

for the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. This region extends throughout the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Northwest Territories, and the North Yukon Slope. The FWI provides facilities for fisheries and environmental research, as well as for non-research activities of the Region such as fisheries inspection, fisheries management, economic analysis, and administration. It is the major federal government centre for freshwater fisheries and Arctic fisheries research.

Scientists at the FWI play a critical role in a number of regional and national issues relative to freshwater, freshwater fisheries, and Arctic marine fish and marine mammals, issues such as the impact of Arctic oil and gas development on fish habitats, toxic contaminants, aquaculture development, inland fisheries enhancement, and acid rain.

The work of the Freshwater Institute at the Experimental Lakes Area in northwestern Ontario focuses on the experimental manipulation of small lakes to long-term pollution stresses. The program has contributed to world-class scientific advancements; notably for the effects of acid rain and phosphorus-based laundry detergents. The government is hopeful that this program will continue to generate the scientific knowledge needed to support management of Canada's water resources.

The work of the Great Lakes Laboratory for Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, which is located at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, Ontario, is an important component of Canada's commitment to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Water Quality in the Great Lakes continues to be a high priority of this government.

It is intended, as part of the rationalization of freshwater and marine responsibilities in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Department of the Environment (DOE), to transfer the affected freshwater programs from DFO to DOE. These programs, as is the case for all departmental programs, are facing budgetary reductions as a result of program review. The budget reduction to the affected DFO freshwater science programs for the 1995/96 fiscal year is approximately 22%. Pending discussions with Environment Canada, no decisions have been made for reductions in future years,

On November 18, 1994, a Memorandum of Intent was signed at the Deputy Minister level, on the rationalization and transfer of responsibilities between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Department of the Environment. The objective is to reduce overlap and duplication between federal departments and other levels of government. Under this initiative, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans would become primarily an oceans department. The Department of the Environment would become the lead federal department for freshwater responsibilities. A further aspect would involve the

delegation of freshwater fish habitat protection and freshwater fisheries management to provinces.

Discussions between the two departments are continuing on the transfer of freshwater and marine programs. These talks are taking longer than originally anticipated due to the complex, multi-faceted nature of some of the affected programs, and the difficult challenge of meeting the reduction targets. In the case of the program at the Experimental Lakes Area, for example, an examination is underway of potential partnership alternatives which could provide a sound long-term financial base for the program.

HEALTH

BOVINE GROWTH HORMONE—LINK BETWEEN IGF-1 AND BREAST CANCER—GOVERNMENT POSITION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Mira Spivak on June 27, 1995)

Products containing rBST are currently under evaluation in the Bureau of Veterinary Drugs of the Department of Health. Review of safety issues on IGF-I, including its physiological function and possible link to breast cancer is still ongoing, and no decisions have been made regarding the issuance of a notice of compliance for these veterinary drug products.

Until the evaluation by Health Canada is completed and a decision made, rBST cannot be sold for use in Canada.

COMMUNICATIONS

GRANTING OF PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTRACT FOR G-7 SUMMIT—CONTRAVENTION OF TREASURY BOARD REGULATIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION—REQUEST FOR ESTIMATED FINAL COST

(Response to questions raised by the Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin and the Hon. Jean-Maurice Simard on June 27, 1995)

There are strict conditions under which the Government may offer sole source contracts. These include cases where the contracts are smaller than \$30,000, in cases of urgency or in cases where corporations sponsor free goods or services. A number of these cases applied to various contracts arranged to support the Halifax Summit.

The preparations for the Halifax Summit were done in a very tight time frame, necessitating some quick decisions. In the case of the public relations firm, the decision to award a sole-sourced contract to Groupe Columbia Inc. was made on the basis of an urgent need for specialized communications assistance for the Summit. The decision was taken after reviewing a number of informal proposals from public relations firms, although a formal tendering process was not undertaken. Groupe Columbia submitted the earliest and most complete bid to handle all the communications functions of the Summit. Further, the firm's capabilities were well known to the Summit organizers.