

SUPPLEMENT TO THE **HISTELEC NEWS**

DECEMBER 2004

SOUTH WESTERN ELECTRICITY BOARD CHRONOLOGY

1948 – 1990

by Peter Lamb

During the Winter 2001/02 at the request of a publisher, I did a considerable amount of research for a potential book on “Nationalised Electricity Supply Industry in the South West 1948 – 1990”, but after that effort the publishers changed their minds, so I give you a SWEB chronology instead. The information has been extracted from the Board Papers, which include the Chairman’s Monthly Reports. Also research from SW Electricity Magazines (1949-1962)# and the ESI Chronology*.

- Jan. 1948 **The Board** initially only consisted of four members appointed from 1st January 1948, who were Stanley Steward (Chairman), Harold Midgeley (Dep. Chairman), Frank Forrest & Sir John Kingcome. They had two meetings to decide and appoint more Board members and senior officers, which were held at Apsley Road, Bristol.
- Mar. 1948 **BOARD** - Three more Board Members were appointed for the 3rd Meeting. They were George Johnstone, A.N. (Bill) Irens & S. H. Payne. The senior officers appointed were :-
- Chief Engineer : George McLean (from Edmundsons)
 - Dep. C. Engineer : A.W.Allwood (from Dep. C.E. Norwich)
 - Chief Comm. Officer : Bob Steel (from Cheltenham)
 - Chief Accountant : Eric Knight (from Hampstead Borough)
 - Dep. C. Accountant : D.S. Duncan
 - Secretary : Vacant (Derek Wood was appointed later)
 - Dep. Sec. & Solicitor : Dan Bentham
- Fourth meeting held at the Pulteney Hotel, at which by then they had their offices.
- Apr. 1948 **BOARD** - Sixth Meeting held at Taunton. Decided to make Colston Avenue building their headquarters, but Ministry of Works refused!
- May 1948 Min. of Works given their permission and Geo. McLean given task to fit out one floor (2nd Floor) of Electricity House.
- Jun. 1948 **BOARD** - Secretary and Dep. Chief Comm. Officer appointed :- H.D.B.Wood and G.W.Richards.
- Load shedding – Sunday 23rd May 48.1MW
- Aug. 1948 **BOARD** - 1st meeting held at Electricity House.
- Electricity House - Reported that the greater part of 3rd floor would be complete by Opening Ceremony 17th September.
- Sept. 1948 Consultative Council - Ald. Perry from Plymouth invited to be Chairman of the South Western Consultative Council.
- Nov. 1948 Accountancy Problems – difficulty in installing Hollerith machines at Armada Street, Plymouth. Also difficulty in assimilating Christy Bros & Chudleigh accountancy systems.
- Load shedding again.
- Dec. 1948 Chulmleigh - Non-statutory undertaking to be purchased for £2000.
- Feb. 1949 Cornwall Rural Development driving ahead with 66.2% connected to the Edmundson’s plan.
- Mar. 1949 Clow Differential - Pressure from BEA being applied to impose this on tariffs, whereby Summer charges are lower than the Winter charges, which was resisted by the Board.
- Non-Stat. Undertakings - supplies to two non-statutory undertakings were refused – Colyton and Polruan. Both undertakings were D C and at Polruan there was no supply, due to a road closure and the oil tanker being unable to deliver.

