

than 1% are rejected. The remainder are returned for additional information. "Many academic and industrial organizations appear to be unaware of the Deemed Export rules or have found means to conduct their affairs without being subject to them," the report states.

David Kramer

Canada abolishes science adviser post

Just four years after creating the position of national science adviser, Canada is scrapping it at the end of this month.



Carty

Created by a Liberal government in 2004 (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, March 2004, page 32), the position of science adviser suffered a blow in 2006 when the current Conservative government redirected the position to report to the research agency Industry Canada instead of to the prime minister. Arthur Carty, science adviser since the position's inception, says the move meant he "has not had access to the highest levels of government over the past two years." Nor, he adds, has the government sought his counsel since the reshuffling.

In a 1 February statement, Michèle Demers, president of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, a body that represents 55 000 scientists and other professionals, describes the scrapping of the science adviser post as "deeply disturbing" and calls for the government to reverse the decision. High-energy physicist Pekka Sinervo, the University of Toronto's dean of arts and sciences, notes that the government did not take advantage of Carty's advice, so "it's very difficult to tell whether [the post] was going to be effective long term." But in abolishing it, he adds, "we're not making steps forward."

Carty's achievements as science adviser included securing funds for international science and technology collaborations with developing countries; helping to create the Council of Canadian Academies, akin to the US National Academies; and developing a framework—which was not put in place—for managing and funding the country's large science facilities.

The Canadian government says it will now get advice on science and tech-

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nology policy from the new 18-member Science, Technology and Innovation Council. "We are expected to be nimble. Issues will be handled on anything from a two-week basis to a one-year basis," says STIC chair Howard Alper, a University of Ottawa chemist. Alper declined to compare the roles and potential influence of his committee with those of the science adviser. But, he says, the council is made up of "leaders of different sectors of industry, presidents of universities, leading researchers, and three deputy ministers. If you populate your council with outstanding individuals, you have an excellent prospect of contributing to decision making."

"We have yet to see anything come out of the [STIC]," says Sinervo. "The government feels it aligns better with their strategy of bringing better coherence to science and innovation." Lately, says Nigel Lockyer, director of TRIUMF, Canada's national laboratory for particle and nuclear physics, the government has emphasized commercialization, and new science facilities have had to "fight over crumbs" for operating funds.

"Maybe the committee [STIC] will be a good thing," Lockyer adds. "But you'd still like someone to sit with the

prime minister and drink a cup of coffee a couple of times a week."

Toni Feder

news notes

Italy's new research head. In January, former CERN director general Luciano Maiani of the University of Rome I ("La Sapienza") was appointed the newest president of Italy's National Research Council (CNR), the country's primary science and technology research funding organization.

When he takes office this spring, Maiani will look to promote joint programs with the European Union and businesses in Italy, restore staff confidence in a system that he says is "badly underfinanced by the state," and reinforce collaborations between the CNR's own research centers and Italian universities. He also plans to commit more money to reforming practices that make it difficult for the CNR to attract visiting foreign researchers.



Maiani

CERN

JNAM ■