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TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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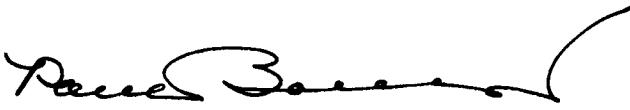
Telecommunications Advisory Committee

May 1986

Mr. K.T. Hepburn
Assistant Deputy Minister
Telecommunications and Informatics
Department of Communications
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0C8

Sir:

On behalf of the members of the Telecommunications Advisory Committee, we are pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Committee for fiscal year 1985/86.



Paul Gauvin
Chairman



Roger Beauparlant
Secretary

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to describe the activities and accomplishments of the Telecommunications Advisory Committee (TAC), its subsidiary working groups and the Regional Telecommunications Consultative Committees for fiscal year 1985/86.

BACKGROUND

The TAC was established in 1977 to advise and assist the Department of Communications (DOC) in the long-range planning and coordination of the use of telecommunications on a government-wide basis. The Committee's terms of reference are attached (Annex A).

Membership on the Committee is at a senior level and in 1985/86 included representatives of the following departments:

- Department of Communications
- Employment and Immigration Canada
- Energy, Mines and Resources Canada
- Environment Canada
- External Affairs Canada
- Government Telecommunications Agency (GTA)
- Health and Welfare Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- National Defence
- National Research Council Canada
- Public Works Canada
- Revenue Canada, Customs and Excise
- Revenue Canada, Taxation
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Supply and Services Canada
- Transport Canada
- Treasury Board Canada Secretariat

In June 1985, Mr. Paul Gauvin (EIC) was elected to succeed Mr. Douglas Woods (ExtAff) as Chairman of the TAC.

The Committee met five times during the year.

ACTIVITIES

Enhanced Exchange Wide Dial (EEWD) service

As was the case in the past two years, the implementation of EEWD service in the National Capital Region (NCR) was a principal item of discussion by the Committee. In view of the establishment by GTA of an EEWD user group and a Bell-Government of Canada Executive Forum to deal with day-to-day operational concerns, however, the Committee was free to address other issues and problems. Nevertheless, members remained fully briefed on the

service disruptions and problems with switch capacity experienced towards the end of 1985, and provided advice to GTA in its efforts to correct the problems and achieve an acceptable level of service.

Government Intercity (IX) Network: cost allocation

A subject which provoked considerable discussion was GTA billing procedures and the impact of Station Message Detail Recording (SMDR) on management control of telecommunications expenditures. Several presentations were made by GTA on this and related issues.

Deliberation by the Committee resulted in a request to GTA to further study the application of SMDR to the allocation of costs among departments and agencies for on-net use of the IX network. Information on the comparison of costs based on SMDR data with those actually being allocated was subsequently sent to telecommunications coordinators by GTA, and it was proposed that the new percentage-of-use formula, based on a three-month average, be put into use at the beginning of FY 1986/87.

At the request of the Committee, a presentation was made at the final meeting of the year on a billing approach similar to that used by the telephone companies. It was agreed that, while it was possible for GTA to bill departments in arrears, the issue should be set aside until such time as GTA's new financial management system is in place.

New orientation for TAC

Since short-term planning problems are being addressed by the various user groups and consultative committees, it was agreed that the TAC should be focusing on the long-term challenges that face the government telecommunications community.

Shared Data Network

In its continuing series of briefings on the modernization program, GTA gave a presentation to the Committee on its plans to provide a shared network using packet switching technology to meet the common data communication needs of federal departments and agencies. Proposals were received in December 1985, and the evaluation report and recommendations were expected to be completed by the end of FY 1985/86. Initial operational capability should be achieved by the third quarter of 1986. Members indicated much interest in the project.

Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the Operation of the TAC

Following a decision by Committee members that the rules of procedure were not sufficiently explicit, a review of both the terms of reference and rules of procedure was undertaken. A number of suggestions were made and the amended documents (see Annexes A and B) were endorsed by the Committee.

WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

WORKING GROUP ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

The Working Group was formed in December 1982 to provide support to the TAC in telecommunications planning. More specifically, its areas of activity include:

- consideration of items having potential interdepartmental impact;
- provision of a working forum for the exchange of information, co-operative planning and consultation among departments and agencies;
- coordinated planning of major GTA planned projects;
- interpretation of technology application and analysis of factors influencing the telecommunications environment; assessment of users' requirements and investigation of areas concerning service performance; and
- dealing with specific matters referred by TAC.

Chaired by DOC/GTA, its membership includes representatives of the following departments:

Employment and Immigration Canada
National Defence
Public Works Canada
Revenue Canada, Taxation
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Transport Canada

The Working Group held five meetings in the course of the year.

Guidelines for the Evaluation of Telecommunications Services

Following the Working Group's earlier decision to develop procedures to standardize the evaluation of telecommunications alternatives, evaluation guidelines were published by GTA under the auspices of the Working Group in September 1985.

Long-term planning

The long-term planning process continued to be a major focus throughout the year. With a view to identifying a means of more timely exchange of information, thereby improving the flow of planning information between GTA and departments, a survey was conducted among TAC members on their accessibility to communications services other than mail and telephone. At the end of the fiscal year, electronic information transfer using a computer conferencing system was being introduced on a trial basis. It is expected that the system, once operational, will significantly decrease the burden of paperwork and remove the need for frequent meetings.

Annual Review and Planning Framework

In view of the target date of September 1986 for the next full edition of the Annual Review and Planning Framework, the Working Group recommended that an interim report be produced to comply with the basic requirements of TB APM 435.

The 1985 Annual Review is concerned primarily with analyses and projections of telecommunications expenditures based on the 1985 ITSP submissions. Distribution will be limited to the government telecommunications community.

To improve the ITSP mechanism, the Working Group began work on the identification of some of the reporting requirements that could be eliminated. To this end, the ITSP expenditure figures for a number of departments were compared with those given in the public accounts. Since the figures proved very close, it was proposed that discussions be held with TBS on the use of the public accounts figures for parts of the financial reporting portion of the ITSP.

Review of priorities

In line with the Working Group's mandate to coordinate the planning of major GTA projects, members reviewed the priorities established in 1982 and agreed that the major areas to be addressed in the near future are:

- telephone network architecture to support integration of voice and data services;
- data networks;
- office communications systems;
- satellite communications; and
- the planning process.

A further issue to be examined is that of intelligent buildings and, in this context, in-house wiring standards.

During the course of the year, the Working Group was briefed by GTA on the status of several projects.

- Thin-route network of satellite communications: members' views were sought on how to identify departmental applications at as early a stage as possible, so that the government can take advantage of the economic benefits of consolidation and bulk purchasing.
- Shared data network: once the definition phase has been concluded, the Working Group's input will be required on the evolution of a common service offering.

- Office Communications Systems: DOC's plans for a common Integrated Office Communication Service (IOS) for the federal government include the evaluation of service requirements as well as technical approaches and vendor systems so as to determine delivery alternatives for such a service. An integral part of this evaluation process is the implementation of a trial service to be based on Northern Telecom Meridian technology. The decision to proceed first with the Meridian system was based on the large inventory of Northern Telecom technology already in place in the government. Members were invited to participate in the trial service.
- Cellular mobile: GTA will be carrying out a user survey to establish whether a common service is warranted.

Open Systems Interconnection

As a result of a request from DOC, TAC tasked the Working Group with developing a position on the implications of Open Systems Interconnection for the government as the largest single user of telecommunications in Canada.

Members reviewed the DOC discussion paper and developed a proposed response to be sanctioned by the TAC.

Procurement

The Working Group was asked by TAC to address the issue of procurement with specific reference to APM 435. The Group will carry out a detailed review and present its recommendations to TAC.

