

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The study objective was to seek the best possible value for money in the delivery of library services, bearing in mind the current, accumulated knowledge and experience and quality of service, by comparing the cost of in-house (Headquarters only) services with costs of other alternative sources. However, as it became clear early in the study that there were few alternative sources of supply available that could offer similar services, the study focussed on the most efficient organization for delivery of the services decided upon by the Department.

The major activities and deliverables included in the terms of reference were:

- o A review of the current activities culminating in a preliminary analysis of these activities;
- o A deliverable in the format of "output specifications" with service levels;
- o A comparison of External Affairs library with similar "special" libraries in the federal government;
- o A determination of the most efficient organization, given the services to be provided;
- o A review of what alternative delivery mechanisms are available in the private sector, and whether these could be applied to the services required;
- o A report which sets out the current services and service levels, comparative library data, the most efficient organization for delivering the services, an assessment of alternatives and conclusions and recommendations.

2.2 BACKGROUND

The Library of the Department of External Affairs is an important resource to the members of the Department in that it represents a major collection of documents, periodicals and newspapers and other specialized information. It has developed over the years as a research library dedicated to meeting the unique information requirements of the Foreign Service.

The Library provides a comprehensive range of services including:

- o reference/research (both manual and automated);
- o lending services, including inter-library loans;
- o routing and/or distribution of periodicals, documents and newspapers;