

7. Conclusions

The results from the TCS 2003 Employee Survey show that overall satisfaction with the Department as a place to work has improved slightly and there have been improvements in satisfaction on a number of the main employee issues. The positive message of these improvements is offset however by the fact that employees have expressed a higher level of dissatisfaction with many issues. In addition, the level of satisfaction continues to be inconsistent across the various employee groups. Although there have been improvements noted by FS, this group remains less satisfied than others. Since this group represents the largest group of CBS in DFAIT's Trade Commissioner Service, their improving satisfaction level has obviously had an influence on the overall employee satisfaction. Conversely, their dissatisfaction with the Promotion, Recruitment and Assignment processes continues to keep these respective satisfaction scores low. Improvements to the Work Environment were noted as was the overall leadership of the Department.

The overall results may be viewed positively, but there remain several areas in which satisfaction levels need to be improved, and many of these areas were also mentioned by employees in the 2000 survey. Employees need to feel that their feedback is being acted upon or they will be reluctant to spend the time in providing this important feedback. By reiterating in 2003 what they would like to see addressed, employees are clearly stating where they would like to see energy and effort expended in the next 12 to 18 months. The top three areas are highlighted below.

- ▣ **Communications** – although some improvements in communications were noted, the overall satisfaction score decreased. Employees who are dissatisfied are very dissatisfied and this seems to be affecting the average score. Employees continue to reiterate the problems in this area and since this is the second most important determinant of overall satisfaction, improvements need to be made. This will be a challenge as many of the employees are expressing dissatisfaction with communications within the Department and are not necessarily referring to IBD communications. An example is the problem with the communication of human resources policies.
- ▣ **Appraisal, Recruitment, Assignment and Promotion processes** – this covers a broad range of issues however the low satisfaction scores for all components present much room for improvement. This is particularly the case since almost all experienced a decrease in satisfaction since the 2000 survey. It seems that any improvements in the process since the 2000 survey have not been sufficient to address the low satisfaction with these items and additional changes are required. There are a number of reasons for the low satisfaction with these items but the importance of timely communication of performance objectives to appraisals is clear and should