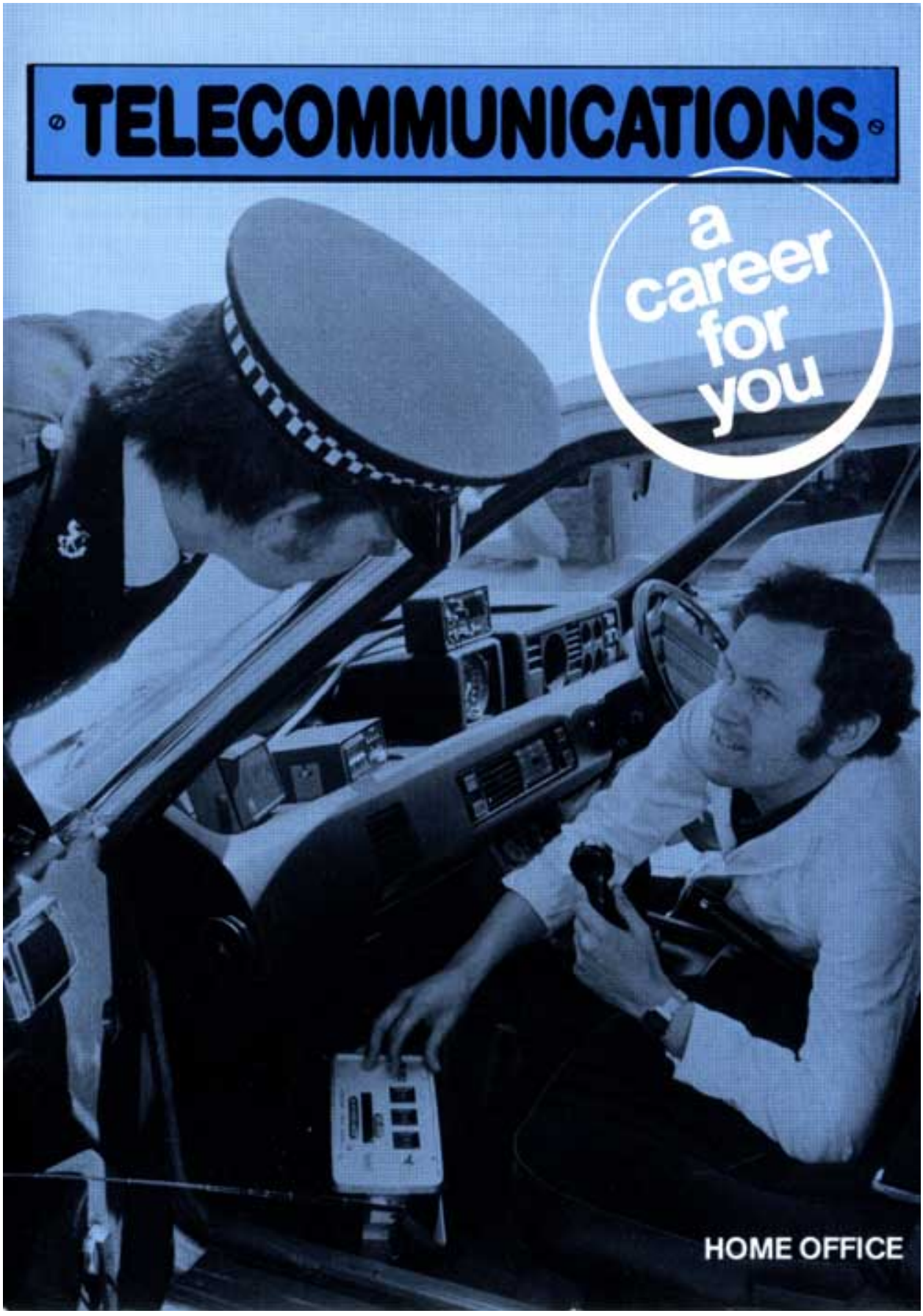
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
a career for you
HOME OFFICE

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One of the most rapidly expanding areas of work in Britain today is that of telecommunications. The Home Office Directorate of Telecommunications employs around 1300 technical and other support staff, some 600 of whom are qualified technicians. More are urgently needed to play a vital role in installing and maintaining VHF and UHF radio communications systems for police forces, fire brigades, prisons and other services in England and Wales. These systems cover a wide range of modern techniques, using digital equipment, logic systems and, increasingly, microprocessors.

