

STUDY ON SMALL MISSION PROCEDURES

Mandate

To review existing administrative procedures for missions abroad, with a particular emphasis on small missions (see definitions in Annex A) and to make recommendations that will result in an easing of their administrative burden.

Objectives:

1. To eliminate unnecessary and outdated procedures;
2. to simplify procedures that cannot be eliminated and/or reduce their frequency;
3. to identify where to carry out procedures that cannot be eliminated;
4. to improve the quality of administrative support at small missions;

Principles:

1. Allow program officers to do program work rather than administrative tasks;
2. reduce administrative tasks to increase the cost effectiveness of resources deployed abroad;
3. maintain administrative tasks that are essential to sound corporate management;
4. ensure that recommendations do not simply result in the transfer of workload from one responsibility centre to another;
5. improve the quality of administrative support through greater reliance on expertise at larger missions;

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Budget reductions and downsizing have led to the creation of small missions which in many cases are managed by a few Canadians and without a Canada-based administrative officer. The administrative workload imposed on these small missions is often the same as for large missions. As a result, program managers at small missions often spend more time preparing reports for Headquarters than delivering the program (trade or otherwise) for which their mission was established.

One of the objectives of the study was to reduce the number of reports required from small missions by either eliminating some of them, simplifying those which cannot be eliminated or by reducing their frequency. The review of the 120 reports listed in the Mission Diary led to a recommendation that 25 of those reports no longer be required from small missions (12 of the 25 reports are to be eliminated for larger missions as well). It is also recommended that 8 additional reports be produced less frequently,