

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the
PURCHASING COMMISSION

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

1967



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in right of the Province of British Columbia.

1968

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Printed by the Government of British Columbia
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VICTORIA, B.C., January 19, 1968.

To Major-General the Honourable GEORGE RANDOLPH PEARKES,
V.C., C.C., P.C., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., C.D.,
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

Herewith I beg respectfully to submit the Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission of the Department of Finance for the period January 1, 1967, to December 31, 1967.

W. A. C. BENNETT,
Minister of Finance.

*The Honourable W. A. C. Bennett,
Minister of Finance, Victoria, B.C.*

SIR,—We have the honour to submit the Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission, covering the period January 1, 1967, to December 31, 1967.

R. G. McKEE,
Chairman.

A. E. WEBB,
Member.

L. J. WALLACE,
Member.

Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission

January 1 to December 31, 1967

GENERAL

As stated in previous Annual Reports, the total purchases under the Act include purchases made by the divisions of those departments with authority to purchase delegated under section 10 of the Act. Records for those divisions are therefore included in the table below.

Department and Division	Number of Purchase Orders		Total Value of Purchase Orders	
	1966	1967	1966	1967
Education—Textbook Branch.....	1,320	2,184	\$3,200,000	\$2,575,000
Provincial Secretary—				
(a) Provincial Library and Archives.....	814	935	10,460	8,630
(b) Public Library Commission.....	206	194	64,370	51,680
(c) Queen's Printer.....	3,820	3,190	1,205,500	2,000,540
Finance—Purchasing Commission—				
(a) For Ferry Authority.....	1,590	1,719	4,670,400	5,246,380
(b) For all departments.....	45,537	45,455	40,106,400	43,985,810
Totals.....	53,287	53,677	\$49,257,130	\$53,868,040

It will be noted that the over-all increase in the number of purchase orders was only one-half of 1 per cent, whereas the total value of these purchases increased by 9 per cent. Although the bulk of this increase in value is due to inflation, the above table does indicate that the large drop in the number of purchase orders (7,887) accomplished last year due to more bulk buying was maintained this year.

The relatively high increase (49 per cent) in number of purchase orders by the Textbook Branch is due primarily to the take-over of purchasing textbooks, bulletins, etc., for the British Columbia Institute of Technology and the seven vocational schools.

Although the value of emergency purchase orders is included in the foregoing figures, the number of emergency purchase orders is not included for the same reasons given in last year's Report. Actually, the number of emergency purchase orders in 1967 was 27,394, or an increase of 6 per cent over last year. This increase was almost entirely due to the emergency purchasing of food and supplies for the worst fire season on record.

STAFF

Last year's Report indicated that the Chairman had submitted to the Civil Service Commission a report on the purchasing agencies in British Columbia and the rest of Canada. As a result, an additional Purchasing Agent was approved in November, 1967, and the salaries of the eight Government buyers were brought more into line with those paid in industry.

The adjustments in work load of the buyers will not be complete until after May of 1968, when Purchasing Agent R. B. Ditchburn retires after 34 years of loyal and efficient Government service, 23 of which were with this Commission.

BUSINESS MACHINES SERVICE DIVISION

A full description of this Division, its functions and procedures, is given in chapter 6 of the Purchasing Commission manual and in the 1965 Annual Report of the Commission. Suffice it to say here that, as the name implies, this Division's reason for being is to service Government-owned business machines throughout the Province.

Again, to illustrate how the machine population is growing, two tables are given below to show that in the calendar year 1967 the increase was 808 machines, with the largest relative increase in the vocational schools and the Institute of Technology.

Table 1.—Machines as at December 31, 1966

Type of Machine	Number in Departmental Offices	Number in Seven Vocational Schools	Number in B.C. Institute of Technology	Total Number
Typewriters (13.8 per cent electric).....	4,298	398	64	4,760
Adding-machines and printing-calculators.....	1,676	53	191	1,920
Dictating and transcribing machines.....	1,285	93	26	1,404
Miscellaneous equipment—posting, bookkeeping, cash registers, etc.....	730	274	46	1,050
Totals as at December 31, 1966.....	7,989	818	327	9,134
Percentage increase in 18 months.....	12.2	78	84	18