WORKING GROUP ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS TRAINING

The Working Group was formally established by TAC in November, 1984 to provide ongoing advice on departmental concerns related to the development of common training and information-sharing mechanisms for personnel involved in telecommunications management and operations. Its particular tasks include:

- advising on the practical steps for implementing the long-term training development methodology;
- identifying short-term information needs of telecommunications personnel and recommending methods of meeting those needs;
- recommending creation of sub-groups to address specific issues and providing guidance for their activities;
- advising on and assisting in organizing and conducting training courses, seminars, and information exchange meetings; and
- implementing direction emanating from TAC.

The group is chaired by DOC/GTA and, in 1985/86, comprised representatives from the following departments:

Department of Communications
Employment and Immigration Canada
Energy, Mines and Resources Canada
National Capital Commission
National Museums of Canada
Public Archives Canada
Public Works Canada
Revenue Canada - Customs and Excise
Statistics Canada

The Group held seven meetings during 1985/86.

Government Telecommunications Study Session

The principal initiative undertaken by the Working Group during the period under review was the organization of the first Government Telecommunications Study Session. Held June 5-6, 1985, the session drew some 190 participants. A breakdown by function showed the following distribution (figures are approximate):

Directors/Assistant Directors/Acting Directors:	5%
Managers/Chiefs/Heads:	30%
Officers/Analysts/Project Managers/Consultants:	55%
Clerks:	10%

Evaluation of the session by the participants was extremely positive. A summary review capturing the essence of each presentation has been prepared.

Planning for the 1986 Study Session is underway by a sub-group under the chairmanship of EIC. While the session will be directed at the entire government telecommunications community, a special effort will be made to attract senior managers.

Future development of training

A subject of lengthy discussion was the future approach to training development. Working Group members agreed that long-term training development should evolve from the identification of common training needs drawn from feedback from participants at courses organized by the Working Group and from representatives of particular functional groups within the telecommunications community.

The group examined the possibility of establishing sub-groups representing specific groups within the telecommunications community to identify the needs of those groups and recommend ways of meeting them. An initial fact-finding exercise conducted by several members of the Working Group resulted in the identification of a number of obstacles to the development of a training approach, and a subsequent recommendation to TAC that an occupational analysis be conducted, followed by appropriate classification of telecommunications personnel.

Concerning more immediate training needs, it was recognized that the clerical group was a priority. In this connection, EIC extended support for a two-day seminar for telecommunications clerks. A pilot course is planned for the summer of 1986.

A related matter, elevated by the Working Group to TAC, was the need for additional resources to coordinate the implementation of the various training activities initiated by the Group. In view of the urgent need for telecommunications training, the TAC Chairman convened a special meeting of several selected members of TAC to explore the approach for dealing with this issue. The meeting produced a partial definition of the functions performed by telecommunications officers and clerks, with the associated knowledge and skill requirements; an agreed strategy for dealing with the training issue; and an action plan covering short-term, medium-term and long-term requirements.

In compliance with one of the recommendations in the action plan, a preliminary briefing was given by PSC to TAC on occupational analysis. Tabling of the remaining recommendations was scheduled for the TAC meeting in May, 1986. To raise the awareness of these issues in TBS and to explore the feasibility of finding solutions to the telecommunications training problems, Mr. G. Capello, Deputy Secretary of TBS, was invited to attend the TAC meeting.

"Automating the Office"

Following discussion on the potential usefulness of this TV Ontario series to the community, DOC acquired copies and offered to organize presentations for departments in both the NCR and other regions.

REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

In 1985/86, committees were established in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.

Newfoundland

The Newfoundland committee met twice during the year. The level of priority given by Newfoundland Tel to federal government orders, and the lack of spare cabling at several building locations were the principal points of discussion.

N.B./P.E.I.

The Committee met for the first time in March 1985 and has held three subsequent meetings. Key points of business were the automated directory production project, the GTA modernization plan, and integrated office services. In connection with the latter, the telephone companies and GTA have established a task force and have agreed to conduct trial application studies. In February 1986, the Committee put on a two-day seminar on office automation.

Nova Scotia

The Committee's inaugural meeting was held in October 1985.

Ontario

The Committee started up in November 1984 and held three meetings in 1985/86. Among the items discussed were Centrex III service and consolidation modernization.

