

If a standard has been accorded to a product, the exporter must ensure that its equipment meets the standard. The Mexican buyer or agent will know if the product requires a certificate, stating that it meets an established *NOM*. Inquiries should be addressed to the address for the *DGN* provided in the section on Key Contacts in Mexico.

If a standard has not been set for a product, it may be advantageous for an exporter to apply to have one established. This can be a very effective marketing tool because it can limit the participation of competing products that do not meet the proposed new standard. Establishing a standard, however, will require considerable administrative time and paperwork.

PATENT PROTECTION

New intellectual property legislation, which went into force in June 1991, significantly increases protection for companies considering the licensing or transfer of their manufacturing technology to Mexico. The Law for the Promotion and Protection of Industrial Property makes the following provisions:

- the initial term of trademark is extended up to 10 years;
- the terms for patents is extended up to 20 years;
- industrial designs, which encompass industrial models and drawings, now receive 15 years protection;
- protection from copyright piracy is increased significantly and extended to computer software;
- Mexico now recognizes internationally accepted markings for trademarks and copyrights; and
- stiff penalties are imposed for infractions of these laws.

These laws are relatively new and the regulations have not yet been fully implemented. Therefore, it is recommended that Canadian firms seek legal advice on intellectual property protection.

