

### □ **Renewing the International Trade Centres**

IC's International Trade Centres are key regional service points in helping export-prepared companies enter international markets. They are currently undertaking a major initiative to redefine their core and enhanced services within the context of the federal/provincial analysis of exporter development services, and to focus efforts in areas of greatest value to clients. Under the heading, *A new approach to serving business in Canada and abroad*, staff are working with their regional partners and DFAIT to reach consensus on a common set of core services. As part of this review, national standards are being developed and will be implemented across the country to ensure a consistent level and quality of service.

### □ **Broadening and Diversifying the Exporter Base**

Initiatives to broaden and diversify the exporter base include making customized training material available to industry associations and other organizations for its members; tapping Canada's ethno-cultural diversity to create a competitive advantage; and promoting strategic alliances to pursue international contracts such as offshore capital projects and International Financial Institution opportunities. Through existing mechanisms such as the Canadian Business Networks Coalition, and the Business Network Program of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, industry associations can play a stronger role in helping to set up such consortia and identify possible networks of companies.

Aboriginal Business Canada (ABC) has identified international trade as a key priority. Through its Aboriginal Trade and Market Expansion Initiative, ABC will continue to identify and profile Aboriginal exporters and growth-oriented firms, ensure that they are introduced to TCI partners, and work directly with them in a range of capacity-building initiatives. In addition, ABC is a key partner with DFAIT, INAC and AAFC in developing an Aboriginal Trade Strategy to build on ABC's success. This strategy will offer comprehensive support to firms in various sectors and in various stages of the export development cycle. ABC will also focus on key sectors of the Aboriginal economy, including indigenous-to-indigenous international consulting, cultural products, and other growth-oriented sectors.

The Trade Research Coalition is a government initiative to promote export development on the part of women entrepreneurs. A number of government departments and agencies (including DFAIT, the Industry Canada Portfolio and Status of Women Canada), as well as various private sector associations, are actively involved. The Coalition has worked to:

- conduct a comprehensive literature review on women entrepreneurs and trade;
- develop an Internet site for women entrepreneurs interested in export and trade issues;
- develop a database of women exporters;
- host a Trade Summit for Women Entrepreneurs (May 1999), drawing on the support of IC's network of International Trade Centres.

TCI will encourage more companies to adopt a global-market mindset and make their products and services export-prepared, in order to enhance Canada's position as a reliable supplier of high-quality, value-added products. Partnerships will continue to expand to reach new client-segments and identify new sectors with export potential, especially in emerging technologies. This will require an ongoing review of local capabilities to match offshore opportunities.

### **3.3.2 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

*The performance measurement strategy for strengthening export capability and preparedness is presented in Annex 1.*