

offices around the world for specific advice about particular markets. Each officer's electronic mail address is posted on the DFAIT Web site. On a wider scale, Canadian industry communicates regularly with Team Canada Inc partners through the Trade Team Canada Sectors (TTCS) system. In short, the Government is well acquainted with, and responsive to, the needs of Canadian SMEs.

Further, there are currently a variety of complimentary market information delivery instruments in place to help SMEs determine their market of choice, such as:

- DFAIT's Market Research Centre, which posts a large stock of market reports on the InfoExport Web site;
- CanadExport, which publishes up-to-date information bi-weekly in its print version (mailed to over 75 000 business addresses) and daily in its Web version;
- the International Business Opportunities Centre (IBOC), which provides Canadian companies with information about upcoming Requests for Proposals and calls for tender bids;
- the Industry Canada Strategis Web site;
- Web sites developed by some of the Trade Team Canada Sectors (TTCS), such as Electrical Power and Generation, in which password-protected competitive intelligence is regularly posted; and
- WIN Exports, which is a database that allows every participating Canadian company to indicate its interest in particular markets.

The Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) has an ongoing mechanism for identifying the changing needs of Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises. The SME Task Force on International Trade meets twice a year to provide advice to the Minister for International Trade on how the Government can best respond to the international business development needs of Canadian SMEs.

One of the results of this exchange with SMEs is the development of a customized electronic information service known as the Virtual Trade Commissioner. When this service is fully operational in 2002, companies will be able to access market reports, business leads, contacts, articles prepared by trade experts, and information on trade events and visits in an easy-to-use format according to particular market priorities. The plan is to include information on EU policies and practices relevant to market access.