

C anada's Voice to the World



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**Announcers-producers
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Each week 16 million people listen to Radio Canada International (RCI). And each year listeners respond with some 50 000 letters. The numbers are impressive, for they demonstrate that this medium-sized service has a large-sized impact upon the world of international broadcasting.

RCI is the shortwave service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Shortwave radio spans continents and oceans, as well as national borders, to reach its audience. RCI began operations near the end of the Second World War to bolster the morale of Canadian men and women serving overseas and since then has established a respected place among the 100-plus broadcasters now beaming an ever-growing number of signals throughout the world.

The service broadcasts 200 hours each week in 12 languages directed at eight target areas: Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and the

Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, Western Europe and the United States. In line with Canada's growing links with Asia and the Pacific, RCI recently began daily broadcasts in Japanese and Standard Chinese.

RCI's mandate is to explain Canada to the world. The basic 30-minute program contains Canadian and international news, commentaries, interviews, reports and documentaries that reflect the political, economic, social, cultural, artistic and scientific life of the country.

Like its CBC parent, RCI strives for balanced, objective programming. However, even greater care must be taken in the shortwave medium because the divergent points of view expressed daily by Canadian political and business leaders, interest groups, newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations are unavailable to the average shortwave listener. In addition, there is no guarantee that the listener tunes in to consecutive broadcasts. So, while journalists and producers may focus on one side of a story, they will also put it

into context for listeners by summarizing the opposing viewpoints.

International broadcasting is an expensive operation, due in part to the cost of constructing and maintaining huge antennas. And these antennas, once in place, cannot possibly serve all target areas equally well. RCI's transmitters, for example, are in Sackville, New Brunswick, a location on Canada's Atlantic coast best suited for transmissions to Europe, the United States and South America.

One way of cutting costs and increasing signal strength is by sharing transmitter time with other broadcasters. Under this arrangement one broadcaster transmits a program by satellite to another broadcaster with facilities located near the target area, which then relays the program by shortwave. RCI has relays in England, Portugal, China, Austria, Japan and Montserrat.

RCI's monitoring station near Ottawa, Ontario, the national capital, demonstrates another aspect of international co-operation. Each week the station monitors 500 hours of programming beamed to North America and sends reception reports to the broadcasters. These broadcasters in turn report how well RCI's signal is received abroad. This shared information guides broadcasters in the choice of frequencies agreed upon at international meetings.

Listeners in many countries also can hear about Canada on local radio via recorded

programs. A favourite item is "Pick of the Pops," a monthly cassette sampler of the latest in Canadian pop, rock, rhythm and blues, country, jazz and folk music. Cassettes containing topical items in English and French are also sent to stations in Africa and the Caribbean and in Japanese to Asia and the Pacific. RCI recordings are available in many university libraries and at Canadian diplomatic missions around the world.

The programs are not limited to foreign listeners. In recent years, shortwave receivers have become smaller, better and easier to use. These improvements have encouraged a growing number of Canadians travelling abroad to keep in touch with home by listening to RCI rebroadcasts of such popular programs from the domestic network as "World at Six," "As It Happens," "Présent" and "Radiojournal."

If you would like to join 16 million other listeners, write for a free program schedule to RCI, P.O. Box 6000, Montreal, Canada H3C 3A8.

As well as shortwave broadcasting, RCI produces disc and cassette recordings for radio stations around the world.



RCI