

A springtime assessment of our goals and objectives

by Alain Gourd

The past year was momentous for Canada and the world: rapid change in the Soviet Union, the Middle East and Europe, Canada's unfolding constitutional renewal process, and the growing urgency attached to global competitiveness by Canadians, are but a few examples.

Perhaps more than any other federal government department, we can consider ourselves at the heart of these changes.

Broadcasting and telecommunications have served as lifelines of democratic expression in many parts of the world. Cultural values are providing the base upon which people everywhere are building their national identity and aspirations. Advanced communications technologies are breaking down trade and financial barriers between nations, and information is becoming the most valuable commodity that any organization can possess.

The Department of Communications is privileged to be a key player in these developments. But with privilege comes obligation. We must understand the forces that are



Perrin Beatty and Michael Binder tour the David Florida Laboratory with director Rolf Mamen.

shaping our world and we must help Canadians to use these forces to their advantage.

That is one reason for publishing this special issue of *Communications Express*. By reviewing a highly successful year just completed with Minister Beatty at the helm, we get an overview of the road just travelled and the way ahead. In spotlighting the Minister's accomplishments, we also see the fruits of the hard work and talent of people in the Department.

As well, in excerpts from the Department's report *Strategic Directions — 1992*, this issue takes a look ahead to what we hope to achieve in the coming months. Also

in this issue, *Communications Express* presents highlights from the recently completed all-employee survey. Analysis of the survey results will provide objective data on what we are doing well to create a good work environment for employees and, more importantly, pointing out areas for improvement.

I hope that the information here will serve as a catalyst for discussion of your team's contribution to departmental priorities. We will need the ideas of all employees in the coming months and years if we are to continue to deliver on our Mission.

Deputy Minister on special assignment

As *Communications Express* went to press, the Prime Minister announced that Alain Gourd will be taking on a special assignment with the Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs, providing advice on communications matters relating to the national unity and constitutional files.

Michael Binder, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, will assume Mr. Gourd's responsibilities at the Department of Communications on an acting basis.

Minister leads Department in action-packed year

Despite a heavy schedule chairing the Cabinet Committee on the Environment and membership on other key committees, including the Committee on Canadian Unity and Constitutional Negotiations, Perrin Beatty had a highly productive first year as Canada's Minister of Communications.

Highlights included the tabling of important legislation, announcing new policies, strengthening client services, and streamlining the Department to meet the needs of a changing society. With the

Minister's lead, the Department met the challenge of an action-oriented agenda supporting national objectives of unity, prosperity and competitiveness.

Challenges and accomplishments in the cultural industries

Of several challenges facing the cultural industries, those of the broadcasting industry

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Second survey another Department first

In 1988, Communications Canada's all-employee survey was the first of its kind to be conducted in a federal government department. The Department is now the first to have surveyed its employees twice for opinions about their jobs and working in the Department.

The complete data will be used to assess the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken as a result of the 1988 survey and to guide efforts to improve the quality of working life in the Department.

Highlights of the survey conducted in late 1991 are presented below. The complete data will be used to assess the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken as a result of the 1988 survey and to guide efforts to improve the quality of working life in the Department.

While analysis of survey data is still under way, preliminary findings will be shared with employees through a series of town hall meetings throughout the country, as was the case with the 1988 survey. As well, the Deputy Minister will be featured in a video discussing key concerns of employees revealed in the survey, and

outlining the Department's response to the survey results.

Information from the town hall meetings will supplement analysis of the survey data and be compiled in a report by early fall. As the survey results can be broken down at the director general level, results will be provided to specific DGs where there are enough respondents to ensure anonymity of employees.

Background

Questionnaires were completed by 1,529 term and indeterminate employees (64% response rate) compared to 1,591 in 1988 (66% response rate). Although lower than the 1988 rate, this is a good response for this type of survey. The results reported here are highlights only. Where appropriate, results from the 1992 all-employee survey are compared to the Department's 1988 survey.