- May 1949 Accounting Offices had been reduced to four during the year and a future reduction to two were planned, just Bristol and Plymouth.
- Jun. 1949 Central Construction Department (CCD) first established at Bindon Road, Taunton.
- Jul. 1949 Polruan non-statutory undertaking. SWEB agreed to run the generation for one year and vested in the Liskeard District Manager (totally illegal !!), until supply can be brought in. Consultative Council reported to be demanding a “subvention” or Government Subsidy towards Rural Development in the South West.
- Sept. 1949 Annual Report (1st) says Board are responsible for the Isles of Scilly. Consumers given as 531,000, an increase of 24,000. At least 55% beyond the reach of the existing 11kV network, including 27,000 farms.
- Nov. 1949 Rural Development – Line rental scheme adopted.
Window Display competition to be introduced.
- Jan. 1950 Reorganisation – Cornwall reduced to 5 districts and four Bristol Commercial Districts created, North, East, South and Central.
- Feb. 1950 Reorganisation Proposal – To merge two sub-areas, Torquay and Exeter by transferring Barnstaple and Tiverton to Taunton and Plymouth and W. Devon to Exeter.
- Apr. 1950 Non-Statutory Undertakings – Work to give a supply to Chulmleigh due to be completed in March. With Colyton, there had been no agreement reached to date.
Load shedding – Paper on the subject.
- Dec. 1950 Colyton Non-Stat – Owner agreed to accept £4000. Buildings retained but rented back.
BOARD - Death of Frank Forrest (Board member).
- Mar. 1951 Staff – A.C.Owen, Sub-area Manager for Cornwall retires.
- Apr. 1951 Staff – Frank Richardson and A.G. Milne appointed Ass't Chief Engineers. Bob Steele formerly Chief Commercial Officer moved to Bath as DM replacing Milne.
- Jun. 1951 Standard Tariffs – A report was presented to standardise tariffs replacing 137 tariffs.
- Jul. 1951 BEPC Brighton – Irens presented a paper on peak lopping using Diesel Generating Sets.
- Oct. 1951 Armada Street – found to be inadequate. Additional premises found at top floor Dingles St. Theresa's Bakery.
- Nov. 1951 Paper on “Sales of Appliances” – by Derek Wood, Secretary, who has taken over duties of Chief Comm. Officer, Bob Steel.
- Jan. 1952 **BOARD** - Stanley Steward – to stand BEA Board for one year.
- May 1952 Vesting of Assets – paper resolves to make agreements with 11 local authorities, and agreement has been reached with the BEA in respect of 23 of the 26 generating stations operating at vesting day. There is dispute over three – Minehead, Bideford & Weston-s-M.
- Jun. 1952 EDA Public Speaking Competition won by Alex Begbie of Torbay (2nd in National Final)
Consultative Council – had a meeting with Sir Henry Self asking again for a Subvention.
- Aug. 1952 Rural Devopm't – 1000th farm connected, Hendra Farm near Liskeard.
Mobile Service Centre – visiting villages in Taunton District.
- Oct. 1952 Lynmouth Floods reported Boards records recovered from upper floor above Gen. Station.
- Nov. 1952 Plymouth “B” opened 30th September.
- Dec. 1952 Brixham DC/AC Change-over nearly complete.
- Mar. 1953 Rural Development brought before the H of P by Sir Harold Roper. Subvention turned down by PS to Minister of F & P.
- May 1953 EDA Public Speaking Competition – Stuart Martyn from Cornwall won the men's National Final, Kathleen Barker (HO) came second in the Women's Section.
- Oct. 1953 Manor House Hotel, Moretonhampstead – National meeting on Rural Development
Target set of 85% farms connected within 10 years. Most Boards would achieve this, three (including SWEB) would not, probably take 15 years.
- Apr. 1954 Rural Development Charges changed from Line Rental scheme to R.D. Contributions.
- May 1954 BEA have agreed to give a grant to SWEB of £250,000/year from Central Reserve Fund.
- Sep. 1954 Mobile Showrooms – (**National First#**) 3 buses purchased.
- Mar. 1955 CCD doubling of capital works over the next three years.

