

3.5 Recent Improvements

The TCS has made a continual commitment to respond to the concerns of employees as expressed in the employee surveys. The issues raised in the 2000 Employee Survey were addressed in the Chief Trade Commissioner's TCS "Employee Survey Action Plan Results." The Action Plan was highly visible within the TCS - approximately 85% of respondents reported that they were aware of the report. Of these, almost all (95%) felt that at least some of the issues had been addressed in the Action Plan. When asked specifically what percentage of issues were addressed, almost half (45%) reported that 60% or more of the issues were addressed.

Use of the Business Mission Agreement (BMA) continues to grow. During the 2000 survey only 25% of employees at Post had used the BMA. This has increased to 65% with the 2003 data. Forty-one percent (41%) of employees reported using the BMA "very often" or "occasionally." Of those at Post using the BMA very often or occasionally, 84% felt that it improved the effectiveness of business missions.

"Regarding the BMA, sometimes too many regulations impair efficiencies."

The BMA was not universally accepted by employees however. A significant proportion of employees who do not use the BMA do not do so as they consider it too difficult to use or feel there is a lack of support from Post management. It was simply viewed as another level of bureaucracy that does not add value to the process. A small number of staff also indicated that clients were reluctant to use the agreement.

Employees have also increased their use of the HORIZONS Intranet site, with a significant majority (94%) reporting that they use the site. More than three-quarters (81%) of employees said that they used it either "very often" or "occasionally." Use of the site is highest amongst LES. Only 1% of LES indicated that they have never used HORIZONS. More than half (57%) on the other hand, reported using the site very often.

While employees used HORIZONS for a variety of reasons, the highest proportion indicated that they used it as a primary vehicle for internal communications. Three-quarters (75%) of employees reported that they use the site in order to stay current either occasionally or very often. Employees at Post were more likely than those at Headquarters to report using HORIZONS in order to stay current. This was true of both LES and CBS-Post although CBS-Post represented the highest proportion of employees indicating that they used the site to stay current.