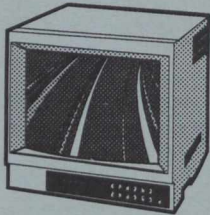


## DFAIT SURFS THE NET

By Lewis  
Coughlin



The new fiscal year marks a new era in the dissemination of electronic information and publications for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). By the end of April, the Department should have established a presence for itself on the Internet, making instant global access to information by computer-modem a reality. We will thus be able to publish our reports, send e-mail, and access data bases worldwide via the Net.

As the primary distributor of departmental information and publications to external clients, the *InfoCentre* (SKI) is taking a lead role in the development of this new Internet presence. The focus for SKI is on the information content side: what information do we make available, and how will it be displayed and packaged? These are key questions that will ultimately determine whether this new Internet site will be successful or not.

The plumbing of the new Internet platform will be managed by our partners in the *Information Systems Bureau* (STD) and the *Trade Information Systems Division* (TPP). The latter group is, especially in the short-term, key to the success of this project as they will manage the external web server alongside the IBB. SKI and TPP together will coordinate and oversee the population of the new Internet box with

key files, and will ensure that the Department's home pages are created with full consideration given to how information is organized and accessed through other sister services (IBB, FaxLink, etc.).

The emphasis is on creating an easy-to-navigate, relevant, and balanced electronic window into the Department. As dictated by demand, the system will be highly trade-driven, with many of the key publications focusing on export market development and trade promotion in general. Furthermore, key documents of the International FaxLink system will be loaded onto the new Internet site to woo investment and business to Canada. Yet strong emphasis will be placed on uploading information on other important subject areas; namely, foreign policy, immigration, defence and peacekeeping, etc. We will develop a system that reflects the current activities and priorities of the Department, and that fully meets the requirements of the public for access to DFAIT information in the 1990s.

*Lewis Coughlin is Head of Advanced Communications (SKI). If you have questions regarding the InfoCentre or its new hi-tech information services, please contact him at 944-1490 or via E-mail. If you prefer using Internet, you can use either <lewis.coughlin@extott09.x400.gc.ca> or <aw702@freenet.carleton.ca>, ignoring all brackets.*

## The IBB for you and me: A Technical Guide by John Kur

As reported in previous issues, the InfoCentre Bulletin Board (IBB) allows clients to access Departmental information 24-hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week, from a PC, via modem. However, this is not its only function. After taking a few moments to subscribe to the IBB e-mail service using IconDesk, trade officers can now easily and automatically receive Departmental information bulletins on their Signet workstations (as e-mail messages in Icondesk, sans modem). The messages are received by subscribing to a list server service, via the Internet.

Press releases, speeches, and trade newsletters can be obtained by subscribing to the IBB. This new electronic system can help keep trade officers in Ottawa and abroad plugged-in to developments in Ottawa and at other posts. Most importantly, material received by subscribers is current and can be reviewed at one's own convenience. The new IBB e-mail service is an ideal way to electronically stay in touch with Ottawa, even when you're half-way around the world.

To access IBB information via the internet, follow the 4 simple steps below. Don't let the arcane character combinations intimidate you. This is really a piece of cake for regular and knowledgeable internet users:

- 1) In IconDesk, create an alias for: listserv@fait.gc.ca by entering its IconDesk equivalent:  
\$rfc-822\*listserv(a)fait.gc.ca\$\$gc+gate.pas\$\$govmt.canada\$ca
- 2) Following regular procedure, send a message to this new address containing only the word: help  
You need not include any message in the Subject Header
- 3) You will receive a reply message from: PCBuucp Listserv  
This message will contain directions on subscribing to specific services.
- 4) Send another message, using the alias you created, to subscribe to the services which interest you.

*John Kur is a Commercial Officer with the OLIFI in Washington. For more information on this procedure, contact him at 456-0000.*