Telecommunications User Study Group (Pacific)

The group held its eighth, ninth and tenth meetings during the past year. Some of the principal discussion items were: the competitive procurement process; GTA shared services; the Consolidated Electronic Switching System (CESS); regional long-range planning, GTA billing, the Spacetel trial; and integrated office services.

CONCLUSION

In the past year, the activities of TAC shifted towards longer-term issues faced by the government telecommunications community. As recommended in last year's report, one of the first tasks was the revision of the TAC terms of reference, and the rules of procedure. Addressing of the shorter term issues was decentralized to the working groups on planning and training, and to regional committees. The main focus of effort by TAC itself was in the areas of telecommunications policy, standards, management and, especially, training. Although these were complex issues that involved other components of the government, the Committee showed initiative in developing a position on them and raising them, when appropriate, in other forums.

A major objective for the next year should be to improve the communication mechanisms which would facilitate interdepartmental planning and management of common services. An improved ability to exchange information should also help TAC to present a consolidated position on issues that arise from policy development, technological evolution and regulatory change. The momentum to deal with the telecommunications personnel training and development problem should be maintained; indeed, it should be allowed to spill over into the related areas of occupational structuring and organizational change. In their role as partners in the development of telecommunications systems and as users of those systems, all segments of the government community feel the impact of these matters; the awareness of telecommunications issues must, therefore, be raised to the highest levels in departments.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Overall Goal

The Telecommunications Advisory Committee advises and assists the Department of Communications (DOC) in the long-range planning and co-ordination of the use of telecommunications on a government-wide basis.

2. Advisory Role

The Telecommunications Advisory Committee acts as a forum for the telecommunications users to discuss mutual problems and to provide, at a senior level, advice to DOC on such matters as:

- a) long-range planning needs;
- b) the demand for new services and the need for the development of new systems;
- c) means of satisfying user requirements.

3. Supportive Role

The Telecommunications Advisory Committee, through the individual experience of member departments, creates feedback at a senior level by:

- a) providing a forum for members to exchange information concerning the cost and effectiveness of services received from the Government Telecommunications Agency (GTA) and other sources;
- b) providing a forum for the discussion of major issues and problems affecting telecommunications, and for suggesting possible courses of action;
- c) encouraging the evaluation of major telecommunications systems in the government and the evaluation of present co-ordinating mechanisms in government;
- d) providing a forum for the discussion of proposals for changes in administrative policy, directives and guidelines regarding the planning, co-ordination, acquisition, operation, and evaluation of telecommunications systems in government.

4. Committee Membership and Meetings

Membership on the Committee is at a senior level and includes members of departments and agencies which are normally major users of telecommunications in the government and which are selected by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS).

The Chairperson of the Committee is elected by the members, while GTA provides the secretariat for the Committee on an ongoing basis. The Committee normally meets quarterly; additional meetings may be called by the Chairperson or DOC, as required. Requests to hold a meeting or place items on the agenda may originate from any member.

The Committee also recognizes issues presented to it by the Regional Telecommunications Consultative Committees.

RULES OF PROCEDURES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

1. Executive

- a) The Executive shall consist of a Chairperson and a Secretary.
- b) An Annual Report shall be prepared by the Executive at the end of each fiscal year for the advisement of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Telecommunications and Informatics, Department of Communications (DOC). Copies of this report will also be distributed to Treasury Board and departments.

2. Chairperson

- a) The Committee shall select a Chairperson by nomination and majority vote.
- b) The membership is to be briefed on the background of all nominees before a vote is taken.
- c) The term of office for each Chairperson should normally be for the duration of a fiscal year (i.e. April 1 - March 31).
- d) Should the Chairperson resign for any reason, it is the responsibility of his/her department to provide a replacement, acceptable to the Committee, to finish the unexpired term. If for any reason this should not prove feasible, the procedure in (a) immediately above shall apply.
- e) If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the immediate past or other past Chairperson should assume the Chair. If no such past Chairperson is present, the Secretary should assume the Chair.