Table 2.—Machines as at December 31, 1967

Type of Machine	Number in Departmental Offices	Number in Seven Vocational Schools	Number in B.C. Institute of Technology	Total Number
Typewriters (16.2 per cent electric).....	4,484	484	76	5,045
Adding-machines and printing-calculators.....	1,815	141	321	2,277
Dictating and transcribing machines.....	1,383	105	27	1,515
Miscellaneous equipment—posting, bookkeeping, cash registers, etc.....	761	291	53	1,105
Totals as at December 31, 1967.....	8,444	1,021	477	9,942
Percentage increase in 12 months.....	6	25	46	9

From the above table, again as a sign of the times, the increase in the purchase of the more sophisticated machines is evident. Electric typewriters have increased from 13.8 to 16.2 per cent, which is occasioned by the fact that in 1967 the net increase of electric machines was 152 and the increase of manual typewriters was only 133. It will also be noted that there is a 24-per-cent increase in adding-machines and printing-calculators, or an increase of 457 of these machines, and that 48 per cent of them were for the technical and vocational schools.

To maintain the above equipment the staff now consists of 1 Supervisor, 2 Mechanics 2, 9 Mechanics 1, and 4 apprentice trainees, a total of 16 men. Of these, 6 work in the Vancouver area, and it is gratifying to report that with the co-operation of the Department of Public Works the headquarters for these men has been moved from the inconvenient basement of the Courthouse to far better quarters at 501 West 12th Avenue.

Eight of the staff completed very satisfactorily the Victoria Vocational School's eight months' night-school course in electronics, tailored to the maintenance of sophisticated business machines. Six others completed a two-week course on the repair of electric typewriters, and two others a one-week course in printing-calculators and adding-machines.

At the request of the Finance Department, the Civil Service Commission instituted a classification study and wage survey for business-machines mechanics. It has long been recognized in the trade that it takes the better-trained and more-experienced staff members to maintain the more-sophisticated machines. Most of the commercial firms have instituted two working grades of mechanics to this end. Also in the case of the Business Machines Service Division, a certain amount of supervision by the senior men is involved on field trips throughout the Province.

It is therefore gratifying to report that starting April 1st two classes of servicemen have been approved. The then complement will be 4 apprentice trainees, 5 Mechanics 1, 4 Mechanics 2, 2 Mechanics 3 (Foremen), and a Supervisor. The rates of pay will also be revised upwards to bring them more in line with those in industry.

THE PURCHASING MANUAL

An additional 30 pages were added to the manual as chapter 9. This chapter details the office procedures. The clerical office of the Commission, which is such a vital support to the work of the buyers, is divided into four sections, as shown in the index of chapter 9—namely, the Mail Room, the General Office, the Typing Section, and the Quotes Room.

Since the procedures as detailed in this chapter are mainly of use to the supervising officers of the Commission in training new staff, and for internal use in systematizing clerical procedures, only a limited number of copies of this chapter were mimeographed and distributed to the staff of the Commission.

SURPLUS MATERIALS DISPOSAL SECTION

It is the responsibility of the Commission to sell all equipment and property declared in writing to be surplus by the department concerned. Efforts are, of course, first made to ensure that such surplus materials cannot be used to advantage by some other department before advertising same for sale.

The bulk of the work done by the Disposal Section is for the Department of Highways, as shown in the following breakdown:—

For Department of Highways—	
(a) Equipment and scrap	\$28,590
(b) Houses and chattels (rights-of-way)	178,160
For other departments	40,380
	\$247,130
Total value	

LANGFORD WAREHOUSE

This warehouse, which is maintained at 2914 Jacklin Road, Victoria, has been fully described in the last two Reports of the Purchasing Commission.

Although it is operated as a service to all departments on a \$10 vote (No. 117), the amount of the approved gross stores purchases was increased this year to \$400,000. As reported before, the value of the turnover of these non-profit goods sold from this warehouse in 1965 was \$371,893, and in 1966 was \$407,829. In 1967 the turnover was \$414,480. The increase was due primarily to heavy demand for forest fire-fighting equipment during the most expensive fire season on record.

Acknowledgment is gratefully made for the hours of voluntary overtime spent by the small staff at the warehouse to ensure that orders for equipment were promptly filled and dispatched to fire-lines throughout the Province.

VANCOUVER OFFICE

The functions of the Vancouver office and staff of eight were fully explained in the 1965 Report of the Commission and will not be repeated here. Under the able guidance of Mr. T. L. Vardy, Purchasing Agent 4, that office had another very successful year.

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