



4 17  
**GEHEIM**

GEHEIM



N.M. 128

Telefoon : 2-1031  
Bylyn : 14

Groothoofkwartier,  
PRETORIA  
22 September, 1951

Hoof van die Generale Staf

MARION EILAND.

1. Met betrekking tot u brief CGS 34/22 van 31 Augustus, 1951, stuur ek hiermee 'n afskrif van die kommentaar van die Kommando-in-bevel Kus Kommandement.
2. Mynsinsiens kan ons die verantwoordelikheid vir die beheer van Marion Eiland aanvaar mits dat :-
  - (a) 'n Spesiale vloot of Mariniers sterkte-tabel vir hierdie doel goedgekeur word.
  - (b) Die onkoste in verband met Marion Eiland afsonderlik gedra word, bo 'n op en behalwe die gewone begroting van hierdie Departement.
  - (c) Die staf en aflos personeel van so'n tiepe is dat organisasie en disipline, so ver moontlik, op kulturele belange baseer word.

  
brig  
VLOOT-EN-MARINIERSTAFHOOF.

Byv.  
/EAS.

**GEHEIM**

GEHEIM

4  
N.F. 3/11/3/7.

Suid Afrikaanse Seemag,  
Groothoofkwartier,

**GEHEIM**

PRETORIA.

12 September 1951.

VLOOT EN MARINERSTAFHOOF.

VERANTWOORDELIKEID EN KONTROLE  
VAN MARION-EILAND.

U leer N.M. 128 het betrekking.

2. Die aanvaring van die verantwoordelikheid en kontrole vir Marion-eiland word vir die volgende redes nie aanbeveel nie:-

- (i) In tye van finansiele besparing is dit gewoonlik die Departement van Verdediging wat aan geraak word.
- (ii) Die onkoste verbonde aan Marion-eiland sou in sulke omstandighede nie verminder kan word nie, daar die funksies van die Eiland, vir die wetenskap as 'n geheel en ook vir die nasies wat die Unie mee assosieer in verdedigingsake, van groot belang is.
- (iii) Die ander afdelings van die Departement sal dus hul uitgawes moet inkort om Marion-eiland aan die gang te hou.

3. Die volgende kommentaar op die Sekretaris van Verdediging se diensbrief DC 2577 gedateer 17 Augustus 1951 word voorgelê.

Para. (a) Dit is nie die geval nie. Gedurende die oorspronklike besetting van Marion-eiland het daar net so veel Staats Departemente deel geneem.

Die Departement van Publieke Werke sal verantwoordelikheid moet dra vir al die geboue op die Eiland op die selfde manier as vir Verdedigings eiendomme in die Unie.

Die Departement van Vervoer se Meteorologiese afdeling sal nog belangstel in die Meteorologiese opgawes van die Eiland.

Die Departement van Landbou sal nog belangstel in die dierelewe op die Eiland.

Para. (b) Ek gaan ..2/..

**GEHEIM**

Para. (b) Ek gaan akkoord, maar moet net meld dat goeie disipline onder sulke omstandighede nie goeie resultate lewer as dit met 'n "stok" aangevoer word nie, maar grootliks afhang van die klas en tiepe van die betrokke personeel.

Soortgelyke stasies word deur ander lande met siviele personeel van 'n goeie tiepe beman.

Die Ekspediesie onder Shackleton was meer suksesvol as die van Scott en laasgenoemde se geselskap was op 'n militere wyse georganiseer.

Para. (c) Nie noodwendig nie. Dit hang af van die klas en agtergrond van die amptenaar wat aangestel word en die belang wat sy geselskap toon.

Para. (d) Ek stem nie saam nie. Die grootte van die bemanning hang af van die onkoste. As Marion-eiland onder die Departement sorteer sonder die nodige goedkeuring vir die werklike staf benodig, sal dit die huidige bemanningsposiesie in die seemag vererger.

Para. (e) Ek is nie bewus dat dit die plan is om die Eiland te versterk of om 'n Garnisoen daar te stasioneer nie. Dit sou mynsinsiens ons nie baat om dit te doen nie.

Die aanval en inneem van Marion-eiland sal 'n vyand 'n groot see-operasie kos en 'n Garnisoen op die Eiland sal hom nie keer nie.

