

❑ Resolving trade irritants and barriers

Continuing to expand the trade and investment relationship with the United States will be critical, as will ensuring the integrity of the NAFTA. Challenges will include managing disputes in the agricultural and agri-food, cultural and forestry sectors, as well as an unpredictable stream of trade remedy cases involving Canadian interests. Canada will deploy either WTO or NAFTA dispute settlement procedures, as appropriate, to defend its interests against protectionist actions and unilateral trade measures taken by the U.S. and other trading partners. We will continue to defend Canadian programs against challenges. The Canadian government will require vigilance as the U.S. continues to enact legislation with extraterritorial application, and apply trade sanctions to support its foreign policy objectives.

3.2.2 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

The performance measurement strategy for strengthening market access is presented in Annex 1.

3.3 EXPORT CAPABILITY AND PREPAREDNESS

The government's products and services to prepare and inform exporters are designed to:

- raise awareness of global market opportunities and promote exports as a growth option;
- provide export-preparedness training to meet the needs of potential exporters;
- align TCI services with the needs of individual firms;
- customize self-help tools and Internet-based information sources with the provinces, linked through TCI's *ExportSource* web site.

TCI's domestic services involve many partners from federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments, as well as the private sector. A federal/provincial Assistant Deputy Minister task force was formed in 1998 to undertake, in part, an analysis of existing exporter development services and to identify gaps, overlaps and best practices. Under the leadership of Industry Canada's International Trade Centres, input is being obtained from the Regional Trade Networks in each province.

Consensus has been reached on five broad service areas to be provided to the export community by the TCI network: General Information, Skills Development, Export Counselling, Market Entry Support and Trade Financing. As a priority, core services were defined for Skills Development (Export Preparation Guides, Export Skills Training, Preparation for U.S. Markets, and Preparation for Other Markets) and Export Counselling (Export-Preparedness Assessment, Export Plan Development, and Export Plan Implementation). Action Plans have been developed by Federal/Provincial working groups to implement these core services.



Export advice for potential and existing exporters is available from many sources of government. Because of their large SME client base, the federal regional development agencies – Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions Agency (CED) and Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) – as well as the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor), and other TCI partners, are ideally positioned to contribute significantly to developing and delivering export capability and preparedness services.