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(NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION)
Lungsod ng Quezon

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OUR REFERENCE:

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. ³⁶____, Series 1997

MEMORANDUM

TO : THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATORS,
DEPARTMENT MANAGERS, REGIONAL IRRIGATION MANAGERS,
OPERATIONS MANAGERS, PROJECT MANAGERS, PROVINCIAL
IRRIGATION OFFICERS, IRRIGATION SUPERINTENDENTS, AND ALL
OTHER CONCERNED

FROM : THE ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT : CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF
IAS AND THEIR FEDERATIONS/CONFEDERATION

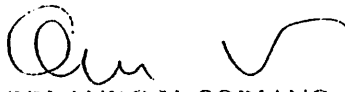
In the effort to realize the agency's vision of a functional and dynamic NIA-IA relationship working in partnership to accelerate irrigation development and provide efficient levels of irrigation service, everybody is hereby enjoined to support the growth and development of Irrigators Associations and their federations/ confederation through the following programs/activities:

- facilitate the formation/establishment and registration of IA federations at the Provincial and Regional Levels, the elected Presidents of which shall respectively compose the General Assembly and the Board of Directors of the National Confederation of Irrigators Associations (NCIA) organized during the First National IA Congress held last 18-20 June 1997;
- provision of transport and/or financial assistance (traveling expenses and meal allowances) to IA or federation officers in attending meetings, conferences and trainings organized and/or sponsored by NIA. Such expenses shall be charged against the IDP funds, Viability Incentive Grants or any available funds subject to existing auditing and accounting rules and regulations. This financial assistance shall be provided until such time that the IAs and their federations/confederation have already attained financial capability to participate in such undertakings;
- making available our communication facilities, records and documents for use by the IA leaders in the pursuance of their duties and responsibilities provided that the purpose shall not in any way jeopardize the agency's operations. The use of equipment and other similar facilities by the IAs shall be subject to existing policies and guidelines of the NIA;
- provision of office space for IA officers and their use of conference rooms in conducting meetings and other similar activities;

- strengthening the NIA-IA partnership in the management of irrigation systems through the following:
 - organization of provincial and/or regional congresses as venues for discussing the issues and problems being encountered by the NIA and the IAs; and, thereby, jointly come up with suitable strategies and action plans to resolve such issues and problems most importantly at the local level;
 - establishment of System Management Committees (SMCs) in all National Irrigation Systems (NISs) which shall serve as formal forums and regular meeting platforms between NIA and the IAs on all matters relating to operation and maintenance including the planning and implementation of rehabilitation and restoration/repair works. Similar forums shall be established in each PIO to address the issues and concerns of IAs in Communal Irrigation Systems. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for SMCs in NIS is attached for reference. The SMCs and such other similar forums are meant to strengthen the bond between NIA and its irrigation beneficiaries, and shall serve as the venues in conducting the O&M dialogues as embodied under M.C. No. 32, S. 1991;
- prompt payment of all dues to IAs with contracts with the NIA particularly canal maintenance remuneration and ISF collection incentive. It is emphasized that payment of these accounts shall be given top priority in order to avoid negative implications in our drive to improve ISF collections;
- devise mechanisms and formulate programs to promote and enhance the financial capabilities of the IAs and their federations/confederation, hence, making them financially self-reliant in the near future; and
- continued efforts in strengthening the mass base of the IAs by providing assistance to the IA leaders and officers in conducting orientation seminars/trainings and/or refresher courses for the general membership on such subjects as water management, crop production but more importantly on the O&M responsibilities of the IA, its By-Laws and other rules and regulations.

Whilst "We do our best for NIA's best", our achievements can become meaningful only if our beneficiary farmers become successful in reaping the benefits of irrigation. It is therefore emphasized that we must explore all means to provide the IAs continued assistance and guidance so that they could become self-reliant organizations capable of attending to the needs and welfare of their constituents, and in performing their O&M tasks on a sustainable basis.

For your guidance and compliance.