Dit is derhalwe net nodig om die elenaarskap te bevestig in vrede tyd, en die stasie sal in oorlog dien as 'n berigstasie.

4. As die verantwoordelikheid vir Marion-eiland aangeneem word is die volgende reelings as noodsaaklik beskou:-

- (a) Addisionele personeel sal moet goedgekeur en gewerf word voor die verantwoordelikhede aangaar word.
- (b) Dit is wenslik dat die staf en aflos personeel van so 'n tiepe is dat die disipline en organisasie baseer word, so ver moontlik, op kulturele belange en nie geheel en al op streng disipline nie.



KOMMODOOR.  
KOMMODOOR-IN-BEVEL KUS KOMMANDEMENT.

SECRET  
GEHEIM

D.D. 124.

Telegramsadres  
Telegraphic Address)

"DECHIEF." II



3

Wees so goed om onderstaande nommer in  
antwoord te vermeld  
in reply please quote

No. C.G.S. 34/22.

UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.—UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

GROOTHOOFKWARTIER,  
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

SECRET.

PRETORIA.

31 August, 1951.

→ NAVAL AND MARINE CHIEF OF STAFF.

ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF.

AIR CHIEF OF STAFF.

ADJUTANT-GENERAL.


QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

SURGEON-GENERAL.

CONTROL OF MARION ISLAND.

I forward herewith, for your information and  
comments, copy of Minute D.C. 2577 of the 17th instant  
from the Secretary together with relative annexure.



  
Lieutenant-General,  
CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

SECRET  
GEHEIM

COPY.

D.G. 2577.

Tel: No. 2-1031.

Ext: 297.

17.8.1951.

SECRET.

THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

CONTROL OF MARION ISLAND.

At a meeting held in the Secretary's office on the 31st July last and which was attended inter alia by Brigadier Zinn and representatives of the Department of Transport, a discussion took place on the question of this Department taking over control of Marion Island.

The reasons advanced by the Department of Transport in support of the proposal were -

- (a) better co-ordination can be achieved in regard to the various activities, as Defence will not be so dependent on other departments.
- (b) Service personnel are accustomed to discipline and to "station" life.
- (c) it will be easier for Defence to select a suitable Station Commander, who need not necessarily be a meteorological or radio expert.
- (d) Defence can more easily arrange a larger party.
- (e) in the event of war, it would in any case be necessary for Defence to take over.

After discussion it was decided that the Department of Transport would submit a memorandum giving a short historical appreciation of the occupation of the island for consideration at the next meeting of the General Staff Council, a memorandum prepared by the two departments jointly would be submitted for Cabinet consideration.

Five copies of the memorandum mentioned in the preceding paragraph are attached and it would be appreciated if steps could be taken to have the matter placed on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting of the General Staff Council.

(Sgd.) J.P. de VILLIERS.  
ACTING SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE.

Defence Secretariat,  
PRETORIA, 16th August, 1951.

HISTORICAL APPRECIATION  
MARION ISLAND.

1. The question of the administration of Prince Edward Islands and Heard Island was raised by the Polar Committee, in 1945, with the U.K. Foreign and Colonial offices.

During July 1947 approaches were made to the Union Government through External Affairs for the Union to assume responsibility for the Prince Edward Islands.

2. The value of the Islands to the Union lies in the following fields. -
  - (a) Meteorology,
  - (b) Strategy and security,
  - (c) Direction finding in respect of a direct air line to Australia.

In regard to (b) a possible threat to security existed in the presence in the Antarctic of a Soviet Whaling fleet and there was nothing to prevent occupation by the Russians. Great Britain held a "loose" sovereignty over the Islands, but the requirements of international law in regard to "ownership" were not complete in that the Islands were not beneficially occupied.

3. In December, 1947, at a meeting of representatives of the Departments of Defence, Agriculture and Transport it was decided to recommend that the Islands be formally occupied by the Union of South Africa. Arrangements were immediately made and a Frigate of the South African Naval Forces arrived off the Islands on 25th December, 1947, and they were formally annexed by the Union Government during the next succeeding few days.

4. The occupation party was put ashore and by March 28th 1948 a meteorological station had been established. On that date the last working party left.

