

utilized to ensure that developing international standards in the generation, transmission and processing of individual trade transactions reflect the best current Canadian practices and interests. Industry initiatives were supported through assistance to the Electronics Data Interchange Council of Canada to organize seminars in eight Canadian cities as part of Canada Export Trade Month in October 1986.

The Interdepartmental Committee on the Facilitation of International Trade, chaired by the Department, continued its role in ensuring that Canadian concerns in this field were brought before international bodies working on standards and documentation in international trade.

### **International Business Research Centre**

The International Business Research Centre of the Conference Board of Canada is partly financed by the Department. The Centre focuses on issues affecting Canada's international trade and competitiveness and seeks to broaden public understanding of these issues. Its research program responds to the interests of its members, and is guided by an advisory board drawn from business and government. Additionally, it undertakes research of specific interest to particular members. During the year, the Centre continued to publish reports based on its research program, published a quarterly listing of export education courses and workshops available to the private sector, staged the annual International Business Outlook Conference and continued a series of trade conferences and seminars.

### **Centres for international business studies**

This program supports centres at the Universities of British Columbia, Manitoba and Western Ontario, and at Dalhousie University and Montreal's *École des Hautes études commerciales*. Support is extended through grants for operational and research purposes, and for fellowships given to students at these universities. The purpose of the program is to improve the quality of management and of international marketing skills of Canadian business. It also assists research directed at an understanding of the issues and challenges facing Canadian exporters, and through the organization of seminars and workshops seeks to strengthen the knowledge and skills of Canadian firms engaged in export trade. The individual centres have advisory boards drawn from the business community, government and the university, which keep the centres in touch with the developments and concerns of the international trading community in Canada.

### **Program for Export Market Development/Promotional Projects**

During the year, these two export promotional programs were consolidated and restructured as recommended by the Nielsen Task Force. Following a year's consultations with industry, business associations, provincial governments and other federal government departments, the two programs were consolidated with one portion covering assistance for government-initiated activities (former PPP) and the other covering industry-initiated activities (former PEMD). At the request of industry, the program retains the name PEMD.

As a result of the 30 per cent budget cuts recommended by the Task Force, assistance in some sections was reduced, eligibility criteria were strengthened, reporting procedures by applicants were tightened and a cost-recovery element was introduced to the government-initiated series of activities.

The objective of the revised PEMD is to improve Canada's international trade performance and, at the same time, stimulate the Canadian economy through increased production and employment. In keeping with the government's industrial and international market strategies, PEMD offers an opportunity for Canadian businesses to undertake new, and often risky, export activities that they could not, or would not, normally undertake on their own.

PEMD offers financial assistance to Canadian companies to participate in government-initiated trade fairs and missions, to undertake visits to identify markets, to bid on international projects, to participate in recognized trade fairs, to establish an export consortium in Canada, and to establish a permanent sales office abroad. Companies pay a fee to participate in government-initiated fairs, while companies applying for assistance under the industry-initiated portion of the program repay the contribution they receive if they are successful in making sales.

During the fiscal year 1986-87, some 4 405 applications were received under PEMD, of which 2 977 were approved, for a total support of \$28.3 million. Total expenditures amounted to approximately \$26 million, as compared to \$33.7 million during the previous fiscal year.

Under the PPP, the Department participated in some 171 trade fairs and information booths in 44 countries involving approximately 500 companies; 171 outgoing trade missions and seminars taking 64 business persons to 41 countries; and 99 incoming missions and visits bringing approximately 1 000 foreign officials and business persons to Canada from 54 countries.