
V. *YOUR BUSINESS VISIT TO CUBA*

Advise and Consult the Cuban Trade Commissioner and/or Galax Inc.

Canadian exporters wishing to visit Cuba should contact the office of the Cuban Trade Commission and/or Galax Inc., before making firm plans. These Montreal-based offices play a key role in all Cuban purchases in Canada and will be able to advise you whether a business visit will be worthwhile. If you are already in contact with Galax Inc., your visit to Cuba can be organized directly by this organization, thus eliminating the need for you to contact the Cuban Trade Commission. Galax will contact the appropriate empresas in Havana to ensure that all aspects of your visit to Cuba (including hotel reservations, airport meet, internal transportation, schedule of meetings and departure arrangements) are well in hand. You should also advise the Commercial Division of the Canadian Embassy, Havana, of your travel plans and the objectives of your visit. The Commercial Division may be able to assist you in better communicating your specific business interests to the empresas and can also monitor and report on preparations being made by the Cubans for your visit.

Why Should You Go to Cuba?

Under a centralized, state-controlled purchasing system, there tend to be several administrative and working levels between the Cuban end user and the Canadian supplier. For example, an end user experiencing operating difficulties in the proper use of a Canadian product may register the complaint with his factory manager. This request may then go to the regional authority responsible for that particular industry who, in turn, will pass it on to the central ministry or industry authority in Havana. Contact may then be made with the Havana-based empresa responsible for the merchandise, who then may contact the Cuban Trade Office and/or Galax Inc. The time involved in processing such requests, together with the risk of distortion in communication that emerge from this process, may lead to confusion and inaccurate information.

As a result of these factors, any Canadian exporter who receives an indication from Galax, the Cuban Trade Commission in Montreal or the Commercial Division of the