5. This occupation involved five trips from Cape Town by frigates of the S.A.N.F. and two by freighters.

6. At that time, for reasons of policy it was considered desirable that the occupation should appear a purely civil matter, i.e. for meteorological purposes but it was actually and essentially a defence measure and was carried out for strategic purposes.

7. For four and a half years the island has been manned by civilian personnel - meteorological and aeradio officers of the staff of the Department of Transport with details of the Public Works Department. The permanent beneficial occupation of the Islands has now been established by this Department and it is considered that the time has arrived when the Department of Defence should take over the garrison and administration thereof in accordance with the original purpose of the annexation, viz:- military strategy and security.

8. Since the meteorological station was first established early in 1948 there have been six reliefs.

8. (Paragraph 8 continued).

The members of each relief party have been volunteers but it has become increasingly difficult to obtain sufficient volunteers and, still more so, sufficient men of the right temperament and character to pull together harmoniously and cheerfully under difficult and rigorous conditions, and isolated from all social contacts. The question of discipline immediately arises and in a small purely civilian community of some six or seven units discipline is not easily enforced, unless the officer-in-charge is a forceful character and endowed with qualities of leadership.

In this regard military occupation appears the only solution.

9. The Department of Transport has had to rely on other Departments for essential services - the Public Works Department for buildings and working equipment and on the Department of Defence for transport. From the P.W.D. that prompt co-operation and assistance vitally necessary for the efficient working of the station and the comfort and well-being of the personnel has not always been forthcoming and the Department's efforts in these directions have been frustrated.

The Defence Department with its wide sphere of activities is self contained and would not be dependent on other Departments for assistance.

10. The cost of the original occupation vide para. (5) was in the neighbourhood of £70,000 and each relief thereafter has cost approximately £4,000 per annum, for fuel and oil only, consumed by the frigate conveying the relief parties and stores. The total expenditure incurred in the four and a half years of occupation, covering salaries and allowances, rations, equipment, buildings and transport is approximately £150,000 which could not be justified solely for maintaining a subsidiary meteorological station.

11. The personnel at present on Marion Island consists of 6 persons, who have all volunteered to serve a full year on the Island. This party consists of 2 meteorological officers, 2 aeradio operators, a P.W.D. handyman and a sergeant of the S.A.M.C. In addition it is proposed in future to include a storekeeper and a diesel mechanic.

12. The buildings consist of:-

- (a) residential quarters to accommodate 7 units with living room, kitchen, drying and ablution rooms and two chemical sanitary conveniences,
- (b) a recreation room,
- (c) two large stores,
- (d) a small power house,
- (e) Meteorological Building,
- (f) Radio sonde hut,
- (g) Aeradio receiving and transmitting station,
- (h) pump house.



13. Recently at the request of the Minister of Transport an interdepartmental conference was held to discuss the possibility of establishing a colony on, and exploiting, Marion Island. A topographical survey map is one of the first requirements and to produce this suitable aerial photographs of the Island are desired by the Department of Lands. The Department of Defence has been approached in this matter.

The Department of Mines is prepared to send a geologist to the Island when a topographical map is available.

Up to the present tours of duty on the Island have been of six months duration and reliefs have taken place in April and October each year. For reasons of economy it has now been decided that tours of duty will be for one year and the members at present stationed on the Island have all volunteered for such period. They will be relieved in March-April next and from then it is proposed that a relief vessel will proceed to the Island at the same time each year. The months March or April have been selected as, in the view of the naval authorities, these are the most suitable months from a weather point of view.

A Frigate is proceeding to the Island in October this year to convey necessary stores and rations for the following six months.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT.

August, 1951.

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7. For four and a half years the island has been manned by civilian personnel - meteorological and aeradio officers of the staff of the Department of Transport with details of the Public Works Department. The permanent beneficial occupation of the Islands has now been established by this Department and it is considered that the time has arrived when the Department of Defence should take over the garrison and administration thereof in accordance with the original purpose of the annexation, viz:- military strategy and security.

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128  
Rec 138

Teleg. Ad.: "MOMENTUM"  
XXXXXXXX "Aviation".

(2)

Ref.  
SWA.17/52.

Tel: 3-3081. DEPARTEMENT VAN VERVOER. - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT.

Division of Civil Aviation,  
Sanlam Buildings,  
PRETORIA.

