

LIBRARY & INFORMATION BUREAU

The Library and Information Bureau was created on 1st May 1931 on the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and was attached to the Central Board of Irrigation. The main functions of this Bureau were to maintain a Library on irrigation and allied subjects; to establish contacts with Institutions in India and other countries engaged in irrigation etc., with a view to exchange publications, to collect and supply information on irrigation development and also to disseminate the results of research on these subjects. Subsequently, when Power Engineers joined the Board, the scope of the library was enhanced to cover hydroelectric engineering and its allied subjects.

In course of time, the Library began to grow. The annual intake of new literature and the number of books lent to provincial officers increased considerably and more and more technical enquiries had to be dealt with by the Secretary of the Board. The library endeavored to obtain all useful literature on Irrigation, Hydropower and allied subjects. For this purpose contacts were established with engineering organizations not only in India but also in about 30 countries like U.S.A., U.K., Canada and Germany etc. Over the years these contacts increased at a fast pace and the library could get lot of literature, many on complimentary basis, and was able to keep itself informed of the activities of other engineering organizations both in India and abroad. The facilities of the Library were extended to Indian States.

As the original organization and financial arrangements proved inadequate for the growing work, the Board was faced, in 1945, with the alternative either of cutting down the activities which it had undertaken to perform or to strengthen the organizational set-up and seek additional funds for the purpose. The Board decided to adopt the latter alternative and, keeping in view the anticipated tempo of the post-war reconstruction programme, it approved a major re-organisation of the Board's office and Library.

Therefore, the Board requested the Government of India to give the Board an additional grant of Rs. one lac per year. As mentioned earlier the Govt. of India, had established the Central Waterways Irrigation and Navigation Commission (CWINC) in 1945. This body was, inter alia, charged with the responsibility to collect, coordinate, publish and analyse data relating to Water, Power, Waterways, Tidal rivers, Rainfall and Temperature, Ground Water Resources, Silting of Resources, Behaviour of Hydraulic Structures etc.,. While agreeing to the need of strengthening the Bureau, and assisting the Board, the Government of India, however, decided to assume full financial responsibility for maintaining the Library and the Information Bureau by treating it as a part of the Central Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation Commission, who would arrange for the expansion, maintenance and operation of the Library.

As the CBIP was facing financial constraints and also lack of adequate space, it agreed to the proposed transfer of library and Information Bureau to CWINC. However the Board emphasised that the facilities then being offered by the Library to the provincial engineers and research officers, should not be curtailed in any respect which was agreed to. Accordingly, the Library and Information Bureau was taken over and formed part of the CWINC later Central Water and Power Commission w.e.f. from 1st April 1946.

Necessary administrative arrangements were put in place in 1951 and a separate 'schedule' was drawn up which clearly mentioned that the Board or any of its members, as the case may be, would have the same privileges and rights as the members were already availing and

that the Central Water and Power Commission will have the obligations as set forth in the Schedule.

As per the, "Schedule" it was agreed that in the management of library, the Chairman Central Water & Power Commission would be advised by a Committee comprising (a) the Chairman, Central Water and Power Commission (b) the President or Vice President of CBIP (c) the Secretary of the CBIP. This Committee therefore established the necessary liaison between the Central Water and Power Commission and the Central Board of Irrigation in respect of the Library.

Many improvements were carried out and some changes were made in Library procedure during the years 1946-48. All instructions and standing orders, etc., with regard to the upkeep of the Library were consolidated into the Library Manual, published by the Board in August 1948 as Central Board of Irrigation Publication No. 45, for the use of officers and staff of the Library. The Library and Information Bureau continues to be the main source for documentation facilities in the field of irrigation and power engineering for the whole country. It is the largest technical library in India covering the allied fields of Irrigation, Water Resources & Power.

Until the middle of December 1951, the Library and Information Bureau was located at Shimla and later it was shifted to Bikaner House on Shahjahan Road, New Delhi and then to R.K.Puram. It is now housed in a separate independent building located at RK Puram where the main offices of Central Water & Power Commission (now bifurcated as Central Water Commission and Central Electricity Authority) are located.

The literature received in the Library consists of books, periodicals, maps, photographs, trade catalogues and films. The books include text-books, government reports, publications of official & non-official societies, type-written notes and pamphlets & manuals. Books have been procured / obtained on all branches of Civil and Electrical engineering and other allied subjects, viz., Irrigation, Hydro-Electric engineering, Water Power, Hydraulics, and Hydraulic engineering, Navigation, Soil Mechanics, and Foundations Engineering, Geology, Climatology, Mechanical Engineering, Rail & Road Engineering, Concrete, Engineering Materials of Construction, Town Planning, Water Supply & Sewage, Soil Erosion & Conservation, Law, Mathematics, Surveying and Architecture. Engineering and scientific periodicals are also being subscribed on the above subjects. The library had a valuable collection of books, reports and other publication totalling more than 2,21,000. In addition it had about 2500 maps and 2000 photographs. A Book Selection Committee had been constituted for selecting books and periodicals for the purchase in each year. In addition, books and journals were also procured on the basis of suggestions received.