

The Board is empowered to undertake research and investigations with respect to:—

- (1) the systems and methods of mining coal;
- (2) the problems and techniques of marketing and distributing coal;
- (3) the physical and chemical characteristics of coal produced in Canada with a view to developing new uses therefor;
- (4) the position of coal in relation to other forms of fuel or energy available for use in Canada;
- (5) the cost of production and distribution of coal and the accounting methods adopted or used by persons dealing in coal;
- (6) the co-ordination of the activities of government departments relating to coal; and
- (7) such other matters as the Minister may request or as the Board may deem necessary for carrying out any of the provisions or purposes of the Act.

In addition, the Dominion Coal Board Act provides authority in the event of a national fuel emergency to ensure that adequate supplies of fuel are made available to meet Canadian requirements.

The Act authorizes a Board membership of seven, including the chairman. The latter is the Chief Executive Officer, has the status of a Deputy Minister, spends full time on the Board's business, receives a salary and is in charge of a civil service staff. The other members, men of long experience and expert knowledge of aspects and regions of the Canadian coal industry, receive *per diem* payments and travelling expenses while attending Board meetings or while otherwise officially engaged on Board business.

In general, the Board and its staff constitute a central agency through which representations on coal matters are made to the Government from any sector of the industry or the public. Conducting a continuous study of developments and problems within the industry, exchanging information with provincial authorities concerned with coal and with national authorities and agencies in other countries and maintaining the most complete files of Canadian coal information in existence, the Board makes recommendations to the Government and reports to Parliament through the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys. In view of the growing impact of oil and natural gas on the markets for Canadian coal, the Board and its staff have intensified the study of the relation of the competing sources of energy and of possible new outlets for the solid fuel.

Since its inception, the Board has worked toward the co-ordination of the activities, relating to coal, of various government departments, agencies and other bodies. Its own responsibilities in research on the mining and utilization of coal have been carried out mainly by delegation to the Fuels and Mining Practice Division, Mines Branch, Department of Mines and Technical Surveys. On occasion, the Board has recommended or commissioned specialized types of research by experts outside the government service—for example, the studies resulting in the Christie Reports which became influences leading to the enactment of the Atlantic Provinces Power Development Act (SC 1958, c. 25) and the establishment of a power grid in the Maritimes. As a contribution to the co-ordination of coal research and to the dissemination to the industry of technical information resulting from research, the Board initiated and originally sponsored the now self-sustaining annual Dominion-Provincial Coal Research Conferences. In the field of coal statistics, the Board has a long-standing co-operative arrangement with the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

Government purchases of fuel, which constitute an important outlet for coal, claim a part of the time of the Board's staff in an advisory capacity. Advice on fuel matters is also continuously available to all government departments and agencies. A senior official of the Coal Board is chairman of the Interdepartmental Fuel Committee, which advises on the supply, purchase and utilization of fuel for the Department of National Defence, and of the Dominion Fuel Committee, which is organized along similar lines as an advisory body to other government departments.

The subvention assistance on the movement of Canadian coals, which the Board administers, is authorized from year to year by votes of moneys by Parliament; payments are in accordance with Regulations established by Order in Council. This assistance, which has been provided in varying degrees for the past 30 years, was designed to further