(In duplicate)

11 AUG 1951

Naval and Marine Chief of Staff,  
General Headquarters,  
PRETORIA.

MARION ISLAND SEVENTH RELIEF  
EXPEDITION, OCTOBER 1951

1. The Seventh Relief Expedition to Marion Island will sail on 19th October 1951 from the S.A. Naval Base, Durban.
2. The expedition will be a normal re-victualling expedition and certain personnel will proceed to the Island for duty. Details of these personnel will be furnished later.
3. Mr. D.C. Ripley, Chief Aeradio Engineer of the Department of Transport, will act as co-ordinating officer for this expedition.

All correspondence in connection with this expedition is to be addressed to:-

The Secretary for Transport,  
Sanlam Buildings,  
PRETORIA.

and marked: For attention Mr. Ripley.

4. The following telephone numbers are listed for information:-

Mr. Ripley, Department of Transport	33081	Ext. 5
	or 21777	
Mr. H.P. Smit, Weather Bureau	43135	
Mr. Glover, Weather Bureau	43135	
Mr. McKay, District Representative,	P.W.D. 21181	
Storekeeper, Aeradio Stores.	33081	Ext. 81
Mr. Addison, Dept. of Transport	33081	Ext. 24
Mr. Rew, Supervising Aeradio Technician, Aeradio Station, Durban.	25462	

5. All concerned are to notify Mr. Ripley as soon as possible of the names and ranks of all personnel proceeding to or returning from Marion Island, and shall indicate whether the men are proceeding for a tour of duty or whether they

/will....

will engaged on inspection duties only. As soon as all names have been received a complete list of personnel sailing on outward and return journeys will be supplied to the Naval and Marine Chief of Staff.

6. The following general timetable is for information of all concerned. Dates must be strictly adhered to in order to avoid delays.

- i. Packing of Stores in Pretoria commences 19.9.51
- ii. Last day for delivery of stores for packing 1.10.51
- iii. Stores leave Pretoria by rail 5.10.51
- iv. Loading of ship commences on arrival of stores from Pretoria, probably 12.10.51
- v. Perishable foodstuffs, livestock and fuel delivered to ship 18.10.51
- vi. Ship sails afternoon 19.10.51

7. The railage address for all stores to be shipped is:-

S.A.N.F. CENTRAL STORES DEPOT,  
 siding 2100,  
 Fynnland,  
 NATAL.

All cases and containers, railed to the above address are to be marked:-

"FOR MARION ISLAND"

8. The Departments responsible for the procurement or provision of the various stores are being provided with complete lists of the Island's requirements. All stores, with the exception of perishable foodstuffs, fuel, and items which do not require packing such as timber and water-piping, will be packed at Aeradio Stores in Pretoria. Departments concerned are therefore to arrange for all stores to be delivered to

The Storekeeper,  
 Aeradio Stores,  
 220 Vermeulen Street,  
 PRETORIA.

All stores to be packed in Pretoria are to reach the above address not later than October 1st 1951. Goods may be sent Rail Forward to the above address.

9. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, PRETORIA.

- 9.1 To arrange for packing of stores at 220 Vermeulen Street, Pretoria.
- 9.2 To facilitate handling, cases should be as small as possible and preferably not larger than a paraffin case. Every effort must be made to restrict the weight of each case to a maximum of 50 lbs. This is essential in view of the difficult conditions prevailing at Marion Island. Serious danger to life and limb exists when heavy cases have to be handled during offloading operations.

o 3 Cases containing items liable to damage by

- 9.4 Cases are to be numbered serially from 1 upwards and each case is to be marked

"FOR MARION ISLAND".

- 9.5 Packing lists shall be prepared by the officer in charge of the packing, showing Case Number, Dimensions, weight and a general description of the contents of each case. Examples are:-

Case 12	24" x 12" x 12"	45 lbs	Clothing
Case 13	24" x 18" x 18"	33 lbs	Tinned Food.

- 9.5.1. The above list shall be submitted to Mr. Ripley as soon as possible after all packing is completed.

- 9.5.2. Six copies of the above list are required and a further four copies which do not indicate the contents of the cases, i.e. they shall show only case number, dimensions and weight.

