

Foreword

In Journal 63 of August 1988 we published our first symposium of reflections and projections on the Co-operative Union's Review of Statistics for the previous year. Here now are the responses to the Review of 1988.

We are indebted to David Wadsworth, Manager - Statistics, Information Services Department, at the Union for the following note on the Review - as well as for much else in the preparation of this feature.

"The Review of Statistics is compiled from the Annual Returns and Financial Statements submitted by societies to the Co-operative Union. The prime aim of the document is to give Congress delegates (and other interested parties) an appreciation of the Movement's performance during the last financial period. In view of the short time available to build up these aggregate figures the document should be regarded as a provisional statement and is refined in a more comprehensive analysis of Co-operative Statistics produced later in the year.

In addition to the overall indicators for the British retail Movement (turnover, profitability, market share and finances) the publication also contains similar information for each of the largest twenty-five societies. These are listed according to turnover size and in addition to absolute amounts various ratios are given in order to facilitate comparison between societies.

Additional copies of the Review are available from the Statistical Section of Information Services of the Co-operative Union at a nominal price to cover printing and postage."

A copy of the Review was submitted to each contributor, along with details for each society outside the range of the twenty-five largest. In the presentation of this additional information, the societies were organised by turnover into: Group 4 - £24m to £48m; Group 5 - £11m to £16m; Group 6 - £5m to £9m; Group 7 - £2m to £4m; and Group 8 - £0.5m to £1.8m.

The Report on Capital Structure referred to from time to time in the articles was commissioned in March 1988 by the Central Executive of Peat Marwick McLintock. Its main recommendations were summarised in a Special Gazette issued by the Union.

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R.L.M.