

authorities, while the VNPT and the DGPT fortify their power base.

The vehicle for foreign equipment suppliers to discuss supply contracts or joint manufacturing projects with the Vietnam authorities lies in the Science Technology and International Cooperations Departments, in both the VNPT and the DGPT. The International Cooperation Department of the DGPT makes the final decisions from a policy and regulatory view, but it is the VNPT's Department which reviews newly-introduced technologies and their specifications, and makes recommendations to the DGPT.

The larger provincial P&Ts also have Technology and International Cooperation divisions with similar responsibilities, but the understanding is that final decisions are pushed upstairs to the VNPT. The most significant of these provincial divisions is of course the HCM City P&T, strengthened by its mandate given to them by the central authority, to be responsible for development not only in HCM City but also the five Mekong Delta provincial administrations.

A cornerstone to this plan is the forthcoming "Master Plan," the ITU and UNDP-sponsored development schedule developed by the Deutsche Bundespost consulting unit Detecon, now in final ratification and supposedly to be implemented by the end of 1993. Hopefully this will give this centralization program the impetus it needs to carry out a nation-wide development program.

Despite largely retreating from the path of service liberalization with regards to its own provincial P&Ts, the DGPT is still open to discussing manufacturing and service provision BCCs with foreign parties. In order to establish a relationship with the Vietnam telecom authorities, it is best to start at the top. Furthermore, while there are bodies in both the national operator and the regulator set up to receive foreign suppliers and service providers, the VNPT and DGPT officials clearly appreciate efforts by suppliers to establish parallel dialogues with both of them.