

4.1 2003 Priority Action Areas

As outlined above, Priority Action Areas are items that have been determined to have a strong impact on overall satisfaction but have relatively poor satisfaction ratings. The methodology for determining areas of concern or Priority Action Areas has been in place since the 1998 survey and remains unchanged in order to facilitate comparisons over time. Upon examination, **Exhibit 7** shows a number of items that fall under this category. The items that are considered by employees to be most important (in descending order) and where employees are least satisfied are:

- ▣ Leadership from the Department
- ▣ Communications
- ▣ Morale
- ▣ Performance Appraisal System
- ▣ LES Appointment Process
- ▣ CBS Assignment Process
- ▣ CBS Promotion Process
- ▣ Salary
- ▣ Foreign Service Directives (FSDs)
- ▣ Workload
- ▣ LES Recruitment Process
- ▣ Training
- ▣ CBS Recruitment Process
- ▣ LES Promotion Process
- ▣ Post Index

All of these issues had been identified in the 2000 survey and were considered to be Priority Action Areas. The fact that these continue to be identified in this year's survey may be seen as discouraging in light of the effort that had been expended in attempting to address concerns raised by employees. It is important to keep in mind however that efforts at improving satisfaction in a specific area, such as Leadership from the Department have been noted. As well, even though the department may have been successful in achieving some increases in satisfaction levels, the item can still remain an area of concern. This results from the fact that the average satisfaction score is still less than that of overall satisfaction and the item remains strongly correlated with overall satisfaction.