

EAMIP PROJECT NO. GB05

TITLE: Use of Communications Satellite for Public Affairs Program at U.S.A. Posts

RESPONSIBILITY: Project Manager: H.G. Pardy, Director (UGP)
Project Officers: D.R. MacPhee (UGP)
G. Delance (SCS)

PRESENT SITUATION:

It has been proposed that satellite receiving antennae, Television Receive Only earth stations (TVRO) be installed at the Embassy in Washington and other U.S. posts to provide direct and immediate access to Canadian television programming in order to enhance their capability of keeping abreast of current policy development in Canada. To date, rental of such satellite receiving antennae by the Embassy and the Consulate General in New York on occasions such as the budget address by the Minister of Finance from the House of Commons has amply demonstrated the value of such equipment in providing key U.S. audiences first-hand access to Canadian news. Inter and intradepartmental consultation on the proposal indicates a broad consensus in favour of launching a pilot project with installation of a TVRO at the Embassy, Washington and the Consulate General in New York. The U.S. State Department has indicated that the proposal presents "no policy problems for the United States Government".

OBJECTIVE:

To achieve enhanced efficiency in transmitting timely public information to posts, and to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of Canadian high-technology as an alternative method of transmitting public information.

GOAL:

The initial installation of TVRO's at both the Embassy in Washington and the Consulate General in New York within two months and as a result the immediate capability of these two posts to receive current Canadian public information via Canadian television.

DESCRIPTION:

The United States Program Division is acting as a pilot coordinator in liaison with the two posts immediately concerned and other client users. The initial installation of TVRO's in both Washington, D.C. and the Consulate General in New York will result in the ability to provide immediate transmission of high-profile Canadian media events to a key U.S. audience including Washington policy-makers and opinion-formers. To date initial response from U.S. media following rental of TVRO's to enable their first-hand viewing of key Canadian media events has been highly positive. In six months to one year from installation there will be an assessment of the cost-effectiveness/saving from such equipment in terms of reducing current costs, both personnel and capital.