

The research objectives of the full study, including both the survey of exporters and twelve focus groups held with exporters,¹ were to assess the information needs of exporters for information with specific emphasis on the following:

- To determine the awareness of the Going Global Strategy and its programs for trade development.
- To collect information on experiences that exporters have had with the Free Trade Agreement.
- To assess problems exporters have had under implementation, for example, paper work at shipping and customs.
- To assess the impact of the Free Trade Agreement on exporters operations to date.
- To assess how exporters are adapting to the Free Trade Agreement, for example with pricing strategies, shipping routes, etc.
- To assess exporters' views on the compatibility of Canada-U.S. standards, dispute settlement procedures, and protectionism in the U.S.
- To assess current sources of information and unfilled needs for information of exporters concerning Going Global and the Free Trade Agreement by sector, region and size of enterprise.
- To assess reactions to print information materials developed by the department to inform business about the Going Global Strategy and the Free Trade Agreement.

The focus of the quantitative Survey of Exporters was to determine the effects to date, if any, of the Free Trade Agreement on the business operations of exporters, including decisions regarding investments, marketing, financial transactions, purchasing of supplies, hiring and location decisions.

¹The research plan involved three phases, as follows:

- Phase I A series of six focus groups with Canadian exporters and individual interviews with six U.S. customs brokers. The results of this phase of the research were used to provide input into development of the questionnaire for the quantitative survey.
- Phase II This consisted of six focus groups among representatives of key sectors of the export community to assess prototypes of information materials developed by External Affairs and International Trade Canada.
- Phase III A quantitative survey was carried out with 501 senior export executives from a sample of companies representing five geographic regions, three classes of business sector and three size categories of business.