

OBJECTIVES:

In an increasingly complex environment, with more Federal government departments involved in international issues, there is growing emphasis on a whole of government approach to our international relations. Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC) /International Trade Canada (ITCan) have a global network of overseas missions with unique access to information and contacts in other governments, the private sector, and other specialised institutions. With regards to providing reporting to OGDs, many *already* receive substantial reporting from our departments. This is especially the case for specialised divisions dealing in areas of trade, environmental and other policy areas that touch upon the interests of a number of government departments. As well, some OGDs (Agriculture, Heritage, etc.) also already have their own overseas representation in some of the larger missions. Although a significant amount of Departmental reporting is shared with such departments as DND, CIDA, and CIC, these departments also have, to varying degrees, representation in overseas missions. In contrast, this pilot project focussed on other government departments that are involved in international issues but do not have overseas representatives in Canadian missions. As well, some of these departments receive few, if any, form of regular reporting from FAC and ITCan.

BACKGROUND:

This pilot project was developed in the context of geographics and missions developing annual “reporting contracts.” These were developed to bring greater focus to the reporting generated by its missions, the Southeast Asia Division (PSE) of the Asia-Pacific Branch. The model contracts outline specific types of reports and reporting themes that the geographic headquarters division expect to receive during the year. The contracts were established to provide the missions with clear expectations of what headquarters believes is of value in reporting. This is especially important given that missions appreciate constructive feedback on their reporting. One of the frequent complaints by posts is that they are not clear who in Ottawa is reading their reports. On the other side of the coin, headquarters divisions may wonder why they receive certain reports from missions. The annual reporting contracts attempt to provide better two-way communication which will help the post concentrate its reporting resources on those subjects that have an audience and an impact.

As well, resources, both in terms of personnel and time at missions and headquarters are limited. Reporting is one of many functions undertaken by missions, and time spent on