

Trade Commissioner Service *Client Feedback Line*

The Trade Commissioner Service is committed to providing a high quality, accessible and responsive service to the Canadian business community. However, if a client is dissatisfied because (s)he feels their request for service was not properly dealt with, or that one of our services is not in keeping with our standards, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade will listen and respond to clients' views. Establishing a feedback line is a constructive way to ensure that the Trade Commissioner Service works as effectively as possible and that it is recognized as being open to comments from the outside. The feedback line also collects client compliments and suggestions which will be integrated annually with client survey results.

How does the Feedback Line operate?

A 1-888 customer service line comes directly to the Overseas Operations Division (TCS) at headquarters. The complaint/comment/inquiry is received by an officer in TCS who determines whether or not the call pertains to the Trade Commissioner Service. If it doesn't, it will be redirected to the appropriate Team Canada Inc partner. Otherwise, the officer will initiate a series of questions to probe for relevant details and will input the information into a tracking system.

Does TCS respond on my behalf?

Do I participate in the process?

If a complaint is made directly to headquarters and goes beyond the initial procedure, TCS will contact the post related to the complaint. The post will be asked to provide its understanding of the facts and circumstances, and if necessary, to prepare a response. TCS will still answer under its own name but input from post and geographic bureaus will ensure that its side of the story is known before replying.

What if the client is still not satisfied?

If clients have pursued their complaints through the prescribed mechanism and still remain dissatisfied, we can expect some to write directly to the Minister or to their MP. Normally, responses to the client complaint would be delegated to TCS to answer on behalf of the Minister, with a copy sent to the post and to the appropriate geographic bureau.

How many and what types of calls have been received ?

Since October, 1998, over 150 calls have been received, ranging from the most basic information requests to very real comments, positive and negative, on our services. Examples of common complaints are: difficulty in reaching government officials at headquarters and/or at posts; lack of response to routine requests; and dissatisfaction with lists of contacts provided by post. TCS also collects and compiles written complaints and compliments. If you receive any written client feedback please copy the PSU.

How has the department publicized the 1-888 Feedback Line?

Initially, the 1-888 feedback telephone number, with an invitation to send comments or suggestions, was printed on the TCS Service Brochure for business clients. Over 100,000 copies of the brochure have been distributed to the Canadian business community through CanadExport, industry associations, direct mail-outs and regional trade network offices. The feedback line is also advertised in the TCS listing of trade offices abroad, and on various trade-related Web site. We will continue to market its availability.

Do we know if our clients are satisfied with the 1-888 service?

Approximately 80 percent of calls have been settled successfully. Of those calls, 15 percent have taken the time to express their satisfaction in writing.

1-888-306-9991

