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Continuing with our look around the Department at what has been happening over the course of the past year in implementation of Corporate Review decisions, this edition looks at the International Trade Development Branch and highlights of what has been happening there.

Focus on the International Trade Development Branch

International trade is of vital importance to the Canadian economy. Most of our economic growth and new employment is dependant on selling our products and services to new markets outside of Canada. The trade development divisions in our geographic branches help Canadian companies with their efforts in specific countries and regions. They also are the connection between headquarters and the missions.

The International Trade Development Branch supports and complements this function through its primary objective of assisting and encouraging Canadian businesses to develop strategies for the international marketplace. As its name suggests, the Branch helps companies to develop and increase their trading capacity. This is achieved through the work of its sectoral trade development divisions which act as a departmental focal point for key industries and through "T" Branch programs such as the Program for Export Market Development (PEMD). The Branch has also developed some very successful trade information systems which are vital both for the department's trade planning and for providing data on Canadian products and services to trade commissioners at missions abroad. The most well known system is "WIN Exports" which provides detailed information on Canadian sources of supply to over one thousand users around the world.

There are many players involved in trade development at all levels of government and in the private sector. Through its Trade Development Secretariat, the "T" Branch works to coordinate some of these efforts and to ensure that the players are aware of EAITC's programs, services and activities. The Branch also includes the secretariat for the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITS) which provide private sector advice to the government on international trade matters. In these times of restraint, it is more important than ever that we both coordinate our efforts with other players and tailor our "products" to the needs of the business community.

Back to the Corporate Review... To respond to the recommendations of the Review, the "T" Branch has been busy completing the reorganisation and redeployment of positions required, and a number of teams have been working throughout the past year to put in place the changes and review the opportunities for continued improvements and cost-saving possibilities.