

Celebrating 100 Years

# Canada's Trade Commissioner Service Puts Canadian Businesses First

Before Ed Swift travels abroad on business, he does his homework.

For Swift, Manager of Business Development for Spar Applied Systems, a division of Spar Aerospace Ltd., this includes confer- ring regularly with the Canadian

Trade Commissioner Service about the best ways to do business in the countries he visits.

"The trade commissioners at the Canadian embassies can help you navigate some perilous waters," he said. "Smart companies always talk to the embassy staff first. They

can save you a lot of trouble, time and money."

Swift, who travels extensively for Spar, Canada's premier space company and a leader in the space-based communications, informatics and aviation and defence industries, says he thinks of the Trade Commissioner Service as a valuable marketing tool.

"It provides a network of people who are dedicated to helping you market your product abroad, and who are glad to do it," he said. "At the same time, they give you the cold, hard facts about your chances. They provide you with a realistic, unbiased view of the market that you wouldn't necessarily get from an export agent."

## EARLY HISTORY OF THE TCS

- 1851:** Three British North America colonies — Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick — collaborate in the first display of Canadian products and resources at the large international exhibition in London's Crystal Palace
- 1892:** Act Respecting the Department of Trade and Commerce proclaimed; Mackenzie Bowell named the first Minister of Trade and Commerce
- 1894:** An Order-in-Council authorizes the Department of Trade and Commerce to appoint commercial agents in foreign countries and various colonies; John Larke leaves Canada in December for assignment in Australia as the first such agent
- 1914:** Dana Wilgris and Norman Johnston become trade commissioners after the first university recruitment
- 1916:** Plant tours before posting become part of a trade commissioner's training
- 1929:** James Langley becomes the first trade commissioner to be formally attached to a diplomatic mission
- 1933** Commodity divisions established to improve communications with industry; first divisions included animal products; economics; wood and vegetable products; and minerals, metals and chemicals
- 35:**
- 1939:** Trade office opens in Los Angeles to promote Canadian tourism and to pursue opportunities offered by the Canada-United States trade agreement, now in effect
- 1949:** Newfoundland joins Confederation and Newfoundland Trade Commissioners become members of the TCS
- 1969:** First female officers recruited into the TCS

*(Facts taken from O. Mary Hill, Canada's Salesman to the World, The Department of Trade and Commerce, 1892-1939, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and London, 1977 and departmental sources)*

### A century of service

For the past 100 years, Canada's Trade Commissioner Service has helped Canadian companies do business around the world.

When John Larke, Canada's first trade commissioner, boarded the R.M.S. Warrimoo in Vancouver harbour en route to the Australian colonies in 1894, he had a clear idea of what he was charged to do — promote Canada and Canadian companies as strong, worthwhile trading partners.

Today, Canada's Trade Commissioner Service, a network of 950 trade commissioners and locally-hired commercial officers, works to uphold this goal. However, their markets are much more vast. Canadian trade commissioners are based in 12 cities across Canada

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