

A DISCUSSION PAPER ON
A DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ENTITY
FOR THE MARIANAS

1973/74

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I. Basic Tasks of a Development Planning Entity

- A. Review and Approve Development Goals
- B. Establish Basic Development Policies
- C. Review and Approve Development Plans
- D. Create Subsidiary Organizations and Employ Outside Organizations for Preparation and Implementation of the Development Plan
- E. Coordinate and Monitor Activity
- F. Revise and Adjust Policies, Goals and Plans as Work Proceeds.
- G. Provide Information about Status and Content of the Development Plan to the Legislature and the Marianas People.

II. Organizational Criteria

- A. Responsiveness to Marianas Legislature and the Marianas People.
- B. Freedom from Political Pressure and Special Interests in Day-to-Day Operations.
- C. Capacity for Effective Leadership
 1. Prompt and Rational Decisions
 2. Consistency
 3. Good Communication with Legislature, with Subordinate bodies, and with Marianas People
 4. Adequate Follow-Up

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III. Structural Alternatives

- A. Legislative Committee
- B. Independent Commission
- C. Executive Department
- D. Public Corporation

IV. Assessment of Alternatives

A. Legislative Committee

A committee would be most responsive to the legislature, but would also be responsive to political and special interest pressure. A legislative Committee would normally rate low in terms of leadership capacity.

B. Independent Commission

Responsiveness to legislative views would depend on the membership. A commission would be reasonably free of day-to-day political pressure if terms were assured and if membership were representative of the major factions in the legislature. Leadership qualities would depend on the number and competence of Commission members. As a general rule a three or five man commission will provide more effective leadership than a larger body. The leadership factor also depends on the extent to which the commission delegates authority to an executive director and his competence.

C. Executive Department

An executive department is the most likely to be unresponsive to legislative policy unless the policy is spelled out in legislation. An executive department is not likely to be free of day-to-day political pressure although this depends in large measure on the chief executive. A department with a single chief is able to provide effective leadership but this will depend almost wholly on the competence of the department head.

D. Public Corporation

Assume a board of directors chosen by the chief executive with legislative consent. A corporate structure would

not be very responsive to legislative policy unless the policy is incorporated in its charter. Such a structure is more likely to be free of day-to-day political and special interest pressure than an executive department. A corporate structure with a chief executive officer is capable of providing effective leadership. This is, of course, dependent on the board of directors willingness to employ a strong, competent individual as chief executive and to delegate operating authority to him.

V. Recommendation

The above analysis suggests that an independent commission of three or five members offers the best opportunity of satisfying the somewhat conflicting criteria. The commission should have representation from the major political factions in the Marianas. Commissioners would be appointed by the Marianas Legislature and be full time employees of the Marianas Government. The commission would report regularly to the legislature and to the Chief Executive when that office is established. Terms would be for four years with removal by the legislature on a two-thirds vote. The commission should select one of its members as chairman and he would act as chief executive officer for the full commission.