

importance not only for the trading house community but for all Canadian exporters.

The Task Force would like to refer the Government to three examples of such systems developed abroad and used successfully by trading houses. A brief description of each of them is provided below.

Trade Opportunities Program (T.O.P.):

T.O.P. is produced by the U.S. Department of Commerce for American subscribers only. The system receives an average of 70 trade enquiries per day from commercial attachés in 150 posts and covers all manufactured and fisheries products. Distribution of the data is done in two ways: first, by daily computerized direct mail to 6000 subscribers on a preselected basis and a summary weekly bulletin to 2000 subscribers; second, dissemination through commercial electronic transmission. The user has direct access by terminal to the Dialog System and selects the data desired by commodity and type of trade opportunity. Charges for these services are minimal.

Trade Opportunity Referral Service (T.O.R.S.) and Export Briefs:

These are produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for American subscribers. T.O.R.S. covers 350 agricultural products. Like T.O.P., dissemination is done by daily computerized mail to 1500 subscribers and to an equal number on a weekly basis. The commercial electronic dissemination is done through the AGNET System of the University of Nebraska. Data are sent electronically from USDA to the AGNET system daily. It is available on the same day as received in Washington, which is two to five days before mail delivery of trade leads and 10 days before the Export Briefs publication. Again charges are minimal based on a complex formula that works out to approximately U.S. \$4.00 per week plus telecommunication costs.

Export Intelligence Service (E.I.S.):

E.I.S. is produced by the British Overseas Trade Board for British users and receives 150 trade leads per day from trade commissioners in 145 posts and covers all commodities. Daily E.I.S. listing is sent by computerized direct mail to 1000 subscribers. The subscriber receives only leads in pre-selected sectors or products. Time lapse between receipt in London to arrival at subscriber is one to two days thanks to a very efficient mailing system. Charges for the service are £500 per year for total coverage, less for only selected commodities.

In order to compete more effectively with other exporting nations, Canada must develop a timely and reliable trade opportunities information system available to all exporters including trading houses. The Task Force therefore recommends that:

Recommendation 11

The Department of External Affairs undertake to put in place without delay a world class Trade Opportunity Information System.

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION (DRIE)

In its survey of the two departments most concerned with the promotion and expansion of Canadian exports, the Task Force noted that there were both overlapping and complementary activities in DRIE and External Affairs. In the earlier section of this report on External Affairs, the Task Force dealt with government support activities relating to foreign markets (e.g., PEMD, PPP and Posts abroad). In this section, the focus of recommendations will be on services and programs related to industry in Canada,

including the trading house sector, but will also comment on functions shared with External Affairs related to such activities as Trade Fairs and Missions.

The DRIE regional offices, particularly those in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, where most of Canada's trading houses are located, are the first contact points for trading houses as far as such functions as sourcing information, PEMD assistance and participation in Fairs and Missions are concerned. It is the Task Force's impression that regional offices carry out their responsibilities to trading houses in a workman-like fashion although the resources allocated to trading houses are largely taken up dealing with PEMD applications.

The Service Industries Branch has maintained a focal point within the DRIE Ottawa structure to collect information on the Canadian trading house sector, and to deal with other federal departments, agencies and national trade associations to promote the interests of the trading house sector and their most effective use. Among other things, the Branch has been responsible for publishing the Directory of Canadian Trading Houses. From the perspective of the Task Force, this Branch has maintained an active role with limited resources to improve the awareness of the trading house sector both with government departments and the private sector.

The third group of direct significance in the DRIE organization are the industry sector branches whose responsibilities include the promotion of exports in their sectors. While the situation varies from branch to branch, it is the Task Force's observation that these Industry Sector Branches give a low priority to supporting and assisting reputable trading houses dealing in products within their respective sectors.

With respect to the above activities, the Task Force recommends that:

Recommendation 12

The government examine the resources of the regional offices of the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion devoted to assistance and support of the trading house sector to ensure that they are adequate to cover the needs of this sector given its importance.

In general, the Task Force recommends that:

Recommendation 13

The government establish a highly visible focal point within the appropriate Department(s) with specialized expertise on the Canadian trading house sector to be responsible for promoting the sector both domestically and internationally.

This group should be responsible for providing information on trading houses to industry and all government departments and agencies including industry sector branches and trade posts abroad in order to co-ordinate the government's export promotion program relating to trading houses. It should oversee the annual updating of the Directory of Canadian Trading Houses by the Business Opportunities Sourcing System until the recommended association of trading houses can assume the production of its own directory.

STATE TRADING AGENCIES

Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC)

The CCC is mandated by the government to contribute to the expansion of trade between Canada and other countries. This broad mandate is restricted to government-to-government activities. It is CCC's stated policy not to compete with the private sector.