

BS 741#804B
CATALOGUE OF SUPPLIES

1. GENERAL

1.01 This section covers the various features to be considered in the preparation of a Catalogue of Supplies for use of Telephone Company employees. As the primary purpose of a Catalogue of Supplies is to facilitate the ordering of supplies, tools, furniture, etc., for conducting the day-to-day business, it should comprise a relatively complete list of materials, tools, apparatus, office supplies, building service supplies, first aid supplies and furniture and fixtures which have been approved for Company use. It should be in a form that provides essential, yet brief, item information arranged for easy reference.

1.02 Miscellaneous piece parts, special tools not widely used, most large items of equipment, and other items, the ordering of which is confined to a relatively few employees, should not be listed in a Catalogue of Supplies. Items in these categories are usually described in general letters, Bell System Practices and other generally distributed media, copies of which are retained for reference by the employees interested.

2. SECTIONS

2.01 The division of a catalogue into sections may be either on the basis of nature of items, such as plant materials, first aid supplies, tools, stationery and office supplies, printed forms, etc., or on the basis of employee ordering groups, that is, grouping the items, regardless of nature, in sections to cover the range of requirements of general ordering groups of employees.

2.02 A sectional breakdown on the basis of nature of items involves a relatively large number of sections and has the disadvantage of requiring the user to mentally determine classification or group before he can make alphabetical reference to the listing; also there are some items in common use which, because of their nature,

may require duplicate listings or cross-reference in more than one section, or entail the possibility of reference to more than one section.

2.03 The alphabetical listing of all items within the regular requirement range of a general group of requisitioners appears to provide the more logical and convenient reference arrangement and in this form only two alphabetical sections (in addition to a General Section) are usually required. Generally, there are only two broad groups of material-ordering employees, the plant force and the office or clerical force. The plant force regularly orders apparatus and materials, tools, first aid supplies, and cleaning materials and a "Material" section including all these classes of items in alphabetical order will facilitate reference and the preparation of requisitions, simplify catalogue maintenance and eliminate the need for cross-reference or duplicate listings. A section for general use of the office or clerical force would include all items not in the "Material" section, such as stationery and office supplies, printed forms, furniture and fixtures, and Traffic Department rest room and dining service supplies.

2.04 Based on the theory of straight alphabetical listing of all items within the usual ordering range of the major order-placing employee groups, the following catalogue sections are suggested:

Section I—General Information

This section should contain all general information and instructions for using the catalogue and preparing requisitions. The arrangement of listings should be explained as well as the need for accuracy in ordering, and meaning of special symbols and abbreviations used in the listings, and any other general information which will aid in the use of the catalogue and the requisitioning of materials. Facsimiles of prepared requisitions or "sample orders" are helpful in this connection.

Section II — General Telephone Supplies

This section should list all generally required items of apparatus, tools and materials which are approved for use in the construction and maintenance of station and outside plant, central office equipment and all supplies approved for use in connection with the operation of buildings, as well as first aid and medical supplies and motor vehicle supplies and accessories.

Section III — Stationery, Office Supplies, Furniture and Fixtures

This section should list all approved items of stationery and printed forms, office supplies, office equipment and furniture, supplies and equipment required for Traffic Department rest rooms and dining service. If it is desired to distribute only this section of the catalogue to the ordering locations which do not regularly order the items listed in Section II, first aid and medical supplies might be included as a part of this section instead of Section II or because of the relatively few items involved, the listings may be duplicated in this section.

3. PRINTING

3.01 Various methods of printing have been considered in the production of local company Catalogues of Supplies; some Companies have adopted the offset method, a few have used mimeographed pages, but the majority have employed the typeset method of reproduction. In most instances only one side of the pages has been printed and with few exceptions the single column form of listing has been used.

3.02 Each of the methods of printing which have been employed for catalogue reproduction has some advantages which may be briefly stated as follows:

Typeset — This method, employing printers type and printing press, is generally considered as providing best appearance, and because of the variety of type faces and sizes which may be had, offers the best type distinction between ordering terminology and descriptive matter in the listings. The need for a variety of symbols to designate

stock items, exempt items, and other catalogue information is also best met by this method.

