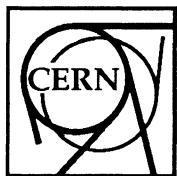


Bulletin ASSOCIATION du PERSONNEL STAFF ASSOCIATION



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OPEN LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW CAREERS POLICY (MOAS)

Dear Director General,

The Staff Association is addressing this open letter to you concerning the new careers policy at CERN, the implementation of which raises hopes, but also creates anxieties and frustrations. It is advisable that the former are realized and that the latter are calmed.

This letter summarises the positions of the Association on this policy, recalls the official statements and compares them with the present situation; it finishes with a series of precise decisions that we request you to approve and to publish.

The new policy, and its implementation

We would recall immediately the position of the Association concerning the principle of the new policy: as we have already put in writing¹ *"in a survey organized by the Association in 1982 and confirmed in 1985, the CERN staff expressed the desire that merit should be better rewarded. The Association therefore thinks that advancement should take into account seniority and performance, recognized more explicitly and formally, within professional paths that offer adequate career progression. The aim should always be kept in mind: better motivation by means of greater fairness and openness."*

¹ see the Comments of the Staff Association on the Management document entitled "Preliminary Report on Staff Policy issues" (CERN/CC/1736 - CERN/FC/3225, of the 14th April 1989) dated 18th April 1989.

see also our article Five-yearly review - Advancement on merit - Deliberate confusion of the two issues? in the Weekly Bulletin n° 50/90 of the 10th December 1990

Ever since the preliminary discussions the Association has recognized² that the proposed new policy³ which *aims to create new motivating factors* contains:

- **positive changes** (extension of careers, simplification of changes of grades within a path, formalization of the performance appraisal,...)
- but also a **considerable number of uncertainties or ambiguities** (definition of paths, criteria for advancement and changes of paths, the level at which staff will be recruited,...)
- and **negative aspects** (limited paths I, II and III, the introduction of three separate paths for professional categories 1, 2 and 5a, reenforced by an impression of arbitrariness, no changing of grade before "the cross over point",...).

The Association was **not in favour of slower advancement in the exceptional merit zone of paths and had requested its suppression**: this measure was however kept in the final version of the Staff Rules and Regulations presented by the Management and approved by the CERN Council: we still do not know the reason.

² see CERN/CCP/91/7, Commentaires de l'Association du personnel sur le Projet de la Direction presented to the Standing Concertation Committee of the 14th May 1991.

³ A merit-oriented advancement policy based on career paths (CERN/CC/1858 - CERN/FC/3430, of the 21st May 1991).

The budget for advancement

The budget for advancement is an essential element of this implementation; the Association has several times requested that the necessary financial means be decided and published: we estimate that **several hundred extra steps (double steps) and advancements into the exceptional zones** of the paths must be attributed to be able to reward merit and to avoid ending up with an automatic bureaucratic system.

Since the month of **May 1991**, we have requested a **formal and immediate commitment on the annual budget of advancement for the next four years at least**.

This commitment for several years has not been given: nevertheless your yourself stated before the CERN Council, in **December 1990** *"that it was proving very difficult to manage human resources at CERN without a comprehensive and coherent long-term remuneration policy"*.

The only assurance that we could obtain, the **13th September 1991**, was that **for 1992** the level of resources consecrated to advancement will not be less than that of the preceding years.

However, you have stated¹ *"I would like to underline that if no additional increases [to the budget] were to be granted for the salary adjustments, we shall devote a major fraction of the ones already achieved [in December 1989] for 1991 [an increase of 2% of the contributions of Member States] to salaries for staff. This is meant to be a clear message that the Management recognizes the central role of the Staff in the achievement of the goals of the Organization"*.

and you have announced also, in December 1990², supplementary increases of 0.75% in 1992 and 0.75% in 1993 exclusively for merit recognition purposes.

The **9th October last year**, the Head of Personnel Division has assured us that the special instructions, including the budgetary resources, envisaged for the advancement and for the changes of paths, would *"naturally"* be discussed in the Standing Concertation Committee.

