

"New Look" in Operator Chairs

News of Operator Chair Development

Considerable attention has been given in the past several years to improving the working environment of telephone operators. The older offices, in which operators sat at long line-ups of switchboard positions, have been replaced by brighter, pleasantly decorated offices with automatic switching systems and modern consoles arranged in small groups or "islands." To complement these new console positions, a new operator chair has been designed and will be placed in manufacture this year. This new chair is shown at bottom left next to the chair it replaces.

The new chair, designed in collaboration with Henry Dreyfus Associates, features a brushed chrome-finished base and foot ring, a single backrest support, and an upholstered seat available in three different-colored fabrics. The chair is also available with cane seats in colors that match the consoles.

The chair incorporates two basic adjustments: a weight adjustment accomplished by turning the upper unit in the manner of adjusting the old piano stool, and a backrest tilt adjustment that is friction controlled and may be performed by the operator to her own satisfaction. The new chair can be adjusted somewhat higher than the older chair.

The chair also has an improved spindle mechanism that employs bronze bearings to carry the vertical load and radial motion of the operator. This will provide trouble-free performance for a

much longer period than the former design.

Fabrics were selected with the dual purpose of providing long-wearing materials and "lively" colors that would lend attractiveness to the operating room decor. The material chosen was a wide-weave nylon in bright-green, royal-blue, or oxford-gray with secondary threads of lighter shades of the predominant colors. These colors harmonize with the green, sky-blue, and covert-gray finishes standardized for operator consoles and allow decorators

the choice of a wide range of room colors.

Field trials of the initial design of the new chair were conducted at two locations, after which modifications were made and further trials were held with good results and a high degree of operator satisfaction. The chair will be manufactured by an outside supplier with regular production starting in the fourth quarter of this year. A small quantity of the new chairs has already been supplied to two telephone companies on special order.



The newly designed operator's chair (left) shown next to older chair it replaces.