 ORLANDO V. SORIANO

September 30, 1997

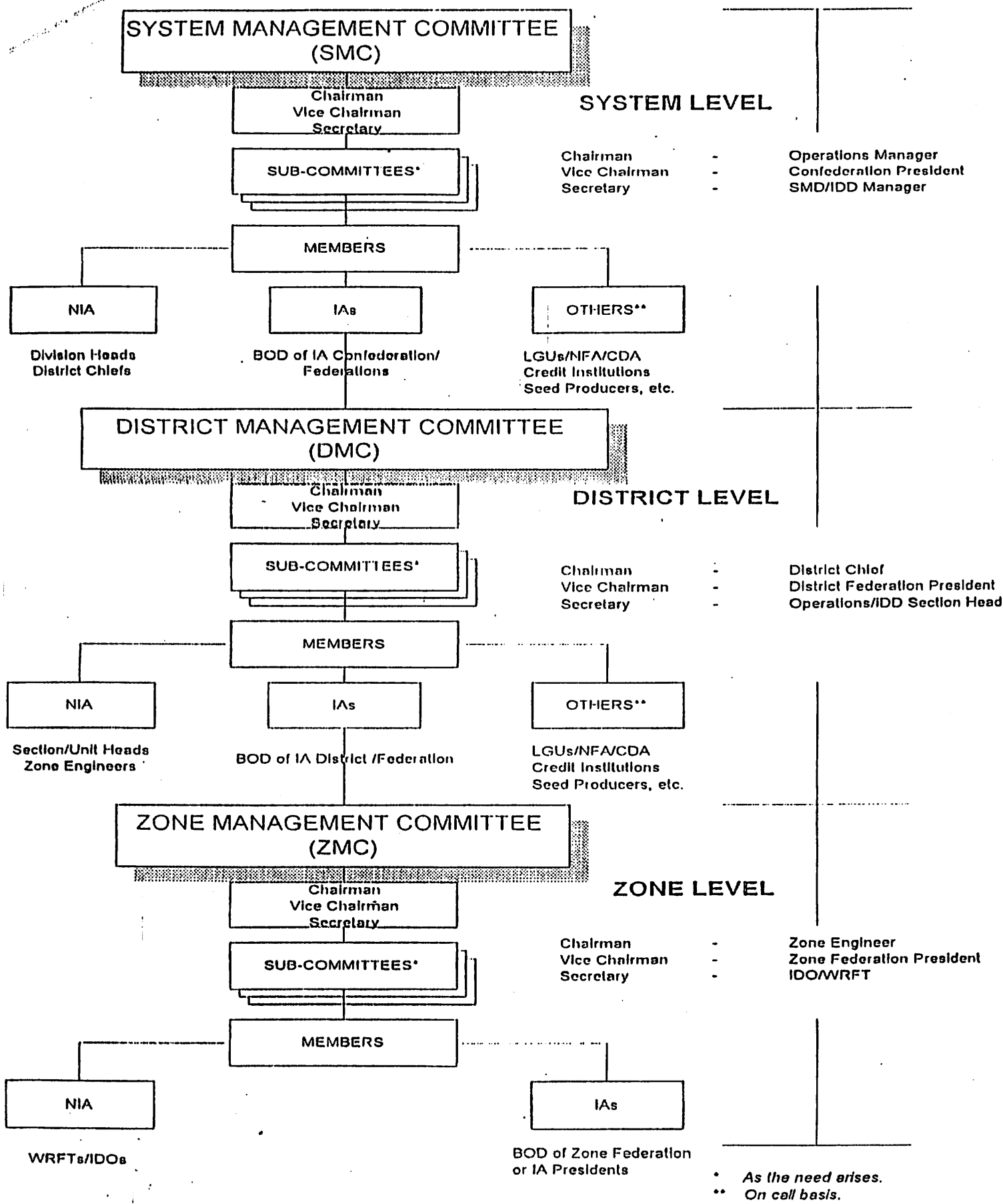


Figure 2. SMC Organizational Structure for Large NIS

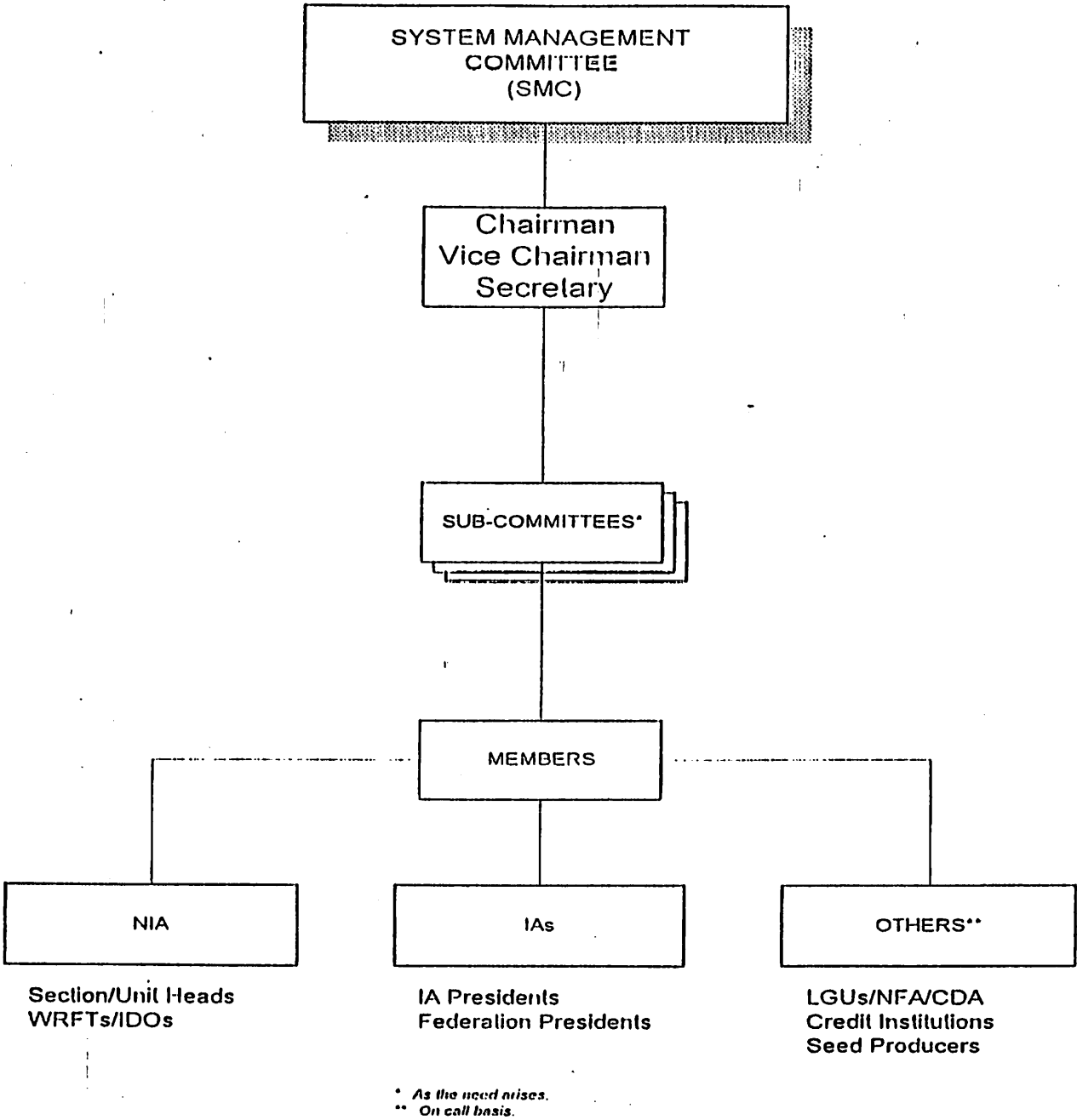


Figure 1. Typical SMC Organizational Structure for Small and Medium Size NIS

In addition, and without limiting its responsibilities, the SMC shall:

- a) collect, exchange and disseminate any information/decision on system O&M including the procurement of goods and services, and work performance;
- b) advise NIA Central Office through the Regional Irrigation Offices on policy matters and other programs (trainings, etc.) which are considered necessary for improving the performance of the irrigation system; and
- c) endeavor to establish close linkages and rapport with relevant government agencies, LGUs and other institutions for the effective and efficient delivery of support services.

VI. Organizational Setup

The organizational structure of SMC for a typical national irrigation system (small and medium size: <20,000 ha service area) is shown in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows the setup for relatively large irrigation systems, i.e. AMRIS, MRIIS and UPRIS.

