

Canadian Companies Enter Thai Rural Telecommunications Sector

Although Canada produces and exports telecommunications products on a massive scale, the impact to date of Canada in this sector in Thailand has been relatively modest. This situation is about to change.

An example of the new inroads being made by Canadian firms is the recent success of a relatively small Montreal manufacturer, SR Telecom, on a variety of fronts over the last two years. SR Telecom has sold their rural telephone equipment separately, but almost simultaneously, to three very different and unrelated organizations; to the Telephone Organization of Thailand which is using it to provide telephone service to some new Bangkok suburbs; to the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand which is using it to communicate with their isolated hydro project sites; and lastly, to a major foreign-owned oil company which is using it to stay in touch with their

offshore platforms in the Gulf of Siam. The SR Telecom equipment is the world leader in its field of supplying telephone services using radio transmission systems which are of such high quality that subscribers are unaware that land cables are not involved.

This technology is particularly appropriate in Thailand where literally thousands of villages, and even dozens of substantially-sized towns, have no public telephone service at all. By installing SR Telecom equipment, these services can be provided in relatively short order, and at minimal cost, but can generate marvelous economic returns through bringing the countryside and the capital into closer contact. Recognizing these benefits, the Telephone Organization of Thailand is planning to install rural radio telephone service in half of the country over the next three years, at a cost of over US\$

100 million and it is likely that SR Telecom will be able to play a major role in this program.

One of SR Telecom's allies in competing for this project will be Alta Telecoms International, a subsidiary of Alberta Government Telephones. This firm which specializes in telecommunications consulting and project management, has recently opened a permanent office in Bangkok after winning a contract to provide telephone traffic engineering training to the Telephone Organization of Thailand. They have considerable expertise in rural telephone systems, gained in rural Alberta, which will be valuable to their clients in Thailand, and combined with SR Telecom's world leading equipment, promises an important role for Canada in the future Thai telecommunications sector.

INDONESIA

Indo-Energy '85: An Exhibition Not to be Missed

More than three hundred companies from Europe, Asia and North America gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia from October 8-11 to exhibit their products and services. Indo-Energy '85, one of the largest trade shows concentrating on the oil and gas sector which is the major foreign exchange earner for Indonesia was held concurrently with the 100th anniversary of Indonesian activity in petroleum exploration.

Canada was represented by 10 com-

panies plus the Canadian Government which provided an information booth and hospitality facilities. The Canadian group's presence was noticed by the local consumer press and particularly one exhibitor, Survival Systems, attracted attention with services which were unique among the show's exhibitors.

Canadian companies such as Alberta Telecom International (ATI) consider that the show generated a dozen extremely promising contacts for the company.

Others like Kobelt Manufacturing of Richmond, B.C. and Dresco Ltd. of Edmonton, Alberta, obtained signed orders at the show.

The importance of Indo-Energy '85 was summed up by Don Lavoie of Lavalin International, "There may be some question as to our participation in an oil and gas show since we are a firm of consulting engineers, but we are part of Canadian business and as such cannot afford to be absent from a show of this magnitude."

Parliamentarians Visit

Two Canadian parliamentarians recently attended the Eighth General Meeting of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization in Jakarta September 23-28. Mr. Elliott Hardey, member of Parliament from Ontario and the Honourable L.B. Bonnell, a Senator from PEI made their first visit to Indonesia. They joined observers from Australia and Japan at AIPO sessions. The two parliamentarians had detailed discussions with representatives from the original five ASEAN countries who were present during a special working session. Topics covered in consultations ranged from political subjects such as Cambodia to questions of international economic co-operation.

The Canadian parliamentarians acknowledged that a real benefit of their attendance at meetings was the opportunity presented to meet their colleagues on an informal basis. Mr. Hardey and Senator Bonnell agreed to explore whether it might be possible to establish a more permanent liaison between Canada and AIPO.



Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Soebroto opening Indo-Energy '85.