



LATEST ISSUE
DERNIER
NUMERO

Vol. 1, No. 3

DEC 1 1993

December 1, 1993

CITEL – Inter-American Telecommunication Commission

Canadian membership in international telecommunications organizations provides a window on the world of telecommunications operators. With the links established through these organizations, the Canadian government can learn of upcoming opportunities and make sure that concerns of Canadian companies are well represented. This issue of *ComExport* looks at CITEL while future issues will discuss Canadian involvement in organizations such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and INTELSAT.

In June 1993, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Managua, Nicaragua established CITEL (Comision Interamericana de Telecomunicaciones, or Inter-American Telecommunication Commission), as part of the OAS structure. While CITEL existed as a "Specialized Conference" under previous arrangements within the OAS, the 35 member states of CITEL from North, Central and South America as well as the Caribbean expect that the new Commission, with its enhanced

status and level of funding, will better represent the interests of the CITEL member states in the important fields of radiocommunications, standardization and telecommunication development. It is anticipated that CITEL will be able to generate common proposals and positions for the countries of the Americas region in preparation for ITU conferences, thus enhancing the prospect of achieving results that benefit the CITEL member states as a whole. It is also expected that CITEL will take a larger role in co-ordinating ITU- and OAS-sponsored development projects.

Canadian membership in CITEL gives our representatives an insider's view of the liberalization and privatization trends that are sweeping the Latin American telecommunications sector. Colombia's requirements for help in spectrum management, for example, were discovered during a presentation of Canadian capabilities in the field to CITEL members. This has led to negotiations between Colombia and a Canadian spectrum management technology company.

Opportunities exist for greater involvement by private sector in CITEL's activities through seminars and through participation in standards co-ordination and co-operation work. Recent seminar topics have included personal communications services, mobile communications satellites and broadcast satellites. CITEL reports can be obtained from the International Telecommunications Division of Industry Canada (see contacts box). Increased private sector involvement should lead to the creation of a special category of "membership" in CITEL, which would reflect an enhanced appeal to a wider constituency of participants.

Industry Canada – New Ministry, New Mandate

The federal role in helping to build a modern competitive economy has now been focussed in the new industry portfolio, which combines, among other roles, the telecommunications policy and programs from the former Department of Communications (DOC) with the responsibilities to promote international competitiveness and economic development from Industry, Science and Technology Canada (ISTC). The International Telecommunications Division, which moves from DOC to the new Department of Industry, will maintain its close relationships with ministries of communications in other countries, through consultations and bilateral agreements. These relationships have enabled the division to introduce Canadian companies, equipment and services to foreign telecom decision makers

and to access strategic market information that is passed on to Canadian companies through reports and through issues of *ComExport*.

The new structure will lead to closer co-ordination between the International Telecommunications Division and the divisions of the former ISTC that are responsible for helping industry. The current close relationship with the Trade Commissioner Service of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada will continue. Indeed, the article on the U.K. cable industry in this issue of *ComExport* was contributed by the Canadian High Commission in London.

Feel free to call the International Telecommunications Division with any question you may have on telecommunications in foreign markets (see contacts box).

