

Heads of Post will generally come from the Executive level of the foreign service. However, because interchange with the domestic service will be facilitated, it will be possible when necessary to go outside the foreign service and indeed the government to get the best individuals to fill particular positions. Also, as a consequence of easier interchange between the two services, Heads of Post will earlier in their careers have had the opportunity to gain more varied experience than would be possible through just foreign service. Even within the foreign service, Heads of Post would have had more exposure, through assignments in various streams, to a wide range of foreign service activities.

The managerial role of Heads of Posts under a consolidated foreign service will become more challenging, but at the same time their accountability to the various foreign interest departments will become more real. At present, Heads of Posts are held accountable to the deputy heads of the various foreign interests departments for the management of programmes at posts, but because the officers who are responsible for the delivery of these programmes have a primary relationship to their own departments, Heads of Posts cannot be said to be in full control and, therefore, the extent to which they can be held accountable for programme management is open to question. Under the proposed system this will no longer be the case.