

POSTAL SERVICES IN THE 1990s

INTRODUCTION

The 1981 passage of the *Canada Post Corporation Act* (the Act), which created a Crown corporation to operate postal services in Canada, marked the beginning of a new era for the Post Office. The move from a government department to a Crown corporation was designed to distance postal services from the political arena, to introduce a measure of fiscal accountability into postal operations and generally to overcome many of the problems that had beset the postal system.

The Act sets out the following three objects for Canada Post Corporation ("Canada Post" or the "Corporation"):

- (a) to establish and operate a postal service for the collection, transmission and delivery of messages, information, funds and goods;
- (b) to manufacture and provide products and services that are necessary or incidental to postal services; and
- (c) to provide services to government departments, agencies and others that are convenient for the Corporation to provide.

The Act also outlines certain factors that Canada Post must consider when carrying out its objects. These require the Corporation, while maintaining basic customary postal service, to have regard to

- (a) improving and extending its products and services in the light of developments in the field of communications;
- (b) conducting its operations on a self-sustaining financial basis while providing a standard of service that will meet the needs of the people of Canada and that is similar with respect to communities of the same size;
- (c) providing for the security of mail;
- (d) utilizing its human resources to achieve its objects and to ensure the commitment and dedication of its employees; and
- (e) maintaining a corporate identity that recognizes that it is an institution of the Government of Canada.

From the beginning, Canada Post's management set out three objectives. These were: improved service; improved labour-management relations; and financial self-sufficiency.