- Apr. 1955 Herbert Committee - Chairman met Select Comm. on Nat. Industries.
East Yelland Power Station opened on 21st April 1955 by Lord Fortescue with Sir Henry Self present, he praises SWEB for their RD Programme anticipating a national RD Plan.
- Jun. 1955 **BOARD** - Stanley Steward made Chairman of EDA for one year.
- Oct. 1955 Paper by Chief Accountant – Recommending conclude contract with BTM and enter into new contract with IBM. Also preparations to combine CBO Plymouth (Billing) with MAO Bristol (Accounting) to form CAO at Plymouth.
- Dec. 1955 **BOARD** – Following the resignation of Stanley Steward, **A.N.(Bill) Irens** appointed Chairman from 1st March 1956.
Hire of Appliances – nat. agreement not to hire appliances, only to educational institutes.
- Apr. 1956 Vesting of Assets – two local authorities outstanding of 11, they are Bristol & Plymouth.
- May 1956 **BOARD** – H.Midgeley retires, E.C. Willis appointed in his stead
- Nov. 1956 St. Mary's (Scilly) Electricity Supply Co.Ltd, to be taken over by SWEB involving 5 Diesel Gen. Sets totalling 555KW and 11 staff.
- Feb. 1957 Staff – Chief Engineer, P.M.Wilson, appointed.
- Mar. 1957 **BOARD** - Derek Wood, Secretary resigned on being appointed Dep. Chairman of EEB
- Apr. 1957 **BOARD** – Dan Bentham appointed Secretary & Solicitor.
- Jul. 1957 CAO established with machine accounting transferred from Bristol to Plymouth
- Oct. 1957 Isles of Scilly – taken over 1st October, generation to be run on behalf of central authority.
- Jan. 1958 Reorganisation –12 directly managed districts proposed, reduced from 19 and the removal of Sub-Areas, Sub-Area Managers renamed Group Advisors.
(CEGB also reorganising from 11 Divisions to 5 Regions)
- May 1958 HV Plastic Aerial Cable (National First*) installed Heddon Valley, near Parracombe
Switched on by Jean Metcalfe, of BBC “ Family Favourites”, staying at the Hunters Inn.
- Jun. 1958 Standardisation – No. of DC consumers reduced from 2059 to 1182 in one year.
- Jul. 1958 Staff–DM's appointed, Exeter–Frank Richardson, Taunton– G. Ridge, E.Cornwall- Isaacs
- Sep. 1958 Reorganisation – Barnstaple reprieved, now to be 13 districts.
- Nov. 1958 Group Advisors – Messrs. Garwood and Hocking to retire on 31st December.
- Dec. 1958 Isles of Scilly – SWEB wished to conclude agreement with CEGB and to gain agreement from Minister to generate. Minister has issued formal consent.
- Jan. 1959 Paper on Gas Turbine Generation – For peak lopping and improve load factor.
Operational Research introduced to SWEB appointed Mr.A. Chisem to be in charge.
- Mar. 1959 **BOARD** - S.F.C.Whitmore, to be appointed as a member of the Board. (Dep.Chairman from 1stAug. upon E.C. Willis's retirement July 1959)
- May 1959 Three New Buildings under construction :- Elliott Rd., Plymouth, Locking Rd., WSM, and at Priorswood Rd., Taunton.
- Jun. 1959 Turbo-Generators – Annual Report stated that two units have been approved, one at Princetown and at another place to be decided. (Jan 1960 decided it would be Lynton).
Standardisation – also mentioned that only 74 DC consumers left on the system.
- Jul. 1959 CAO – Accountant in Charge appointed J.G.Byers replacing G.G.Vincent.
- Dec. 1959 Control Room – in Electricity House completed and opened by Lord Mayor including Turbo-Generator (National First*)- switching-on remotely generator at Princetown (11th December).
- Jun. 1960 Turbo-Generator - – Minister of Power visited Princetown Turbo-Generator on 30th.
- Nov. 1960 Turbo-Generator – 2nd site at Lynton switched on.
- Dec. 1960 Turbo-Generator – third one to be at Porlock.
Floods at Bath and Exeter
- Feb. 1961 Meter Test Stations at Plymouth and Taunton to close
- Feb. 1962 Isles of Scilly – Decision to purchase 2 – 450KW generators
- Oct. 1962 Isles of Scilly – protest by IOS Council via Consultative Council about high tariffs.
- Dec. 1962 SWEB Trade Mark registered, term is for 7 years and renewable.
- Feb. 1963 Turbo-Generator – Fourth unit to be established at Roseland near St.Mawes, Cornwall.

