

To date, several banks have indicated an interest in pursuing an agreement on an SME Risk-Sharing Framework. This represents significant progress in the process of increasing export financing support. Discussions on a General Risk-Sharing Framework are continuing.

For information on these initiatives and EDC programs in general, please contact your local EDC office listed in Annex II.

Bank Initiatives

Banks and financial institutions have been adopting numerous internal measures to increase awareness of exporting and to enhance financial support to exporters. Substantial resources are being committed to training and the publication of educational materials for both bankers and customers.

In terms of operating capital, those banks/financial institutions with a corporate policy which treat U.S. and Canadian accounts receivable in the same fashion, have re-emphasized this policy with their operational bankers.

As well, the banks and Caisse Desjardins have been most responsive to working with Government on various initiatives, such as the development of the *Road Map to Exporting and Export Finance*.

Finally, agreement on the EDC/Bank SME Risk Sharing Framework is a milestone in export finance support.

The foregoing represents a degree of cooperation never before seen for the benefit of the SME exporter. This cooperative approach is precisely the kind needed to mobilize Canada's export potential, and in particular, the potential of SMEs.

For further information, please contact one of the financial institutions listed in Annex III.