PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Thirty-first Annual Report of the
PURCHASING COMMISSION

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

1973

Printed by K. M. MacDonald, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty
in right of the Province of British Columbia.
1974

The Honourable David Barrett,
Minister of Finance, Victoria, B.C.

SIR: We have the honour to submit the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission, covering the period January 1, 1973, to December 31, 1973.

T. L. VARDY
Chairman

L. J. WALLACE
Member

G. L. GILES
Member

Thirty-first Annual Report of the Purchasing Commission

January 1 to December 31, 1973

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 these divisions are therefore included in the table below.

Department and Division	Number of Purchase Orders		Total Value of Purchase Orders	
	1972	1973	1972	1973
			$	$
Education—Curriculum Resources Branch	2,401	2,335	6,143,532	5,697,512
Provincial Secretary—				
(*a*) Provincial Library and Archives	695	581	21,219	24,003
(*b*) Library Development Commission	186	228	93,047	151,329
(*c*) Queen's Printer	3,909	4,852	2,816,765	3,110,672
Finance—Purchasing Commission—For all departments	53,133	56,815	70,661,823	76,070,881
Totals	60,324	64,811	79,736,386	85,054,397

For 1973 there is an increase of expenditure in all divisions totalling $5,318,011 or 6.66 per cent and the number of purchase orders issued increased by 4,487 or 7.44 per cent.

The total value of purchases for the year is $85,054,397.

The value of emergency purchases is included in the above figure; there is an increase of 3,683 over the previous year, giving a total of 30,428.

The most significant feature of the year's operation has been the inflationary trend in practically all types of commodities, the rate of increase being most noticeable in the final six months. In general, manufacturer's inventories are depleted, supplies are harder to obtain, and deliveries are becoming progressively prolonged and uncertain; in simple words, business has become a sellers' market. The situation must continue well into 1974 before improvement of consequence may be expected.

Because of inflation, arrangements have also been introduced, in conjunction with the Comptroller-General, to increase the limit allowing purchases to be made without the authority of a covering purchase order issued by the Purchasing Commission. The previous amount of $25 will become $40 and will be effective in the fiscal year 1974/75.

STAFF

The staff now totals 79 employees. Increases have occurred in most departments, and this is gratifying, as a better balanced operation to cope with an increasing work load is now possible.

Early in the new year, G. L. Giles, Deputy Minister of Public Works, was welcomed as the replacement Member of the Commission, the position becoming vacant on the retirement of A. E. Webb.

Two new positions for Purchasing Agents were created, one in Victoria and one in Vancouver. The Buyer-trainees in Victoria have been increased to three, a long-awaited need, and an organized educational programme is being followed whereby the Purchasing Agents will benefit from the assistance the new group can offer.

A. J. Broome was appointed as Administrative Officer. Under his direction new routines and changes in procedures have been introduced. The Chairman is appreciative of the response and efforts of the general staff in adapting effectively in this regard.

BUSINESS MACHINES SERVICE DIVISION

The Division has enjoyed a busy and successful year. It is a branch which contributes effectively in maintaining the routine needs of the business equipment and often does not get proper recognition for this. The Chairman feels that a portion of the report of its Supervisor, F. A. White, expresses the contribution well and it is therefore given here verbatim.

"The attached tables reflect the ever-increasing work load of this Division. Where in 1963 the machine Inventory carried some 7000 units on file this Inventory now records in excess of 17,000 units of all types. An increase of over 250%. Staff increase in the same period of time from 12 to 22 equals 180%. Each technician is carrying a heavier work load with a consequent less frequency of preventive maintenance. Nevertheless it is interesting to note that despite this our demand for interim repairs during the year compares favourably with 1972.

"While the Division was authorized to employ an additional 3 technicians in 1973 difficulties were encountered in recruiting of qualified personnel and resulted in the employment of only one qualified technician, the other two positions were filled by employment of 'trainee' technicians with some training and experience. These men will be required to complete our training programme after which they will be eligible for an Apprenticeship Certificate.

"During the year: 6000 field preventive maintenance inspections were carried out, 6300 units required interim repairs either in the field or in our two service shops, and 570 units were shop-overhauled.