- c) to disseminate information and ideas, and to make decisions on system O&M so as to achieve transparency on the management processes between NIA and the farmers, and other concerned parties; and
- d) to foster a functional and dynamic NIA-IA partnership by encouraging mutual cooperation and sharing of resources in the management of the irrigation system.

IV. Membership Composition and Officials

The SMC shall be composed of the following:

- a) the Irrigation Superintendent/District Chief (IS/DC), his assistant and the heads of the relevant sections/units particularly O&M, finance, billing and collection; and
- b) farmer representatives specifically the IA Presidents. In case no IA is existing, the concerned farmers shall elect a leader who shall serve as their representative to the SMC.

The representation of the relevant government agencies, LGUs and other institutions shall be on call basis or as the need arises. This is to limit the SMC to a manageable size.

The IS/DC and his assistant shall serve as Chairman and Secretary of the SMC, respectively. One of the IA Presidents shall be elected to the position of SMC Vice Chairman. In case a system level federation of IAs is existing, the federation President shall serve as the Vice Chairman.

In case of big systems (service area of 20,000 ha and above), similar committees (Zone Management Committee, ZMC) shall be established at the zone level to be chaired by the Zone Engineer. Other officials of the ZMC shall be decided by the members during the organizational meeting of the committee.

V. Functions

The SMC shall function as a decision making body on O&M matters and as a meeting platform between NIA and the beneficiary farmers. The SMC shall decide on a consensus basis (to be reflected in the minutes of meetings) on the following matters;

- a) overall planning of O&M activities and programs;
- b) identification and implementation of proposed physical improvement works including the planning of farmers' contributions;
- c) inspection, approval and turnover/acceptance of completed improvement works;
- d) monitoring and evaluation of individual IA, IA federation and overall system O&M performance; and
- e) planning and implementation of other development activities geared towards enhancing the capability of the IAs to become functional, cohesive and viable organizations of irrigation water users;

SYSTEM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SMC)

Terms of Reference

I. Background and Rationale

For almost two decades now, NIA has been implementing programs for the organization and development of Irrigators Associations (IAs) as partners in irrigation development and management. In the national irrigation systems most of the IAs have entered into contract with the NIA for their assumption of O&M responsibilities under various types of agreements. As of 1994, 1,553 IAs (87% of the number of registered IAs) covering a total service area of about 433,000 ha (68% of the total service area of NIS) have entered into contract with the NIA.

The delegation of O&M responsibilities or Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) to IAs will necessarily introduce changes in the administrative functions and operational setup of irrigation systems. As more and more O&M activities are delegated to the IAs it becomes imperative for the IAs to partake in the decisions and actions concerning the management of the irrigation system. In order to strengthen the relationship between the NIA and the IAs, NIA has initiated in 1990 the conduct of NIA-IA dialogues on regular basis (at least three times in a cropping season). While in most cases these dialogues have been bringing about fruitful results, much has yet to be desired in setting up a mechanism more responsive to the changing administrative and operational outlooks in the management of national irrigation systems. Nurturing the partnership between NIA and the IAs will necessitate the establishment of a working body or committee at the system level which shall serve as the forum and meeting platform between the NIA and the farmers through their duly elected representatives to exchange views and make decisions on all matters relating to the management of the irrigation system. The sustainability of the O&M of irrigation systems will depend much on the degree of collaboration, cooperation and coordination between the NIA and the IAs in the planning and implementation of programs and activities geared towards improving irrigation system performance particularly the collection of irrigation of service fees. For a more meaningful undertaking between NIA and the IAs, it is therefore indispensable to establish a System Management Committee (SMC).

II. Establishment

At the system level a System Management Committee (SMC) shall be established, through which NIA shall share with the farmers through their representatives the responsibility for the management of the O&M of the irrigation system including the planning and implementation of improvement works and other activities jointly identified with the farmers for improving the performance of the irrigation system. The objectives, composition, functions and organizational set-up of the SMC are specified below.

III. Objectives

The SMC shall be set up:

- a) to reflect farmers views and experience in the management of the irrigation system;
- b) to achieve a consensus between NIA and the farmers on key matters which are vital for improving the management of the irrigation system;