Organisation

The Directorate of Telecommunications is divided into four sections, the largest of which is the Field Service. This, in effect, is the 'operational wing' and the one in which you would most likely be working, although there are opportunities to work at Harrow, Middlesex, preparing systems, evaluating equipment and carrying out quality assurance checks at factories.

The main functions of the Field Service section are the installation and subsequent maintenance of equipment to ensure that it remains fully operational. With over 700 different types in use, there is ample opportunity to develop a wide expertise and job interest.

◀ The Equipment Preparation Section at Harrow

Inset pictures, left to right: ▶

- Work in progress at a Maintenance Unit
- Inspecting a prison CCTV camera
- Digital work on a VDU

▲ Testing a VDU at Weyhill

Tracing a fault on a printed circuit board ▶

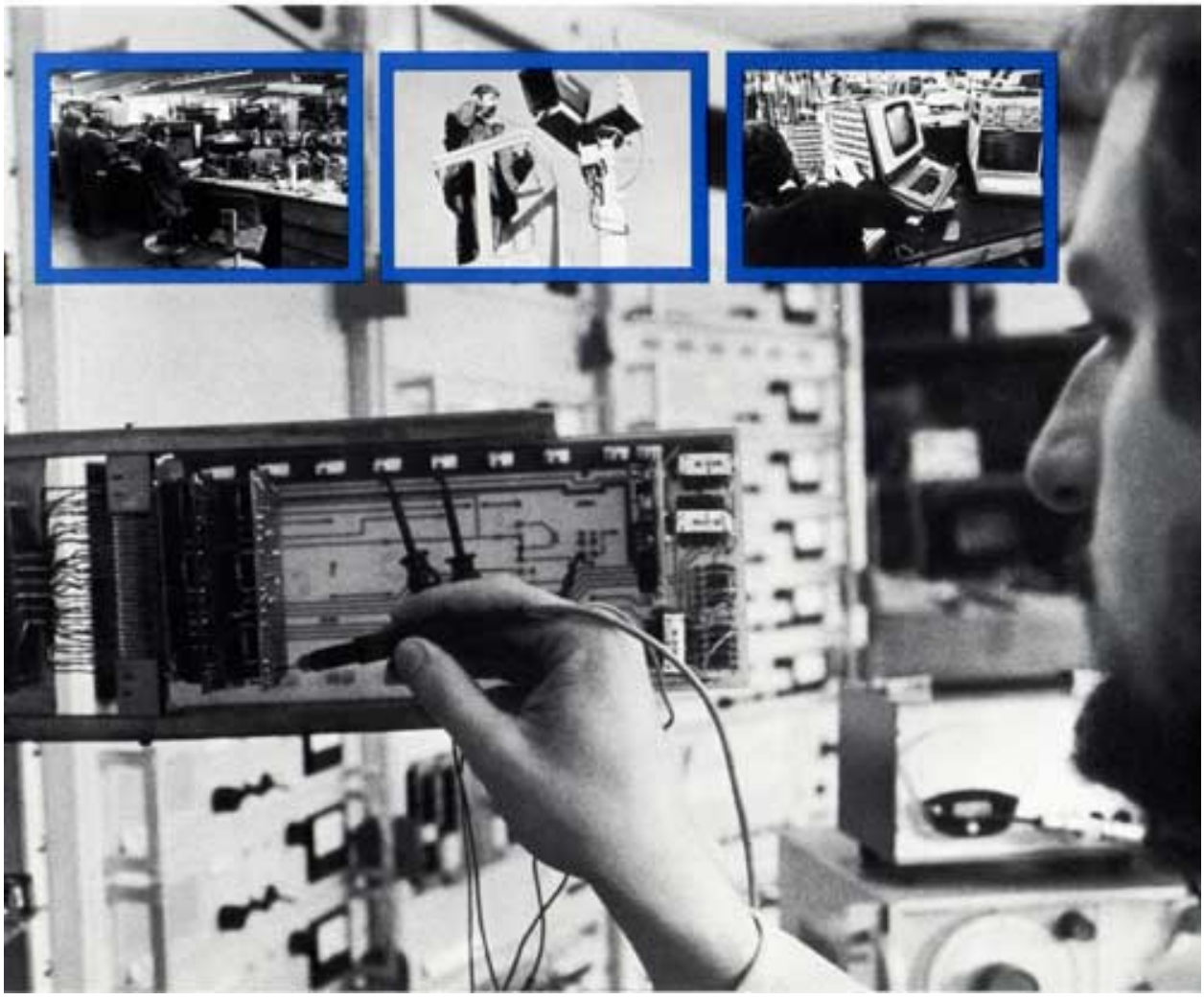
Installation and maintenance

The Field Service section is controlled from the Central Communications Establishment at Harrow, but operates throughout England and Wales on a regional basis. Many of the detachments are housed in police or fire service HQ buildings. As a technician, what would be your task?

Let's assume that you are employed at one of the many detachments dotted around the country.

You may, for example, be called upon to maintain radio link equipment at a hill-top radio site. Or attend to a UHF base station on the roof-top of an urban office block. Or a mobile transmitter/receiver in a fire appliance. Or the repair of closed circuit television (CCTV) at a prison. These operations and more would be part of your everyday job, and the safety of life and property could depend upon your skills.

Despite the emphasis on individual responsibility, you would by no means be on your own. You would be supported by a highly trained team of technical staff able to cope with or advise on any number of faults in the field. Two of the Directorate's Maintenance Units – at Bishops Cleeve (Gloucestershire) and Kippax (W. Yorkshire) – provide a corrective maintenance service for personal receivers and portable radios. Also at Kippax visual display units (VDUs) and vehicle availability equipment is included in this work. The third, at Weyhill, operates in a support and advisory role, installing and maintaining both the police and prison departments' CCTV equipment. It also maintains visual display terminals of the police national computer network,



which serves police forces throughout the country.

With the ever-increasing use of computers by the police, fire and other services, there is every opportunity for technicians to gain experience of working on systems using the latest technology.

