

to provide research support to groups of two or more accomplished investigators who wish to engage in collaborative work in what appear to be especially productive areas. Investigators comprising MRC Groups are expected to devote virtually all their efforts to their common research objectives, and receive from the MRC what is essentially full support of their research program. There are now 10 MRC Groups, working in fields ranging from neurosciences to medical genetics, located in the following universities: Montreal, Alberta, McMaster, McGill, Manitoba, Laval and Toronto. Under the heading of Research Development, the MRC also provides financial support for scientific symposia and workshops held in Canada, and assists in defraying the operating costs of the Canadian Council on Animal Care.

9.2.14 Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation

The shift in emphasis in the Corporation's research and development program, begun in 1973, gained momentum during 1974. The major research and development priorities of the Corporation for 1974 included investigation of housing and community needs, increased understanding of housing costs and prices, information and methods of evaluating and improving ongoing NHA programs, innovation in housing and housing-related technology, the development of new housing policies, and communication of research and research findings through publications, workshops and conferences.

As part of the Corporation's continuing research into housing and community design a Development Group was established in 1974 to investigate three areas: land use, settlement patterns and technology. The land use study is considering new ways of integrating housing with existing shopping centres and light industrial areas, while the settlement patterns group is examining the development of the "inner city" and current problems of rural housing and small communities. Technology covers the broader area of how new construction methods and concepts can improve Canadian housing in general. In past years CMHC, in co-operation with other research groups, has helped to develop CANWEL (Canadian Water Energy Loop), a system of recycling domestic waste water which also utilizes the energy potential in domestic solid waste. Investigations have also begun into the economic use of solar energy as a domestic heating source. To complement these research efforts CMHC, during 1974, created a Demonstration Program which, by using the advances made through development and research, will demonstrate their feasibility in actual housing subdivisions. Two such programs have already begun: a 400-acre Woodroffe Avenue Demonstration Project in the National Capital Region and another in the Ottawa LeBreton Flats.

9.3 Provincial agencies

9.3.1 Economic planning

Nova Scotia's Voluntary Planning, an organization representing non-government elements of the Nova Scotia community, was established in 1963 with the general objective of involving the private sector, on a co-ordinated and balanced basis, in a continuing program of economic and social development.

The organization comprises the following main components: sector committees representing "grass roots" elements of producers, private business, labour and government in agriculture, construction, fisheries, forestry, mining, tourism, transportation and secondary manufacturing; advisory councils in consumer affairs, education, power development and labour-management affairs; the Provincial Planning Board, which is made up of the sector and council chairmen, together with other representatives of business, labour and government; and a small professional staff which provides administrative and technical support to the volunteer groups.

Voluntary Planning provides for the effective involvement of the private sector in development planning; facilitates the identification of problems by the private sector and relates appropriate private and public resources in an attempt to resolve these problems; and involves the private sector in the analysis of government planning proposals during the process of their development, prior to final approval.

Through this planning agency government has a single contact with all major elements of the private sector and the private sector has both a forum for discussing mutual problems and a direct channel to government for submitting co-ordinated views on any aspect of development planning.