

The Board of Grain Commissioners.*—The Board of Grain Commissioners was established in 1912 under the authority of the Canada Grain Act, 1912 (RSC 1952, cc. 25 and 308 and amendments). It is a quasi-judicial and administrative body of three—a Chief Commissioner and two Commissioners—reporting to the Minister of Agriculture.

The Canada Grain Act has been called the Magna Charta of the Canadian grain trade or, more particularly, of the Canadian farmer, and the Board's chief duties are to ensure that the rights conferred on the different parties by the provisions of the Act are properly protected. Transportation of grain is restricted except from or to licensed elevators, and restriction is placed on the use of established grade names. The Act does not provide for any control or supervision of grain exchanges and the Board of Grain Commissioners has no power or duties in the matter of grain prices.

The Board manages and operates, under semi-public terminal licences, the Canadian Government elevators situated at Moose Jaw and Saskatoon, Sask., Lethbridge, Edmonton and Calgary, Alta., and Prince Rupert, B.C., and leases the Canadian Government elevator at Port Arthur, Ont., to a privately owned grain company. The Executive Offices of the Board and other principal offices are situated in Winnipeg, Man., but branch offices are maintained at numerous points from Montreal in the east to Victoria in the west. Total personnel is approximately 900.

On a fee basis, the Board provides official inspection, grading and weighing of grain, and registration of warehouse receipts. All operators of elevators in Western Canada and of elevators in Eastern Canada that handle western-grown grain for export, as well as all parties operating as grain commission merchants, track buyers of grain, or as grain dealers, are required to be licensed by the Board annually and to file security by bond or otherwise as a guarantee for the performance of all obligations imposed upon them by the Canada Grain Act or by the regulations of the Board.

To protect the rights of the different parties, the Board has jurisdiction to inquire into and is empowered to give direction regarding any matter relating to the grading or weighing of grain; deductions made from grain for dockage; shortages on delivery of grain into or out of elevators; unfair or discriminatory operation of any elevator; refusal or neglect of any person to comply with any provision of the Canada Grain Act; and any other matter arising out of the performance of the duties of the Board.

In the Prairie Provinces the Board maintains four Assistant Commissioners—one in Alberta, two in Saskatchewan and one in Manitoba. These Commissioners investigate complaints of producers and inspect periodically the country elevators in their respective provinces; all elevators with their equipment and stocks of grain are subject at any time to inspection by officials of the Board.

The Board sets up, annually, Committees on Grain Standards and also appoints Grain Appeal Tribunals to give final decisions in cases where appeals are made against the grading of grain by the Board's inspection officials. To assist in maintaining the uniform quality of the top grades of Red Spring Wheat handled through terminal elevators, the Canada Grain Act provides that wheat of these grades shall be stored with grain of like grade only.

In addition to its duties under the Canada Grain Act, certain other duties are performed by the Board. Under the provisions of the Inland Water Freight Rates Act (RSC 1952, c. 153), the Board maintains records of rates for the carriage of grain from Fort William or Port Arthur, Ont., by lake or river navigation and is empowered to prescribe maximum rates for such carriage. Under the provisions of the Prairie Farm Assistance Act (RSC 1952, c. 213 as amended), the Board collects from licensees under the Canada Grain Act, 1 p.c. of the purchase price of wheat, oats, barley, rye, flax and rapeseed purchased by such licensees.

* Prepared by W. J. MacLeod, Secretary of the Board of Grain Commissioners for Canada, Winnipeg, Man.