

# ***B.C.'s Lower Mainland Weather Office has Larger Role, New Premises***

The Vancouver Weather Office, formerly located at the international airport, moved into town last summer and is occupying space on the same floor of the building that houses the Pacific Weather Centre. With improved facilities, the WO4 has now been renamed the Lower Mainland Weather Office (LMWO)

The new name signifies that the Weather Office services a far greater area than Greater Vancouver. In fact its coverage area extends from Whistler Mountain in the North to the U.S. border in the south and from the coastline in the west to Hope in the east. Thanks to the use now



***Will Hayward, superintendent of stations, AES Pacific Region (right) and shift supervisor Robert Rowson, examine the Video Network in the new, high-tech, Lower Mainland Weather Office. Among other things the equipment displays satellite imagery, supplies current weather forecasts and locates lightning strikes.***

made of state-of-the-art weather radar, lightning detection equipment and weather satellite "loops", LMWO can carry out such tasks as issue weather reports to ski enthusiasts, give out farm weather bulletins, report on probable highway conditions in snow-prone areas, and monitor lightning strikes for the forestry industry.

Comments Will Hayward, the former officer-in-charge of LMWO, "Our new facilities

enable us to tailor our weather product to a wide variety of publics. We can achieve considerably more than we did over at the airport. For example we now have ample studio space available for our radio broadcasts. We can also update cable TV weather forecasts and provide special services to four local radio stations, including KLYN in Washington State, frequently listened to by Canadian farmers".

The move has brought a number of in-service advantages to the WO4. These include more rational use of space. (They no longer have to share a room with Transport Canada); they have more windows for viewing the weather directly; LMWO staff are now able to deal directly with meteorologists at the Weather Centre, thus speeding up vital consultations, especially during severe weather and, finally, duty staff can now use the Weather Centre's library and cafeteria.

During the busiest periods (in the daytime), the LMWO has three people on duty, including the shift supervisor, a weather service specialist and a media briefer. According to Will Hayward, the move affords some overall savings in person years.

All in all, the move seems to have pleased almost everyone. Arrival of the LMWO has not cramped the operations of the Pacific Weather Centre and, equally important, LMWO personnel no longer regard themselves as "the forgotten people".