Item (i) on the face of it could be said to deal with a problem common to other systems. In practice the frequent new developments on the international scene, and Canadian responses to them, link this problem to that discussed immediately above.

Item (j) reflects the fact that both official Canadian languages are being freely employed in communications throughout the Department. This will impose operational requirements on the system both as to personnel dispositions and automation techniques.

65.   Finally, several of the criteria will be seen to be largely specific to External Affairs.

Item (k) relates to a problem which touches most aspects of Departmental operations. Because of foreign service rotation the depth of the "institutional memory" in the various divisions is much shallower than in other departments which much weakens the exercise of the Departmental coordination role in the conduct of international relations. This weakness has been compounded by the fact of the rotation of classifiers in the Registry. Development of the system must therefore be specifically directed towards compensating for these drawbacks.

Item (l) calls for the headquarters system to be compatible with and to support the substantive programmes, and the communications and registry operations at some 113 posts in foreign countries. Any new format for communications, for example, must not impose unreasonable strain on the personnel and other resources at the posts. The pool of rotational CR's and their training must also be taken into account.

Item (m) is directed towards the creation of "country" and other data bases to make possible the systematic presentation of relevant information to other government departments in order to support the Department's coordination role. This is a function which can only be performed inadequately at the present time.

Item (n) identifies the need for the creation of certain specialized data bases to facilitate a number of functions within the Department (e.g. the "satellite" systems described in paragraph 56 for Protocol, Consular and other operational activities).

Item (o) envisages the extension of the information system to a new dimension to encompass the particular needs of the senior management and central policy formulation sectors. In these areas there is a generally perceived need for new tools to cope more expeditiously with policy issues and the related question of crisis management.