- 9.6 The only priority marking required is on cases containing Medical Stores, which shall be marked "MED" and shall have a red band painted round the case.

- 9.7 On no account are details of the contents of the cases to be marked on cases.

- 9.8 If required, the Department of Public Works will arrange for native labour under a European foreman to be available at S.A. Naval Base, Salisbury Island, Durban, to assist with loading of the ship. Number of labourers required will be advised at a later date.

- 9.9 The Department of Transport will accept debit for all costs in connection with packing of stores and with labour at S.A. Naval Base. Official orders will be sent to the District Representative, P.W.D., Pretoria, to cover all costs. The relevant Order Number is to be quoted on all claims.

10. NAVAL AND MARINE CHIEF OF STAFF.

- 10.1 Arrangements will be made by Department of Transport for the S.A.N. truck(s) carrying stores from Pretoria to reach S.A. Naval Base, Salisbury Island, not later than 12th October 1951. If required, arrangements will be made with P.W.D. for native labour to be available to assist with loading etc. Mr. Ripley, Department of Transport, is to be advised of the number of labourers required and for how many days.

- 10.2 Approximately 200 gallons of petrol and 50 gallons of Lubricating Oil will be sent. This will be delivered to the ship on 18th October 1951, unless this date is inconvenient. The fuel will be shipped in 5 gallon drums.

- 10.3 Certain livestock will be sent, as follows:-

4 goats  
6 sheep  
12 fowls

Provision is to be made for accomodating these on board. Delivery to the ship will be made on sailing day.

- 10.4 Two Ecko Type 88 Walkie-Talkie Radio Sets will be provided by the Department of Transport, on loan, for use by the Frigate. Two similar sets are held on the Island for ship-to-shore communication. The two sets loaned to the Frigate are to be returned to:-

The Supervising Aeradio Technician,  
Aeradio Station,  
Snell Parade,  
DURBAN,

when the ship returns to Marion Island.

- 10.5 The Officer-in-Charge at Marion Island will be requested to have the landing stage and cranes overhauled and in good order before the ship arrives off Marion Island.

11. DIRECTOR, S. A. NAVAL BASE,

- 11.1 To arrange purchase of all food, liquor, cigarettes, books, welfare items, and the supply of Meteorological requirements. Delivery as indicated in Para. 8 above.
- 11.2 To arrange purchase of perishable foodstuffs in Durban. Suppliers to be requested to crate the supplies for sea voyage. Delivery to made to:-  
S.A.N.P. Central Stores Depot,  
S.A. Naval Base,  
Salisbury Island,  
DURBAN.

Delivery to be effected on the afternoon of 18th Oct. 1951

- 11.3 To arrange provision of protective clothing for personnel.
- 11.4 As Tender Board will purchase the bulk of the food-stuffs, Weather Bureau is to liaise with Tender Board regarding certification and forwarding of accounts and is to send copies of all orders placed to the Chief Aeradio Engineer.
- 11.5 All purchases of food, liquor, cigarettes and tobacco, welfare items, to be made on a separate Z26 book. The Order Book, when all orders have been placed, is to be forwarded to the Chief Aeradio Engineer, who will arrange payment of all accounts. All invoices to be certified correct by the responsible officer before payment.
- 11.6 To arrange purchase of livestock. Delivery of livestock to be effected on the morning of 19th October 1951. See Para. 10.3 above.
- 11.7 To arrange purchase of crockery, cutlery and other domestic equipment and stores.

12. CHIEF AERADIO ENGINEER,

- 12.1 To act as co-ordinating officer for the Expedition.
- 12.2 To arrange supply of radio, electrical, and power-plant maintenance items, and stationary.

- 12.3 To arrange supply of Medical requirements.
- 12.4 To arrange supply of photographic requirements.
- 12.5 To arrange railage of stores from Pretoria to S.A. Nav Base, Durban.

*W. K. Roberts*  
SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT.

Tel No. 2-1031  
Ext. 297

1  
D.C. 2577

N.H. 127

*In duplicate*

2 - AUG 1951

THE NAVAL AND MARINE CHIEF OF STAFF.

Marion Island.

