

A message from the New Editor-in-Chief

In the last volume of *Trade Post*, Kathryn McCallion offered her vision for the Trade Commissioner Service (TCS). She introduced the new Trade Commissioner Services division (TBO) as the group responsible for "serving the people who service the customers". TBO's mandate is to make your daily tasks easier, allowing you more time to provide the best service possible to the business community. In an interview with Kathryn, on page one, you will see that the TCS has her full support.

I expect that many of you will have questions such as: how can Ottawa really support us? To start with, we are gathering tips and "tricks of the trade" from a number of Trade Commissioners. For example, many posts have come up with unique ways of dealing with daily workload problems, and other obstacles common in the field. We plan to publish these ideas and solutions in future issues of this

newsletter. Ideally, we will gather enough of these tips to put together a comprehensive reference of best practices. For now, I initiate this discussion with two topics presented on pages 4 and 5.

In the next issue, we will publish two more business techniques and tips that some of you have already submitted. We will also reserve a section for news from Headquarters, and devote another section for news from posts. Moreover, we are considering changing the name and format of the newsletter, and developing a logo to provide quick visibility for the TCS. If you have any ideas or comments, please write us or call us. We are here to help you, and we need your input.

Richard Lecoq, Director (TBO)

On behalf of Trade Post readers, I want to thank Maria Bernard for her fine work as editor over the years. We welcome Andrée Cooligan as Managing Editor, and congratulate her on the smooth production of her first issue.

An Interview with Kathryn McCallion

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entry into this marketplace" is the kind of information they're looking for. So, it takes people and people skills in our offices abroad. The challenge will be to find the money to put more of us abroad again.

TP: *How would you propose to address the subject of performance measurement of International Business Developments initiatives?*

KM: We are under pressure from the Auditor General to show the value added of our work. We're trying to avoid systems such as phoning every company and interviewing them, because it's costly and probably not effective. I think the government has only started to put value on services in a measured way in the last 18 months. We are not as behind as we sometimes appear. So, we're trying different things. The WIN Export tracking system is coming on stream, it's going to be very useful. The U.S Branch is further ahead than the other geographics for measurement of activities, and for trapping new exporters, and we think if their model works, we can apply it more generally around the world.

TP: *Of your many achievements in the Latin America Branch, which has been the most gratifying?*

In the Latin America Branch, we came up with a workable plan that everybody helped put together, and over two years, we were well on our way to seeing it succeed. For those people in the department who think you can't have priorities and you can't achieve them because you are constantly swept up in the issues of today, it's just not true. Don't forget the two problems in the Caribbean that were constant: Haiti and Cuba. The plan strategically put our relationships in order.

First and foremost, was the enhancement of the NAFTA relationship with Mexico. The second part was to enhance our relationship with Central America as a group, because we could not afford to meet them one-on-one. The third element was crucial: we had to let the Caribbean know that we were still a valuable partner. Forth, we had to intensify our relations with key partners such as Brazil and Chile. I was sad to leave before I got it finished, but I was extremely happy with the work we did.