The ITS Mission

The Institute for Telecommunication Sciences (ITS) is the research and engineering laboratory of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). ITS provides technical support to NTIA in advancing telecommunications and information infrastructure development, enhancing domestic competition, improving U.S. telecommunications trade opportunities, and promoting more efficient and effective use of the radio spectrum.

ITS also serves as a principal Federal resource for solving the telecommunications challenges of other Federal agencies, State and local governments, private corporations and associations, and international organizations.

ITS supports private sector telecommunications activities through cooperative research and development agreements (CRADAs) based on the Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986. The Act encourages sharing of Government facilities and expertise as an aid in the commercialization of new products and services. ITS is a member of the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer, formally chartered by the Act in 1986.

ITS also maintains an Office of Research and Technology Applications (ORTA), established as a result of the 1980 Stevenson-Wydler Act. The ORTA assesses research and development projects for potential commercial applications, and makes information on Federal technologies available to State and local governments as well as private industry.

ITS provides leadership and technical contributions in national and international telecommunication standards committees under OMB Circular A-119, which provides ground rules and encouragement for Federal agency involvement in voluntary consensus standards development.

The ITS mission often involves technical leadership of interagency projects. Here, engineers from (left to right) the NTIA Office of Spectrum Management, ITS, and the Federal Aviation Administration inspect a radar circuit card during interference measurements in Oklahoma City (photograph by F.H. Sanders).