

Telecommunication Service

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DELEGATION SERVICING

In 1972, the Delegation Servicing Section dealt with some 350 offers of services.

Co-operating with the Henry Dunant Institute, it organized four introductory courses, each lasting several days, at the *Centre de rencontres de Cartigny*, near Geneva. The courses were attended by 108 applicants, thirty-nine of whom were members of the "International Missions Group" (IMG), directed in Berne by Mr. René de Watteville. Four other courses, particularly geared to ICRC activities in the Asian sub-continent, were attended by thirty-two persons, while a seminar on Indo-China was attended by fourteen.

Such courses are held in order to acquaint delegates with the organization of the ICRC and the nature of the missions they may be required to undertake, and to impart general information on the Geneva Conventions and their practical application.

The attitude of delegates at the seminars, the interest they take in the problems outlined and the talks they have with ICRC senior officials allow a selection to be made; appointments have to be confirmed during the first six months delegates spend in the field.

Sixty-seven delegates thus trained (including four doctors), twenty-six who had already been on one or more missions (including seven doctors) and eighteen IMG members (including fifteen doctors) went out on missions in 1972.

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE

In March 1971, the ICRC and the League sent all National Societies a joint memorandum on Red Cross radio-communication and the setting up of a national and international emergency network. By the end of 1972, the National Societies of the following twenty-five countries had obtained a radio designator with permission to use ICRC frequencies where necessary: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Israel, Jordan, Khmer Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Spain, Syria, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela and Yemen Arab Republic.

The National Societies of eight countries informed the ICRC that they had set up an internal radio-communication network of their own. The countries were Austria, Federal Republic of Germany, Iran, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Spain and the United Kingdom.

The ICRC installed transmitter-receiver sets at National Society headquarters in the following seven countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela.

In February 1972, the Swiss Federal Air Ministry agreed that the ICRC might use the fixed aeronautical telecommunication service network, a service which ensured the transmission of messages regarding the movement of aircraft, flight plans, and information about loading, search or relief operations.

An agreement was concluded with the Swissair personnel service whereby former radio navigators would be made available to the ICRC.

Main station in Geneva (HBC-88): The Telecommunication Service has two main stations in Geneva, one of them equipped with two radio ham-type transmitter-receivers and the other with professional equipment that can provide a 24-hour service, plus a 1-kW fully automatic RF-201/102 transmitter-receiver. Messages can be sent by radio-telegraphy, radio-telephony or radio-teleprinting, on frequencies ranging from 2 to 30 megacycles.

In 1972, the main station in Geneva underwent the following alterations:

- Installation of a new directional antenna beamed to the Far East and the Middle East, thereby improving communication with Dacca, Islamabad, Amman and Beirut.
- Installation of two Redifon stations between the telex office and the radio station for the exchange of radio-teleprinting messages between the two services.

As regards the proposed transfer of the radio station from ICRC Geneva headquarters to Versoix,¹ plans for the premises and technical installation have been drawn up.

¹ See Annual Report, 1971, page 61.

In 1972, the ICRC kept or installed radio stations in the following areas:

Far East: About 18,700 telegrams or over a million words were exchanged over the radio network established in the Asian sub-continent. Following the conflict in the sub-continent, in December 1971, the ICRC installed radio stations in Islamabad, New Delhi and Dacca, and an internal network in Bangladesh.

Early in 1972, the ICRC set up a radio station at its delegation's headquarters in Phnom Penh.

Middle East: Radio connections between Amman, Beirut and Damascus, and between Amman and Geneva, continued to operate normally.

On the other hand, the radio connection with the Yemen Arab Republic ceased, as the ICRC removed its delegation from Sana'a early in 1972.

Latin America: The radio link with the ICRC delegation in Caracas was maintained.

The number of telegrams exchanged in 1972 between the ICRC's HBC-88 station and the field totalled 24,457, or around 1,291,110 words.

RELIEF SERVICE

ICRC Relations with the European Economic Community

On 6 December 1972, the European Economic Community and the ICRC signed an agreement on the attribution of 28,000 tons of grain (18,543 tons wheat flour) to the population of Bangladesh. Conditions governing the submission of tenders to supply had been worked out by the Commission of the European Communities by 25 August 1972, and before the end of the year it proved possible to ship the whole quantity (see table of relief supplies).

The ICRC allocated in 1972 the full 7,000 tons of grain supplied under the agreement signed on 13 July 1971: 2,635 tons of wheat