

relationships with Category C will have to be taken into account.

General Findings

22. Many of the findings will be intuitively known to the majority of members of the Department, yet may still appear dramatic in their extent and implications.
23. By way of analogy, an impression is conveyed to one standing back to gain perspective that in terms of potential capacity the Department seems to be firing on only six of its eight cylinders. Destinations are usually reached, but response is often somewhat rough, and there is always the threat of not starting. This is not meant to imply that gross inefficiencies exist in the substantive work but rather that the information system is proving to be inadequate to support some of the Departmental mandates and requirements. An unwarranted burden is thus placed upon the major asset of the Department, the foreign service staff. In earlier days, though much was expected of the foreign service group it was also possible to achieve much, the depth, breadth and complexity of Canadian interests to be coped with being far less than today. Much is still expected, but the only additional aids given today's foreign service officer to survive in meeting the complexities of daily problems are photocopying machines and a modern communications network.
24. The latter may be less of a blessing than appears at first sight since it generally speeds up the impingement of substantive problems and increases the demands made upon desk officers. Inevitably the daily round becomes more and more operational, leaving diminishing time for more reflective work to assist in the task of policy formulation of which the operational activities are a manifestation. There is a further disincentive to examining issues in depth. As the information base of subject files increases day by day, to some officers it will appear that a large featureless plain is being created with the only landmarks being within the memory and experience of individual desk officers. With rotation these landmarks tend to be those very close to the near edge of the plain. Only a very inadequate map exists -- the Records Classification Guide -- and for the few who resort to it, there is little to show how it should be oriented.
25. An important mandate recently reaffirmed relates to the coordination role of the Department in the conduct of international relations. The task of coordinating the whole range of Canada/U.S. relations, for example, will require dynamic record-keeping of current and planned activities of concern to many Departments, as well as Provincial authorities. No support or procedures exist at present for carrying out such a task. Examples were cited where statements made by Canadian officials during visits abroad have resulted in some degree of policy embarrassment, or the upsetting of carefully nurtured bilateral relations in specific areas. Similarly, international activities being carried out by two different Departments have been discovered to be at cross-purposes. On occasion lack of timely key information has hampered international negotiations.
26. The foreign affairs initiative remains with the Department but 'competition' from other Departments and government agencies and the provinces is increasing in certain areas as more and more they perceive their programmes and interests acquiring international dimensions. To cope with this problem