

Report to Mr. Lovell, Chairman of the Technical Working Committee of an interview in this office with Mr. Cole, Manager of the Communications Division, Maroonis, on Friday 10th December 1948.

1. Mr. Cole of Maroonis called to see me to-day and produced my letter to Mr. Hayter of Maroonis of 25th November as a basis of discussion. This makes mention of the complaints about the Marconi Hellschreiber equipment at New Delhi and Buenos Aires.
2. Mr. Cole referred first of all to the equipment at Buenos Aires and indicated that, from the diagram which I had supplied, the aerial was unsuitable that good equipment deserved a good aerial and that not so much weight should be given to correct orientations.
3. I pointed out that good reception was registered at Rio de Janeiro on an ordinary aerial slung across a well on the fourteenth floor of an eighteen storey building on equipment other than Maroonis and that the Foreign Office Maintenance Engineer and Mr. Thwaites of the Post Office Engineering Department attached great importance to correct orientation.
4. We agreed nevertheless that a good aerial would provide better reception than a less good one and Mr. Cole, indicating that considerable study had been put into this matter, said he would be able to let us have some suggestions for improving the aerials and eliminating interference. I said we would be very glad to have it at his convenience.
5. Next, Mr. Cole referred to the three sets of equipment at Karachi, New Delhi and Bombay and said he realised these Printers had been a source of trouble which ought to be cleared up. He said they were part of an older design made to Post Office specifications and Maroonis would replace them at their cost by Printers of a new design which, he felt sure, would give satisfaction.
6. I said we would appreciate that and suggested that, if the Printer at Buenos Aires was of the same design, perhaps they would consider replacing that one also. Mr. Cole promised to have the suggestion considered.
7. I pointed out that in Buenos Aires a CR 150 costing £120 had been contracted and paid for whereas a CR 300 costing £80 had been supplied. Mr. Cole said he had gone into that and a CR 300 had been contracted for and supplied. In any case there was very little difference in performance between the two receivers - one incorporated a loud speaker, that was practically all.
8. Attention was called to Mr. St. John Jones' letter of 8th December 1948 and Mr. Cole was supplied with an extract as follows:-

"Mr. Donnelly's report contains a number of request

~~which~~ which clearly indicate that the Marconi sets should be subject to a considerable list of modifications in the near future, We are, therefore, unwilling to accept these twenty sets until we have obtained an assurance from Marconi's as to what their policy is with regard to the points raised by Donnelly. We will also require clarification of Donnelly's reference to "the new version" in his paragraph 8.

We are not, of course, taking any immediate action on this matter because it is clear that Jowers will be able to render some extremely useful reports on the Marconi machines in the near future, but it is clear that if these points of faulty Hellschreiber operation are not cleared to our satisfaction we should have to reject the delivery".

9. Special attention was called to the Foreign Office request that Donnelly's reference to a "New Version" of Hellschreiber equipment should be amplified and explained. Mr. Cole said there were actually three versions; the first comprised about two dozen sets, made to Post Office design; the second, numbering perhaps twenty, incorporating some of their own improvements and finally the latest pattern which he felt sure was a good article that would give satisfactory service.

10. I told Mr. Cole that as soon as I had read Donnelly's report I asked the Post Office whether the tests they had made on the Marconi equipment should show whether they, too, registered the same defects as those in India. In reply the Post Office had said they applied a functional test only which was not sufficient to indicate how the equipment would stand up to an endurance test under working conditions in the field.

11. Mr. Cole said he was prepared to take back into the workshop the twenty sets that had been supplied and have such modifications made as were necessary: the spirit being that they would do their very best; but he said there existed always the possibility of the emergence of hitherto undisclosed difficulties. I said I would report that to my superiors and let him know as soon as possible what they decided.

12. Mr. Cole said the CR 100, which was generally used at the Posts, was a receiver hurriedly produced during the war and was was regrettably subject to considerable drift. Marconi's latest receivers had an automatic stabiliser which gave remarkable stability and saved the operators much worry. He enquired

Hellschreiber reception on equipment supplied by other firms other than Marconis compared with Marconis and I was able to assure him that reception was good on all other Post Office designed equipment and we had had complaints from all Posts supplied with Marconi equipment. This, I mentioned pointed out, was in our minds partly bound up with the "Export drive" and did neither this country nor Marconis any good.

13. Mr. Cole said he realised that, indicating at the same time that Marconis had a fair reputation to maintain, and it was for that reason they were anxious to clear up the present unsatisfactory situation.

14. In the course of further discussion he said Colonel Malthy of the Foreign Office had an invitation to visit their works at Chelmsford and, when he came down, he would be shown their latest developments of Hellschreiber. He said I too would find their works interesting and gave me an invitation.

15. To sum up Mr. Cole said:-

- a The three Hall Printers in India and Pakistan would be replaced at their expense.
- b The Printer at Buenos Aires would be replaced if it were one of the old issue.
- c The 20 Printers now with the Post Office waiting delivery would be recalled, modified and improved.

M. M. Goughlin
24th Dec 1948