3. Secretariat

- a) The Government Telecommunications Agency (GTA) shall provide the Secretary and secretarial services necessary to support the Committee. The Secretary is a non-representative, non-voting member.
- b) The agenda and any supporting documentation, including proposals, are to be distributed at least two weeks before each meeting. Only the Chairperson may authorize the tabling of papers less than two weeks before a meeting.
- c) The minutes of the Committee will be prepared in both official languages and will normally be distributed to members and alternates within three weeks of each meeting. The minutes will also be distributed to the departmental telecommunications co-ordinators of all departments and agencies which are subject to the policies and guidelines of the Treasury Board Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter 435, "Telecommunications Administration".

4. Membership

- a) The membership of the Committee is composed of representatives from:
 - (i) the major telecommunications users and a number of other selected departments and agencies;
 - (ii) common service organizations involved in provisioning of telecommunications - GTA, Supply and Services (SSC) and External Affairs;
 - (iii) the lead department - DOC; and
 - (iv) the central agency - Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS).
- b) Each participating user department may be represented by one member and one or two alternates, except where additional members are deemed appropriate by DOC, TBS and TAC, e.g. GTA and SSC.
- c) The department supplying the Chairperson may, during his/her term of office, have an additional departmental representative who will have the right to vote.
- d) At any time any department wishing to apply for membership on the Committee may do so to the Office of the Deputy Secretary, Administrative Policy Branch, Treasury Board Secretariat.
- e) At least annually the ongoing membership of the Committee is to be reviewed by Treasury Board staff with the Executive, who will consult with appropriate members.
- f) The following criteria will be evaluated when considering new membership applications and when reviewing the ongoing membership:
 - (i) impact of department or agency on total telecommunications expenditures of the federal government;
 - (ii) impact of telecommunications on departmental program;
 - (iii) level of representative - members should normally be at the most senior level practical, possessing a thorough knowledge of telecommunications and authority to act on behalf of their departments;
 - (iv) attendance record of representative.
- g) The names of each departmental representative and one alternate representative shall be transmitted by letter to the Secretary. Departmental representatives not so identified are not entitled to vote.

5. Observers

- a) Departmental representatives may be supported, as they deem necessary, by any number of observers to provide specialist advice. To be recognized by the Chair, such observers must, however, address the Committee through their official representatives.
- b) Anyone wishing to attend a meeting who is from a non-represented department shall request permission to attend by notifying the Chairperson at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. Non-represented observers are not qualified to address the meeting unless they specify such requirement at the time of their request to attend.

6. Voting

- a) Each department shall have only one vote.
- b) Recommendations will be made by a majority vote of the Committee; however, all recommendations that are not unanimous will include the position and identification of each dissenting department.
- c) The Chairperson has voting privileges only when a tie vote is recorded, in which instance he/she shall cast the deciding vote.

7. Frequency of Meetings

- a) Meetings shall be called by the Chairperson or DOC, as required, with a minimum attendance of a quorum (a quorum shall comprise 10 voting members).
- b) The Committee should normally meet quarterly, as a minimum schedule.
- c) The date of the next meeting shall be decided as the last item on the agenda of each meeting and any subsequent change of this date will require three weeks notice to departmental representatives.

8. Location of Meetings

The location of Committee meetings will be determined by the Secretary.

9. Working Groups

The work of the Committee will be carried out by working groups selected by and tasked by the Committee. The working groups will have specific objectives with time limits to the extent feasible.

10. Linkage to Regional Telecommunications Consultative Committees

Issues which, in the view of the Regional Telecommunications Consultative Committees, need to be addressed by TAC will normally be referred to the Chairperson of TAC using secretariat channels

11. Presentations

- a) Presentations given by any segment of the public sector on topics of interest to the Committee will normally be given within the forum of Committee meetings.
- b) Presentations given by any segment of the private sector will be arranged in co-ordination with the Secretary. Whether these presentations are given within or outside the forum of Committee meetings shall be decided upon as they arise by the Executive.