National coverage

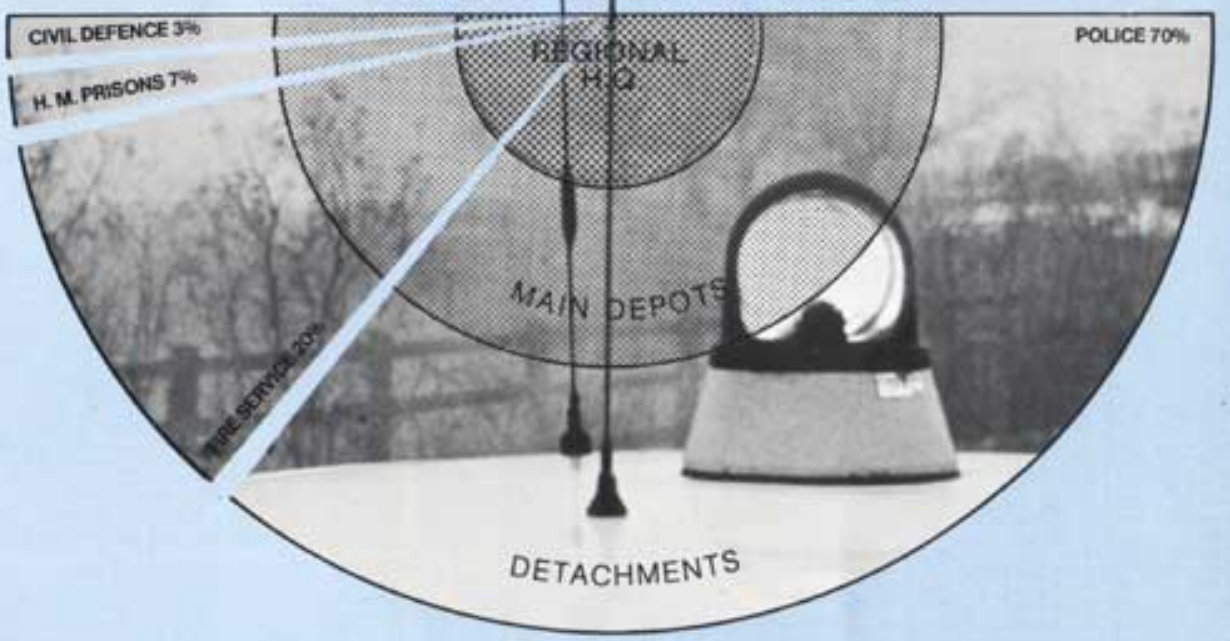
All technicians must be prepared to work in any part of England or Wales and in an emergency at any time,day or night (on a roster basis). That is part of the challenge involved. However, when deciding initial appointments, individual preferences and circumstances are taken into account.

Qualifications

Applications for the post of wireless technician are accepted from British subjects, men and women, who hold a City and Guilds Telecommunications Part 1 Certificate, or equivalent qualification and relevant experience. This could have been gained in the armed forces, or you might have served an apprenticeship in the electronics industry. You will need to have a good practical experience of construction or maintenance of VHF and UHF telecommunication equipment and be familiar with modern workshop techniques.

You must be able to drive, hold a current UK driving licence and, normally, have lived in the UK for at least five years. If your application is successful, you will work for a trial period first, and then become eligible for establishment 12 months after joining. Generous sick pay is granted and on retirement you could be entitled to a non-contributory pension and tax-free gratuity.

Field service



The Field Service operates throughout England and Wales and is divided into Regions. Each Regional HQ controls a number of main depots, of which there are 11, with each depot responsible for detachments (usually part of a police or fire service HQ in main towns and cities), and there are over 60 of these. Specialised service is also carried out at 3 maintenance units on a larger scale and flow line techniques are used. The co-ordination of this network is carried out by the Field Service HQ at Harrow in Middlesex.

Training

As a technician you would also be encouraged to take full advantage of day release courses and in-house training to improve your ability. The Directorate's own training centre at Harrow offers specialised courses in such subjects as radio systems, logic principles, visual display terminals and microprocessors.

Promotion and pay

There are good prospects for promotion. As a Senior Wireless Technician, the next grade, you could stay with Field Service or change over to the Development and Research Department. As a Chief Wireless Technician, one further step, planning telecommunication systems opens up an interesting future. Rates of pay are competitive and are regularly reviewed (see insert).

