

Canada's program has become an integral part of the country's culture and economy. Every year we find new applications for existing satellite technology, and because of increased spending on research and development by government and industry, we will, without doubt, continue to develop new technologies to work with in the years to come.

Some of the projects on the drawing board include:

Mobile Satellite (MSAT)

Because of Canada's vast territory, much of it remote, there is a real and often urgent need for effective communications by mobile radio users who live and work outside metropolitan centres. At present, mobile communications are usually limited to a maximum effective range of 40 to 60 kilometres from a base station. Workers on a remote construction or exploration site, for example, have to travel 50 kilometres or more to reach the nearest phone—or even to be able to use their existing mobile radiotelephones.

MSAT is a proposed satellite system that would link mobile radio users with the rest of Canada—and the world. If a demonstration spacecraft is approved for launch in the late 1980s, Canada would become the first country with a mobile communications satellite. Preliminary feasibility studies on MSAT proved encouraging, and plans are proceeding on spacecraft design, market identification and an examination of the economic viability of the project. A final decision on MSAT is expected from the government in late 1984.

Major users of an MSAT system would include: emergency and medical workers; forest fire fighters; the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other law enforcement agencies; oil and gas exploration crews; truckers and travelling salesmen; fishermen; environmental data collection platforms.

