

*Government Orders*

Consolidating these two similar agencies will achieve savings in administrative overhead, eliminate duplication of services and allow for increased efficiency and program delivery. This action will result in the reduction of seven person-years and one Governor in Council appointment and annual saving of about \$1 million.

Efficiency gains will also be realized by merging the Copyright Board, the Trade Marks Opposition Board and the Patent Appeal Board to form the new intellectual property tribunal. Its duties will include the fixing of royalties which the performing rights societies may collect in return for granting licences for the performance of dramatic or musical works. The tribunal will also decide on how royalties should be divided, including those generated by the retransmission of television and radio signals. The intellectual property tribunal will arbitrate dispute on copyright royalties and decide opposition and cancellation procedures arising under the Trade Marks Act.

As recommended by an independent report, the tribunal will bring together an expanded wealth of intellectual property law and expertise into one organization. Industry sectors involved in the use of intellectual property will benefit through improved service and greater expertise among board members. Given that the tribunal at times will rule on government decisions it will be independent of the government.

The legislation also provides for the merger of the Procurement Review Board and the Canadian International Trade Tribunal. Following the merger, the new organization will be named the international trade and procurement tribunal and report to Parliament through the Minister of Finance.

Amalgamating the PRB and the CITT is a logical course of action. As members will know, these two entities provide similar services pertaining to complaints from Canadian and American suppliers about unfair trading practices. While the PRB's authority is limited to government procurement decisions within the scope of the free trade agreement, both bodies conduct investigations, hold hearings, uphold or dismiss complaints and if necessary determine remedies.

The new entity will provide increased administrative efficiencies from the sharing of personnel and overhead. For those who fear that the expertise accumulated by the PRB will be lost in the merger, I want to assure them this is not the case. As the new name implies, the international trade and procurement tribunal will have a separate division that will deal solely with matters of government procurement.

The government also intends to wind up the Petroleum Monitoring Agency. Its functions will be assumed in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. For those who are unfamiliar with the PMA, the agency publishes semi-annual and annual ownership surveys of the petroleum industry as well as other specific reports as requested by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to whom the PMA currently reports.

This streamlining action builds upon the efficiency gains that the PMA has achieved over the years which have already allowed for a steady decline of its size and budget. It also reflects the fact that administratively an independent agency with 10 person-years and a part-time chairman is not the most effective manner in which to perform the monitoring function. Monitoring the petroleum industry within EMR will result in annual savings of \$300,000 over the PMA's 1991-92 budget and will require two less person-years.

Finally, the Veteran's Land Administration will be wound up and its function and responsibility will be transferred directly to the Department of Veterans Affairs. This merging of VLA operations with those of the department will allow greater economies while ensuring that the interests of veterans are fully protected.

I want to emphasize that the VLA program is not being abolished. Rather, the legislation merely reflects the fact the program is in its final phase. Established during the Second World War, the VLA program provides loans and other assistance to veterans purchasing property for farms and homes. However, no new loans have been made since 1977 and as of April 1, 1992 there were 10,603 loans outstanding as opposed to 144,000, 20 years ago. Given the declining VLA workload, it is appropriate that its separate agency status be terminated.