Job satisfaction

- Employees were asked to agree or disagree with the statement "In general, I am satisfied with my job." The percentage of those agreeing with the statement has remained fairly stable over the last four years (i.e. 66.5% to 69.9%).
- There are significant differences in the percentage of employees at various levels within the Department who feel satisfied with their jobs. At the CR, ST, and GL levels, only 64% agree that in general they are satisfied with their jobs. At the management level (i.e. EXs) 84% of respondents agree with the statement. This finding is consistent with the 1988 survey where 63% of non-management reported satisfaction with their jobs, compared to 79% of senior management.

Components of job satisfaction

- Respondents tend to be less satisfied with opportunities open to them in the Department than they are with their jobs.
- They are least likely to report satisfaction with opportunities for career planning, professional development and promotion. In the current climate of fiscal restraint and downsizing, these

concerns are endemic to the entire public service.

- Respondents were most likely to report satisfaction with job security. This is an area the Department has addressed with repeated assurances that its no-layoff policy remains in effect.
- Respondents as a group were also likely to report little satisfaction with the resources available for doing their jobs. Few employees report being satisfied with the number of people available to do the work. This finding applies both to front-line staff and to managers at all levels.

Internal communications

- About a third of respondents report the amount of information they receive is overwhelming. Just under a third (32%) report the information they receive is not overwhelming. Middle and senior managers are the most likely to feel overwhelmed by information.
- About 45% of respondents report that communication up, down and across the organization is effective. Non-managers are more likely to view communications up or down as ineffective. Perceptions of the effectiveness of communication up and down increase moving up the organizational hierarchy. Views on the effectiveness of communication across groups are not related to the respondents' organizational level.

Orientation to people

- Employees were asked the extent to which the Department is interested in their welfare and satisfaction. This question is a measure of the Department's orientation to people.
- In 1988, only 10% of respondents reported that the Department had a great or very great interest in employee welfare and satisfaction. The new survey shows that the percentage of respondents agreeing with this statement has doubled.

Initiatives

Employees were asked to agree or disagree with the following statements:

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are among the most complex. Fragmented markets and restraints on public funds demanded a re-evaluation of the industry's economic base. With a new *Broadcasting Act* proclaimed, the Minister arranged a broadcasting summit, bringing together for the first time all partners in the production and delivery of Canadian programming. Mr. Beatty called on them to make recommendations the government could support with a national industrial strategy.

Participants at the December 1991 summit accepted 31 of 44 recommendations in the Task Force Report on the Economic Status of Canadian Television. The summit's steering committee continues to work on ideas raised during the Montreal meeting and is expected to provide a report by mid-year. The Minister also assisted Canada's book publishing industry; \$102 million in new funds were added to the Department's support program for Canadian publishers and distributors, along with renewed emphasis on marketing.

Fragmented markets and restraints on public funds demanded a re-evaluation of the broadcasting industry's economic base.

Weekly newspapers serving small communities were recognized for their role in national identity and \$5 million was provided to them in subsidies to offset postal rates until March 1993.

As well, the sound recording industry and the independent film production sectors received additional structural support this year.

Cultural expression and social concerns

Recognizing the importance of Canada's cultural institutions to our perception of ourselves as Canadians, and the need to support them with professional training, Mr. Beatty received the report of the Task Force on Professional Training in the Arts with great interest, as did his colleague Employment and Immigration Minister Bernard Valcourt. Moreover, substantial grants were made to national cultural institutions, notably the Montreal-based National Theatre School, to stabilize their operations.

Canada's artists were pleased by the introduction and progress through Second



Everyone's a world-class athlete at the DOC "Olympics".

Reading to Committee stage of the Status of the Artist Bill. Proclamation is expected this year for the legislation, which formally recognizes the contribution of artists to Canadian culture. In recognition of the need for artists to benefit from their work, the Minister, together with Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister Pierre Blais, established a consultative committee to advise on amendments to the *Copyright Act*. A bill is expected to be tabled this fall.

