

▶▶ **Database Support Must Be Addressed**

The difficulty being experienced with the implementation of the WIN database system at some posts was addressed by both the industry and post staff. Teething problems with the software and the inability of the system to effectively manipulate data were seen as very high barriers to getting the system operational. With only one exception, post staff seem to have lost the motivation to use the system. If this issue cannot be addressed expeditiously, the WIN system will never function to the level of expectation demanded by the industry.

▶▶ **Staff is Functioning in a Partial Vacuum**

It is apparent that more intra-organizational communication is needed throughout the posts in the U.S. if they are to work as a focused team. While staff at individual posts work closely together, there is limited exchange between posts. At the same time, post officers expressed a need for more information on and involvement with what is happening within the tourism industry in Canada both from a public and private sector perspective.

More important, however, is the apparent communications vacuum between the industry (especially Canadian-based) and the posts. Industry representatives expressed extreme frustration in this area; they were convinced that the posts had a great deal of current market intelligence to share but it was not being communicated effectively. Post officers expressed a similar degree of frustration about the industry's ability to provide new product information and materials in a timely manner.

## THE COMPETITION

While in the United States, the Review Team took the opportunity to meet with competitive tourism bureaux including those of Australia, Great Britain and New York State.

▶▶ **The Competition Functions to A Very Clear Strategy**

In all three instances, the competition has developed a clearly-defined, well articulated and overt strategy covering a period of between three and five years. From those strategies, annual workplans have been developed which form the "bible" in terms of what is to

be done and how. Similar to EAITC post staff, tourism bureau representatives have the flexibility to negotiate local cooperative ventures with the industry as long as they conform to the objectives of the workplan.

▶▶ **Cooperative Ventures Are the Basis of All Activities**

In the case of Australia and Great Britain, no activities are undertaken of any kind unless they have the direct support and financial backing of the industry. In fact, both countries require their tourism managers to meet financial leverage targets in terms of resources from the industry. In both cases, the financial contribution from the industry exceeds 60% of total operational budgets, and many of their activities (eg: their national catalogues which are centrally controlled) are entirely self-funded.

▶▶ **The Competition Stresses Industry Education**

Both Australia and Britain stress events designed to educate the retail trade rather than activities to promote an image. They both charge for trade seminars and provide the agents attending with value-added information. At the same time, both service the consumer direct and monitor interest and conversions through coupons, telemarketing and 1-800 numbers.

Both countries also sell their databases and lists to the industry on a scale basis, depending upon the size of the business and the number of names required from specific lists. Australia indicated it could qualify its prospect lists by 52 separate indicators.

▶▶ **Tourism Managers Have Direct Access to Head Office**

Both Australian and British representatives indicate that they have direct access to their program managers at home, are actively involved in the development of strategic directions and workplans and undertake a continual two-way exchange of commercial and market intelligence.