Sep. 1963 R.F.Richardson (Chief Comm. Officer) appointed Chairman of NWEB

Oct. 1963 A.O.Johnson appointed Chief Commercial Officer

Dec. 1963 Tricity "Electra" Cooker to bear SWEB label.

Jan. 1964 R.D. Terms – new ones issued from 1st April.

Mar. 1964 Turbo-Generator – Fifth generator to be installed at Mevagissey.

Apr. 1964 Berkeley Nuclear Station opened on 5th April – Chairman attended.
First Aid Competitions – Barnstaple team won the SW final and went on to win the national final, retaining the national trophy.

Jun. 1964 Barnstaple Old Gen. Station – to be converted into stores etc.
Iron Acton to Feeder Road 132kV circuit erected.

Jul. 1964 SWEB laid 132kV cables from Lockleaze to Mangotsfield.

Sep. 1964 SWEB Appliance Sales highest of any Board in terms of 1000 domestic consumers, a position they held for many years.

Oct. 1964 Chief Engineer - P.M.Wilson death reported at age of 62. Len Locker succeeds him.

Jan.1965 Volts Standardisation – Bristol to seek permission for a two stage volts conversion 210 to 240 i.e. 210 to 230 then 230 to 240 after ten years.

Feb. 1965 Control Room at Feeder Road opened i.e. transfer from Electricity House.

Mar. 1965 Blizzard hits the West Country on 6th March.

Aug. 1965 Pocket Substations (National First) first specially designed packaged substations installed in Bristol, made by three firms – SWS, Brush & Foster.

Nov. 1965 Load Shedding – November cold spell coldest for 100 years

Oct. 1966 CAO – IBM 360 Computer installed.

May 1967 Mini-Pillars services distribution demonstrated by Cornwall.
MBO to be introduced replacing Operational Research.

Sep. 1967 SWEB Brand to be changed to SWEBLINE, launched 13th November.

Jan. 1968 Helicopter Team (National First) established by the purchase of a Jet Ranger from Italy
132kV Assets proposed transfer from CEGB to SWEB.

Mar. 1968 Taunton Training Centre completed.

Apr. 1968 **BOARD - Chairman** has agreed to be Chairman of the S.W. Economic Planning Council for 3 years.
SWEBLINE Trade Mark registered
Pay & Productivity schemes to be introduced. Agreement with NJIC.

Oct. 1968 Tariffs – new Day & Night Tariff introduced, in order to phase out the afternoon boost.

Jun. 1969 Electricity Council held their 99th meeting at Electricity House, Bristol.
JOPP – job organisation, planning & programming to be introduced for controlling field activities.

Oct. 1969 **BOARD** – A.O.Johnson appointed to the Board as well as being Chief Comm. Officer.

Nov. 1969 Engineering – Consac aluminium cored and sheathed to be introduced.
P & P Agreement – agreed nationally with NJIC for a 10% wage increase.

Apr. 1970 Buildings – Piling commenced both at Feeder Road, Bristol and at CAO, Manadon.

Aug. 1970 Medallion Homes scheme being considered similar to national scheme.

Sep. 1970 Central Appliance Store being considered.

Nov. 1970 Capital Investment – Government have demanded a reduction over a two year period.
National Fuel Emergency – Coal Strike procedures have been worked out.

Mar. 1971 Overhead lines to revert to copper conductor, instead of aluminium due to corrosion.

Jun. 1971 Ghana Project – Four engineers volunteered to work in Ghana

Jul. 1971 Feeder Road – Avonbank Building opened 2nd July.

Sep. 1971 Isles of Scilly - St. Mary's Gen. Station 1MW set to be installed requiring a larger chimney.

Nov. 1971 CAO Staff moving into new building.

Dec. 1971 New Engineering Projects – Pocket Substations and Heat-shrink HV terminations.

Jan. 1972 **BOARD** – W.J.English, Board member knighted.

