

Their recommendations include:

- restricting the Program for Export Market Development and the Trade Fairs program to small and medium-sized companies;
- ensuring that private-sector participation in all government-organized outgoing trade missions are self-financed;
- selecting for special attention high technology sectors and geographical markets with major export potential;
- strengthening the ability of the Trade Commissioner Service to respond to rapid changes in the international environment, notably by providing more training to officers in priority areas, by increasing the number of short-term executive exchanges with the private sector and International Financial Institutions, and by lengthening the duration of postings.

The message that I have heard has been consistent and clear — do less but do what you already do better.

Our government has also launched a review of Canada's foreign policy and I look forward to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee which is expected to table its report in a couple of weeks.

All these recommendations will be looked at closely and I intend to take action and put into place a number of specific measures in the near future.

In the meantime, I have already taken some preliminary steps to respond to private-sector needs.

We are improving the way we collect and disseminate market intelligence and market information, using the most up to date information technologies.

We are providing greater cohesion and focus to the support role played by governments by better co-ordinating international business development activities among federal departments and the provinces; this year's International Trade Business Plan, for example, will include the input and international business activities of all provinces, as well as the 18 federal departments and agencies that are already part of the process.

In addition, in conjunction with the provinces, Industry Canada, and a number of federal agencies, we are undertaking a new initiative called "Trade Team Canada." We are looking to: enhance the shared usage and shared up-dating of our national data base of exporters; ensure the better collection, analysis