

DIVISION

Diplomatic Corps Services (XDC)

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Acts as the link or interface between the Government of Canada (not only the Department) and the foreign community in Canada: 122 resident embassies, 510 consulates, over 20 executive secretariats of international organizations, and some 8200 individuals under Protocol jurisdiction. It also oversees and issues authorizations for stays in Canada for those entitled to some form of international protection (Vienna Conventions).
- Administers the privileges and immunities granted to all individuals and entities concerned. It is also responsible for implementing and ensuring compliance with Canada's international obligations with regard to the diplomatic community. It is often called upon to explain to provinces and courts that diplomatic and consular immunity and privileges are based in Canadian law. It also mediates with other federal government departments and with the provinces and municipalities. In this regard, XDC must often act as judge and jury to discretely resolve legal and judicial disputes with local authorities. XDC enforces Canadian laws, making the diplomatic community understand that, although not subject to Canadian law and the Canadian judicial system, it must make it a point of honour to comply with local laws and statutory norms.
- Oversees and manages the accreditation process for foreign heads of mission in Canada and for our heads of mission abroad. It also manages most aspects of State Ceremonial pertaining to the participation of the Diplomatic Corps as well as state visits.
- Manages relations with provincial Protocol offices, especially in relation to State occasions in Quebec. Because of the federal-provincial component of its mandate, XDC is involved in the Interdepartmental Group on Federal-Provincial Relations chaired by the Senior Coordinator for Federal-Provincial Relations (CFD).

Involvement by the Minister

- The Minister hosts farewell luncheons in honour of heads of missions. Where other commitments occasionally prevent him/her from performing this function, he/she asks a Cabinet colleague to fill in. Nonetheless, the Minister's involvement effectively emphasizes the importance attached to bilateral relations.
- The Minister may wish to institute roundtable discussions with the Diplomatic Corps. The President of the Privy Council, for example, favours this approach, which has been successful over the past two years.
- The Minister invites ambassadors to take part in Canada's "Northern Tour" and is the host of the Diplomatic Forum, which is held in a different Canadian city in mid-October each year.
- Although the Prime Minister hosts a major reception at Christmas each year, the Minister may wish to host a related or similar event, as some of his/her predecessors have done.