- Mar. 1972 Power Emergency – Rota Disconnections changed to meet consumer criticisms.
- May 1972 Building – Priorswood Road Old Bakery conversion complete. CCD staff move in.
- Sep. 1972 Reorganisation – proposal to reduce number of districts to 8. DM's appointed.
- Nov. 1972 Reorganisation – appointed two assistants for each district – Eng. and Comm. Managers.
- Feb. 1973 Reorganisation – New organisation stumbling with the Union negotiations.
- Mar. 1973 **BOARD - Chairman** – **Bill Irens** to retire and **Glyn England** appointed to replace him 1st August.
- Aug. 1973 **BOARD** – Board member Sir John English dies.
Consultative Council – David Atchley to replace Lady Carew Pole as Chairman since '52.
- Jan. 1974 Reorganisation Abandoned – Glyn England states “inappropriate to proceed”.
- Apr. 1974 Annual Report shows 13 Districts, Grouped as Bristol 3, Somerset 3, Devon 4, Cornwall 3
Comm. Sales of Appl.– shown as double all other Boards (all Board's average).
- Jun. 1974 Len Locker retires as Chief Engineer and John Winterburn appointed in his stead.
BOARD - Bryan Weston appointed Commercial manager and member of the Board.
Hydro-Stations - CEGB discusses closure of Mary Tavy, Morwellham and Chagford.
- Jul. 1974 David Legg appointed Assist. Chief Accountant.
- Sep. 1974 Urban Network Management (UNM) –Transf. Load Monitoring – Computers in Bristol & Plymouth being linked to enable information from the billing files to be used for UNM.
- Dec. 1974 Aluminium sheathed 11kV cable to be introduced to save £70,000 a year.
- Jan. 1975 Plowden Committee – Evidence of SWEB given for possible restructuring of the ESI.
- Apr. 1975 Portishead “A” Power Station to be closed 31st March 1976.
- Jun. 1975 **BOARD - Bryan Weston** appointed member of the Board.
- Jul. 1975 **BOARD - Glyn England** has accepted to be a part-time member of the CEGB for 2 years.
- Sep. 1975 Commercial Manager - Keith Oxtoby replaces Bryan Weston (Both Weston, 1949, and Oxtoby, 1951, were Eng. Students of SWEB).
- Oct. 1975 132kV Conductor Replacement – SWEB demands fully greased steel reinforced alum. conductors whereas CEGB were happy with only the inner conductor greased.
Staff – Robert Symons awarded the IEE Willis Jackson prize.
- Jan. 1976 Electric Car – Prince of Wales invited to test new Enfield 800 electric car.
- Mar. 1976 Alverdiscott 400/132kV S/S proposed, presumably with East Yelland closing later?
- May 1976 Staff - DM's appointed D.Smith and Ron Symons to Plymouth and West Cornwall resp.
Hayle Power Station to be closed.
- Jun. 1976 Ghana Project signed contract.
- Aug. 1976 Consultative Council Chairman changed - Mr. Pannell replaces Mr Atchley.
- Sep. 1976 DM appointment – Mr. P.L. Bass appointed to East Cornwall.
- Oct. 1976 DM appointment – Mr.F. Morris appointed to Taunton, replacing Mr. Cleave.
- Nov. 1976 **BOARD** - Glyn England appointed Chairman of CEGB from 30th June.
- Dec. 1976 Sec. Of State for Energy, Dr. J. Cunningham visited SWEB.
Staff - DM appointment – John Bee appointed to West Cornwall.
- Mar. 1977 **BOARD** – D.M.McGrouter appointed Dep. Chairman. Lady Carew Pole has died. (She retired as Chairman of Cons. Council in August 1973).
- May 1977 **BOARD - New Chairman appointed** – Kenneth Whittle appointed. Mr.Whitmore has agreed to stay on until 31st July.
- Jun. 1977 **BOARD** - Bryan Weston appointed Dep. Chair of Yorkshire Board.
Staff - DM appointment- Mr. Fletcher appointed to Bath replacing Mr. Bax.
- Aug. 1977 Group Engineer appointment – David Tucker appointed.
- Oct. 1977 Ghana Project reported to be into Phase III.
- Mar. 1978 NMS Studies to test volt drop and load calculations.
- Apr. 1978 Blizzard Report (Feb) issued.
Feeder Road to St.Pauls 132kV cable under construction.
- May 1978 Employees – 3473 industrial plus 107 craft apprentices & 3153 non-industrial. As at March 1978, being 354 less than last year.

