

Section 3.—Trade Standards*

The Standards Division of the Department of Trade and Commerce consolidates, under one Director, the administration of the Electricity Inspection Act, the Gas Inspection Act, the Electricity and Fluid Exportation Act, the Precious Metals Marking Act and the Weights and Measures Act.

Commodity Standards.—On Nov. 26, 1949, Parliament passed the National Trade Mark and True Labelling Act which provides a framework for the development of the National Standard and true labelling in order to circumvent public deception in advertising.

In brief, the use of the National Standard is voluntary and compliance with commodity standards affects only those manufacturers who desire to use the national trade mark. In addition, where manufacturers label descriptively any commodity or container, it must be labelled accurately to avoid public deception. One such regulation of interest applies to the labelling of fur garments and has been established as a code of fair practice throughout the merchandising field.

Under the terms of the Precious Metals Marking Act, 1946 (R.S.C. 1952, c. 215), commodities composed of gold, silver or platinum may be marked with a quality mark which describes accurately the quality of the metal. Where such mark is used, a trade mark registered in Canada, or for which application for registration has been made, must also be applied. Gold-plated, silver-plated or platinum-plated articles may also be marked under certain conditions outlined in the Act. The inspection staff of the Standards Division is engaged in the examination of advertising matter, in verifying the quality of articles offered for sale and in checking the marks applied.

Weights and Measures.—The Weights and Measures Act prescribes the legal standards of weight and measure for use in Canada. Responsibilities under the Act require control of the type of all weighing and measuring devices used for commercial purposes, their periodic verification and surveillance directed towards the elimination of sales by short weight or short measure.

The number of inspections made in the year ended Mar. 31, 1953, was 437,644, compared with 435,333 in 1951-52. The more important inspections comprised the following: weighing machines, including scales of all kinds, 225,452; measuring machines for liquids, 67,174; weights, 122,966; other measures, 22,052. Total expenditure was \$659,975 in 1952-53 compared with \$621,449 in 1951-52, and total revenue \$600,641 compared with \$508,963.

Electricity and Gas Inspection.—Responsibilities of the Standards Division under the Electricity Inspection Act and the Gas Inspection Act comprise the testing and stamping of every electricity and gas meter used throughout Canada for billing purposes, the object being to ensure the correct measurement of all electricity and gas sold. Canada is divided into 21 districts for administration of the two Acts, and staff numbers 158. During the year ended Mar. 31, 1953, 928,827 electricity and gas meters were tested as compared with 910,069 in the preceding year. Revenue derived from the testing amounted to \$631,389 and expenditure to \$574,597.

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