

governments for release of information and requests from foreign governments for the declassification of information by the Canadian government.

The total of requests and consultations completed is about 10% less than last year (although numerical statistics do not tell the whole story as requests can vary in size and complexity). This modest decrease follows a quantum increase last year. When the two years are averaged, the department continues to conform to the government-wide pattern identified by the Information Commissioner of a 10% yearly increase. The challenge of responding to this steady increase with no increase in resources, while maintaining service standards, continues.

Complaints

Forty-five complaints were received during the year by the two Commissioners' Offices in addition to 8 outstanding at the beginning of the year. Of 26 investigations completed, 7 were judged to be not substantiated and 4 were discontinued. Twenty-seven complaints were still under investigation at the end of the year.

This represents an increase in complaints over last year (which was probably abnormally low) but the total number remains relatively low and we are satisfied that it does not signal any overall decline in service standards.

Other responsibilities

In addition to the management of Access and Privacy requests, the Coordinator's Office provides advice and guidance to departmental units on compliance with the legislation. Briefings on Access to Information and Privacy were given, inter alia to service centre personnel, consular officers, and Ministers' offices. In addition, the Coordinator developed and presented tailored ATIP course modules to new officers as part of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute training program for recruits in the political/economic, commercial/economic, and consular/administrative streams. The Coordinator is the departmental point of contact for the Registration of Information Collection and Public Opinion Research, (although the function is carried out in the Communications Bureau). The department reports new requests on a daily basis to the Coordination of Access to Information Requests (CAIR) system and consults it to stay abreast of the range of requests being processed across government. The department contributes financially to the ATIP tracking system maintenance and participates in related interdepartmental consultations.

Screening program

The Coordinator's Office is responsible for screening records for transfer to the National Archives. The Coordinator directs a team of retired senior foreign service officers who review records and determine whether they may be opened for public examination. This is a unique program that has helped to provide access for researchers to greater volumes of information concerning Canada's conduct of international relations. This year we completed a