

government support rather than entrench it. Access to programs and activities will need to become more selective and differentiated.

After a brief history of the Trade Commissioner Service and related government programs, this paper discusses the changing international business environment. Reduced government participation in economic and trade development suggests that existing programs need to be re-evaluated on the basis of new criteria. To place Canadian programs and services in context, a summary review of practices of selected competitor countries is included. A detailed performance review of trade commissioner services and trade development programs suggests that current resources and activities are over concentrated in mature markets with diminishing marginal rates of return. Future programs will need to question universal access to government programs and services, enhanced linkages to the basic competitiveness of Canadian companies, and greater devolution of program delivery. Discussion of training requirements, business linkages and organization follows.