

United Nations Technical Assistance Board. During 1956 provision was made for 20 countries to receive assistance either through the providing of experts for them, or by the awarding of scholarships and fellowships to their telecommunications students. By the end of 1956 a total of six students had received telecommunications training in Canada.

World Meteorological Organization

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)¹ developed from the International Meteorological Organization, a voluntary association of national weather services, and came into existence as a Specialized Agency of the United Nations on December 20, 1951². The purposes of WMO are: to help bring about, by international co-operation, the establishment of weather stations and the improvement of weather observations; to promote the establishment and maintenance of telecommunication systems for the rapid exchange of weather information; to promote standardization of meteorological observations and to ensure the uniform publication of observations and statistics; to further the application of meteorology in such fields as aviation, shipping and agriculture; and to encourage research in meteorology and assist in the training of meteorological personnel.

The activities of the WMO are carried on by seven technical commissions covering the main fields of modern meteorology and six regional associations. Mr. Andrew Thomson, Director of the Canadian Meteorological Service, is President of Regional Association IV (North and Central America). The supreme body of WMO is the Congress in which each member is represented by the Director of its Meteorological Service. Congress meets at intervals not exceeding four years, and between its sessions guidance is given by the Executive Committee (consisting of 15 Directors of Weather Services) assisted by WMO's Secretariat in Geneva which now totals about 60 persons.

During 1956, one of the most important projects of the WMO was the preparation of the meteorological programme for the International Geophysical Year. Although the greatest effort will be expended in the Antarctic, the Canadian Meteorological Service has the responsibility for maintaining 100 surface weather stations, 4 ozone stations and 35 stations for measuring temperature and humidity at high levels in the atmosphere. The WMO Secretariat is establishing a Meteorological Data Center to receive and distribute reports and observations on a world-wide basis.

The Technical Commission on Maritime Meteorology, which holds quadrennial sessions, had its second session at Hamburg in October 1956. An international vocabulary for describing sea ice was adopted as was a standard terminology for recording waves observed at sea. Plans were laid for securing aerological observations from freighters and passenger ships to supplement the official weather ship programme. Other WMO technical commissions also carried on active programmes during 1956. Probably the most important single step was the decision to change the time of upper air

¹WMO's membership now totals 94 and is made up of 72 states and 22 non-sovereign territories which maintain their own weather services.

²See *Canada and the United Nations 1954-55*, pp. 75-76.