

- o on-line research service to provide access to literature and statistical data from a variety of data bases;
- o a newspaper clipping service; and
- o acquisitions and cataloguing support for library materials both at home and abroad.

As a special library, the Library of the Department of External Affairs provides a unique dimension of service. The Library serves a number of different clients with different information needs. Further, these needs have changed over the years as the mandate and scope of operations of the Department have changed. As a provider of services, this poses a number of problems to management of the Library. For example, how does management in the Library identify the unique or changing information requirements of the new/different information users? What information requirements will be generated in the future?

Management in the Library considers that a Most Efficient Organization study provides an ideal opportunity to examine the adequacy of existing services and to review alternatives for service delivery. In common with many service delivery functions in other organizations, any library must justify the level of resources in relation to the level of services provided. All too often, in periods of resource scarcity, it is the service functions like a special library which bear the brunt of cuts. In many instances these cuts are imposed arbitrarily with little real regard for the value of the service to the organization. The MEO study provides an opportunity to examine alternative service delivery mechanisms.

It is interesting to note that the Library of the Department of External Affairs is not alone in reviewing service delivery options. The Council of Federal Libraries, under the co-ordination of the Federal Libraries Liaison Office of the National Library of Canada, arranged a workshop in October 1988, dedicated to the topic - Private Enterprise Philosophy of Federal Libraries. This seminar was organized under the general mandate of the Council to assist federal libraries in exchanging ideas on how to achieve a greater degree of efficiency and effectiveness.

### 2.2.1 Issues Raised

The study considered several issues:

- (a) The definition of users and the users' expectations of service:
  - Who has used the service in the past?
  - What are the trends in usage by service and by user?
- (b) An analysis of the services:
  - Are there areas of need which appear to be "under serviced", or conversely, are there areas of need which are "over serviced"?