SECTION A - OVERVIEW

Analytical framework
To determine DFAIT's total work force, we broke employees down into two separate groups – Canada-based staff (CBS) and locally engaged staff (LES). We looked at a number of variables for each of these groups, particularly whether Canada-based staff were rotational or non-rotational, as well as gender, type of position (indeterminate or term of three months or more), occupational category and occupational group and level. Wherever possible, comparisons were made with the Department's demographic data at March 31, 2002 and with the data for the public service as a whole.

The scope of our analysis of LES was limited by a lack of information. Moreover, in some cases, since the analysis was done from the perspective of a comparison with the rest of the public service, we could not include the LES. We compared DFAIT with the rest of the public service using variables for which there are reliable data, for example breakdown by gender, percentages of employees by first official language, and so on.

We analyzed the progress made in the last year with respect to increasing the representation of the employment equity designated groups, by determining their representation within the Department and comparing it with External Labour Market Availability (ELMA).

In order to understand how the work force is changing, we analyzed employee movement (mobility), a key characteristic of any work force. Departures for retirement as well as for other reasons (hires, promotions, assignments, secondments and acting appointments), were the key parameters used for our analysis of the changes in the Department's work force. One section was devoted to the outlook for succession planning based on age groups and employees' number of years of service. In addition, we determined the number of employees who will become eligible for retirement in the next 10 years on the basis of their age and years of service. The report also contains other indicators of DFAIT's organizational health, such as data on training, the rate of absenteeism and the remedies used in the case of labour relations problems.

Source of the data
The data used were obtained from various sources. Most are from the Department's Human Resources Management System (PeopleSoft). These data relate to CBS and LES strengths, employee movement, departures, hires, assignments, secondments, promotions and acting appointments. Appropriately, we attached a great deal of importance to the quality of the data, carrying out a number of checks and tests to ensure that they were reliable. The updating of the PeopleSoft database before the data were retrieved created some inconsistencies in relation to the 2002 data, so this was taken into account in our descriptive analysis.

Data processing
The data were processed using programs developed for the March 2002 Organizational Health Report, which were reviewed and adjusted to meet the new requirements for 2003. The data from PeopleSoft were transferred into an SAS program, the most appropriate statistical data processing tool for a large quantity of data. Finally, the results were transferred onto Excel tables for analysis purposes.