

Order Paper Questions

If action on a matter that was the subject of a recommendation has not been taken and is not currently planned, an explanation is provided.

Most of the recommendations in the reports noted above deal with matters falling within the general area of regulatory reform. As the House has been advised on other occasions, in October, 1980, the government endorsed an initial 18-month work program for regulatory reform which was comprised of 12 projects, each with clearly defined objectives. The government's intention, recognizing that not everything could be achieved or even attempted at one time, was to focus its energies on pursuing a selection of possible reforms that seemed to be both beneficial and achievable within an initial, limited time. The government will review the results and prospects of the program. Recommendations not dealt with in the initial regulatory reform work program will be reviewed again in the course of developing proposals for the next phase of the government's regulatory reform efforts.

With respect to those recommendations of the above named reports dealing with the matter of improved consultation on regulatory matters with the private sector, one of the projects of the current regulatory reform program has as its objective improved private sector consultation. The Office of the Co-ordinator, Regulatory Reform has been working with major regulatory departments to examine existing consultative procedures and techniques to improve the consultative procedures and techniques of federal regulatory departments.

With respect to recommendations on the matter of advance notice of new regulatory initiatives, we are currently assessing the feasibility of implementing regulatory agendas or a consolidated regulatory calendar.

With respect to those recommendations dealing with pre-publication of draft regulations and notice and comment procedures, such prepublication, with opportunity for comment by affected interests, is encouraged under the government's regulatory reform program. Prepublication requirements for regulations are increasingly being incorporated in new regulatory statutes. In addition, Chapter 490 of the Administrative Policy Manual, which sets out requirements regarding socio-economic impact analysis of major regulations in the health, safety and fairness area requires prepublication of draft major regulations together with a summary of the analysis that has been prepared. A recent decision of the Treasury Board, incorporated in a new policy directive regarding compliance by federal departments with the GATT agreement on technical barriers to trade, requires that federal regulations incorporating technical specifications (e.g., standards) be subjected to a notice and comment procedure which includes prepublication.

With respect to recommendations dealing with improved *ex ante* analysis of new regulatory initiatives, we are assessing the feasibility of implementing an RIA (regulatory impact analysis) requirement for new federal regulatory initiatives. The essential objective in this area is to improve the information on the impact of regulatory initiatives that is being provided to decision makers. Work on proposals for an RIA system is

continuing under the direction of the Office of the Co-ordinator, Regulatory Reform.

Regarding those recommendations dealing with the matter of parliamentary reform, and particularly parliamentary involvement in the regulatory process to ensure greater accountability for regulatory activities, the position of the government has not changed. The President of the Privy Council has advised the House on past occasions of his intent to initiate the process of examining possible reforms, and specifically those that were the subject of recommendations in the above-noted reports.

We have examined the recommendations dealing with reliance on the consensus process for developing technical specifications and referencing of external standards in legislation. We are actively promoting reliance on the consensus process as well as reliance on the technique of incorporation by reference. A recent decision by Treasury Board, incorporated in a new chapter of the Administrative Policy Manual, encourages federal regulatory departments and agencies subject to the directive to follow these practices.

Those recommendations dealing with accountability and control of, and appointments to regulatory agencies, including questions of the use of government policy directives and cabinet review of agency decisions are the subject of a major project of the current regulatory reform program. A special review group on regulatory reform of Crown agencies, based in the Privy Council Office, has recently completed an assessment of these and other recommendations regarding federal regulatory agencies. The findings of the review group are now being considered.

Support for public interest groups, including the question of provision of core funding, project specific funding, and cost awards by regulatory departments and agencies is also being examined within the regulatory reform program. An inter-departmental task force, headed by the Secretary of State, is examining the role of voluntary organizations and their relationship to the federal government. Issues relevant to interest group support in connection with the federal regulatory process will be covered in the report.

With respect to those recommendations dealing with the matter of reduction of paper burden and records retention provisions, one of the projects of the current regulatory reform program has as its objective implementation of a cabinet decision to standardize and reduce requirements in federal legislation (statutes and regulations) which impose obligations on the private sector to retain records. Work on this project is well advanced. A bill to amend the records retention provisions of seven statutes is nearly completed and should be available for consideration by Parliament in the very near future. Federal departments are also preparing amendments to some 50 regulations for the purpose of further adjusting records retention requirements. Cost savings to the private sector from these changes have been conservatively estimated at \$100 million per year.