The cost of typeset reproduction is usually higher than that of other methods which have been employed.

Offset — This method, involving the preparation of typewritten originals and reproduction by offset printing, has the advantages of lower cost than the typeset method and permits retention of the master sheets by the compiler. Changes and revisions may be made by the pasting of strips of new matter over the original master copies. The use of special symbols and the variety of type faces, however, is limited to the range of characters that may be adapted to the capacity of a typewriter.

Mimeograph — An advantage of this method is that the entire catalogue production job can be retained within the Company offices. It does not provide as good appearance as the other methods, however, and the limitations as to type faces and symbols are the same as with the offset method. The cost is generally lower than that of the other methods.

3.03 In the matter of printing both sides or only one side of the catalogue pages, there are advantages to be considered in both cases. The large majority of the Companies have employed the "one side" plan as it facilitates reference to the listings, the printed matter being all on the right-hand page of the open book, and it simplifies the making of changes and additions because of less matter to rearrange and reprint. The printing of both sides of the pages, however, substantially reduces the number of sheets and thus the bulk of the complete catalogue.

4. PAGE ARRANGEMENT

4.01 The arrangement of subject matter on the pages is limited to the single column form which has been adopted by most of the Companies, or the double column form which has been chosen in a few instances. The latter offers the advantages of compactness of listings and generally a reduction in the number of pages required, but tends to reduce the flexibility for

rearrangement in connection with changes and additions as compared with the single column arrangement. The subject matter also has a bearing on arrangement; the short listings required for such items as printed forms are particularly adapted to double column arrangement, whereas some of the complicated listings required for plant materials involving a variety of sizes and codes for a single item, such as lead covered cable, are better arranged on the single column page.

4.02 The numbering of pages is desirable as an index to proper sequence of pages in the binder and also for reference in dealing with the printer or others during the course of revision. The pages of each section may best be numbered consecutively, each section beginning with Page 1, and with this arrangement it is desirable that the Section number or name such as General Telephone Supplies, be shown in proximity to the page number. As an aid in identifying the page issues, by checking list or other means, association of the date of issue with the page and section numbers is also recommended. To insure removal of obsolete pages some companies follow the practice of including the replaced page number and date in the new page designation as shown in the illustration below. Suggested forms of page marking are:

Page 1
General Telephone Supplies
May, 1959

or

Section II, Page 1
May, 1959
Replacing Page 1, dated Feb. 1958

4.03 The location of the page designation may be either in the upper or lower right corner of the page. While it would seem more natural to place it in the upper corner, it is not required in the normal use of or reference to catalogue information and serves its purpose in either location as an aid to proper filing of the pages and keeping the catalogue up to date.

4.04 In the initial printing of a catalogue some blank space should be provided on each page of listings to allow for item additions and subject matter revisions. However, if it is necessary later to add an occasional page because of

lack of space, new pages may be given the same page number as the preceding page in the alphabetical arrangement, with a letter suffix following the page number, i.e., Page 21-A.

5. FORM OF LISTING

5.01 Several factors should be considered in the adoption of a form of listing.

- (a) The item name should be prominently displayed to afford easy location.
- (b) The nomenclature used should be that used in the source of catalogue information, i.e., Description Sheets, P.E.L. or other general letters, specifications, etc.
- (c) The arrangement of words in the basic item name should follow a definite uniform plan throughout the catalogue.
- (d) The descriptive matter should be brief but complete enough to avoid the need for reference to specifications, drawings, or other source to identify the item.
- (e) The listing should provide all supply information necessary to requisition the item correctly.

5.02 The item name, in the complete form to be used in ordering, with blank spaces for size or type data where more than one size or type are available, should comprise the first line of the listing and be shown in bold face type to distinguish it from descriptive matter in the body of the listing. Size, code number, or type information essential to ordering, and to be provided in the blank spaces, but which for compactness and simplicity is tabulated in the body of the listing, should also be emphasized in bold face type. This will facilitate reference and insure proper wording of requisitions with a resultant minimum of error in editing, selecting, billing, and checking.