¹ in your letter to the CERN Staff Members, of the 11th October 1990.

² see Considerations about a new career path advancement policy, (CERN/CC/1842 - CERN/FC/3393, of the 4th December 1990).

It is now the **24th January 1992** and the Budget for the advancement decisions to take effect on the **1st July 1992** have still not been discussed.

Initial designation of career paths

The **3rd October last year**, you have approved the INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DESIGNATION OF CAREER PATHS TO PRESENT STAFF MEMBERS³, resulting from hard discussions between the Administration and the Association. During these discussions, the Association tried to obtain⁴ precise objective definitions of the major functions performed, outlined in the new Staff Rules and Regulations, without much success.

On the other hand, the Administration introduced the idea of the evaluation of potential (and even proposed the evaluation of future potential).

Yet, according to the new rules, *"the proposed policy maintains the use of objective job evaluation criteria, but at a scale corresponding to a broader time-span than in the present system, that of career paths rather than that of grades"* and *"career paths are defined by a general description of major functions performed and by a span of grades as indicated in Table 1. This Table also gives the educational requirements on recruitment"*.

On this last point, we would point out that, according to your Instructions (§12) *"while educational qualifications almost completely determine the appropriate career path for newly recruited staff, they are less useful indicators for staff with long experience, which is the case for a majority of the present CERN staff"*.

The Association could obtain however, that the criteria seeming to it to be based on arbitrary grounds (e.g. the evaluation of future⁵ performances) were suppressed and that others (e.g. age at the last promotion) were not kept as elements of the decision but uniquely as guides for the first provisional designation.

³ having the same legal value as an administrative circular.

⁴ see Demandes établies par le Conseil du personnel sur la politique d'avancement au mérite selon des filières de carrière lors de sa réunion du 3 septembre 1991, basés sur des documents préliminaires de la Direction (CERN/CCP/91/9, of the 9th September 1991).

⁵ the evaluation of past performances already requires already much care!

It had also requested that, from the second stage of the process of attribution, which took place in November, an interview should take place with each member of the personnel who could expound arguments relative to his functions and his path; it only obtained that the interviews will be done "at the latest" in the third stage, which is still taking place in January: many interviews have taken place belatedly and now provoke a flood of written protests.

You have recognised in your Instructions (§4) that *"this exercise must be carried out well in order to be a motivating factor for the staff. On the other hand, if it is perceived to be unfair, arbitrary, or not to offer reasonable prospects for dedicated and hardworking staff, it might be strongly demotivating"* it is thus necessary that the decisions take this into consideration.

Let us point out, in passing, that the working procedures of the Career Paths Advisory Commission, created moreover at our insistent request to examine litigious cases before taking a decision, were established without concertation: despite you having said¹ that *"further concertation will clearly be needed in the future and in particular during the implementation phase"*.

Finally, according to your Instructions (§2), *"the designation of career paths is a first measure, clearly distinct from advancement procedures, and has to be defined before the latter begin in 1992"*. Now the paths are still not decided, but the advancement procedures are starting.

The 1992 advancement exercise

Last November, you have approved and published Administrative Circular n° 26 entitled ANNUAL INTERVIEW, ADVANCEMENT AND CHANGE OF CAREER PATH.

The next exercise of annual interviews is starting: this Circular fixes the aims which are *"to promote regular setting of clear objectives, transparent analysis of results, frank exchange on strengths and weaknesses, systematic review of working methods, resources, training needs and personal aspirations."*²

All supervisors (almost) have followed a training course to allow them to conduct correctly the interviews; from the documents that they

received, we extract the following lines in the part entitled Conditions for success, *"all parties concerned must have the necessary skills and motivation to make the system work"*: the Staff Association is going to make every effort to obtain a minimum of training for the members of the personnel who are not supervisors.

In the same part is written: *"performance objectives [let us add: and the resources] must "cascade" down through the organization. This means that at each level people's objectives should be a more detailed sub-set of those of their manager at the level above"* You are, according to the Convention of the Organization, the chief executive of the Laboratory and we think that you must set the example.

