INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended for people in management and admin-
istrative positions who do not themselves possess a knowledge
of printing techniques but whose organisations need to have
anything from a few dozen copies to one or two thousand
copies of inexpensive printed materials to support their
work.

In the formal education sector such people may be lecturers
and teachers wishing to prepare learning materials for their
students, or they may be curriculum developers, schools broad-
casters or distance educators. In non-formal education they
may be engaged in literacy training, agricultural extension,
health and nutrition education, sanitation projects, village
co-operatives or a variety of other community development
projects. Outside of education they may belong to non-
governmental or commercial organisations, or to businesses
wishing to bring the services they offer to the attention of
the general public. They may require leaflets, newsletters,
pamphlets or booklets. They may have access to an electrical
power supply, or they may not.

Though the range of such people is wide, and their needs
diverse, they are likely to have the following things in
common:

A limited capital budget with which to purchase equipment.

A clear idea of immediate needs, an expectation of growth,
but no certainty of the pace and direction of that growth.

One or more typewriters, and one or more secretaries with
typing and other office skills.

Printing requirements which fluctuate to an extent that
specialist printing staff cannot be fully (and therefore
economically) employed, and a staff structure which does
not easily assimilate the employment of printers at salary
levels comparable to those they can obtain in commerce.

No skilled staff to operate sophisticated printing machinery or to maintain and repair it.

A need to be able to exercise close supervision of every operation from the time that printed materials are first conceived up to the time they are distributed.

What this handbook sets out to do is to help management staff to make informed decisions on the purchase and utilisation of small-scale printing equipment which suits their needs and takes into account the budgetary and personnel constraints within which most organisations are compelled to operate. It recognises the problems - both mechanical and economic - that confront anyone given the responsibility of starting up a printing unit.

Its sequence follows as closely as possible the stages that have to be undertaken in preparing and producing printed materials. It begins with methods of setting the text, including typewriter setting, word processing, photocomposition and headlining, and continues with graphics, layout, and the other processes involved in preparing camera-ready copy. Then come three sections dealing with the various ways of producing multiple copies of printed materials - by mimeographing, silk screening and offset printing. There is also a section on the process camera and darkroom for units requiring relatively large quantities of high quality work. Various ways of collating, folding, binding and trimming are then described, and the main part of the handbook concludes with procedures and practices required in managing a small printing unit. Wherever possible the relative advantages and disadvantages of the different processes and machines are compared as an aid in assessing which of them are best suited to units of different sizes.

Inevitably, a book of this size cannot hope to cover every eventuality, and questions are sure to arise which it does not answer. In these circumstances, the best thing to do is to seek advice from a printing unit similar in size to yours, or consult someone with expertise in the subject provided that the person is impartial and not personally engaged in selling printing equipment.