"With the rapid growth of interior as well as local offices and the installation of more difficult and time-consuming equipment to repair or ship out to our repair shops, it is imperative that early establishment of interior service facilities at key points be instituted. Past Government policy has prevented this as the Division was limited in the employment and training of staff. It is estimated that 25% of the total machine population is located east and north of Hope. Our records show over 500 machines in the metropolitan areas of Kamloops and also Prince George. Other large machine populations are recorded in such places as Nelson and Prince Rupert. It is hoped therefore, that our 1974-75 estimates will include additional staff so that we may embark on this programme in 1974.

"1973 was the 30th anniversary of this Division. The Annual Report of the Chairman in that year referred to this division by stating: 'Machines under service and inspection, 1032, of which 292 were in Vancouver.'

"In conclusion the writer is proud to say that he has been with the Division since its inception, and gratified to report that the three senior staff which includes

the foreman, Mr. Neilson, and Messrs. Burt and McClure have served this Division continuously and faithfully for 27 and 26 years respectively, being the first three technicians employed by the Victoria Division."

The Chairman endorses the recommendation for an operational centre in the Interior. It is a need becoming more evident each succeeding year.

Table 1—Machines as at December 31, 1972

Type of Machine	Number in Departmental Offices	Number in Vocational Schools	Number in B.C. Institute of Technology	Total Number
Typewriter (32.61 per cent electric)	5,814	887	121	6,822
Adding machines and printing calculators	2,775	359	454	3,588
Dictation/transcription equipment and tape recorders	2,466	297	89	2,852
Miscellaneous equipment—posting, bookkeeping, cash registers, etc.	1,218	351	131	1,700
Totals as at December 31, 1972	12,273	1,894	795	14,962
Percentage increases over 1971	10.51	9.60	15.05	10.63

Table 2—Machines as at December 31, 1973

Typewriters (38.29 per cent electric)	6,521	894	153	7,568
Adding and calculating machines	3,394	391	483	4,268
Dictation/transcription equipment and tape recorders	3,084	358	90	3,532
Miscellaneous equipment—posting, bookkeeping, cash registers, duplicators, etc.	1,443	353	132	1,928
Total as at December 31, 1973	14,442	1,996	858	17,296
Percentage increases in 12 months	17.67	5	8	15.59

At a cost of $1,004,161, a total of 2,616 new machines (all types) has been purchased. Of these the distribution has been 90 per cent to Government offices and the balance to vocational schools and B.C. Institute of Technology.

THE VANCOUVER OFFICE

Under the guiding hand of F. H. Leonard, the Vancouver Office has had a successful year. Reorganization of staff plus the addition of an extra Purchasing Agent and clerical help has allowed an increased output to keep pace with demands. Because of the increase in staff, quarters are cramped and a request has been made to the Department of Public Works for larger space, and hopefully it will be provided during 1974.

The staff, in total, is now 11 in the procurement division and nine in the business machines servicing section. The over-all increase is five.

THE SURPLUS MATERIALS SECTION

The section has operated under similar conditions outlined in the last Report; it has enjoyed a busier year and the total funds returned to Consolidated Revenue have increased by 130 per cent.

Surplus Disposal

	$
Department of Highways—	
(*a*) Equipment and scrap	284,808
(*b*) Buildings	43,815
Other departments	47,217
	375,840

LANGFORD WAREHOUSE

The warehouse which is located at 2914 Jacklin Road, Victoria, has met satisfactorily the demands made upon it. As already substitute materials are having to be stockpiled because of the inability of the market to supply to specification, 1974 will be even more demanding. The warehouse function is becoming increasingly important as lead time obtained by its pre-planning allows consultation with the affected departments, hopefully to prevent further delays in equipping the parties at the time placement in the field is due.

A much needed facility has been obtained this year—the replacement of an obsolete high-lift fork truck, gas operated, by an electric-type unit.

The value of the goods processed during the year corresponds to that of the previous year, which was the highest accommodated by the warehouse. The new figure is $721,639 and is $5,148 below last year. The operating vote for the warehouse remains at $10 annually.

CONCLUSION

The Commission gratefully acknowledges the specialized purchasing done under delegated authority by the Queen's Printer, the Director of the Curriculum Resources Branch, the Provincial Librarian and Archivist, and the Superintendent of the Library Development Commission.

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