

TOURISM

Mexico's tourist industry is expanding rapidly. There has been considerable construction of hotels, marinas, shopping centres, condominiums, and golf courses. Hotel construction is particularly active. Approximately 10,000 new hotel rooms are constructed annually, and a large proportion of them are 4 and 5-star quality. There is also a demand for infrastructure to support these facilities, including airports, water treatment plants, roads and electrical distribution systems.

Opportunities for construction materials and equipment include:

- high quality finishing materials for luxury hotels and conference centres;
- bathroom fixtures and plumbing materials;
- lighting fixtures;
- systems for heating, security and control; and
- chemically-treated lumber for landscaping, piers, and docks.

Fondo Nacional de Fomento al Turismo (FONATUR), the National Fund to Promote Tourism is an important government contact for learning about future tourism development plans. Canadian firms can begin by examining *FONATUR's* plans for new resorts. Contacts within the agency may provide introductions to private sector developers who are engaged in the major projects. Other groups influencing the choice of construction materials are:

- *Grupo Situr*, a major Mexican company responsible for an estimated 30 percent of new tourism developments;
- major hotel chains;
- local tourism developers; and
- the Mexican architectural community.

HOTEL EXPANSIONS PLANNED

Several hotel chains have announced plans to expand their operations. Holiday Inn Worldwide plans to build 20 new hotels in Mexico over the next two years. Ritz-Carlton is considering two projects in Mexico City and Guadalajara with joint-venture partner, *Fondo Opción*. *Grupo Situr* and the Hong Kong-based Mandarin Oriental Group have plans for a new 5-star hotel in Mexico City. *Grupo Situr* is also building a 360-room hotel on Mexico City's Reforma Avenue with its partner, Hilton International.

