

Missions are participating in Foreign Language Maintenance programs more than they have in the past. Over 60 missions are cost-sharing nearly half a million dollars' worth of training to improve the foreign language skills of CBS and their families. This allows them to be more authoritative as sources of information, more competent as advisors on local customs and more effective in bridging the differences between cultures.

The impact of the Foreign Language Board will be a steady increase in the number of employees arriving at posts with the necessary proficiency in the foreign language, thus heightening their effectiveness and professional impact from the start. The FLB is now completing a review of all positions abroad requiring proficiency in a foreign language.

Directors' Orientation Program

Reflection and Management Skills

"Getting away to reflect on how to be better managers while touching all major bases of the Department made the Directors' Orientation Program very

useful," says Robert Peck, Director, Media Relations Office (BCM). Offered in October, the four-day training event is held annually by the Centre for International Affairs Learning and Management Development (CFSD). This year, 25 directors attended the program at the CFSI Bisson campus in Hull.

"It was one-stop shopping for us," Mr. Peck explains. "We had the opportunity to hear our Deputy Minister, Mr. Campbell, and the Prime Minister's Foreign Policy Advisor, Mr. Kergin, speak to us in a candid and frank manner."

"The key message from Mr. Campbell, that Human Resources and communications are top priorities, was very encouraging to hear," says Mr. Peck, who not only attended the training session but, along with Lillian Thomsen (BCF) and Greg Meredith (BCT), made a presentation to the group on behalf of the Communications Bureau. Day one of the program addressed the director's role as a public servant. Donald Campbell, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, opened the orientation program by outlining the Human Resources Strategy for the coming year. Suzanne Laporte, ADM for Human Resources, talked about implementing the new HR strategy. John Klassen, DG, Personnel Management (HPD) and Robert Desjardins, Director,

Human Resources Policy (HRP), also addressed the directors in this context. Staff Relations Officer and Advisor Marc Leclaire (HRE) discussed harassment in the workplace.

Day two focused on the director's role as a leader and day three on relationships within divisions, while day four addressed resource allocation, financial management, accountability, public diplomacy and B-Branch communications.

The program is specifically designed for directors who are newly appointed or who have recently returned from post. One of its objectives is to familiarize participants with new developments and trends within DFAIT, as well as current departmental priorities in light of reorganization. The program gives directors a chance to network with colleagues across DFAIT.

At the end of the course, participants were given a guide prepared by CFSI which outlines the responsibilities of DFAIT divisions. The guide includes a diskette providing additional information and related documents.



Three BCD directors who participated in the Directors' Orientation Program, left to right: Greg Meredith (BCT), Lillian Thomsen (BCF) and Robert Peck (BCM).

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