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The Creation of Telesat Canada



On March 28th, 1968, the Government's White Paper entitled A Domestic Satellite Communications System for Canada, concluded that in view of Canada's particular geographic, economic and social features, "...a domestic satellite communications system is of vital importance for the growth, prosperity and unity of Canada, and should be established as a matter of priority."

A Satellite Project Office was established by the Science Secretariat reporting to the Department of Industry to commence implementation of the Program and, after detailed hearings before the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts, The Telesat Canada Act was introduced in the House of Commons. It was assented to on June 26th, 1969, and on September 1st, 1969, the date of Proclamation, the Telesat Canada corporation came into existence.

The objectives of the Company were clearly enunciated in the statute: "5. (1) The objects of the company are to establish satellite telecommunication systems providing, on a commercial basis, telecommunication services between locations in Canada."

This new organization-neither a crown corporation nor an agency of the government-combined the proven telecommunications know-how and experience of the Canadian telecommunications carriers with the financial and research resources of the government. It proved to be the right combination as three short years later, on November 9th, 1972, a Delta rocket lifted off the launch pad at Cape Canaveral, Florida, carrying Canada's Anik satellite, the world's first commercial domestic communications satellite system to operate in geostationary orbit (35,790 km above the equator).

Since then, Telesat has become the world's most experienced commercial fixed satellite operator, and a highly respected consultant and partner in satellite ventures around the globe. The Company competes with other top international satellite fleets in providing telecommunications and broadcasting services to more than 275 customers throughout the Americas. With over thirty years of engineering and technical experience, Telesat is a diversified, end-to-end satellite services company with some 500 employees stationed throughout the Americas and on international assignment.

Telesat offers:

- a worldwide consulting business with a wide range of specialized space-related expertise, services and software products designed to assist satellite owners and operators, and spacecraft manufacturers;
- a variety of products and service solutions for business customers who use satellites to transmit voice, data and image information;
- vast experience in operating and maintaining VSAT based private data networks;
- an extensive ground infrastructure that includes earth stations, a national and international Teleport network, a Satellite Network Operations Centre, and Tracking, Telemetry and Command stations around the world.

Telesat's headquarters are located in Ottawa, Ontario (Canada), and the Company is wholly owned by BCE Inc., one of the world's premier communications companies.

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