- Aug. 1978 New Tariff – new Day/Night tariffs to be introduced.
- Oct. 1978 **BOARD - Dep. Chairman**, Mr. McGrouther, to leave to take up an appointment with EC.
- Nov. 1978 **BOARD - Dep. Chairman** – Mr. Brian Townsend appointed from 1st December.
- Nov. 1978 “Brown Goods” to be sold in shops from 2nd October.
Economy 7 Leaflets sent out explaining revised off-peak times.
Centralised Appliance Stores – Bristol operational from April 1979, similar to Norton Fitzwarren and independent of Exeter.
- Jan. 1979 Proposed Closure of Certain Shops – SWEB have “some 100 shops”, double the average of all Boards. Closures Yelverton, Polperro, Millbrook, Lostwithiel & Budleigh Salterton.
- Mar. 1979 New Depot for Torquay at Watcombe operational.
- Apr. 1979 Alverdiscott 132kV Substation deferred until 1983.
- Jul. 1979 132kV Reconductoring – paper approved to spend £401,000 for 30kM, already completed 264kM between 1974 – 1978.
- Aug. 1979 Management Structure Change – proposed 13 districts grouped into 4 managed units as
Avon – 355,500 consumers Somerset – 175,600 consumers
Devon – 357,000 consumers Cornwall – 181,400 consumers
- Sep. 1979 SWEDAT – new remote control system at a cost of £7M proposed.
- Jan. 1980 Ghana Project III struggling due to revolution.
- Feb. 1980 Area Managers appointed – Severnside : F. Morris, Somerset : G. Ashwood,
Devon : C.C. Brazier, Cornwall : J.C. Bee.
- Jul. 1980 Consultative Council – New chairman appointed, Rear Admiral W.J.McClune.
Alverdiscott 132kV Substation – approval sought to spend £1,178,000.
- Oct. 1980 Plymouth “B” Power Station to be decommissioned from October 1981.
- Nov. 1980 Board’s Corporate Identity – new colour (red) & logo launched with van in new livery.
Engineering – New hybrid service cable to be standard.
- Dec. 1980 Restructuring of NJCC – coordinating councils to replace advisory councils at all levels.
- Mar. 1981 More Shop Closures – 19 targeted, but only 4 agreed.
- Oct. 1981 Portishead “B” Power Station closure to be brought forward from 1985 to 1st Oct. 1982.
- Nov. 1981 New Computers – CAO : IBM 3033, Eng : IBM 4331
- Dec. 1981 132kV Transfer – control transfer to be in 1985.
- Mar. 1982 SWEDAT/SWECOM – Tenders invited.
New Blizzard Report – December 13th to 19th 1981
- Apr. 1982 Headquarters Restructuring – basically Chief Officers to become Directors.
SWEDAT/SWECOM – contracts to be placed with Westinghouse & Plessey resp.
- Sep. 1982 Isles of Scilly – report no economic case!
- Nov. 1982 Isles of Scilly – further report in response to paper by “Mains Electricity Action Group”
Stating basically that it is too expensive.
- Dec. 1982 Bath Depot – to be at Radstock Road, MSN. Walcot St. & Dorchester St to be sold.
- Mar. 1983 Employees – 3278 Industrial & 2736 Office Staff = 6014 total.
- May 1983 New Computer – delivered to CAO on 21st March - IBM 3083 – E16 Cost = £520,000
- Jun. 1983 Isles of Scilly – Judge not prepared to issue a Declaration in favour of St. Mary’s Tariff.
- Jul. 1983 I of S – SWEB have approved the use of waste heat from Gen. Sta. for St. Mary’s Hosp.
- Sep. 1983 Portable Billing Machine by Immediate Billing Systems PLC tested in Exeter.
- Oct. 1983 Solid State Meters – by Sangamo purchased. They are less vulnerable to tampering.
- Dec. 1983 132kV System Control – SWEB took over control of Northern Section on 6th Nov. and will take over the remainder on 6th Dec.
- Feb. 1984 Tariff Revision – Government has set External Financing Limits (EFL) for all Boards.
SWEB target of 1.85% return on net assets for 2 years, results in increasing tariffs by 2%.
- Mar. 1984 East Yelland Power Station to close at the end of October 1984.
- Apr. 1984 Redland Training Centre to be sold for £287,603.