With reference to minute No. N.F. 3/11/8 of the 8th June, 1951, received from the Director-General of Naval Forces, I subjoin for your information an extract from a letter (No. M.11/15) addressed to this office by the Secretary for Transport on the 19th July, 1951 -

" I have read the reports forwarded under cover of your letter No. D.C. 2577 of the 20th June, with great interest and wish to thank you for having made them available.

The reports have been considered by our departmental "Marion Island Committee" who have furnished me with their comments, which are summarised below.

A. Personnel.

The Department has a very limited staff from which to draw and while every effort is made to select suitable candidates, it is difficult to get volunteers with the necessary qualifications and experience. The position will deteriorate and in spite of the substantial allowance now authorised (£200 p.a.) it is doubtful whether a sufficiency of suitable volunteers will be forthcoming.

B. Accommodation.

It is recognised that the accommodation is inadequate and the Department is endeavouring to get the Public Works Department to erect additional and more suitable buildings. As buildings fall under the Public Works Department this Department cannot take any direct action in the matter.

C. Machinery and Equipment.

Steps are being taken to attach a mechanic to the staff of Marion.

It has been realised for some time that action must be taken to improve the electric-generating plant and the need for the installation of a hydro-electric plant was represented to the Public Works Department a considerable time ago. Here again the Department is dependent on another department to carry out the work.

Instructions in regard to the care of the equipment are being drawn up and will be issued to

*over copy to  
house  
Cowan  
2/4/51*



the officer in charge of the island. With the addition of a mechanic to the personnel there should be no cause for complaint on this score in future.

D. Comparison with Heard and Macquarie Islands.

The Departmental Committee intends drawing up a programme of work somewhat on the same lines as the Australian Operations Manual.

E. Discipline.

The Department is fully conscious of the necessity for discipline on the island and steps are being taken to give the officer in charge the necessary powers to enforce discipline. It is difficult, however, to obtain a high standard of discipline from civilian officials who are not accustomed to such control.

F. Landing Facilities.

The Department is fully aware of the difficulties and danger of landing personnel and stores and the S.A. Railways and Harbours Administration is being requested to investigate the possibility of building a small breakwater."

*J. P. de Villiers*  
SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE.

Defence Secretariat,  
PRETORIA.

1st August, 1951.

Telephone : 2-1031.  
Extension : 14.

Q/P/94  
General Headquarters,  
PRETORIA.  
26th April, 1951.

Secretary.

MARION ISLAND DEVELOPMENT :  
INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

1. Your minute D.C. 2577 dated 25 April, 1951, refers.
2. I have NO comments to offer.

*[Handwritten signature]*  
Brig  
QUARTERMASTER GENERAL.

/PS.

Q/P/94

Tel: 2-1031  
Ext:

D.O. 2577.

25 APR 1951

THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL.

Marion Island Development :  
Interdepartmental Committee.

I enclose for your information  
two copies of the record of the meeting held  
on the 3rd instant in the above connection  
and would be pleased to learn whether you  
have any comments to offer.



*J. Service*  
SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE.

Defence Secretariat,  
General Headquarters,  
Potgieter Street,  
PRETORIA.

*no comment. Thank you*  
*Card*

/P.Mc.I.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT.

MARION ISLAND DEVELOPMENT: INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

Summary Record of meeting held in Room 409, Sanlam Buildings, Pretoria, at 10 a.m. on 3rd April, 1951.

PRESENT:

DEPARTMENT.

NAME:

Mr. W.H. Cogill (Chairman)	Transport.
Mr. P. Miners.	Transport.
Mr. H.P. Smit.	Transport
Mr. D.C. Ripley.	Transport.
Mr. A.A. Cooke.	Transport.
Mr. H.M.E. van den Boogaard.	Transport.
Brig. P. de Waal.	Defence.
Mr. J.P. de Villiers.	Defence.
Mr. L.S. Stevens.	Public Works.
Mr. D.H. Laurens.	Public Works.
Mr. H. Neethling.	External Affairs.
Mr. H. Geldenhuy.	External Affairs.
Mr. G.S. Maré.	Agriculture.
Mr. F.J. Kotze.	Interior.
Dr. C.J.G. Hunter.	Health.
Mr. N.J. Maas.	Commerce and Industries.
Mr. L.T. Nel.	Mines.
Mr. D.F. Roberts.	Irrigation.
Mr. W.H.S. Lister (Secretary)	Transport.
Miss F.I. Celsi (Shorthand Typist).	Transport.

