



communiqué

No:
No.: 50

DIFFUSION: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
RELEASE: MARCH 30, 1982

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION REPORT ON CONDITIONS OF FOREIGN SERVICE

Following the presentation of the Royal Commission Report on Conditions of Foreign Service to the government in mid-December, 1981, the Prime Minister invited the Secretary of State for External Affairs to act as lead Minister for the review of the Report's recommendations. This process is well underway. A senior official has been appointed departmental co-ordinator and working groups under his chairmanship are proceeding with a careful examination of the recommendations and options in related groupings, including health, education, spouses, recreation, accommodation, security and personal safety.

The decision of the government to reorganize the department as part of an overall economic strategy, incorporating the trade functions of the former Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce into the Department responds to a principal recommendation in the Report. This decision also completed the consolidation process, setting the foundation for the more effective delivery of government programmes abroad. The new organizational structure of the Department moreover reflects senior management's commitment to the importance of personnel management, which the Commission identified as a high priority.

The broader mandate of the Department will permit employees to be offered a greater variety of assignments, and a study is underway on how to do this while ensuring that employees retain a high degree of specialized professional skills as suggested by the Commission. Moreover, the establishment of the administrative service officer category in the foreign service, to be staffed significantly through promotions of rotational support staff, will ensure that they have open to them expanded career opportunities. The Commission attaches high priority to this objective.