

16.1.4 Overseas services

The Canadian Overseas Telecommunication Corporation was set up in 1950 as a Crown corporation to establish, maintain and operate Canada's external telecommunications services. It acquired existing overseas facilities which amounted to three telephone and 13 telegraph circuits provided by high-frequency radio and telegraph cable systems. COTC has built up a modern international telecommunications system providing Canadians with telephone, telegraph, telex, video and data transmission services to almost every country in the world through interconnections with global networks of submarine cables, high-frequency radio circuits and satellite circuits.

COTC has participated in the installation of six submarine cables. In 1956 the first long distance telephone and multi-purpose cable in the world was laid across the Atlantic by COTC (representing Canada), Britain and the United States. Next came the first links in the Commonwealth globe-circling system of submarine telephone cables: the transatlantic cable CANTAT in 1961 and the Pacific cable COMPAC in 1963. A microwave route leased from the Canadian domestic carriers connects the CANTAT and COMPAC systems. Although not involved in any of the terminal stations, COTC is a joint owner of the Commonwealth SEACOM cable to Southeast Asia. Another link in the Commonwealth network is the Canada-Bermuda cable.

In conjunction with the Great Northern Telegraph Company of Denmark, COTC installed the ICECAN cable linking Newfoundland with Greenland and Iceland. CANTAT II, a joint project of Canada and Britain, has been in service since April 1974. This 1,840-circuit telephone cable has a greater capacity than all existing transatlantic cables combined.

COTC is a member of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO) whose purpose is to promote the efficient exploitation and development of the Commonwealth external telecommunications system. The Corporation is an active participant in the Commonwealth Telecommunications Council which promotes the purpose of the CTO and carries out policies agreed to by governments.

In 1964 the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT) was formed to operate a global commercial communications satellite system. COTC, as Canada's representative, was one of the initial 11 members of INTELSAT whose members now number 83, and continues to play an active role. The Corporation is also represented on the Board of Governors' Advisory Committees on finance, technical, contract, data and patent matters and the Special Committee on Long Range Planning. In addition to the services it provides via undersea cables, COTC supplies communication links to many countries of the world from its earth stations at Mill Village, NS and Lake Cowichan, BC via the two INTELSAT satellites over the Atlantic and one over the Pacific.

COTC participates actively as a representative member in the affairs of the International Telephone and Telegraph Consultative Committee (CCITT) and the International Consultative Committee on Radio (CCIR), two of the four permanent organs of the International Telecommunications Union, to promote international technical and operating standards and procedures. COTC is also associated with a number of national bodies such as the Canadian Telecommunications Carriers Association.

To keep pace with the expansion of overseas facilities from Canada, COTC has introduced sophisticated terminal equipment, automatic telephone switching centres, computer-controlled telegraph, telex and private wire (AUTOCOM) operations, and video and data transmission facilities.

In the fiscal year 1972-73 Canadians made 1.8 million telephone calls and sent 1.5 million telex and 1.4 million telegraph messages to overseas points via COTC's facilities.

Under a long-term agreement with the Ministry of Transport, COTC charts the CCGS John Cabot, a combination ice-breaker/cable-repair ship to repair cables in the western North Atlantic Ocean.

16.2 Radio and television

The broadcasting system in Canada has both public and private components. The earliest legislation with respect to Canadian broadcasting was passed in May 1932, creating the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, but the basic principles for radio and television broadcasting have been revised over the years. The Broadcasting Act of 1968 entrusted the Canadian Radio-Television Commission under Part II of the Act with the direction of the Canadian