Hours of work

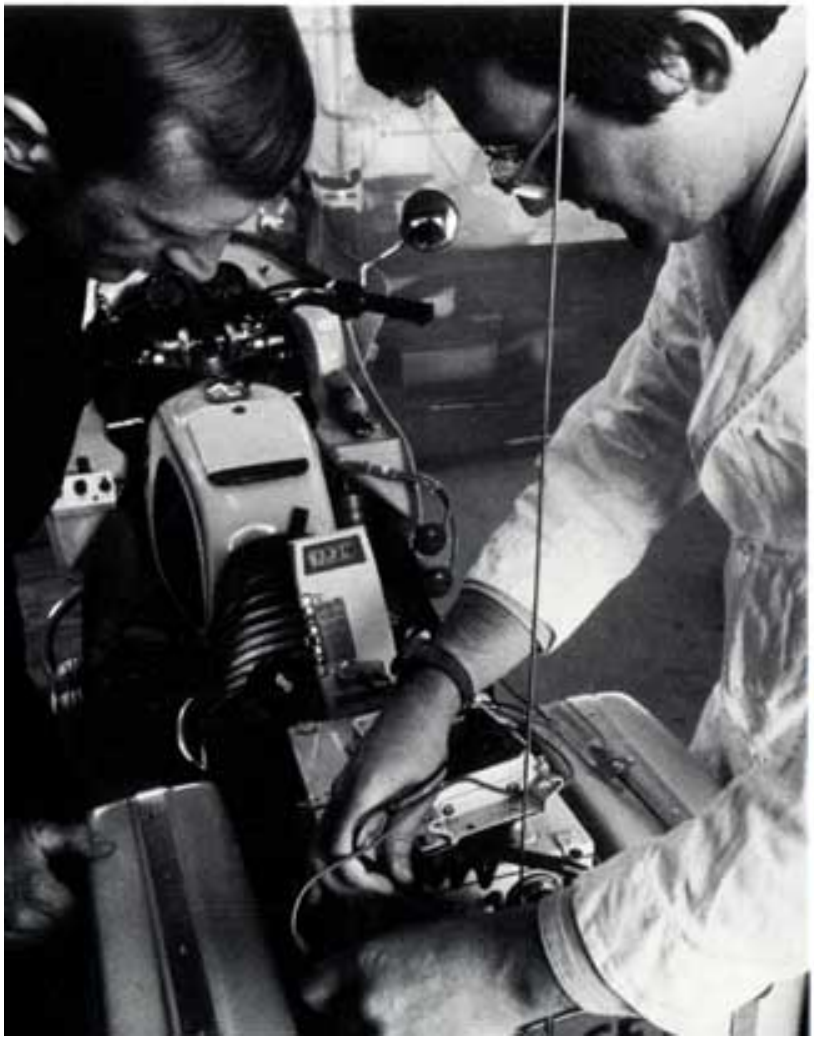
There is a basic gross 41-hour week in London and 42 hours elsewhere. Overtime is sometimes available: you would also get an extra allowance for being on the out-of-hours roster.

How to apply

Application forms, and further information are available from:

The Recruiting Officer
Directorate of Telecommunications
Home Office
Horseferry House
Dean Ryle Street
London SW1 2AW
Telephone: 01-211 5293 or
01-863 0393 ext. 216

or you can get in touch with the Officer-in-



▲ A fault-finding visit to a hill-top radio site

◀ Repairing a police motorcycle radio

Charge of one our main depots listed overleaf and have a look at the job for yourself.

If you are suitable, you could be invited to London or other main depots for an interview. You might be asked to take a trade test. If your total cost of travel is over £1, we will refund the difference between this and the cost of 2nd class rail travel or bus fare from your home.

Holidays

When you first join, you'll get 20 working days per year, which gradually increases to 30 days after 27 years' service or promotion.

In addition to this there are 10½ public and privilege holidays.

Locations

Headquarters

Home Office Central Communications Establishment, Harrow, Middlesex.

The Regions

There are Home Office Wireless Maintenance Units at Kippax, Leeds; Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham, Glos. and Weyhill, Andover, Hants.

The Home Office Regional Wireless Depots are at:

Billinge, Wigan, Lancs
Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan
Cheveley, Newmarket, Suffolk
Cranbrook, Kent
Hannington, Basingstoke, Hants
Harrow, Middlesex
Marley Hill, Newcastle upon Tyne
Romsley, Halesowen, Birmingham
Shapwick, Bridgwater, Somerset
Stanton, Nottingham
Kippax, Leeds.

There are also two Home Office Regional Wireless Sub-depots at Colwyn Bay, Clwyd, and Tavistock, Devon.

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