5.03 Description Sheets, general letters and other sources of information pertaining to new items of materials and tools, are now reviewed before issue for item nomenclature and consistent wording of ordering information.

5.04 It is the consensus of opinion that a uniform self-indexing, alphabetical order of

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listings for each catalogue section provides the most convenient arrangement to aid the user in quickly locating specific listings.

5.05 The descriptive part of the listing should be concise but complete in conveying to the catalogue user all information essential to insure definite identification of the item without need for further reference to specifications, drawings or other original sources of information. The intended use, the standard unit package quantity, the ordering unit (ream, each, pound, box, ball, etc.) are all essential to intelligent and economical ordering, editing, selecting, and accounting.

5.06 With the ordering name, sizes or types, standard package quantities and ordering unit included in each listing as suggested in the above paragraphs, the preparation of requisitions will be so simplified that errors in identification in all activities incident to supplying and accounting for materials and supplies should be reduced to a minimum.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS

6.01 Generally, illustrations are not considered necessary to catalogue listings. The cuts consume considerable space and add appreciably to the bulk and expense of the catalogue. They also reduce the flexibility of arrangement when page revisions are required.

7. ACCOUNTING AND ORDERING INTERVAL DESIGNATIONS

7.01 It is essential that catalogue users know the stock or non-stock status and the accounting classification of items listed, to aid in the scheduling of requisitions and the reporting of material usage. To this end it is recommended that symbols be used to mark the listings, particularly the non-stock items and either the exempt or non-exempt items. For some Companies symbols to indicate other conditions may be helpful, such as where more than one distributing house is involved and area demand may warrant a difference in stock conditions at the different houses. The following symbols are suggested:

Exempt items	— "E"
Non-exempt items	— "NE"
Stock Items	— "*"
Non-stock items	— (14)

Note: The figure in the circle indicates the number of days required for delivery.

8. CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

8.01 To provide maximum utility it is desirable that all catalogue information be kept up to date. There are practical limitations, however, in that it is not economical to make revisions immediately as each change or addition is suggested. Generally, it is good practice to accumulate proposed changes and additions for periodic revisions, say once a month, or at relatively frequent random intervals as volume may warrant.

8.02 It is suggested that new or revised pages be issued in permanent form. The issue of tentative new or corrected listings pending revision and issue of new permanent pages entails duplication of preparation, printing, and filing effort and tends to produce reference difficulties and resultant ordering errors.

9. GRADE OF PAPER

9.01 The quality of paper specified for use in the Catalogue of Supplies is important from both the standpoints of economy and utility. A fairly good grade of paper of proper weight will increase first cost only slightly but will avoid the need for frequent replacement of catalogues or pages at the heavy usage locations.

9.02 Considering all qualities desirable for cataloguing, Telco Message Bond, Substance #20 is recommended as a suitable paper for catalogue pages which are to be typeset or offset. Telco Mimeograph, Substance #20, is suitable for mimeographed pages.

10. BINDER

10.01 A number of binders suitable for a Catalogue of Supplies are available, but con-

sidering all the essentials the standard Bell System Practices binder, either in canvas (#101) or imitation leather (#103), is recommended. This is a durable binder, and it is very easily opened at any point to remove or insert pages without disturbing other pages, locking automatically as it is again assembled. Its simple binding mechanism is conducive to proper maintenance of the catalogue and its cost is relatively low. Where frequent reference is required, the #113 binder is recommended.

10.02 The complete Catalogue of Supplies in a single volume is desirable. The single volume facilitates reference and maintenance, but if the number of pages is such that more than one volume is desired, it is recommended that the division be based on substance rather than page count. With the sectional arrangement suggested above, the General Section and the Section on General Telephone Supplies would comprise one volume and the pages covering Section III would be complete in another volume. This would provide division on the basis of ordering groups and in some instances would permit the economy of section distribution only.