

practice is engaged in, the director may obtain from the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission authorization to examine witnesses, search premises, or require written returns. After examining all the information available, if the director believes that it proves the existence of a forbidden practice, he submits a statement of the evidence to the commission. Hearings may then be held to gather more information. The director may submit the evidence directly to the attorney general for prosecution without going to the commission after completing an inquiry.

The director may also bring before the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission a broad range of business matters for review under civil procedures. The commission is empowered to issue appropriate remedial orders where serious anti-competitive effects are found.

**Food.** In areas of health, grading, standards and composition, the Food and Drug Act, the Canadian Agricultural Products Standards Act and the Fish Inspection Act are generally applicable. The consumer and corporate affairs department is charged with administration of the economic fraud aspects in distribution. This responsibility relates mainly to labelling and advertising in any segment of the news media.

**Advertising.** Most legislation has particular requirements to ensure against misleading advertising. The deceptive marketing provisions of the Combines Investigation Act include general provisions against misleading advertising practices.

**Measurement.** The Weights and Measures Act prescribes the legal standards of weight and measure for use in Canada; it also ensures control of the types of all weighing and measuring devices used for commercial purposes, and provides for in-use surveillance directed toward the elimination of device-tampering and short-weight sales. A replacing act was passed by Parliament and new regulations were proclaimed in August 1974. The fundamental objectives of earlier legislation remain unchanged. The act is complementary to consumer packaging and labelling legislation.

**Metric conversion.** The Metric Weights and Measures Act of 1871 made the use of the metric system legal in Canada. The Weights and Measures Act of 1971 specified the most recent evolution of the metric system, the International System of Units (SI), as the legal form of the metric system for use in Canada. The *White Paper on metric conversion in Canada*, tabled in the House of Commons in January 1970, stated that the government accepted the following broad principles: that the eventual adoption in Canadian usage of a single coherent measurement system based on metric units should be acknowledged as inevitable and in the national interest; that this single system should come to be used for all measurement purposes required under legislation, and generally be accepted for all measurement purposes; that planning and preparation in the public and private sectors should be encouraged in a manner to achieve the maximum benefits at minimum cost to the public, to industry, and to government at all levels.

Since 1972 over 2,000 volunteers in all sectors of the economy developed plans for metric conversion. These plans have been published by Metric Commission Canada, which was established by the Canadian government as a result of the white paper, to coordinate the changeover. Such widely varied elements of Canadian life as temperature, precipitation, atmospheric pressure, wind speed, road signs, much of the construction and automotive industries, grain sales, wines, seeds, furniture, the petroleum industry, postal scales and many grocery store items have been converted to metric, and the gradual process is continuing.

In accordance with a plan developed by the working group on scales in the retail food industry, the mandatory conversion to metric of in-store weighing of meats and produce was instituted in July 1979 in Peterborough, Sherbrooke and Kamloops, and was to have been extended to most of the rest of Canada from January 1980 to December 1981. Because of some resistance this extension was delayed by the government for a minimum of one year. The voluntary conversion of sales of livestock and poultry to meat packers and of dressed meats to wholesalers and retailers became impractical in the face of the government decision to postpone the retail food scale conversion. Further development in these two sectors will be conditioned by the government decision on the resumption of in-store metric weighing of meats.