**92-40**

Ottawa, Ontario
**Seismology Survey Building (#7)**
Central Experimental Farm

## HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Seismology Survey Building was constructed in 1913-14 to house the Geodetic Survey of Canada. It was designed by the Chief Architect's Branch of the Department of Public Works. The custodian is Natural Resources Canada. See FHBRO Building Report 92-40.

### Reasons for Designation

The Seismology Survey building was designated Recognized because of its environmental and local importance and historical associations, and also for its architectural significance.

The Seismology Survey building is a component of the historic complex of early government buildings established around the Dominion Observatory at the Central Experimental Farm. The building is compatible with the present informal layout of adjacent buildings set in a mature treed landscape.

The building is associated with the establishment of the Geodetic Survey of Canada and with the history of seismological research and development. Its construction reflected the expansion of the federal role in pure and applied research to enhance the country's scientific and economic development. The construction of this building and of adjacent government office buildings also encouraged local city growth in the environs.

The Seismology Survey building is a good example of the Edwardian Classical style used for mid-sized governmental lab and office buildings of this era. The symmetrical facade and selective use of classical detail are characteristic of the style.

### Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Seismology Survey Building resides in the building's form, Edwardian Classical proportions and architectural details, construction materials, surviving interior layout, and relationship to its site and setting.

The building is a flat-roofed three storey rectangular structure with a two storey extension. The elongated vertical proportions, symmetrically organized facades and

../2

varied, repetitive window rhythms should not be altered. The height of roof top installations should be limited if possible to reduce their impact on the roof line with its distinctive metal cornice and shaped parapet.

The building composition reflects the classical tripartite division of base, body, and capital. Rough limestone accentuates the base, while smooth brick masonry is used for the body and copper defines the cornice. The brick walls with corner quoins are simply accented by red sandstone lintels, sills, string courses and entrance surrounds. These elements are in keeping with the Edwardian Classical style and should be maintained.

Based on early photographs, the original window design featured elongated double-hung units with transoms, with the top floor having semi-circular transoms and all windows having awnings. The current windows are of modern materials and have inappropriate muntin divisions. The semi-circular transoms are blocked, and there are air conditioning units located in some windows. When the windows are at the end of their service life, they should be replaced with units that are compatible with the initial design intent. Reinstatement of the awnings would cut cooling costs and enhance the heritage character of the building.

The layout, essentially a central corridor plan, has largely survived. The third floor has had minor modifications to some room layouts. The original layouts and patterns of use should be maintained. Original interior materials such as terrazzo flooring, marble stairs and woodwork should be preserved and incorporated into any rehabilitation of the interior.

The simply manicured landscape of walkways and grass is appropriate and should be maintained.

95.07.31

For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.