

Organization and Implementation

The Coordinator for Access to Information and Privacy Protection (ATIP) has been delegated full authority to exercise the powers of the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act. The Office of the Coordinator is responsible for the development, co-ordination and implementation of effective policies, guidelines and procedures to manage the department's compliance with these Acts. All requests submitted to the department within Canada or at Canadian missions abroad are replied to by the Office of the Coordinator in Ottawa. The Coordinator reports to the Legal Advisor. In addition to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Coordinator, the Deputy Minister for International Trade, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Political and International Affairs, and the Legal Advisor are also designated with full powers, and all Heads of Mission are designated to act under Section 8(2)(m) of the Privacy Act.

The Canadian Government holds records and information received in confidence from foreign governments. Other federal government institutions are encouraged to solicit the assistance of the department in determining the extent to which documents were obtained in confidence or the extent to which disclosure of information would be injurious to the conduct of international affairs. The Coordinator's Office is responsible for consultations with foreign governments which are normally undertaken through Canadian posts abroad. Requests by foreign governments regarding the declassification and disclosure of Canadian documents are also processed by the Office. The department also collects, under various legislative authorities or otherwise, an appreciable amount of commercial information in confidence from companies operating abroad or dealing with foreign governments. In the event of requests for such information, the department, if it determines it has no substantive interest in the information, will undertake appropriate notification or consultation with interested parties before disclosing any records. The Coordinator's Office also has frequent occasion to convey personal information to federal investigative agencies.

During the past year the extensive organizational changes in the federal government had a modest but significant impact on this department. Most notable was the **name change** in November, 1993 from External Affairs and International Trade Canada to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). The Secretary of State for External Affairs is now titled the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his deputy the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. The **Passport Office**, a special operating agency, was transferred in the June 25, 1993 reorganization to the Department of Public Security. However, pending the establishment of structural and legal frameworks to effect this change, the DFAIT ATIP Office continued to be responsible for its Access and Privacy business. In November, 1993, the Passport Office was transferred back to DFAIT. There was therefore no real change in the handling of passport-related ATIP requests during the reporting period. The **Investment Development Bureau** was transferred from Investment Canada in June 1993, and has been gradually integrated into this department. There have been no Access or Privacy requests involving information from this Bureau since the transfer. There has also been extensive internal restructuring in DFAIT over the past two years; these changes have been fully reflected in the 1993-4 edition of Infosource.