

*Canadian National Railways and Air Canada*

We feel that the quality inspection department cannot function properly without regular meetings for the purpose of evaluating the inspection program, keeping aware of organizational, administrative and policy changes, general information, beefs, etc. For example, we learn of staff changes and other relative information via the grapevine.

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We have never been asked but our collective experience suggests that a program of direct inspection (with proper ratios of inspectors to production personnel in all required areas) followed up with audits at suitable intervals would be of greater benefit and have a better chance of meeting the prescribed standards of the 862 Maintenance Quality Manual.

I would like to point out that it is not the union grievance that are raised with regard to air safety standards, but that these standards are laid out in the 862 Maintenance Quality Manual. They go on to explain the ratio of inspectors to mechanics in the various areas, and these are far below standard. The grievance continues:

Presently there exists two inspection formats, i.e., audits and direct physical type methods. Some inspectors are totally involved in audit reports only; other inspectors apparently are not involved in audit report writing and only do direct inspection. Some work areas, e.g., radio, process and paint shops do not have either type of inspection. Unit and support shop inspectors feel the above is inequitable and disregards the intent of the inspection function.

This certainly challenges Mr. Pratte's statements to the transport committee.

The change from direct inspection to the audit report methods has resulted in many changes for unit and support shop inspectors. Previously the inspection function did not necessitate the following:

Presentation of discrepancies in written form. Constant adjustment to a program which has seen many changes in the methods of presentation and which involves a very high degree of verbal instructions.

Investigative work outside the immediate shop area. Development of forms to suit the distinct areas (pioneering of audit program).

Responsibilities to discuss and explain audit findings at the general foreman level.

The above changes have taken place without benefit of any monetary adjustments or company consideration of the difficulties arising from the new inspection format. Of particular concern is the requirement to submit written evidence of our fellow unionists' errors or discrepancies.

Erosion of the status of shop inspectors is considered to have taken place in recent years. Shop inspectors do not have the same respect they formerly had. Most managers have never accepted the audit program, as evidenced by the lack of action and lack of answers to the audit reports.

It seems ironic and unjust that unit and support shop inspectors, the group within Air Canada which has pioneered and developed the audit program, should be so low in the esteem of management that we have lost our full-time stenographic support and indeed some of our identity by the integration of our employee pay roster into the paint shop.

It is difficult to understand the logic of having unit and support shops under the supervision of the power plant organization, which is remote and presently believed to be functionally different. Since the relocation of the P.P. shop, unit and support shop inspectors rarely have any contact with the superintendent of quality inspection.

Interpretation and general understanding of the 862 Manual is apparently left to the discretion of the individual inspector. Unfortunately not all inspectors are in possession of an 862 Manual. Four only out of the eight inspectors in this formation have these manuals.

It is no wonder the oxygen masks are not working on Air Canada planes.

It is a source of embarrassment to be an inspector submitting written reports of area discrepancies and at the same time knowing that many areas of 901 Forms and Report Manual Instructions are incomplete and out of date. Instructions in these areas require a complete examination

[Mr. McKenzie.]

to revise (update) and rectify the many and varied discrepancies. Simple procedural instructions for certain applications appear never to have been completely formulated or finalized, e.g., modification instructions are incomplete in that the location within the shop area for filing modification instructions is undesignated.

Revisions that are made to the forms and reports section of the 901 Instruction Manual, which are of important significance to shop inspectors, are not forwarded to them. Policy changes, standards revisions etc. are made without any notification being provided to shop inspectors. This condition also applies to 911 Manual Instructions. A current example is the "release permit" now in use but for which there is no information provided to the shop inspector.

There exists a number of areas where an inspector is not able to find concrete policies and is left without any information to guide or direct him. Some examples:

Reference the MOT letter of approval, the terms "standards acceptable" is not defined. (MOT inspection information is not readily available.

Required measuring or testing equipment is unavailable and reported in audits. If action is not undertaken, what is the appropriate procedure, when and by whom?

To what degree is it allowed for maintenance engineering to deviate from manufacturer's specifications e.g. allowing units to have a visual check only, due to test equipment not being available, deletion of specified tests from the vendor's manual for the same reason?

Is the procedure to audit inspect supplier and subcontractors being followed; is it an MOT requirement? If so, who is responsible to ensure its compliance?

Why is there no formal contact between shop inspectors and MOT regional staff inspectors?

In the interest of highest possible standards we seek to know why FAA representatives' visits are preannounced allowing abnormal cover-ups to be carried out.

Unit serialization policy, shelf life expired units policy, modifications etc. are considered to be unclearly defined and in need of attention.

We feel that the work responsibilities and skills of shop inspectors involved in quality audits are equal to, if not greater than those of shop foremen, engineering technicians, planners etc. However, to our knowledge, no meaningful consideration has been given to this matter by management.

Unit and support shop inspectors believe that they are limited in opportunities unjustifiably, both within the inspection department and the shops where they have originated. Promotional opportunities and even relief assignment experience in the respective shop areas are generally non-existent. No consideration is given for shop advancement to shop inspectors; in other words, to become a shop inspector is to be ignored within your own area for any advancements. Considering the kind of experience gained in this category, this condition is considered a disadvantage to the inspectors and to the company. In general, promotional opportunities within the inspection department are few and the practice has been to award positions above foreman to personnel from outside the inspection department. This too, we feel, is a disadvantage not only to the inspectors and the company but also to the individual who has not had actual inspection and audit report experience.

The major and underlying reason for the creation of this submission was and is the existing low morale and the fact that all eight inspectors are planning in one way or another to leave the inspection department.

There are many workers with Air Canada who cannot wait to get away from the place and take early retirement at age 55. They go on to explain in this submission:

One inspector is currently bidding on another position. One other is on loan and hoping to become a permanent instructor. Two are awaiting lead mechanic bulletins (one of which is expected to be actioned by November, 1973). The remaining four are contemplating early retirement.

We realize that this is a very critical submission but must emphasize that its purpose is in the interest of creating a better maintenance