

T R A I N I N G

This is TOTAL WAR. We are all in it together. We do not presume to compare any Home Front job to the magnitude of the task demanded of the bombardier, the sailor, or the foot soldier. We can't help think of the job they are doing and how they are risking their lives to do it, while here at home none of us has come in direct contact with the real horrors of war. We have merely been personally inconvenienced in order to help prosecute total war.

The war will be won on the battlefield. Here at home a healthy economic system must exist to which sons, brothers, husbands, and friends may return -- a place of peace and security, religion and love.

The preservation of this policy of Economic security for the post-war world is in a large measure the responsibility of OPA Volunteers who aid in fighting inflation.....Inflation means a national catastrophe.

National security is guaranteed by community control. Each community has problems peculiar to itself, so by voluntarily solving its own problems, it stabilizes our nation's economy -- safeguards our national security.

Role of Price Control:

Business as usual is impossible under conditions of total war. People have more money, but there is less for them to buy. As this greater amount of money bids for smaller quantities of goods, prices rise. It is the duty, then, of the OPA to keep the cost of living down so that everyone can have enough to eat, to wear, and a place to live -- through price control.

Accomplishments of Price Control:

Ceilings have been established on the prices of 90% of what the average family buys. It protects business man and housewife alike.

Merchants have been able to replenish stocks.
Speculative buying has been prevented.
Hoarding has been made difficult.
Small businesses have been protected.
Installment buying has been made more economically sound.
The cost of living has shown comparatively little change.

World War I - up 64.6%
World War II - up only 27.2%
House furnishings within 52 months increased
95% in War I
27% in War II

Investments are protected.

Role of Rationing:

Rationing is an American idea dating back to the days of our earliest settlers in this country who, facing scarcities of food and clothing, pooled their precious supplies and apportioned them to everyone on an equal basis. When war upsets our regular economy, rationing is the one measure the government can take to insure equal opportunities for all citizens in obtaining the necessities of life. Rationing is a community plan for dividing fairly the supplies we have among all who need them. The first objective of our Rationing Program during this war emergency is to serve the welfare of the nation and the community. For example, a man with a million dollars cannot buy more sugar than the person with one ration allowance.

Why Rationing:

Our Government, through the Office of Price Administration, is rationing only essential goods which have become scarce because of the war. Because of the detailed machinery necessary to administer the rationing program, the Government does not ration non-essentials when they become scarce. Each one of the items on the ration list today represents scarce goods, which, if not made available in the right place at the right time and in sufficient quantity, would seriously impair our nation's war effort.

How Things are Rationed:

When the supply does not permit a rationed commodity general distribution the individual's eligibility for the rationed goods is determined by his particular service to the war effort.

When the supply permits a general rationed distribution, everybody receiving a share, the coupon and point system is used, with a change from time to time in the point values and validity of the ration period.

Who Rations:

The most strategic position in the Rationing Program is occupied by the 5500 Local War Price and Rationing Boards throughout the nation. Staffed with public spirited citizens of the community, volunteers who are giving their time and energies, without pay, to the administration of the Rationing Program.

ORGANIZATION OF OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION

1. National Office: - The National Office is the focal point for planning vast decentralized operating programs for price control, rent control, and rationing which affect the lives and actions of the entire civilian population of this country. In order to obtain the most effective administration of these programs, it was determined that OPA's day-to-day, face-to-face dealings with the public should be carried on from offices geographically suited to serving the needs of local populations living in widely spread, diversified areas. The National Office is a central policy-making and coordinating agency; the field offices and the Local Boards are the actual operating agencies which translate policies into action.

Seven departments make up the organizational structure of the National office. Three of these are directly responsible for OPA's three big jobs - PRICE CONTROL, RATIONING, AND RENT CONTROL. The other four facilitate the doing of these jobs by furnishing expert guidance and services.

2. Regional Office: - A Regional Office is, within its jurisdiction, a center of general planning and supervision, under the direction of the Regional Administrator. It is the immediate representative of the National Office in the field and is responsible for the vast number of problems which must be settled authoritatively in the field for decentralized programs. It is responsible for the direction of all price control, rent control, rationing and related operations in the area, as well as for the supervision and control of all subordinate offices in the Region.

3. District Office: - District Offices provide convenient locations for the transaction of business. In general, they deal with problems of interpretation and adjustment of specific price regulations; the explanation of regulations to individual businessmen and trade groups; and the supervision of the Local Boards in handling rationing, price control, and consumer education matters within their districts. District Offices are the primary points of enforcement activity for all OPA Price, Rationing, and Rent Regulations. They adapt National policies to the requirements of the specific district area. In the price control field they deal primarily with administration of OPA regulations with respect to their effect upon dealers at various levels, leaving for the Regional Offices consideration of producer problems of larger scope.

