

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

By Anna
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For those among us who have not yet seen the *International Business Development Review* (IBDR), it is a must read. Last year, Minister MacLaren commissioned a private sector committee led by L.R. (Red) Wilson, a former Trade Commissioner and now Chairman, President, and CEO of BCE Inc., to "review the federal government's international business development programs and services". The IBDR is their report. The Report, which MINT announced at the TCS National Conference (see p 1), makes a number of recommendations which, if implemented, would result in cost savings of \$55 million for the Department, and \$115 million, across the government.

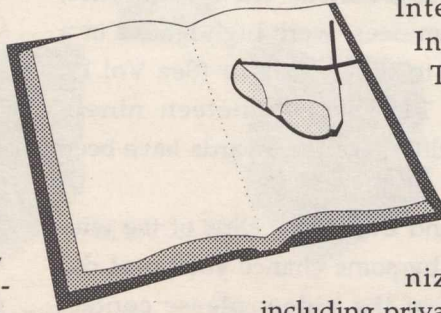
In examining the programs and services, the IBDR observes, "clearly, from a business perspective, the most valuable international business development service is that being performed overseas". Focussing on the TCS, the IBDR recommends that the government "continue to support a strong Trade Commissioner Service overseas". In summary, it recommends that:

"The Trade Commissioner Service, while recognized as an essential compo-

nent of the government's international business development support, must strengthen its ability to respond to rapid changes in the international environment. To address this need, we recommend that all trade officers receive more training in priority areas. In addition, more short-term executive exchanges could be arranged between the private sector, other organizations and the Trade Commissioner Service, and more officers placed in key positions in International Financial Institutions. As well, Trade Commissioners should be encouraged to lengthen their postings. We examined alternative forms of organizing the service, including privatization, and concluded that current arrangements should be continued."

Minister MacLaren is committed to putting as many of the IBDR recommendations as possible into practice by the start of the next fiscal year, and headquarters staff are now proceeding with an impact analysis of the recommendations as a preliminary step to mapping out an implementation plan.

The full text of the IBDR is available on SIGNET in *Corporate Applications* under "Articles". If you do not have access to Articles, and would like a copy of the IBDR, please contact TOO.



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