A program to recognize and encourage volunteers and benefactors in the cultural sector, the Lescaibot awards, was implemented, with former Communications Minister Flora MacDonald chairing a blue-ribbon selection committee. Broad participation throughout the country has been stimulated by the Department and award recipients have just been named.

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To aid the environment and to protect valuable documents for future generations, the Minister announced the government's intent to publish all documents of long-term value on permanent alkaline paper. In addition to lasting for up to 400 years, rather than the 40-year life of acidic papers, the

permanent alkaline paper can be recycled more often.

Mr. Beatty set up a committee this year to advise him and the Department on communications initiatives to facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities into the mainstream of society. Part of a government-wide initiative, the Department is contributing \$8.1 million over five years for a communications research and development program to support people with disabilities.

Despite growing fiscal restraint, millions of dollars continued to be available for cultural initiatives of all types and scales.

The Minister also assured Canada's museums community of the continuation of peer review and financial support through the Museums Assistance Program, and he increased funding for the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples. Native Canadians continued to be involved in this sphere through grants for archaeological projects in their territories.

A \$150,000 grant was also made to ensure broad participation by Canada's museum community in the ICOM (International Council of Museums) meeting in Quebec this year.

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Group effort charts road ahead

One of the realities of contemporary organizational life is that strategic planning never stops. The approach outlined in this special issue of *Communications Express* is above all the collective result of the Department's continuous strategic planning process.

Grassroots input on what the Department should be doing was obtained through strategic planning workshops and seminars organized by the Strategy and Plans Branch in 1990 and 1991. Many of these issues were also discussed at sector planning sessions and refined through analytical papers and background reports.

Departmental staff have also been active over the past couple of years in suggesting improvements in how we operate. Through employee surveys, attendance at departmental conferences and sector meetings, and participation in working groups (such as the Committee to Reduce Excessive Bureaucracy), they have helped revitalize our operational environment.

Senior management faces the continuous challenge of taking suggestions and recommendations from all parts of the Department and turning them into a coherent plan. At the annual Strategic Planning Session, senior managers meet with the Minister and his staff to discuss the Minister's priorities and adjust the Department's course of action accordingly. During the year, senior management's Strategy Committee meets weekly to fine-tune the plan by adding or deleting priorities as circumstances change.

In this dynamic environment, what we want to accomplish remains relatively stable, but how we accomplish it may change overnight. The Department's employees are already adept at "turning on a dime." *Strategic Directions — 1992* will provide guidance on which way to turn when faced with a need to change tactics.

Four objectives to guide us in delivering on our Mission

Our Mission — Nation-building: helping Canadians share their ideas, information and dreams — reflects the Department's role in strengthening Canada through communications and culture. It is based on a consensus that our primary clients are individual Canadians and our

primary task is helping them to communicate with each other: business information, scientific knowledge, Canadian cultural productions, personal messages ... anything that can be communicated by humans to each other through any form of expression or technology.

To deliver on our Mission and contribute to government priorities, the Department has adopted four strategic objectives for 1992:

- **Fostering Canadian creativity**
- **Strengthening access to Canadian cultural products**
- **Strengthening Canadian telecommunications**
- **Renewing our management approach**

The following pages discuss how these strategic objectives will be accomplished.

Technology and policy combine to foster creativity

To enhance appreciation of Canada's diverse cultures, while reinforcing a sense of belonging among all Canadians, the Department will pursue policies which give all citizens greater opportunity to create "ideas, information and dreams."

To accomplish this, the Department will maintain regionalized program delivery, giving particular attention to the different needs of English- and French-language markets. It will also develop agreements with the provinces to ensure that communications and cultural priorities reflect what is wanted and needed at the local level.

In other cases, we will seek broadened opportunities for certain segments of the population, such as the Aboriginal community, to participate in creative activity.

To create a better environment for creative activity, we need to be more energetic in applying new information technologies to culture

and the arts, since the emerging new media will likely be primary vehicles both for creative expression and economic prosperity.

To improve the economic situation of creators, the Department is committed to introducing measures that will help creators make a better living from their creations. Chief among these are the Status of the Artist legislation and Phase II of *Copyright Act* revisions.

