

DOCS
CA1
EA450
S12
EXF
v. 2
April
2001



Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Ministère des Affaires étrangères
et du Commerce international

Canada

Min. des Affaires étrangères

MAI - 2 2001
MAY

LIBRARY E A / BIBLIOTHÈQUE A E
3 5036 01029455 4

Savoir-faire

CFSI NEWSLETTER VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

ON THE INTRANET: [HTTP://INTRANET.LBP/CFSI/SAVOIR-FAIRE/SF-T-O-C-E.HTM](http://intranet.lbp/cfsi/savoir-faire/sf-t-o-c-e.htm)

Getting Ready to go Abroad

Get Ready, Get Set, Go!

*Pre-Posting Training Means
Being Prepared*

Friends and neighbours are always amazed. Long before the moving truck rolls up to the front door of a DFAIT employee and family, the questions come hard and fast. How can you like this kind of life? How do you adapt? How can you live and work in a place where they don't even speak your language? Do you really have to soak all your vegetables in disinfectant?

The answer, of course, is simple. DFAIT employees like the challenges, starting with the pre-posting period, which can be one of the most exciting times in the life of a foreign service family. The challenge of a new language, learning about a new culture, packing for a different climate, new sports activities perhaps, a new social life, all these together with learning about a new job or a new school put a little zing into the comfortable routine of Ottawa life.

What friends and neighbours are probably not aware of is the hard work that every DFAIT family puts in before going off to a mission abroad. Part of it is pre-posting training. It is geared to individual needs and gives employees and their families a vital head-start to a posting. Cultural awareness, language proficiency, work-related and spousal employment training are all essential ingredients in pre-posting preparedness. All family members are involved in getting ready to go abroad.

Pre-posting training is indispensable for a successful posting," says Guy Saint-Jacques, Director of the Assignments Division (HPF). It allows staff to acquire needed competencies which may be necessary to do the job efficiently, to upgrade or newly acquire skills in the language of the host country, to refresh their knowledge in some fields or to know more about the country where they will spend the next few years.

Pre-posting training paves the way for a new life abroad. The Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI), in conjunction with SERV, ISDT, and JPPT, offers courses geared to send people

on their way better equipped to face the inevitable work and non-work challenges that arise on every posting. Pre-posting training is an investment in the future effectiveness and happiness of staff and their families when they go abroad. So when the movers finally arrive, families feel ready for the next big step in the posting cycle.

Been There...Done That

The person you are about to replace on posting is well-placed to advise on the requirements of the job. So every year just after Christmas, CFSD asks people at posts they will vacate in the summer, just what are the requirements of the job?? Queries are made through a questionnaire, soon to be virtual to promote swift replies.

The questions are related to the work in each stream but in general, ask the incumbent: (1) what are your responsibilities at your post? (2) describe how you divide your work time and (3) what training might be best suited to the job you are doing?

This information helps CFSD advise people before they head out and offer suggestions for courses that the new incumbents may take, including information technology, one of the most popular training sessions offered.



Old hands still have lots to learn. After seven postings spanning 25 years abroad the Munro family, Scott, Elaine, and daughter Laura, are busy with pre-posting courses and have lots of reading in preparation for going to Hong Kong this summer.

Stay the Course

This year DFAIT offers 63 different pre-posting courses in addition to language training and Virtual Campus courses. There will be 147 sessions for these courses, of which 110 are SERV seminars and briefings.