

CONFIDENTIAL

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PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister (2)

To note
MS 9/11

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DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR STANDARDS

I was interested to read Lord Cockfield's report to you dated 20 October on the progress he is making on the implementation of his White Paper "Standards, Quality and International Competitiveness".

2 I understand, from your Private Secretary's letter of 22 October, that you are happy now to leave Departmental responsibility for Standards with the Department of Trade.

3 I had already come to the conclusion that no useful purpose would be served in transferring Departmental responsibility at this point as this could disrupt or delay the good progress which the Department of Trade is making on the implementation of the White Paper's proposals. I appreciate that this is not in accordance with ACARD's recommendation but when viewed in the light of the substantial progress being made on their other recommendations I am sure this will not present a significant problem.

4 Lord Cockfield's report makes particular reference to the possibility of relating public purchasing requirements to standards (on page 3) and (in the last paragraph) to the



development of a system for the voluntary national accreditation of certification schemes, together with guidelines for the use of a possible National Mark. We are investigating what measures we can take to encourage the greater use of national standards in public purchasing, and my Department has undertaken the necessary work on accreditation and the possible National Mark. We will be making proposals when our consultations with industry have been completed.

6 I am copying this minute to members of MISC 14, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

PJ

P J

8 November 1982

Department of Industry
Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street

Govt Mach., Nov '81
Standards.



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COMMUNICATIONS