The Cultural Affairs Division is responsible for the conduct of cultural relations between Canada and other countries as far as these contacts occur through intergovernmental channels. It also maintains liaison with other agencies, both official and private, with a view to making Canada better known through its cultural and educational activities. It has specific responsibility for the governmental aspects of Canada's membership in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and provides departmental liaison with the Canadian National Commission for UNESCO. The division's duties include primary responsibility for negotiating and administering cultural programs with other countries and developing cultural and academic exchanges with them (such as scholarship awards, invitations to scholars and artists, tours by performing arts groups and art exhibitions). It performs a liaison function in matters of education with international implications, and is responsible for co-ordinating arrangements for Canadian participation in international education conferences and in the work of the education committees of the OECD, UNESCO and the Commonwealth Secretariat. It arranges for Canadian participation in cultural events outside Canada, such as festivals of the arts and crafts, selected international exhibitions and competitions, and participation by foreign artists and cultural personalities in similar events in Canada. It helps keep Canadian cultural organizations informed of cultural activities outside the country and provides general assistance to Canadian students, artists and professors going abroad. It has a book-presentation program that arranges donations of Canadian books to libraries abroad, and it handles questions arising from international agreements on intellectual property and copyright.

The Information Division has two main functions: (1) to spread abroad the knowledge and understanding of Canada and of the Canadian people and (2) to provide information on Canada's external policy and the work of the Department of External Affairs to Canadians as well as citizens of other countries. The division produces a variety of publications, such as Statements and Speeches, Reference Papers, Reprints, the departmental bimonthly journal International Perspectives, Canada Weekly and several booklets and folders in English, French and a number of foreign languages. It also purchases certain Canadian publications in quantity for distribution abroad. In association with the National Film Board, the division organizes the distribution of films by Canadian posts. It co-operates with Information Canada/Expositions in the provision of display materials to posts for trade fairs and exhibitions in other countries. It is responsible for liaison between the Department and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), and for cooperation with the CBC International Service. The division has a visits program under which prominent journalists are brought to Canada.