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NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

SESSIONAL PAPER NO. 6
(First Session, 1966)

CONTRACTS - GREATER USE OF LOCAL MATERIALS

DISPOSITION

Accepted as Read.....
Amended.....See Text
Rejected.....See Text
Deferred.....See Text
Not Considered.

CONTRACTS - GREATER USE OF LOCAL MATERIALS

At the 30th Session of Council the member for Mackenzie South requested that the Administration put greater emphasis on the use of local materials in contracts awarded for N.W.T. projects. (Requested by Mr. Porritt, Page 546.)

In the specifications of the Branch under the heading "materials" the following paragraph is used: "---- the Engineer may permit the use of local lumber for joists, studs, girts and rafters provided that such local lumber shall possess characteristics equal or superior to those possessed by the lumber specified."

The Department of Public Works inserts the following paragraph in the specifications for northern construction projects carried out on behalf of all Departments: "Local lumber may be used for structural members such as studs, trimmers, bridging, bucks, furring and sheathing. Such local lumber is subject to the approval of the Engineer and must be sound, well seasoned, and reasonably free from pitch pockets, knots, splits, shakes and wane. All lumber shall conform to standard dimensions as required for finished or rough sawn lumber."

Of the local material available, sand, gravel and wood products are the most important. Sand and gravel are used in the original state or with little modification, as it comes from the ground. The lumber products, which are the most important, take many forms and shapes.

In the Mackenzie District several small sawmills operate and participate in the lumber market requirement. The local producers undertake little promotion work.

The Department of Northern Affairs hired a team of Forestry Management Consultants to study the complete system, manufacture, marketing, etc. In order to point out how important the wood product production program is the following facts are listed. These facts obtained from a report prepared by the Territorial Division of the Department of Northern Affairs, give an overall picture for the lumber production for the N.W.T. for the period from 1960 to 1964 inclusive.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Saw-Logs</u>	<u>Fuelwood</u>	<u>Roundwood</u>	<u>Total Cu. Feet</u>
1960-61	89,835	150,480	263,188	508,503
1961-62	381,836	168,880	78,570	629,286
1962-63	412,011	299,280	172,063	883,354
1963-64	454,306	315,520	501,345	1,271,371
1964-65	1,323,500	167,840	378,647	1,717,260

As an Industrial Division project to aid local economy, a sawmill was established in Aklavik. In 1959-60 the cut was 100,000 lineal feet. Production was more than quadrupled for the 1963-64 season. Approximately 900 building piles were also produced in 1963-64. This material was all used in the delta area on construction and maintenance projects.

Use of Wood Products

All building and construction projects could be broken into the following headings:

Architectural - the design of the structure incorporating
and
Structural the arrangement of raw materials available to provide a finished product. Here the characteristics of each raw material component have to be known, that is, the allowable stresses of wood types used as members in the structure.

The use of local materials is introduced into the product at this time, should such materials be available.

Mechanical - Most of the items under this heading are produced in the manufacturing centres of southern Canada with distribution through local dealers.

Electrical - Most items are produced in the manufacturing centres across Canada, with local dealers distributing to the general public.

To date there is no wood products grading authority in the N.W.T. In order to use wood products as structural members, complete information on the characteristics of the wood is required. There is no doubt that there would be greater use of N.W.T. timber if the wood was properly graded and the moisture content controlled.

Proper air drying would allow local materials to be used more extensively for finish work. Proper grading would provide the Architect with the allowable unit stresses that the material could stand, thus local materials could be used as structural members.

The Purchasing Division at Fort Smith places orders on a yearly average for 125M to 150M board feet of spruce lumber with local suppliers. Building piles are also purchased locally. As a cost comparison locally produced spruce F.O.P. Fort Simpson averaged \$80/M while on the other hand southern spruce F.O.B. Fort Simpson (including freight) averaged \$110/M. It is estimated that some \$10,000 per year is spent for locally produced spruce wood products.

Use of Concrete Products

The suggestion has been made in the past by a Council member that possibly pre-cast concrete products could be made in Yellowknife. Concrete blocks were manufactured in Yellowknife and placed on the commercial market in the early 1950's. This business carried on until the death of the owner. The equipment was purchased by another Yellowknife contractor, but to date only a small volume of concrete blocks have been for sale. In order to make a successful business and to make costs comparative in this field, the market would have to be consistent from year to year.

Concrete blocks have been used in building designs for the Territorial Government, and the fire hall at Fort Smith. More use would be made of these blocks if produced locally. Ready-mixed concrete is now being used by the Branch where it is available from commercial producers.

Conclusions

In conclusion, therefore, it is considered that the Administration encourages the use of local materials for construction projects in the Northwest Territories as far as is possible. Greater use could be made of local lumber, however, if a wood products grading authority were to be established for the N.W.T. and the lumber industry developed by private enterprise.