

As a member of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the Kingdom is now a major user of the INTELSAT system. Earth stations in Riyadh, Jeddah and Taif provide about 3,500 circuits for international calls. Over 180 countries can now be reached through direct dial facilities. The communications system has been enhanced by other links to the outside world including the SEA-ME-WE underwater cable, the INMARSAT satellite system, and ARABSAT, which links members of the Arab League.

The one million-plus new lines of the expansion project represent the single largest increase of the Kingdom's telecommunications system. Phase one of the project, comprising 190,000 new lines, has recently been awarded to the German firm Siemens. The RFQ for the 500,000 line second phase of the project is expected to be released in early 1993.

Even with this major expansion project, which will effectively double existing telecommunications capacity, the resulting upgraded and expanded system will probably represent only about 30% - 40% of the Kingdom's overall demand requirements. The potential for further expansion will be significant.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN EXPORTERS

In addition to the line capacity expansion, there are many other opportunities in telecommunications: the upgrading and expansion of the microwave and telex systems, PBX, mobile telephones, pagers, spectrum management, and airtraffic control. ARABSAT is looking for other satellites whose owners would be willing to move them into the ARABSAT orbit.

Canada has played a substantial and respected role in the development of Saudi Arabia's telecommunications sector. For ten years Bell Canada was responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Kingdom's telephone system. Saudis have a high regard for Canadian telecommunications expertise.

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TANZANIA

Tanzania Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (TPTC) is the organization which provides public telecommunications and postal services throughout Tanzania. It is expected that the Corporation will split into two entities in early 1994, one for postal service and the other for telecommunications. Tanzania has an installed telephone network capacity of 108,000 lines, of which 80,000 are connected. The exchanges are 37% digital, and plans to increase that proportion are underway. (The network is 86% automatic in urban areas, but only 14% automatic in rural areas). The major trunk transmission networks are analog. The telex network has an installed capacity of 4550 lines, of which 2000 are connected.

TPTC is undertaking a \$200 million US dollar modernization and expansion plan to improve the quality and quantity of Tanzania's telecommunications services. This project will encompass: radio, multiples, exchanges, local line plan, power, building and terminal sets. Several consultancy studies are also expected to be undertaken.