

development of a virtual campus. Built on an Internet platform, the virtual campus will be available to DFAIT's employees through the department's Intranet. It will be used initially to support major training blitzes and to provide staff abroad with learning opportunities previously available only at headquarters.

3. COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT AND APPRAISALS

DFAIT operates an appointment-to-level system for its rotational staff, which uses criteria or competencies against which to measure employees for recruitment, appointment and especially promotion. In DFAIT's pooling system, we cannot use position criteria against which to measure employees, so competency profiles for various levels have been developed. These competencies have been used both for recruitment and in the appraisals used for the annual promotion boards. However, these same competencies are not extensively used when considering developmental plans for employees or for assignments. DFAIT will soon launch a pilot project to develop an integrated and transparent human resources management system that is intended to help succession planning, match recruitment with future needs and align recruitment with strategic and business plans. It should also allow employees to be more involved in planning their careers, and should introduce a simpler, less ambiguous appraisal system.

4. REMUNERATION

A salary survey commissioned by this department confirmed that:

a) hiring salaries were lower than

private-sector salaries for equal qualifications;

b) time to reach the working level was significantly longer for Foreign Service (FS) officers than for their peers in other classifications; and

c) for certain specializations (e.g. lawyers, economists, difficult language speakers, trade policy officers) the rates were low at the top end of the FS scale.

While FS salaries may always lag behind what private-sector companies can offer, it is believed that new initiatives being considered, outlined below, may help to reduce the disparity.

The Foreign Service Development Program (FSDP) is modelled on an existing program that we hope to adopt for our own recruitment and training. The structure of the program will go some way toward addressing the problems of salaries for FS1s (with a significant salary gain under the FSDP over the same five-year period under the existing system) and with promotions to the next level at the end of a five-year development period, given all the parameters are met. The specifics of adopting this program are currently the subject of negotiations between management and the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers (PAFSO).

The Universal Classification Standard (UCS) should alleviate the problem of inter-classification comparisons (e.g. FS2 versus CO3) if the work is judged comparable, in that the aim of UCS is to reward work of equal value across employee groups with equal pay scales. What the impact on FS salaries will be is hard to predict, but we are hopeful

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