

objective would be for the private sector to make clear what it cannot provide and what it expects from the various orders of government. This review should be undertaken by a task force consisting of representatives of financial institutions, trade and business organizations, independent business people and trade experts, to be appointed by the federal government in consultation with provincial governments and in consultation with municipalities and the private sector. The three levels of government should be represented in an ex officio capacity as observers. The operations of the task force would be financed by the principal stakeholders. (page 56)

The government supports ongoing review of IBD programs and services to ensure that they continually meet the needs of Canadian exporters.

The government recognizes that the world is constantly changing, and that its roles will also change - both to meet the new needs of Canadian exporters and to avoid duplication and overlap. The government's IBD strategy evolves towards a moving target of perfect programs and services, with the goalposts ever changing.

The government has been working to identify any unfulfilled gaps in the needs of SME exporters, which are unmet by the private sector, or in its own services. Since 1991, at least thirteen surveys have been conducted to determine the needs of Canadian exporters, not including the private sector International Business Development Review Committee (Red Wilson Committee). Many of the initiatives discussed in this response were implemented as a result of feedback received from these surveys.

The Minister for International Trade currently receives comprehensive advice directly from the private sector through a number of standing committees comprising only private sector individuals and chaired by the private sector drawn from SMEs, financial institutions, business associations and academia. To reflect the private sector's areas of interest the consultative committees include sixteen Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs).

The government does not propose to establish a task force as recommended by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade but rather to ensure that the private sector SAGITs review the issues raised by the Committee in recommendation 20.

These advisory groups review the governments international trade and international business development strategies on an on-going basis. These private sector advisory committees have dealt with topics including international competitiveness, streamlining of programs and service to private sector, impact of domestic regulations on international competitiveness, harmonization of international/technical standards and gaps in services to groups such as SME's. Ensuing recommendations have been instrumental in establishing the governments IBD Strategy, the domestic Team Canada approach and EDC's review of financing for SME's already mentioned. Also, the Business and Professional Services SAGIT has been reviewing the issue of competition between private sector and government services. These committees will continue to review these issues, as well as concerns expressed by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

To provide for full participation of as many of Canada's business leaders as possible, one third of the committee members are replaced annually. New members are selected on the basis of consultation with federal, provincial and private sector contacts. Member selection criteria includes an emphasis on SME (the majority of members are from SME's) and regional considerations. These criteria will be reviewed to ensure that criteria expressed by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade are taken into consideration.

As an existing mechanism for independent review, the advisory committees on international trade benefit from already having a system in place for financing their activities.

21. The Committee recommends that this review be guided by the following