

INTRODUCTION

The organization of a major international summit is a monumental task. The summit will reflect well upon the host country, but only if it is a success. While success will be primarily measured by what is achieved substantively, it will also be determined by the quality of the logistical organization.

The objective of summit organizer is to set the best possible physical environment for the meeting, to ensure that all arrangements provide a comfortable, fully supportive setting for the pursuit of the substantive work.

It is the intent of this handbook to give to future hosts the basic elements of organizational detail in as simple a format as possible. It is impossible to design a logistical organization which will perfectly for all summits. Therefore, it must be understood from the start that the suggestions and recommendations in this book are only that. The future host should use the information contained in this handbook as a source of information and experience, and not as the "bible" for their summit.

From the experience gained from hosting four major meetings, it is possible to assemble the generic organizational details common to all four and present them in the following pages. Each summit offered its fresh challenges - new location, different participants, and a unique set of guidelines and organizational precedents - but the tasks to be done were the same. These tasks are outlined in the following chapters.

The handbook assumes the "worst case scenario": a major international summit, in a location out of the capital region, in a major urban setting, with more than one principal participant (VIP) requiring top security protection, with a lead-time of approximately one year.

If the summit to be organized is a "worst case scenario" then the host must seriously consider every chapter and its contents. It is very easy to assume that some of the logistical details/problems will naturally "just happen", or perhaps, "never happen". However, the success of the four events organized by the Summits Management Office in Canada, was only possible because of this detailed planning.