- May 1984 Turbo-Gen – Silencing and exhaust systems have collapsed at Mevagissey & Princetown.
NAFIRS – SWEB commenced direct entry of Fault info from 1st April 1984.
I of S – Marine Survey complete.
Network Management System (NMS) – to be implemented throughout the Board.
Alverdiscott 400/132kV Grid Station – commissioned 29th April.
- Jul. 1984 Wind Farm – planning permission given for one at Slade Farm, Woolacombe, Somerset.
- Jul. 1984 Radio Teleswitches (60) purchased.
SF6 Switchgear Pole Mounted Reclosures- Probably **the first** in the Country.
- Nov. 1984 Electric vehicles – 2 Dodge & Bedford vans are in service.
- Dec. 1984 Isles of Scilly – Letter to Earl of Avon, Dep. Of Energy, confirming that the Board will bear cost of undersea 11kV cables (to the outer islands), but cost to potential consumers would be £1000 each for LV mains etc. Board to apply for EEC grants.
- Mar. 1985 I of S – Board given approval to spend £2,615,000 with contributions amounting to £1,630,000 supported by the Duchy of Cornwall, IOS Council, Countryside Comm.(CC), Cornwall C.C., and Tresco Estates. Extra costs of U/G by the Duchy, CC, and European Development Fund.
- Mar. 1985 Auto-reclosers – Faros Scheme of pneumatic reclosers installed.
- May 1985 SWECOM – Microwave system commissioned for communication between HO & CAO.
SWEDAT – First part in operation by end of March.
- May 1985 **BOARD** – David Jones appointed Engineering Director.
- Sep. 1985 **BOARD** – J.M.H. Walker retired as Financial Director.
- Oct. 1985 **BOARD** – Richard Paine appointed Financial Director from 1st Nov.
- Jan. 1986 Head Office – Paper presented to spend £5.68M for a new building at Aztec West.
Radio Teleswitches to be used instead of time-switches for Economy 7 Tariff.
- Apr. 1986 **BOARD** – Brian Townsend left to take up appointment as Chairman of MEB.
Manager, Devon – Cliff Brazier retires and replaced by George Ashwood.
- Jun. 1986 **BOARD** – John Seed appointed Deputy Chairman from 1st June.
Management – Bruce Merrick appointed Area Manager Somerset.
Economy 7 – Paper by J.A.G.Bonner on requirement for new regimes, since night peaks are 10% above day peaks.
- Jul. 1986 Management – John Spiller appointed Area Engineering Manager, Severnside.
- Aug. 1986 Bills' Price Reduction – Following Coal Board agreement with CEGB a reduction can be given of 0.2p/unit on all bills.
- Sep. 1986 Bath Offices – sold for £775,000.
Appliance Servicing – Paper 185 ind. staff completed 165,000 jobs with turnover £5.37M.
- Oct. 1986 Selston Report – National report on substation safety received, which eventually required work on all outdoor substations.
- Nov. 1986 Growth of Night-time Loads – Elec. Council concerned at increased capital programme, but paper stated that it was not appropriate to increase off-peak tariffs, since it was in the national interest. First time SWEB's MD occurred at night, 1st March at 1.30am=2324MW
- Jan. 1987 Radio Teleswitches – Installation begun.
- Feb. 1987 New HQ – Board approval given to spend £6.98M on new offices at Aztec West.
BOARD –New Chairman appointed Mr. A.W.Nicol from 29th April (Ken Whittle retires).
I of S –New Diesel generator 1.9MW for St. Mary's Gen. Sta. Mirrlees Blackstone deliv'd
- Mar. 1987 Fibre Optic Cable – First cable laid between CAO and Elliott Road, Plymouth.
- Apr. 1987 Wind Generator (120KW) – erected on St. Mary's, I of S with grant from EEC.
- Jun. 1987 Appliance Servicing – Paper states losses in years :- 80/81, 81/82, 83/84
Profit in years :- 82/83, 84/85, 85/86, 86/87
Industry has agreed a rate of 5% return.
- Jul. 1987 Privatisation – Paper by Chairman and Secretary with no obvious conclusions.
- Sep. 1987 Customer Care – Paper on the importance of customer satisfaction. First mention of “customers” instead of “consumers”.

