



ANNEX I: CANADA'S TRADE COMMISSIONER SERVICE



Canadian trade commissioners live and work in Oslo and Buenos Aires, in Beijing and Buffalo, in fact in 125 cities throughout the world. As part of an extensive network of trade experts, their primary responsibility is to help exporters get started or expand their sales in foreign markets. As employees of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), they work on your behalf.

It is always a good idea to inform the trade commissioner in each of your established or target foreign markets of your export activities. Keeping them up-to-date pays big dividends in reducing costs, avoiding pitfalls and seizing opportunities.

Before you contact a Canadian trade commissioner, you should consider these suggestions.

Provide your trade commissioner, in advance, with:

- summary of your company's activities;
- previous export experience;
- precise descriptions of your product or service;
- main selling feature of your product or service;
- type of distributor or representative you are seeking;
- tentative travel schedule;

- requests for introductions to or appointments with potential agents and/or buyers;
- copies of your sales brochure and product/service literature.

Your trade commissioner can help you determine:

- whether your product or service can be imported into the market;
- normal distribution channels for your product or service;
- whether there is local or imported competition;
- buying practices in the market;
- market support services that are available, such as banking, shipping and storage;
- import policies and restrictions;
- how to quote in the market;
- social, cultural, business, market and political conditions that may affect sales.

When your marketing plans are completed and the trade commissioner has been informed of your plans, s/he can help you market your product by:

- canvassing and recommending local representatives — you should seek the trade commissioner's advice before appointing agents or distributors;
- recommending translation, legal, advertising and other support services;
- arranging meetings for future business trips;