

competitive marketplace can benefit consumers, business people and investors. Four bureaus share responsibility for achieving the department's marketplace objectives.

The consumer affairs bureau co-ordinates government activities in the field of consumer affairs through four branches: consumer services, legal metrology, consumer fraud protection, and product safety. The corporate affairs bureau administers legislation and regulations pertaining to corporations; its branches are responsible for corporations, bankruptcy and securities. The bureau also administers laws pertaining to patents, copyright, timber marks, industrial design, and trade marks, with a branch responsible for each of these fields. The bureau of competition policy has branches specializing in resources, manufacturing, services and marketing practices; its economic analysis and policy evaluation branch has responsibilities in federal-provincial relations, legislative development, research inquiries and international relations.

The department maintains regional and district offices in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal and Halifax, and district and local offices in other cities. These offices ensure that laws and regulations administered by the department with the exception of the statutes administered by the corporations branch are uniformly applied and interpreted in all parts of the country. The field force includes consumer services officers, inspectors and specialists in the fields of bankruptcy and marketing practices.

Competition legislation. Canadian competition legislation seeks to eliminate restrictive trade practices in order to stimulate maximum production, distribution and employment through open competition. Legislative measures, including some formerly included in the criminal code, were amended in 1960 and consolidated into the Combines Investigation Act (RSC 1970, c.C-23). An act to amend this act was passed in December 1975 (SC 1974-75-76, c.76) and came into effect in 1976.

The Combines Investigation Act makes it illegal to conspire to prevent, or lessen unduly, competition in production, manufacture, purchase, barter, sale, storage, rental, transportation or supply of a product of trade or commerce. Price maintenance, predatory pricing and price discrimination are also prohibited.

Under the act it is illegal to participate in a merger or a monopoly that has operated or is likely to operate to the detriment of the public, whether consumers, producers or others.

The act applies also to certain specified business practices which are subject to review and remedial order by the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission following an application by the director of investigation and research. These practices include refusal to sell, exclusive dealing, tied selling, market restrictions and consignment selling.

The Combines Investigation Act includes provisions against misleading advertising and deceptive practices. It forbids all misleading representations that are made for the purpose of promoting a product, as well as such practices as double ticketing, pyramid selling, referral selling, bait and switch selling and certain types of promotional contests.

The director of investigation and research, who is also the assistant deputy minister for the bureau of competition policy, is responsible for investigating conspiracies, combinations or other offences in restraint of competition.

After examining all the information available, if the director believes that it proves the existence of an offence he usually submits a statement of the evidence directly to the attorney general, who then takes the necessary legal proceedings. Where an investigation reveals the existence of a reviewable business practice, the director applies to the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission which is empowered to issue appropriate remedial orders where serious anti-competitive effects are found.

Food. The department of consumer and corporate affairs is responsible for regulation on behalf of the consumer of the quality, quantity, composition, substitution, packaging, labelling and advertising of food products, by the administration of the Food and Drugs Act, the Canada Agricultural Products Standards Act and the Fish Inspection Act.

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. 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