

governments for release of information and requests from three foreign governments for the declassification of information by the Canadian government.

This workload represents a substantial increase over the previous year. In terms of numbers of requests, the increase is about 15%, but taking into account the size and complexity of several of the requests, we estimate an increase of 20% in the workload of the office. Dealing with this steady increase with static resources while maintaining service standards represents an ongoing challenge.

Complaints

Twenty four complaints were received during the year by the two Commissioners' Offices in addition to 12 outstanding at the beginning of the year. Of 29 investigations completed, 13 were resolved and 16 were judged to be without justification. Seven complaints were still under investigation at the end of the year.

This represents a decrease of 25% in the number of complaints received. While complaints are not in themselves a measure of service standards, this statistic is an encouraging indication that standards did not slip unduly in spite of increased workload.

Other responsibilities

In addition to the management of Access and Privacy requests, the Coordinator's Office provides advice and guidance to departmental units on compliance with the legislation. Briefings on Access to Information and Privacy were given, inter alia to service centre personnel, consular officers, and Ministers' offices. In addition, the Coordinator developed and presented tailored ATIP course modules to new officers as part of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute training program for recruits in the political/economic, commercial/economic, and consular/administrative streams. The Coordinator is the departmental point of contact for the Registration of Information Collection and Public Opinion Research, (although the function is carried out in the Communications Branch). The department reports new requests on a daily basis to the Coordination of Access to Information Requests (CAIR) system and consults it to stay abreast of the range of requests being processed across government. The department contributes financially to the ATIP tracking system maintenance and participates in related interdepartmental consultations.

Screening program

The Coordinator's Office is responsible for screening records for transfer to the National Archives. The Coordinator directs a team of retired senior foreign service officers who review records and determine whether they may be opened for public examination. This is a unique program that has helped to provide access for researchers to greater volumes of information concerning Canada's conduct of international relations. This year, a major effort was launched to clear a backlog of records waiting for transfer. An understanding was reached with