In summary:

- the Association is in favour of the principles of the new personnel policy;
- but it considers that, to assure its success, it is necessary:
 - that the entire Management, starting with you yourself, demonstrates its personal commitment;
 - that all the decisions are taken bearing in mind the essential aim, to improve the efficiency of the Laboratory in creating new factors of motivation amongst all the personnel;
 - that the necessary budgetary decisions are taken rapidly and published;
 - that the rules are correctly followed.

Consequently, we address to you the following requests, which we have numbered for convenience:

concerning the modifications to the Staff Rules and Regulations:

- 1.- since you have taken the decision to reject the request of the Association that annual advancement in the exceptional zone of paths (formerly "exceptional merit grade" or "career grade") should not be reduced by half, give us at least the reasons;
- 2.- to ensure that the definitions of career paths which appear in the new Staff Rules and Regulations and which link them to the major functions performed are fully respected;
- 3.- to give instructions that a new job catalogue, which will clarify the definitions of paths and

¹ your letter to CERN Staff Members, of the 19th September 1991.

² Administrative circular n° 26, Annex I, §2.1

professional codes, be established, after discussion in the Standing Concertation Committee;

concerning the annual advancement budget:

4.- to decide rapidly, after consulting the Standing Concertation Committee, a budget for advancement in 1992 sufficient to allow a credible launching of the new system, and to publish it;

5.- to establish a provisional budget for advancement over four years, according to a procedure similar to the Bannier procedure;

concerning the exercise in progress on the initial attribution of career paths:

6.- to confirm that, irrespective of when the decisions are taken, they will take effect as from 1st March 1992;

7.- to inform all staff members of the exact calendar of the exercise;

8.- to prevent bureaucratic arguments, hardly compatible with the announced spirit of the new system, resulting in decisions which demotivate whole services;

9.- to ensure that the Instructions that you have approved and published are scrupulously respected: that the criteria for provisional designations are not taken into account in the final decisions, that staff members with long service are not asked for diplomas when their experience amply compensates their absence;

10.- to take rapidly special measures for members of the personnel recently recruited on a lower grade than that of their post, and who otherwise will be penalised by the new system;

11.- to decide that the list of paths attributed will be published for each division (or equivalent service) and will be available in their secretariats;

12.- to decide that the conclusions of the Career Paths Advisory Commission are forwarded to and discussed in the Standing Concertation Committee;

13.- to take the decisions and to treat the appeals which will inevitably be made in a positive spirit compatible with the statements made concerning the aims of the new system;

concerning the 1992 exercise of annual interviews and advancement:

14.- to have respected your Instructions (§2) so that the designation must be defined before starting the advancement procedures, namely that each member of the personnel receives his official notification of his path before his next annual interview;

15.- to ensure that all the division leaders return the periodic interview forms of the preceding exercise before starting the new exercise, as was agreed a long time ago;

16.- to recall that the aims of the annual interviews are not only the evaluation of the results of the work, but also to help communication between the member of the personnel and the supervisor, to fix the objectives and the resources necessary for the forthcoming year and to determine training needs;

17.- to start yourself the annual interview exercise with the Directors and the division leaders: this would be both logical (fixing the objectives and the resources) and conform to the instructions of Administrative Circular n° 26 (annex I, §1.3); the Management would thus show that it supports wholeheartedly the new system;

18.- to give clear instructions that the interviews in the divisions only start after the division leaders have had their interview with you, and that they then proceed in descending order through the hierarchy;

19.- to recall that the evaluation of results must be based on precise and well reasoned facts;

20.- to give instructions for the changing of paths which will take place during the 1992 exercise, after consulting the Standing Concertation Committee, in particular for personnel in grades in which they can not change grade without changing path;

21.- to inform the personnel of the complete calendar of the 1992 advancement exercise;

22.- to confirm that, irrespective of this calendar, the decisions will take effect on the 1st July 1992.

* * * * *