Although resources will remain scarce, the Department will examine ways of bringing greater stability to the funding of the arts in Canada.

Improving access to cultural products more crucial than ever

Never before have Canadians so clearly needed to create cultural products that express their rich and varied identity. We must therefore help Canadians share their culture and heritage with each other and the world.

In 1992, the Department will undertake initiatives in heritage and archaeology that will improve Canadians' access to the accomplishments of their ancestors. To help our creative and performing artists display their works, we will strive to improve the marketing of the arts and cultural products,

Strategic Directions continues, page 5



At the annual Strategic Planning Session, senior managers meet with the Minister and his staff to discuss priorities for the coming year.

Strategic Directions from page 4

such as books and films, both in Canada and abroad.

In addition, we will explore new ways of sharing Canada's culture and heritage through advanced broadcasting systems, educational software, databases, and networks for the exchange of electronic information. To strengthen the cultural and broadcasting industries, and the arts and heritage community so they can better perform their vital roles, the Department will seek solutions to the financial problems of the broadcasting and publishing industries, foster stable markets for Canada's film and sound recording industries, and review the recommendations of the task force report to improve access to Canada's military and peacekeeping history.

We will also use the International Expositions Program, placed under our responsibility in the February 1992 federal budget, to promote Canada's cultural and communications industries, and our performing arts and heritage resources, throughout the world.

Dynamic telecom system vital for economic health

An efficient and effective telecommunications system is essential for economic prosperity. It is the highway on which the world's most precious commodity — information — travels to suppliers and customers. Consequently, it is a prerequisite for Canadian productivity and competitiveness and gaining access to global markets.

Improving access to advanced communications services involves many activities. Our key role in conducting and encouraging research and development will help communications companies in all regions to take advantage of new developments.

Access to the radio frequency spectrum is vital for introducing new radio-based communications services and broadcasting technologies. We are committed to moving quickly with industry to test and license new services and systems. Challenges this year include developing a responsive spectrum policy, promoting Canadian interests at international forums on spectrum allocation, and assisting Canadian industry in adjusting to spectrum reallocation.

As interconnectivity is essential to ensure access to advanced communications services, the Department will emphasize standards development activities, including conformance-testing of new equipment and

standards harmonization agreements with Canada's trading partners.

In addition, to increase Canadian competitiveness, the Department is committed to removing regulatory and other barriers that impede modernization or the introduction of services. Key here will be passage of new telecommunications legislation and implementation of a new regulatory regime.

Finally, the Department will focus on the social implications of advanced communications services. It will examine the need to protect personal privacy in an environment where information will be more easily stored and manipulated. It will also develop projects with the disabled, Aboriginal communities and others to make it easier for these groups to communicate and participate in the economy. We will also explore the use of advanced communications and information technologies to deliver social services, redress inequalities and ensure a better informed and educated electorate.

Clients and employees focus of renewed management approach

To be more efficient and responsive to the needs of Canadians, the Department will integrate its management of departmental resources: human, financial and physical.

To empower employees, the Department will improve training opportunities and provide employees with more opportunities to share feedback with management. Our no-layoff policy will continue.

Employees' design requirements will be integrated in plans for a new headquarters building. Work will also continue on a day-care strategy for employees and on cutting excess bureaucracy.

As part of its commitment to improved client service, the Department will continue to regionalize programs and services, providing these as close to clients as possible. It will improve internal communications so that service is not hampered by misunderstandings or lack of information. We will also promote consultations with



Perrin Beatty and family enjoy model airplane show at DOC picnic.

clients and improve the communications services we provide, for example through the Government Telecommunications Agency and the Senior Executive Network.

To cope with fiscal austerity, the Department's Single Operating Budget pilot project will provide an integrated approach to the planning and management of resources. As part of this approach, we are negotiating increased delegation of financial authority from Treasury Board. We also need to develop a human resources strategy to take into account changes to the management category, the proposed introduction of simplified classification and new rules for employment equity.

