



PROFILE - THE CANADIAN TRADE OFFICE IN HONG KONG



As business in Hong Kong increasingly focuses on the China market, Canada's Trade Commissioners are adjusting their priorities accordingly.

"Our priorities are to build on the business synergies of the Canada-Hong Kong-China triangle," says Scott Mullin, the senior Trade Commissioner who heads up the Commercial Division, or trade office, of the Commission for Canada in Hong Kong. "We have to look at how better to use Hong Kong as a base for business in China and how to get more focused on our efforts in China."

According to Mullin, that focus on China is already evident with the Commission's efforts to organize, with the Canadian Chamber, an upcoming trade and investment seminar called "Profiting from Partnership." The conference, which will be held in Hong Kong and Guangdong in early May, will emphasize the relationship between the Hong Kong and southern China markets.

Recently, a separate South China trade office at the Canadian Commission in Hong Kong reported to the Canadian Embassy in Beijing. Now, that office is an integrated part of the Hong Kong trade office.

Canada's worldwide Trade Commissioner Service, celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, provides market information and helps Canadian companies develop their overseas business strategies and market intelligence by providing up-to-the-minute information to help implement that strategy.

The Hong Kong trade office is focusing its promotional activities in the following sectors, where Mullin thinks there are good opportunities and Canadian companies have an advantage: building products and services, telecommunications, electronics and computers, food and agriculture, environment, and infrastructure projects in Hong Kong and China.

In Hong Kong, there are about 30 to 40 inquiries a day from Hong Kong companies asking about Canadian products and Canadian companies asking about the local market. "We play matchmaker," says Mullin. "Our commercial officers have good local contacts."

Obviously, the recent closure and downsizing of a number of provincial government offices has affected the workload of the Commercial Division at the Commission. "We do our best to provide the service we do," says Mullin. "We are extremely busy."

Mullin stresses that they aren't working alone to help Canadian companies in China. "There is great effort to work together with our offices in Taipei, Shanghai, and Beijing to identify opportunities."

Call 847-7414 or fax 847-7441 to make an appointment to speak with one of the commercial officers. The office, located on the 13th floor, Exchange Square, Tower One, is open from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 17:00 p.m. ♦

Commercial Division, Commission for Canada

Sitting (from left to right):

Chris Li (Commercial Officer), previously with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in Shanghai, concentrates on building products and related services.

Endy Chung (Commercial Officer), who focuses on the energy, power, and machinery sectors, previously worked for a Japanese trading company and the Ontario government office in Hong Kong.

Lawrence Leung (Commercial Officer) has 10 years of China trade experience, including work with a Japanese trading company in Shanghai. His priorities are transportation and infrastructure projects.

Brian Wong (Commercial Officer), who worked in Canada for seven years as a project and programme engineer, focuses on the telecommunications, electronics, and computer sectors.

Standing (from left to right):

Amy Yung (Investment Officer) is responsible for promoting investment in Canada by assisting companies planning to invest in Canada or form business ventures with Canadian companies. She has a strong background in corporate and private banking and was previously with Citibank in Hong Kong.

Anne Argyris (Trade Commissioner) came to Hong Kong after one year of Mandarin language training and three years with the Canadian Embassy in Beijing. Anne concentrates on south China.

Scott Mullin (Senior Trade Commissioner) is responsible for Canada's trade programme in Hong Kong, Macau, and south China. Scott arrived last September after two years as Spokesperson and Press Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He previously served in Tebran, Beirut, and Nairobi and started his career in Hong Kong from 1977-81.

Steven Gawreletz (Trade Commissioner) joined the Commission in 1990 and concentrates on Hong Kong. Steven's previous assignments include Los Angeles, New York, and the Japan and U.S. trade development divisions in Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

Miranda Wong (Commercial Officer) recently joined the Commission and is responsible for food and agriculture. She has a degree in food science from the University of Alberta and has worked with the American Beef Federation in Hong Kong.

Zita Yau (Commercial Officer), whose main responsibility is the environment sector, has been with the Commission since 1990. Before that, she worked for eight years in marketing.

