

4. EVALUATION DESIGN

4.1 Recommended Approach

The general aim of Public Affairs: Abroad is to create favourable attitudes towards Canada in foreign countries, and to foster understanding and cultural relations. The approach is multifaceted, comprising a number of major thrusts or subprograms, such as information dissemination, people exchanges, cultural presentations and the development of university related interest in Canada. Because of the diversity of activity, some aspects of the recommended evaluation are restricted to particular subprograms, whereas others are more general.

The principal focus of the proposed evaluation will be the objective resolution of a number of significant issues pertaining to the design, implementation and effectiveness of the program. This will be accomplished in part through a conceptual evaluation of the overall Public Affairs: Abroad program, and in part through complementary evaluations directed specifically at questions of the efficiency or effectiveness of certain subprograms.

An initial set of issues to be addressed is discussed in section 4.3; the proposed approach in each case is then described in outline form in the next section. The last section of the report identifies a number of alternatives, in terms of both methodology and evaluation objectives, that were considered but are not recommended at this time for various reasons.*

4.2 Scope

As can be inferred from the description above, the subprograms within the Public Affairs: Abroad program component can for convenience be classified into three groups. These groups can be called (I) cultural relations; (II) academic relations; and (III) information abroad. The roman numerals will be used to identify these groups in subsequent discussion.

The conceptual evaluation relating to general issues such as objectives and overall program design cuts across all these groups. More detailed evaluations emphasizing effectiveness are suggested for some subprograms in

* It is, of course, the prerogative of senior management to redirect the main emphasis of the evaluation as it desires.