4. War Price and Rationing Boards: - War Price and Rationing Boards shall have such functions as shall be delegated to them from time to time by orders, regulations, and instructions issued from the National Office. In particular they shall have the following functions:

A. To inform the public of the nature, purposes and methods of price control and rationing.

B. To inform the District Offices of public response to OPA's programs, and the need for changes in operating procedure.

C. To act on all rationing matters assigned to Local Boards.

D. To act on all price matters assigned to Local Boards, and to conduct educational and compliance programs at retail.

E. To receive complaints of price violations and take such action on them as is required by OPA regulations and instructions.

F. To maintain prescribed records and prepare specified reports on actions taken.

G. To cooperate in price and rationing surveys undertaken by District Office.

H. To provide local leadership for meeting community problems associated with the price control and rationing programs.

Regular Volunteers:

Regular Volunteers is the term used to designate volunteers who are assigned with the understanding that they shall devote a minimum of thirty hours a month on a regular schedule in War Price and Rationing Boards and rent offices. These Volunteers supplement the paid clerical staff and are assigned such duties as:

1. Receptionist
2. Telephone Clerk
3. Counter Clerk (Careful training and long experience in Board work required for this.)
4. Certificate Processing Clerk
5. File Clerk (Experience in filing or immediate supervision of trained or paid personnel required.)
6. Correspondence Clerk
7. Stenographer or Typist
8. Posting Loose-Leaf Service
9. Issuing Food Books
10. Mailing Food and Mileage Books
11. Writing authorized B and C. Books
12. Sending out Notices
13. Rent, registration and survey work

Work which involves public contacts or technical knowledge should be assigned only to those who can contribute a minimum of one day per week, or its equivalent to work in the Board. There are no maximum hours pre-determined for regular volunteers and they should be encouraged to offer as many as possible.

Peak Load Volunteers:

Peak Load Volunteers are frequently needed to assist the regular paid and volunteer staff with extra or emergency workloads. The recruiting of peak load volunteers is usually handled on a more generalized basis, and the number required and their qualifications are determined by the program executive of the division concerned.

Price Panel Assistants:

Price Panel Assistants have a serious responsibility and a unique opportunity in the War Emergency program - to serve their families, communities, and the Nation. They are assigned to carry on a continuous program of retailer education and compliance price survey within the Board area.

A. Duties

1. Distribute informational materials to business establishments. In this part of the job, they may be asked to work with trade relations committees and with trade groups in the scheduling and programing of campaigns, clinics, meetings, and other concerted activities. On the other hand, they may be assigned to help educate retailers on certain regulations upon which they have had special training or personally to distribute regulations and furnish other information to particular retailers on your reg-schedule.

2. Disseminating information to consumers. They may be assigned to work with the Community Service Member of their Board or with any special wartime committee or with groups or organizations interested in the public's education on price control.

3. Collecting price information. For this part of the work, they will go out to the retail stores to find out what is being done about community prices, to obtain information for the verification of consumer complaints, to compare posted prices with established ceiling prices, and to see if the retailer has followed the regulations in regard to posting prices and marking and ticketing his goods. Usually, when they visit a store for this purpose they will also give the retailer the posters, materials, and other information he needs to aid him in compliance (see, above).

4. Perform liaison service between the War Price and Rationing Board and the merchant.

5. Performing clerical assignments. After they have visited a store, they will fill out their assignment sheet, giving the details of what they learned from their visit. They will also make up a written report, on a form furnished by the Price Clerk, of any consumer complaint they may have been asked to verify. Upon assignment, they will prepare other materials for filing, or for mailing. All reports and other materials are for the purpose of keeping their panel informed about the progress of the price program in their community.

Work assignments of Price Panel Assistants must be kept flexible. As time goes on, they will become more experienced in their work and will develop new interests and new skill in the work. also, new price programs will create new work for them. They should hold themselves in readiness to help their panel serve their community on any assignment.

Community Service Volunteers:

Community Service Volunteers are a vital force in developing community understanding of the Office of Price Administration. They are a specially recruited group of workers bringing rationing and price control to the people through publicity and education. They Assist the War Price and Rationing Board program. By:

1. Publicize Local Board activities through press and radio media.
2. Arranging booths at county fairs with OPA posters on display.
3. Attending OPA conferences with consumer groups.
4. Securing window space for OPA pictorial displays.
5. Promoting community price compliance.
6. Distributing OPA material to schools, and group services.
7. Arrange for OPA participation with civic and educational groups.