I. INTRODUCTION.

The Chairman welcomed the members and explained that the meeting had been called in order to consider ways and means of developing Marion Island. He said that the Minister of Transport, Mr. Sauer, was interested in the development and wished to encourage married men and families to live on the island so that the Department could draw on the older and more mature personnel for duty there. Proper married quarters would therefore have to be constructed.

The Chairman then gave a general description of the island and the conditions there and called upon Mr. v.d. Boogaard, who had been stationed there, to describe his personal experiences of the weather and living conditions.

Special mention was made of the following:-

- (a) There are at present 7 buildings on the island built of wood and specially designed to withstand the windy weather. At present 8 persons can be accommodated. There is a good landing stage, but no boat.

- (b) The island is situated 1,200 miles S.S.E of Port Elizabeth and is on latitude  $47^{\circ}$ .
- (c) Climate: Very windy with gusts sometimes 100 m.p.h. Average rainfall 93 ins per year. Hardly any evaporation, consequently extremely wet. Average sunshine in summer 7 hrs per day, in winter 1 hr. per day. Coldest day was  $23.8^{\circ}$ F. Icebergs are occasionally seen. The cold winds make living conditions unpleasant.
- (d) Topography: Snow covered central peak 3,890 feet. Surface of island covered with layer of soggy vegetation with no soil to speak of, making it difficult to walk about. Island surrounded by floating kelp.
- (e) It is the intention to instal a hydro-electric plant and waterborne sewerage later in the year.
- (f) There is plenty of good clean drinking water on the island and no flies.

## 2. RELIEF PERIODS.

The Committee considered that twelve-monthly reliefs to the island would be reasonable.

## 3. ACCOMMODATION.

The Committee considered that, as a first step, two detached bungalows to accommodate two families should be erected. The buildings must be detached on account of fire hazard.

Mr. Stevens said that, provided the transport difficulty was solved, the money provided and the Department of Public Works told in good time exactly what was required, that Department could undertake the erection of the additional buildings.

## 4. MEDICAL SERVICES.

Dr. Hunter was in favour of a doctor being stationed on the island if women were to live there, and with this the Committee agreed.

The Doctor could assist with routine meteorological work in his spare time.

5. FARMING.(a) Horticulture:

Mr. Roberts handed in a report by Mr. J.P. Kriel, Engineer in the Department of Irrigation, regarding the condition of the soil on the island, the drainage position and the possibility of growing vegetables. This report forms Annexure "A" to this record.

The Chairman informed the meeting that experiments were in progress on the growing of vegetables in cold frames, and so far, were proving that certain vegetables could be grown.

Mr. Maré suggested that it might be worth while to erect a greenhouse for growing vegetables. It was decided, however, to test fully the cold frame method first.

(b) Livestock:

The Chairman reported that the sheep sent to the island in 1949, which were a cross between a Dorsetshire and a German Merino had done fairly well. Those sent in April, 1950, have disappeared. The pigs are doing well. Fowls would do well if they were properly housed and given laying meal.

Mr. Maré suggested that experiments should be conducted with different types of sheep, such as Scotch Blackface, to see which would do best on the island.

6. AFFORESTATION.

The Chairman stated that the Department was in touch with the Department of Forestry regarding the most suitable trees for planting on the island. He read a report from the officer in charge of the island to the effect that, of the trees planted in November, 1950, the Pinus Pinaster and Cypressus Iawsoniana were growing strongly.

The Committee considered that, when it is established which trees grow best, these should be planted extensively as wind breaks.

7. RESIDENT FARMER.

The Committee considered that an experienced official from the Department of Agriculture should be

stationed on the island to conduct farming experiments in horticulture, livestock, poultry, afforestation, etc.

#### 8. FISH.

It would appear that fish can be caught only on the outer edge of the kelp barrier. The Committee considered that advantage be taken of the next visit of the frigate to test the fishing possibilities in the vicinity of the island.

#### 9. SEA-ELEPHANT OIL INDUSTRY.

The Committee considered that a census should be taken of the number of sea-elephants on Marion and Prince Edward Islands. The census on the latter island could be taken by the forthcoming relief ship. It would of course be a very rough estimate as time will be limited.

