consequent demands on development and maintenance resources that will not be able to cope with new demands. Indeed users and potential users are already encountering frustrations when they find they cannot obtain the kind of expert help within the Department they need to develop new Informatics Systems to support their activities. Some of the resources being proposed in this Plan relate to the Informatics support role which must have urgent and continuing attention if the Department is to achieve full benefit from the introduction of Informatics Systems.

Planning for new systems and planning for resources must go hand in hand. In other words when new systems are proposed the resources for development, operation and maintenance must be identified at the same time.

In the past effective use has been made of outside consultants for projects that Departmental personnel have not had time to undertake. This practice should continue. However, as Departmental personnel need to give direction to the work of consultants, their employment on a project means that fewer Departmental personnel resources will be required - it does not not eliminate the need for them entirely.

The use of micro-computers in the Department is expanding and an increasing number of personnel are using them to perform a variety of administrative tasks from budgeting to project monitoring. Demands for them are growing. However personnel do not always have a clear idea of their precise needs or how a micro-computer will meet them. To assist them in becoming more familiar with this technology a Micro-Centre has just been established. It provides a place where personnel can receive instruction in the use of micro-computers, and can find support while they learn to use software packages. Personnel are also able to examine a variety of systems in order to select the one most suitable to their requirements. The Centre will also arrange to loan equipment to personnel, and will serve as a place to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of software packages as they become available on the market.

The Micro-Centre provides a central point from which the Department's micro-computer resources can be managed to ensure equipment acquisition and use within the Department is coordinated and appropriate training and support services provided. The steps set out in the circular document on the acquisition of EDP systems apply to micro-computers, but this document needs to be supplemented with a code of practice for micro-computer users. The use of micro-computers also raises a number of security issues and these are being addressed in the Chapter of this document on "Security".

4.2.8 DOCUMENTATION AND PROCEDURES

Some of the issues the Department faces in further developing its Informatics systems are common to other organizations, both public and private. As a result of consolidation the Department has a problem of several data bases having been developed independently. Some data can therefore only be shared with difficulty across functional and organizational boundaries. The lack of common standards and guidelines applicable to all systems could further inhibit access to information produced within the Department. This problem needs to be addressed immediately for those systems which respond to the needs of senior management. For other systems including that supporting the Library and those operating in a process support role (e.g. The Special Trade Relations Bureau, the Program for Export Market Development and the Passport Bureau) the introduction of common guidelines is desirable but less urgent.

There are a number of gaps in the documentation governing the operation of EDP systems in External Affairs. An early effort should be made under the Committee's direction to fill these. One of the most important is security. Historically, security measures in the Department have concentrated on the protection of classified information relating to Canada's national security. Security information processed or stored in Informatics systems is a relatively