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Select Chronology of NRC

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Building Canadian Science: The Role of the National Research Council

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Select Chronology of NRC

In this table 'HAC' means specifically the members of the Honorary Advisory Council on Scientific and Industrial Research; 'NRC' may mean either the HAC with its staff (NRC employees) or the NRC staff alone.

1916 Honorary Advisory Council on Scientific and Industrial Research convened by order in Council

1917 Research Council Act established the HAC under Privy Council Committee on Scientific and Industrial Research (first statutory Cabinet committee) NRC spent \$50,374

1917 HAC Research Inventory (first in Canadian history)

1919 House of Commons (Cronyn Committee) Report approved plans for a National Research Institute for (1) standards, (2) Trade Guilds for Research (cf. Mellon Institute)

1920 2nd Cronyn Committee Report endorsed HAC development plan.

1921 HAC Institute Bill passed in Commons, defeated in Senate: succession of part-time chairmen of HAC

1923 H.M. Tory joined Council, becoming (part-time) Chairman the same year

1924 Research Council Act: Chairman Tory became President of the NRC (name authorized by Privy Council minute 19 June 1925)

1925 NRC magnesite project began (first in-house research project)

1927 NRC Library founded

1927 Ontario Research Foundation announced (prompting federal government to authorize NRC Laboratories)

1928 First NRC patent (magnesite)

1928 NRC presidency becomes full-time appointment

1929 *Canadian Journal of Research* founded

1929 NRC Laboratories created with four divisions: Physics and Engineering, Chemistry, Research Information, Applied Biology

1931 NRC's first research contract (with magnesite producers)

1932 Government hiring frozen

1935 A.G.L. McNaughton became President

- 1936** NRC Division of Mechanical Engineering formed
- 1938** NRC conference on and survey of medical research in Canada
- 1939** First bilingual NRC *Annual Report*
- 1939** Montreal Road laboratory complex began
- 1939** Second World War: C.J. Mackenzie Acting President
- 1940** Research Enterprises Ltd. radar and optical factory opened
- 1940** Tizard Mission: NRC designated as science adviser for armed forces: NRC research co-ordinated with British Ministry of Supply and US OSRD (NDRC)
- 1943** NRC magnesite project terminated
- 1943** Anglo-French atomic research laboratories moved to Montreal (Chalk River 1944)
- 1944** C.J. Mackenzie President of the NRC
- 1944** Saskatoon Conference on postwar NRC research in Western Canada
- 1944** NRC President C.J. Mackenzie Director-General of the Research Branch, Department of Reconstruction and Supply (to 1947)
- 1945** ZEEP reactor completed at Chalk River
- 1945** Following management study, NRC vice-presidencies created
- 1946** NRC Division of Chemistry reorganized in Pure and Applied Branches
- 1946** Defence Research Board founded for military R & D (military work separated from NRC)
- 1946** Amendments to NRC Act: Crown patents to NRC (CPDL), authorization to construct pilot plants, etc.; NRC declined responsibility for social science research
- 1947** Canadian Patents and Developments Ltd. incorporated
- 1947** NRC Division of Radio and Electrical Engineering formed
- 1947** NRC Division of Building Research formed
- 1947** Technical Information Service transferred to NRC from Dept. of Reconstruction
- 1948** Prairie Regional Laboratory (Saskatoon) formally opened
- 1948** NRX reactor completed
- 1948** Post-Doctoral Fellowships created at NRC

1949 Privy Council Committee powers devolved on Advisory Panel for Scientific Policy chaired by NRC president

1951 NRC formed National Aeronautical Establishment

1952 Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. severed from NRC

1952 Atlantic Regional Laboratory opened

1952 Chemistry divided into Pure and Applied Divisions: Applied Chemistry building designed for pilot production plant functions

1952 E.W.R. Steacie President of the NRC

1953 Net budgeting began: NRC extramural revenues (5 to 10% revenues since 1945) transferred to Consolidated Revenue Fund

1954 NRC Associate Committees' research budgets reassigned to disciplinary grants committees

1955 Physics divided into Pure and Applied Divisions

1955 Deans of engineering declined NRC proposal to fund university engineering on same basis as university science

1957 National Science Library created (from NRC Library)

1958 Heeney Report recommended placing NRC staff under Civil Service Commission

1960 Medical Research Council constituted by NRC (active since WW II): separately incorporated 1969

1962 Industrial Research Assistance Programme: first cash grants to industry for R & D

1962 NRC President Steacie died: VP Ballard nominated by Council as Acting President (appointed President by Cabinet 6 months later)

1964 Council vetoed President Ballard's proposal to give industrial research first priority. Spinks Report on 'Needed Federal Support of (University) Research

1965 Terms of reference for IRAP set by Order in Council (excluding university participation, proposed 1966 by NRC Advisory Committee on Applied Science and Engineering Research)

1966 Amendments to NRC Act terminated statutory functions (advice to Cabinet) and traditional ones (scientific liaison overseas)

1967 W.G. Schneider President of the NRC

1969 NRC industrial post-doctoral fellowships began

1971 Nobel Prize for chemistry awarded to Gerhard Herzberg

1975 NRC trial project Access to Scientific Knowledge (technical information for small manufacturers: failed)

1976 NRC Pilot Industry/Laboratories Program

1976 NRC and IRAP exempted from budget restraints

1977 Treasury Board proposed 'privatization' of NRC-published *Canadian Journals of Research*

1977 NRC promulgated 'strategic' areas for priority funding: energy, oceanography and environmental toxicology

1978 Government Organization (Scientific Activities) Act (Bill C-26) reorganizing university grants councils, forming NSERC, redefining powers of NRC, MoSST and Science Council, abolishing Fisheries and Defence Research Boards, etc. HAC lost authority to nominate acting president if NRC president incapacitated

1978 NRC STEP programme to subsidize unemployed researchers

1979 Winnipeg Industrial Technology Centre (later NRC Manufacturing Technology Centre) founded

1980 Larkin Kerwin President of the NRC

1980 The Urgent Investment, five-year plan of the National Research Council

1982 NRC Technical Information Service absorbed into IRAP

1983 Budget speech announced new NRC Institutes in Winnipeg, Shawinigan, etc

1985 Cancellation of new NRC Institutes (Winnipeg, Shawinigan, etc.) due to budget restraint

1985 NRC Action Plan for Winnipeg Institute of Industrial Technology

1986 Announcement of National Advisory Board on Science and Technology to be chaired by Prime Minister (with mandate identical to that of the NRC in 1917)

1987 Privatization and collapse of *Science Dimension*

1989 Canadian Space Agency founded

1989 Pierre Perron President of the NRC