

3.13 As pointed out in paragraph 2.5, above, the Department can obtain a complete picture of Departmental expenditures only once a year. The information used for this purpose (such as salary costs) is provided largely by the DRS - by itself, the FMS cannot provide this information. The practical difficulties encountered in the day-to-day use of the FMS are as follows:

- a) the linkage between expenditures and activities is not available;
- b) the linkage between P-Y utilization, P-Y costs and activities is not made;
- c) major enhancements would be required for the system to fully meet the needs of the Department's managers (paragraphs 2.14 and 2.31 above, refer);
- d) neither the computer nor the communications systems are dedicated to FMS purposes so that growth potential and computer time for necessary experimentation are constrained; and
- e) the system is not designed to provide detailed accounting information to the Posts and cannot do so.

3.14 In the future it is intended to:

- a) provide additional detail in the financial reports to Headquarters managers;
- b) record commitments for both Headquarters and the Posts;
- c) report on commitments (Headquarters responsibility centres only);
- d) transfer pay data into the FMS by tape;
- e) use the FMS to replace some of the manual systems in Headquarters; and
- f) automate various employee-related functions, e.g., allowances.

3.15 Even with the foregoing enhancements, the FMS will not meet all user needs for financial information, nor will it distribute comprehensive financial reports directly to responsibility centre managers. The FMS provides for the capture of expenditure data close to their source, but the information has to be entered twice at the Posts (by the accountant and the communicator) and must be reviewed and edited in Headquarters. Thus, the system does not have edit and control mechanisms for the first entry of data, nor does it provide an on-line entry and inquiry facility and automated assistance to users; even with currently planned enhancements, therefore, the FMS will not overcome all the difficulties listed in paragraph 3.13, above.

Financial Data Processing - Washington

3.16 The Task Force travelled to the Washington Embassy and reviewed the accounting functions processed through a service bureau (American Management Services - AMS). New applications envisaged for the Embassy include the processing of advances, security deposits,