

the amalgamation of the legislative libraries of Upper and Lower Canada following their unification as the Province of Canada in 1841. The library is designated as a department within the meaning and purpose of the Financial Administration Act, the parliamentary librarian holding the rank of deputy minister. The parliamentary and the associate parliamentary librarians are appointed by the Governor-in-Council. The parliamentary librarian under the speaker of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Commons, assisted by a joint committee appointed by the two houses, is responsible for the control and management of the library including the branch libraries, the parliamentary reading room and the Confederation Building reading room. Persons entitled to borrow from the library are the Governor General, members of the Privy Council, the Senate and the House of Commons, officers of the two houses, judges of the Supreme Court of Canada and Federal Courts of Canada, and members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery. Research services to parliamentarians include the preparation of in-depth studies, background papers and current issue reviews. Additionally, research officers provide oral briefings or continuing assistance to Parliamentary committees. Information and reference services include answering queries; indexing Senate committee minutes of proceedings and reports; maintaining extensive clipping files; providing a daily clipping service, bibliographies on request and computerized literature searches; and acting as an information centre for parliamentary information. The library's collection is accessible to other libraries through interlibrary loan.

Machinery and Equipment Advisory Board. This board, established in 1968, is responsible for considering applications for remission of duty on certain machinery and equipment and advising the minister of industry, trade and commerce as to the eligibility of such machinery for remission of customs duty. The board is composed of a chairman and the deputy ministers of industry, trade and commerce, finance and national revenue. The objective of the machinery program is to increase efficiency in Canadian industry by enabling machinery users to acquire advanced equipment at the lowest possible cost while affording tariff protection on machinery produced in Canada.

Maritime Pollution Claims Fund. Under the Canada Shipping Act (SC 1971, c.27), a strict liability is created on the part of a shipowner discharging oil from a ship in Canadian waters without need to prove fault or negligence; this liability covers cost of remedial action if authorized by the Governor-in-Council, preventive action by the minister of transport and damages suffered by any person. Proceedings are taken against the shipowner and served on the administrator of the fund to make him a party to the litigation; upon failure to recover from the shipowner, the administrator is to the claimant in the position of a guarantor or unsatisfied judgment fund. If the ship cannot be identified, suit may be taken against the administrator. A special claim may be made directly to the administrator by fishermen suffering a loss of revenue resulting from an oil discharge attributable to a ship and not otherwise recoverable at law. The administrator reports annually to Parliament through the minister of transport.

Medical Research Council. Established in 1969 and operating under authority of RSC 1970, c.M-9, the council is a departmental Crown corporation of the federal government. It is composed of a president, a vice-president and 20 members. The primary aim of the council is to support and develop research in the health sciences in Canadian universities and affiliated institutions. It reports to Parliament through the minister of national health and welfare.

Merchant Seamen Compensation Board (Merchant Seamen Compensation Board Canada). The board was established by authority of the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act (RSC 1970, c.M-11, as amended) and reports to the minister of labour. The three members are appointed by the Governor-in-Council. The board adjudicates claims for compensation made by injured seamen employed on ships registered in Canada when they are not entitled to workers' compensation under any provincial workers' compensation act or the Government Employees Compensation Act.

Metric Commission Canada. The commission was established by the Metric Commission Order of June 1971. It consists of a chairman and up to 20 part-time commissioners. The executive director is responsible for the direction of the full-time commission staff.

The commission advises the minister of industry, trade and commerce on conversion to the metric system and assists sectors to prepare metric conversion plans. It also disseminates information related to the implementation of these plans and to metric conversion generally as it affects consumers. There are over 100 sector committees covering all areas of the economy. The staff and 12 steering committees play a co-ordinating role for these sector committees, with the major impetus for conversion coming from the committee members who represent industry, labour, consumers, trade, standards and service associations, governments and other concerned bodies.

Each sector committee develops a conversion plan; after liaison with customers, suppliers and other related sectors, the committee recommends the sector plan to a steering committee for concurrence, and the plan is then reviewed and approved by the commission. Both sector plans and national guidelines follow a four-phase program of guideline dates (investigation, planning, scheduling and implementation) to ensure, as far as possible, that the benefits of metric conversion are achieved at minimal cost.