

RADIO LICENSING RELAXED

Licenses for private mobile radio systems will now be available to a much wider range of applicants than before, Transport Minister Léon Balcer announced recently.

Because private systems operate on very high frequencies and the number of channels available is necessarily limited, licences have so far been restricted to those that could prove an essential need.

Technical advances have now resulted in a more economical use of frequencies through closer spacing of channels. As a result, the Department of Transport is able to relax its requirements and permit more general licensing.

As certain frequencies will still have to be reserved for such essential services as police, fire, utilities, etc., general licences will have to share with others the frequencies assigned to them.

Also, to meet public demand, the licensing of public radio dispatching systems will be broadened so as to permit a greater number of such systems to operate on a competitive basis in the large centres.

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FEDERAL BID FOR B.C. AIRPORT

The Federal Government has offered the City of Vancouver \$2,750,000 for its interest in Vancouver International Airport. The offer covers land and buildings and is based on two appraisals, one by the real estate branch of the Department of Transport, the other by a Vancouver firm selected with the approval of the city.

The appraisals and the federal offer do not include city-owned equipment with a present book value of approximately \$210,000. Although this value includes some items at actual cost rather than depreciated value, the Federal Government is prepared to accept this valuation as the basis for further negotiations on the transfer of the equipment.

Classifications and salary scales for Department of Transport staff at airports across Canada are set by the Civil Service Commission and employment of individuals is subject to the Commission's jurisdiction.

"Subject to these controlling qualifications," Mr. Balcer, Minister of Transport, said, "it would be our objective to offer continuity of employment to present city employees at as near the same wages and present employment benefits as possible."

Protection of pension rights of municipal-airport employees would also be possible and would be a matter for direct discussion between the city and the Department of Finance.

The Transport Department would expedite preparation of plans for a new terminal building which might cost the federal Government anywhere from \$13 million to \$18 million.

PLANES FOR HOLLAND

The first five of a total of 17 "Tracker" aircraft of the Royal Canadian Navy were transferred to the Netherlands under terms of the Canadian programme of Mutual Aid to member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization during ceremonies at HMCS "Shearwater", naval air-station near Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, on December 5.

Mr. J. Angus MacLean, Minister of Fisheries, represented Canada and turned the aircraft over to His Excellency A.H.J. Lovink, Netherlands Ambassador to Canada, who accepted them on behalf of his Government. Vice-Admiral L. Brouwer, Chief of Naval Staff for the Royal Netherlands Navy, also attended the ceremonies.

The "Tracker" is a twin-engine anti-submarine aircraft built by the De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited, under licence from the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation of the United States.

Considered an outstanding anti-submarine aircraft, the "Tracker" is equipped with radar, sonobuoys and magnetic airborne detector (MAD) for detecting submarines. It is armed with depth bombs and homing torpedoes for their destruction. The aircraft carries a crew of four.

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WINTER WORK ON WELLAND CANAL

A fender system on entrance walls of Locks 1, 4, 6 and 7 of the Welland Canal will be constructed this winter. Standby diesel engines for vertical-lift bridges over the canal will be supplied and installed in a continuing three-year programme, as will a number of gear-speed reducers for the bridges. Changes will be made in the hydraulic system at Locks 3 and 7 of the Welland, to increase speed of filling and emptying.

The Welland Canal, providing a 327-foot lift between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, will be closed to navigation on December 15 and appropriate reaches of the 27-mile, eight-lock canal will be unwatered immediately afterward to permit a considerable amount of modification and improvement to be accomplished during the non-navigation season. Last year, in a \$5-million programme, extensions to tie-up walls at three locks and the guard-gate were constructed, equipped with white-oak fenders. During the 1959-60 winter season, also, modification of fender booms and other work was undertaken, which provided a smooth-running operational season on the heavily-used canal this year.

Further improvements, which will be carried out this winter, are modifications to rolling-lift bridges at Locks 1, 4 and 7 and replacements of mitre-gate sills at Locks 4, 6 and 7. These will be done by contracts recently awarded.