

**The Business Assistance Branch** supports existing business enterprises by providing counselling and consulting expertise in accounting, merchandising, transportation and marketing. To make these revitalizing services accessible to business firms throughout the province, branch representatives are located at seven centres outside Regina.

**The Trade Development Branch** promotes trade in Saskatchewan products in regional, national and international markets, particularly in the US, Europe and the Pacific Rim. Contact points for this program include the office of the Agent-General in London, England, and the Pacific Rim office in Regina.

**The Research and Development Branch** collects and disseminates statistical data, and prepares or contracts for economic feasibility studies to determine what imports and new products might be produced in Saskatchewan, and what primary products can be further refined or processed in the province. It also assists in intergovernmental relations with other provinces and the federal government on economic policies and programs.

**Operation Recycle** is a special project which administers the collection of abandoned or scrap vehicles for shredding into acceptable steel furnace feed. It is estimated that approximately 100,000 vehicles will be collected over a three-year period and other recycling projects are under active consideration.

**The Industry and Commerce Development Act** authorizes the department to: undertake, either for its own use or on a shared-cost basis with business enterprises, feasibility studies and research to identify new business opportunities; provide, either through department representatives or outside consultants, counselling and advice on all forms of business problems; and make financial assistance available to a community-based group to continue the operation of a business threatened by closure which would seriously disrupt the community in which it is located.

**The Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO)**, a Crown corporation, provides financial assistance to business enterprises. SEDCO was originally established in 1963 to provide loans for the establishment or expansion of manufacturing enterprises. Since August 1972, its terms of reference have been significantly broadened to permit the provision of financial assistance to virtually all types of businesses. In addition to industrial enterprises, SEDCO loans may now be made to retail, wholesale and service businesses. SEDCO assistance can take many forms, the most common being a first mortgage loan over a medium term. Security for such loans consists of specific pledges of land, buildings and/or equipment; the support of the individuals involved in the business is normally pledged as well. Repayment terms are designed to suit the income pattern of the enterprise, and may include such features as step-payments, seasonal payments or similar arrangements.

Loans can be granted for terms varying from a few months to 20 years and in amounts from a few thousand to many millions of dollars. The term is determined by the estimated life of security pledged and by the earnings of the business. Equipment-based loans would be for five to eight years, while building and equipment loans might be eight to 12 years, and real estate alone as security would warrant a loan of up to 20 years. Working capital loans would range from one month to two years.

In all cases, the corporation expects that the owners of the borrowing company will have a reasonable equity contribution in the enterprise. In certain instances, the corporation may consider taking an equity investment in its own right if required to maintain a reasonable balance between debt and equity. The corporation also has industrial sites and buildings which it is prepared to make available to eligible enterprises. Lease, lease-purchase or outright sale of such properties can be considered and, in certain circumstances, the corporation will consider constructing a facility for the subsequent sale or lease to a client.