

4. LIAISON WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The Department's extensive network of Trade Commissioners located in External Affairs and International Trade Canada headquarters, across Canada in the 10 regional International Trade Centres, and in our missions throughout the world ensures that the Canadian business community, at home and abroad, has ready access to the Department and its programs and services.

(a) International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC)

The ITAC, which was formed in early 1986, is comprised of 44 members from the business, labour, consumer, cultural, research and academic communities. It meets four times per year and concentrates its efforts on broad national issues relating to international trade access and marketing matters, with its current work program focussing on: the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) under the auspices of the GATT; the implementation of the Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement; and advice to the government on international trade development policies and programs.

Contact:

Trade Advisory Committees Secretariat
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
Telephone: (613) 995-7667

(b) Sector Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGIT)

The SAGIT system comprises 13 sector-specific groups which meet 3-4 times per year. The SAGITs are divided along the following sector lines: agriculture, food and beverage; apparel and fur; arts and cultural industries; communication, computer equipment and services; consumer and household products; energy, chemicals and petrochemicals; financial services; fish and fish products; forest products; general services; industrial and transportation equipment; minerals and metals; and textiles, footwear and leather. These groups interact with the government to ensure that sectoral views are fully taken into consideration when the government develops international trade policies and programs.

Members of both the ITAC AND SAGITs must be Canadian citizens, and are appointed by the Minister for International Trade. Membership is broadly representative of regional, sectoral and demographic interests.

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