From information supplied by Mr. v.d. Boogaard as to the number of sea-elephants on Marion Island, it would seem, on first sight, that the population is far too small to warrant the establishment of an oil industry there.

#### 10. WHITE FOXES.

In view of the fact that albatrosses and penguins come to the island to breed and incidentally provide welcome fresh meat and that their eggs and young are totally unprotected on the ground, the meeting felt that if white foxes were introduced on the island they would destroy these birds.

#### 11. REPORTS FROM OTHER ISLANDS.

Mr. Neethling suggested, and the meeting agreed, that it would be advantageous for the Union Government to obtain reports on horticulture, afforestation, livestock, etc, from the authorities in charge of the Falkland Islands and the South Shetland Islands and any others where conditions appear to be similar to those obtaining on Marion Island.

#### 12. SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS.

Before any scientific investigations could be conducted to explore the natural resources of the island, Brigadier de Waal proposed, and Mr. Nel agreed, that a proper topographical survey of the island should be undertaken, and with this the Committee agreed.

Geological, hydrographic, soil and any other necessary surveys should follow. The result of these surveys could then be forwarded to the appropriate Government Departments so that the possible benefit to be derived from further scientific study could be explored.

The Committee considered it reasonable to expect officials conducting scientific investigations and surveys to be resident on the island on 12 monthly reliefs. It might become necessary slightly to increase the accommodation on the island to provide for them, but this would present no difficulty.

### 13. TRANSPORT.

It was very clear to the meeting that, without suitable transport, the Government would be handicapped in all its efforts to develop the island. Frigates are very expensive to run, costing about £10 an hour in fuel alone and, furthermore, are not suitable for carrying cargo or passengers.

After considering the matter, the Committee came to the conclusion that transport requirements would best be met by the provision of a small cargo vessel with passenger accommodation and of sufficient endurance to enable her to make the 2,400 mile ocean journey and to lie off the island for the necessary period.

The view was expressed that the Government might consider purchasing such a vessel and manning it with naval personnel and employing it on Naval duties when it was not engaged on relief work for the island.

### 14. CONCLUSION.

In concluding, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance. The meeting closed at 12.30 p.m.



ANNEXURE "A".

MEMORANDUM.

A. I consider that suitable patches for growing vegetables could be found close to the Meteorological Station. The main considerations would be -

- (1) Accessibility from living quarters:
- (2) Locality sheltered from high winds:
- (3) Vegetable garden to have Northern aspect.

B. There is very little true soil on the Island. Even in vertical banks 2 to 3 feet high of Freshwater Stream material which looked like soil proved to be fibrous peaty material. Owing to the continuous high rainfall and water-retaining properties of peaty material, even comparatively steep slopes are sodden, but if the surface vegetation is cleared away in more gently sloping areas and small furrows made to take away standing water I have no doubt that vegetables could be grown successfully. The use of agricultural drainage pipes may also be useful in this connection.

C. In two places against steep slopes not very far from the Meteorological Station I actually came across some firm clayey soil. The extent of this soil appeared to be small but more intensive inspection would conceivably show up sufficient of this material to make terracing practicable. Terrace slopes should be protected with grass and moss indigenous to island which prevent erosion even against very steep slopes or ridges.

D. On many of the ridges and knolls gravel of scoriaceous rock, which often looks very much like pumice and is partly decomposed, is mixed with soil and peaty material. Such areas are usually firm and it might be quite possible to grow crops in them. They are generally reasonably level and in some cases protected from winds to a certain extent by higher outcrops.

E. I do not recommend attempts to drain level boggy areas. The high and continuous rainfall, retentive nature of material and complete lack of any firm material for a considerable depth would make any such work very difficult to carry out and probably cause it to be a failure. Nor is large scale terracing considered to be justified at this stage.

It is recommended that experimental patches as outlined in B, C and D above should be tackled first under the care of a full time experienced gardener for one tour during summer. This will indicate the potentialities before embarking on considerable terracing or drainage work and I am convinced that it will prove that a variety of vegetables can be grown on the island.

F. It may be possible that willows, poplars or other water-loving trees may be established in windbreaks round the vegetable patches. Whether such trees will be able to withstand the terrific winds is doubtful, but it is considered to be worth trying.