

THE WORKS PROGRAM-----  
--- Works Progress Administration ---

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Coordinating Committee of Central Statistical Board and WPA guides research.

In order that the greatest value may be secured from hundreds of "white-collar" research and statistical projects of the Works Progress Administration, a central board of review has been set up representing jointly the Central Statistical Board and the Works Progress Administration to pass upon surveys proposed by Federal, State, and local governmental agencies and other public bodies, Corrington Gill, Assistant Works Progress Administrator, announced today.

This board of review, which operates as a central clearing house, is known as the Coordinating Committee of the Central Statistical Board and the Works Progress Administration. The Committee includes: Theodore J. Kreps, Chairman, Professor of Business Economics at Stanford University and formerly Chief of the Statistics Section of the National Recovery Administration; Lowell Cheney, Chairman of the Board of the Cheney Mills; Robert P. Lane, Executive Secretary of the Welfare Council of New York City, and Theodore O. Antema, Professor of Business Statistics and Accounting at the University of Chicago. Ex-officio members of the Committee are: Mr. Gill, W. J. Carson, Acting Executive Secretary of the Central Statistical Board; and Charles W. Elliot II, Executive Officer, National Resources Committee.

The Coordinating Committee will pass upon and coordinate statistical surveys and other research projects included in the new Works Program, will make recommendations to the Advisory Committee on Allotments, and, after the projects have been approved and are in operation, the committee and its staff will supervise their progress in the field. All such projects proposed by Federal, State, and local agencies will come under review by the committee.

The committee has already passed upon and approved the following projects, which, with the committee's recommendation, have had the approval of the Allotment Board:



<u>TITLE</u>	<u>TOTAL BUDGET</u>	<u>SPONSORING AGENCY</u>
Census of Business Enterprise-1935...	\$7,784,000	Bureau of the Census
Alphabetical Index of Census of 1900.....	1,804,945	Bureau of the Census
Statistical Analysis and Compilation of Income Tax Returns.....	1,200,000	Treasury
Public Employment and Payroll Statistics (To obtain index of Govt. employment and payrolls.)....	434,500	Bureau of Labor Statistics
Occupational Research Program.....	400,000	U. S. Employment Service
Sample Survey of Retail Trade in June 1934-35.....	293,000	Bureau of the Census
Indexing, etc. of Material in the Library of Congress.....	43,160	Library of Congress

Other important Federal projects are now before the committee for consideration.

A number of other important surveys to be conducted by Federal agencies are also in prospect. In addition there is a considerable number of State and local projects that under consideration.

Statistical and research survey projects will form an important part of the program for the considerable number of unemployed "white-collar" workers who are now on relief. Projects of this kind provide one of the most suitable means of employment for this group of trained workers. At the same time they offer a means of obtaining information of real public interest which in many cases will afford essential guidance to public agencies in formulating policy.

Mr. Gill pointed out that with the growing complexity of modern machine civilization, heightened by the derangements brought on by the depression, increasing reliance has been put upon statistics and research.

"If we are to gain accurate knowledge", he said, "we must recognize the key importance of technical research. It is obvious that before we can devise broad policies affecting remote individuals we must know what we are doing. Manifestly, we must have experts to guard the integrity and plan the intelligent use of the social and economic facts we discover."

Mr. Gill stressed the importance of placing a minimum burden upon business and other interests from whom statistics are obtained, and also the importance of careful advance planning for work of this kind.

"It is particularly necessary that there be no duplication in these surveys," he said. "Probably no greater source of irritation can arise than that of a business firm being called upon by two or more persons, one a representative of a Federal agency, the other of a State or local agency, to give



the same information. Also, in house-to-house surveys we want to prevent a corps of door-bell ringers making the same calls. Through careful planning, scrutiny and coordination by this committee and its staff, we can insure practical results and a maximum of working efficiency.

"White-collar workers engaged in statistical, survey, and research projects will contribute toward an understanding and control of the very economic forces responsible for their plight. The opportunity exists to obtain practical results of major significance and enduring importance."

The two agencies--the Central Statistical Board and the Works Progress Administration--have set up this Coordinating Committee to act as the agent of both primarily concerned in the coordination and effective operation of these statistical, research, and informational projects.

The Central Statistical Board has been given the mandate by statute to bring about coordination in this field so that statistical information will be obtained with a minimum amount of burden to the respondents. The Central Statistical Board is authorized by Act just passed by Congress "to plan and promote the improvement, development, and coordination of, and elimination of duplication in, statistical services carried on by or subject to the supervision of the Federal Government, and, so far as may be practicable, of other statistical services in the United States."

Similarly, so far as the special projects to be completed in the Works Program are concerned, the Works Progress Administration is required by Executive Order No. 7034, to "provide for the coordination of such data compiling projects as form a part of the work relief program and of such portions of other research activities as may be necessary or useful in carrying out such program."

The work of the Coordinating Committee falls into two parts. The first is that of technically appraising plans and evaluating statistical feasibility of the projects. The second is giving expert guidance and technical assistance in the field to sponsors of projects. The committee will have the assistance of a number of experts from the staff of the Central Statistical Board. In addition, the former Federal Coordinator of Statistical projects under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, and his staff and a number of experienced field investigators have been detailed by the Works Progress Administration to the committee to assist in the work of field supervision and investigation.

Of primary assistance in coordinating local statistical, survey, and research projects are the State Statistical Coordinators, who have been appointed in all but a few States by the State Works Progress Administrators. These coordinators help to prepare statistical projects, give special guidance to local sponsors, and assume general responsibility for the articulation of projects into a consistent program. They forward all projects directly for review to the Coordinating Committee, which has the national responsibility of dovetailing into a well-balanced whole the various Federal and State projects.

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