



SCOTTISH HOME AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

St. Andrew's House, EDINBURGH, EH1 3DE

Telephone: 031-556 8501, ext. **GRO-C**

24 February 1978

A W Eason Esq
Civil Service Department (Pay 3)
Whitehall
London SE1

Dear Eason

PROTEIN FRACTIONATION CENTRE, EDINBURGH

I am rather disturbed that we have heard nothing from you since our meeting in London on 11 January when our proposals for the PFC were discussed. You will recall that having heard our arguments you felt unable to give us your views immediately but undertook to let us have these quite soon.

The purpose of the meeting on 11 January was two-fold. Firstly we wanted to know if there were any objections to our suggested staffing and salary structure which, as we explained at the meeting, we feel obliged to move towards for a number of reasons, not the best being that staff at the PFC are in many instances unable to obtain qualifications they require to satisfy the criteria set out in the Whitley Council agreements for grading as medical laboratory technicians etc. Secondly we sought your agreement to a realistic offer to the Staff Side as payment for the shift work we want to introduce, and your advice on what offer might be made, particularly in the light of the very substantial reductions in unit costs that would accrue to the Health Service. We have been looking with interest at the list of premium payments for shift work sent to us by John Lewry but it is not clear whether you would agree to any rate that can be paralleled there.

Fred Richards of DHSS expressed some reservations about one or two aspects of our proposals, but we did not get the impression that his Department was fundamentally opposed to the overall package of a salary and staffing structure and the introduction of shift work to allow the PFC to function at greater capacity; neither was anything said by the representatives of the Treasury and the Department of Employment to indicate that they had any objection in principle to the proposals. Indeed Mr Parrott of DHSS indicated that because of the need to review the UK provision for production of blood products it was vital that the extent of the PFC's capacity to increase production was cleared up quickly.

We are anxious therefore to proceed quickly to the next stage which is to recommence negotiations with the Staff Side with a view to getting their agreement on the question of shift work, and we feel that we must offer as an inducement the proposed staffing and salary structure which we hope the staff will be happy to see implemented. As we made clear to you at the meeting we cannot justify to Ministers or anyone else the continued drastic underuse of the plant at the PFC and we must therefore take urgently whatever action we can to try to solve the problem. In view of this I am afraid that in the absence of any comment soon we shall simply have to go ahead with opening negotiations on both the staffing structure and the shift work on the basis of what offers we consider we can defend.

I am copying this letter to Parrott and Richards (DHSS), Wilson (Treasury) and Cahill (DE).

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

DAVID STEVENSON