- Oct. 1987 I of S – Marine survey for a mainland link undertaken on 14th September.
- Dec. 1987 Appliance Servicing Report – inconclusive, still difficulties ahead.
Contracting Report – Showing only small increase over same period last year.
Appliance Marketing Report – Turnover slightly above last year. The improvement in market share was in excess of that for other Boards.
- Feb. 1988 Vending Machines – First installed in Bristol in January.
- Mar. 1988 I of S – Mainland connection approved at a cost of £6.255M.
- May 1988 Control Room – Somerset closed following installation of SWEDAT and SWECOM.
- Jun. 1988 Computer – CAO had new IBM 3090 – 200 in March at £1.57M, now it is required to upgrade to IBM 3090 – 300E at a cost of £1.372M.
Key Operated Meters – 10,000 purchased at a cost of £1.388M.
- Oct. 1988 Superstore – Approval sought for first superstore at Cribbs Causeway at £634,000.
- Feb. 1989 Privatisation – Chairman states that Secretary of State has announced his intention of appointing me as Chairman and John Seed as Managing Director.
Strategy Steering Group set up consisting of all senior officers, Nicol, Seed, Marshall, Oxtoby, Paine, Carson and also John Bonner appointed Director of Privatisation.
Plus four advisory companies.
- Mar. 1989 Reorganisation – The rationale has emerged of a new Trading Division has been approved by the Board, for the opportunity it offers of reducing overheads on three accounts.
New Superstore – at Marsh Mills, Plymouth expenditure considered.
- Mar. 1989 **BOARD** – Keith Oxtoby to be released from his post to work with Bristol & Avon Enterprise Agency. W.T.R. Meadows appointed Trading Director. Richard Paine to be Director of Corporate Development with new Financial Director, John Sellers, appointed.
- Jun. 1989 Electricity House – sold for £9,627,000, whereas it only cost £9,923,500 to establish HQ at Aztec West, including land purchase etc. Aztec West now too small requiring an extension at £2.3M!
I of S – The mainland connection cost £7M with 55% grant from European Regional Development Fund enabling tariffs to be equalised between the Isles and the mainland.
Superstore – Cribbs Causeway achieved a £900,000 sales in first 15 weeks.
Computer – New IBM 3090 mainframe installed enlarging computer capacity.
Operations Division – new title of report of Engineering Department plus possibly Energy Marketing.
- Sep. 1989 Share Registrar – appointed Nat Westminster Bank.
Corporate Communications Budget (i.e. for PR/Advertising) sought approval to spend £550,000 towards flotation.
- Oct. 1989 Central Appliance Store at Exeter is now complete.
- Nov. 1989 Brokers appointed.
- Dec. 1989 Renewable Energy – Paper by John Bonner mentions CEGB experimental wind farm at Carmarthen Bay. Seven sites considered in the South West total capacity of 37MW.
- Jan. 1990 Employee Share Scheme is considered.
Teeside Power Project – Proposed to approve an agreement to purchase electricity from the new power station with Enron/ICI and if possible obtain equity stake in the new project.
- Feb. 1990 2nd Board Meeting of the new South Western Electricity plc., to be on 5th March.
January Storm – Major emergency on 25th Jan. Loss of supply to 250,000 customers.
- Mar. 1990 Consultation Council – Final meeting held and all outstanding issues to be dealt with by the Office of Electricity Regulation (Offer).
BOARD - Last Meeting of the Nationalised Board held after 42 years – it was the 495th.