

### 16.1.3 Federal regulations and services

**The Department of Communications.** The Department, established in April 1969, is responsible for ensuring that all Canadians obtain the best possible access to a rapidly expanding range of communications services. Fulfilling this task involves not only technological research and planning, but also exploration of the complex social, human and economic issues which result from changing patterns of communications. The Department protects Canadian interests in the realm of international telecommunications and manages the radio frequency spectrum to permit the development and growth of radio communications.

The duties, powers and functions of the Minister of Communications include all matters relating to telecommunications over which the Parliament of Canada has jurisdiction, not by law assigned to any other department, branch or agency of the Government of Canada. The general development and use of communication undertakings, facilities, systems and services for Canada also come under the Minister's jurisdiction. The Department is organized into four sectors (policy, space program, research, and services), each under the direction of an assistant deputy minister.

The policy sector formulates and recommends international and national telecommunications policies and proposes legislation for the government's consideration. This sector coordinates federal-provincial relations and is the focal point for contacts with Teleglobe Canada, the Canadian Radio-Television Commission, and the Telecommunications Committee of the Canadian Transport Commission. It also provides technological and socio-economic forecasts, identifies areas needing new research or development, and carries out strategic planning.

The Department's field organization, headed by five regional directors (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Central and Pacific), also reports to the senior assistant deputy minister. It is primarily concerned with management of the electromagnetic spectrum.

The space sector comprises all space-related activities. The responsibilities of the assistant deputy minister include the Communications Technology Satellite (currently the Department's single largest budget item); relations with Telesat Canada and other agencies and departments concerned with space; development of new space systems and applications; and important planning and international functions in this rapidly growing area of communications technology. Reporting to the assistant deputy minister are three directors general, responsible for space programs, space applications and space technology.

The research sector carries out research and development in the complex field of communications, both in-house and through a system of university and industrial contracts. It performs research and development concerned with new communications and computer/communications systems and services, conducts extensive research in the use of the radio frequency spectrum and provides scientific advice to aid in formulating departmental policy and developing new programs. It also seeks to ensure that an adequate level of communications research and development capability is maintained in Canada. The Department's principal research facility is the Communications Research Centre, just west of Ottawa. Reporting to the assistant deputy minister (research) are four directors general, responsible for research policy and planning, education systems technology, radio and radar research and technological and systems research and development.

Within the services sector, the Telecommunications Regulatory Service establishes technical standards for broadcasting facilities and equipment, issues technical certificates and radio operating licences and manages the radio frequency spectrum. Another branch, the Government Telecommunications Agency, provides consulting and centralized telecommunications services for the government. The assistant deputy minister (services) is the Department's principal adviser on organization, personnel, financial management, administration, bilingualism, information, legal matters and security. Through the services sector, the Department maintains liaison with Telesat Canada.

**Canadian Transport Commission.** Telephone and telegraph companies incorporated under federal legislation are subject to the jurisdiction of the CTC in the matter of rates and practices under the provisions of the Railway Act. Previously the CTC regulated rates only in those cases in which a charge was made to the general public. Amendments to the Railway Act extended its jurisdiction to cover rates charged for private wire services as well. Legislation has been introduced in Parliament to amalgamate the Telecommunications Committee of the CTC with the Canadian Radio-Television Commission.