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REGIONALIZATION AND REGIONAL SERVICE CENTRES

The International Platform Branch is responsible for providing common services in missions. Common services include property, material, human resources, and financial management, as well as IM/IT and contracting and procurement. Also included are general administrative services: transportation, diplomatic mail, reception and cleaning services.

In recent years, the IPB has created two Regional Services Centres (RSCs) to provide management-level support to missions within their respective regions. The Centre in Washington D.C. (RSCEUS), supports common-services programs at missions in the United States; the United Kingdom's Thames Valley Centre (RSCEMA), just outside of London, fulfills the same role for missions in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

In addition to the above-mentioned services, the RSCs provide overall advice and guidance; they play an important coordinating role for the Common-services programs in their regional missions. RSCs were instrumental in coordinating and implementing many DFATD initiatives related to the 2012 Economic

Action Plan, such as updating processes, closing missions, and reducing resources and mission-vehicle fleets. RSCEMA also manages the rent-ceiling initiative on behalf of all missions within the Network.

More recently, to modernize service delivery, the IPB has consolidated transactional financial functions into a select group of missions, referred to as Common Service Delivery Points (CSDPs). CSDPs provide services to other missions in particular regions, enabling the IPB to standardize service delivery, mitigate the risks associated with decentralized operations and leverage new technologies, such as virtual services.

In the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific, where RSCs do not exist, CSDPs will deliver human resources, contracting and procurement services. The management level support continues to be delivered from Ottawa.

RSCs and CSDPs enable the IPB to reduce the overall cost of services. The economies of scale generated by centralized service delivery, together with the efficiencies gained by leveraging new technologies, also increase the Network's capacity.