

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of a survey and analysis of Canadian R&D interests and activities in information technology. This was undertaken as part of the research conducted to examine the potential for international cooperation in information technology R&D (ITRD) on behalf of the Canadian Federal Government, Department of External Affairs (DEA) and Department of Communications (DOC).

Three surveys were conducted during 1987 in the following countries and regions:

- 1) Canada
- 2) Western Europe
- 3) Japan

The results of the Japan and Western European Surveys are reported in companion volumes to this summary. A substantial portion of the findings are also contained in the ITRD electronic database developed for the internal use of DOC/External Affairs as part of this project.

The impetus for the project came from a joint initiative of the Department of Communications and Department of External Affairs in late 1985 to examine the potential for collaborative projects in information technology between Canada, Western Europe and Japan. The principal focus of the initiative was to gather information from the private sector in the relevant countries and to determine, based on the information obtained, areas of mutual interest in advanced, precompetitive research. The U.S.A. was not included in this project, the reason being that its proximity and familiarity to most Canadian industries makes such information readily available for most practical purposes.

The overriding goal of the project was to make information about relevant areas of R&D more easily available for identifying and fostering potential cooperative ventures among high technology firms, at the "pre-competitive" stage. Pre-competitive R&D usually refers to basic or applied research, having a relatively long time frame, which is oriented towards a strategic initiative in a key technology area. Being relatively remote from the product decision and formulation stage, the pre-competitive phase is considered ideal for developing strong professional and personal working relationships.