mooney, there

are three functions of staff agencies, namely,
(a) Informative
(b) Advisory and
(c) Supervisory

Examples - The Department of Economic Affairs, Finance Ministry, Cabinet Secretariat, Cabinet Committees, Planning Commission etc.

Line Agencies -

The principal agencies which are organized on the basis of major substantive purpose, and are concerned with the provision of services for the people or regulating their conduct in particular fields are termed 'line-agencies'. They are concerned with the primary objects for which a government exists. From top to bottom a single 'line' of authority extends downwards from Secretary through the Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries, Superintendents and Clerks.

The activities of line agencies are primarily i.e. those which they perform in order to accomplish the purpose for which they exist. The line agencies are thus concerned with the fulfilment of the primary objects of the government. They deal directly with the

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08 people and implement policies laid down by
 09 The Legislature. The people come
 10 directly in touch with the line
 11 agencies which cultivate power in its
 12 hands or on the part of executive to
 13 assign it primary activities which is
 14 not a desirable tendency. It stands outside
 15 the main line of administrative hierarchy. Its
 16 function is not to command but to
 17 advise.

13 Examples - The major line departments of
 14 Government of India are Defence, Home,
 15 Health, Education, Railway and Transport.

15 Line Agencies are of three kinds, viz,

- 16 (1) Department
- 17 (2) Corporation and
- 18 (3) Independent Regulatory Commission

18 Auxiliary Agencies

19 Pfiffner does not distinguish between staff
 20 and auxiliary agencies. He includes
 auxiliary agencies within the term 'staff'.
 According to ~~the~~ him there are
 three kinds of staff services - general
 staff, technical staff and auxiliary staff.
 The general staff is the staff which
 helps the chief or other officers in
 his administrative work by advice,

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collection of information research and sifting of important issues from the unimportant ones. The technical staff consists of the technical officers such as engineers, doctors, financial experts etc. The auxiliary staff consists of officers or units which perform certain duties and functions common to the various administrative departments but which are incidental in character. Auxiliary agencies are the agencies which serve the line agencies rather than the public. They perform functions common to all the departments.

Advantages of Auxiliary Agencies -

- (1) The officers in line agencies who have the responsibility for the performance of primary activities are relieved of the duties not directly pertaining to the performance of such activities and they will be in a position to devote themselves exclusively to their duties.
- (2) This system ensures specialization of functions and it is but desirable that if they are not to be effectively performed, they should be put under the charge of those persons who are expert in those fields.
- (3) It secures economy in administration as it avoids duplicity of work. A single auxiliary agency does a particular work common to all the departments and thus saves time and money.
- (4) The system secures the advantage of closer

⁰⁸ supervision of the auxiliary functions.
(5) It will have the advantage of increased
⁰⁹ scope of operations and reduced unit costs.

¹⁰ Disadvantages of Auxiliary Agencies -

¹¹ (1) The establishment of auxiliary agencies means
¹² "tearing the department" which tends to
weaken the responsibility of the line
¹³ agencies.

¹⁴ (2) The auxiliary agencies may make encroachments
upon the responsibilities of the line agencies
and thus conflict may ensue between
¹⁵ them.

¹⁶ (3) The auxiliary agencies tend to consider their
mission superior to the objects sought by
the line agencies and hence happen to
¹⁷ subordinate questions of welfare to
economy or mere symmetry.

¹⁸ (4) Sometimes undue delay results in getting
the required services or goods on account
¹⁹ of long negotiations with the auxiliary
agencies.

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