Successful implementation of these initiatives entails continued investment in hardware, software and training, as well as improvements in the provision of network services.

Initiatives under this strategic objective will strive to give employees the authority, responsibility, accountability and flexibility they need to do their jobs well.

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Despite growing fiscal restraint, millions of dollars continued to be available for cultural initiatives of all types and scales, reflecting the Minister's belief that cultural expression across the country is central to the reaffirmation of our values. Towards more effective distribution of these funds, the Minister signed cooperation and partnership agreements with several provinces.

A unique contribution was made to helping Canadians feel good about national unity with the announcement of a song contest to celebrate Canada's 125th anniversary. Media across the nation took up Mr. Beatty's quest for 125 Gold.

All-employee survey from page 2

- I would use a departmental ombudsperson for assistance if I was having trouble with my manager (40.2% agree).
- I would welcome a departmental initiative that would allow me to provide feedback to my manager on what I think of his or her management style (63.1% agree).

The percentage of respondents who agree with the statement "The Department is interested in my welfare and satisfaction" doubled in the new survey.

- The minimum of three days training per year for each employee will be respected by managers (67.4% agree).
- I would use a career counselling service offered by the Department (55.8% agree).
- The change to Special Operating Agency status for some sections of the Department will have a positive effect on me and my job (33.6% agree).
- The change in the Department to a Single Operating Budget will have a positive effect on me and my job (45.4% agree)
- Implementation of the recommendations contained in PS2000 will have a positive effect on me and my job (36.9% agree).

Telecommunications, standards, research and spectrum

The terrestrial and satellite links that tie Canadians together from coast to coast and which open the doors for us to communicate with the world, were strengthened through measures shepherded by Mr. Beatty.

A bill modernizing regulation of Canada's telecommunications system was tabled in the House of Commons, paving the way for a more vital manufacturing and service base for our strongest high-technology sector. The bill will permit stability and growth in the industry while continuing to ensure affordable, reliable, high-quality services. Furthermore, the legislation recognizes the need for greater sensitivity to regional and provincial interests.

- The regions' views on policy are taken into account in this Department (58.5% agree).
- The regions are given the necessary authority to do their job (61.5% agree).
- The regions are given the necessary resources to do their job (34% agree).

Conclusions

- Respondents satisfaction with their jobs has stayed the same or improved slightly in the last four years.
- Morale tends to be lowest regarding opportunities for career development and promotion, and the number of people to do the job. These tend to be problems that are endemic to government rather than specific to the Department.
- Morale tends to vary considerably across the Department's hierarchy, with senior management having significantly higher morale than non-management respondents.
- Ratings of the Department's orientation to people revealed a 100% improvement over the 1988 survey results, nevertheless, this area should remain a focus for further improvement.



**Recycled
paper**

Other important measures included selling the government's shares in Telesat Canada and extending for five years Teleglobe Canada's mandate as Canada's telecommunications gateway to the world.

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The Minister's first speaking engagement with the Department was to its international conference on information technology and telecommunications standards. Mr. Beatty quickly moved on to open a departmental facility for advanced television research.

Successful negotiations were concluded at the 1992 World Administrative Radio Conference for international spectrum allocations, assisting Canadian initiatives in advanced television, digital audio broadcasting and mobile communications. The Minister praised a departmental discussion paper, *Proposals for a Radio Spectrum Policy Framework*, released in November 1991, and recognized the need for a balance between the demands for services and rapidly changing technologies.

Corporate improvements

The Minister supported streamlining in the Department to improve service to clients. One initiative was placing responsibility for the Cultural Initiatives and Museums Assistance Programs with the Department's regional offices, in order to move delivery of these programs closer to the clientele they were designed to serve.

The Department's Communications Research Centre became a research institute, giving it more management flexibility, and the Government Telecommunications Agency became a special operating agency.

The Department's Communications Research Centre became a research institute, giving it more management flexibility.

The Minister also lent his support to the work of Deputy Minister Alain Gourd in introducing a Single Operating Budget pilot project this fiscal year — a key initiative in moving the federal public service towards PS2000.