Trade associations are organized on both a national and local basis and encompass practically every aspect of trade and industry. Many trade associations are members of national federations such as the Federation of Norwegian Industries (manufacturing) and the Federation of Norwegian Commercial Associations (trading).

Imported goods are most often marketed through agents, although some retailers may buy through a centralized purchasing office. Most agents work on a commission basis and cover the whole country. However, many larger firms act as importers and distributors, maintaining stocks on their own account with exclusive distribution rights. Products which require servicing are best marketed through firms already engaged in the distribution of similar equipment.

Representation

It is common practice for foreign companies to appoint a local representative and it is usually necessary when selling to local or federal government agencies. A local representative is mandatory when selling electrical consumer appliances which require approval by NEMKO (the Norwegian equivalent to the Canadian Standards Association).

Whenever possible Canadian firms should appoint Norwegian local agents rather than those of other nationalities. Agents work either on a commission basis, or import and sell on their own account.

Oslo is the most important centre of Norwegian commerce and it is usually necessary to appoint an agent resident there. It is not usually expedient to employ an agent for the whole of Scandinavia, as Norwegian buyers have a general preference for dealing with Norwegian agents, but there are cases where the market is covered competently by agents situated in other Nordic countries. The leading Oslo agents either have sub-agents in the provinces or have a number of travellers capable of covering the whole country.

The majority of agents dealing with the offshore petroleum sector are located in Stavanger and, increasingly, in Bergen.

Trade associations are often helpful in locating suitable agents. Manufacturers wishing to export should