

purchases. Some studies have already been completed and projects identified in these systems which should yield some interim improvements pending major improvements.

The Department has already decided (subject to final Treasury Board approval) to acquire a new Headquarters computer which will accommodate these major new systems. The funds for the computer were approved in the 1985-86 MYOP but the capital cost estimates have had to be increased from \$350,000 to \$780,000 because the estimates were prepared two years ago, prior to the emergence of new requirements that have now been identified.

### 2.7.2 PRIORITY TWO: SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Several projects fall under this heading. The largest involves the redesign of the Import Permit Processing System which, if Treasury Board approves, will be located on Departmental equipment and operated by Departmental employees. At present this system is accommodated at an outside service bureau and is operated by contract personnel. The change will result in sizeable cost savings, estimated at \$1,000,000 annually, and will, in addition, give the Department a greater measure of control over the system, meaning among other things that it will be able to provide information for senior management on those Canadian imports subject to licensing.

In the Throne speech the Government announced its intention to pursue with vigour and imagination new trade opportunities in the USA, the Pacific Rim, and with Canada's traditional partners. The Department needs to take prompt action to enhance its capabilities at Headquarters and at Posts to support this policy initiative. Specifically personnel working in this area need to have access to more timely and comprehensive information on Canadian export capabilities in order to match Canadian companies with potential foreign customers. There are in existence a number of data banks in Canada, some in the Government, that could be put to good use by Canadian Posts and by Headquarters. The Department intends to study the most feasible means of doing this and funds are being included in the budget to retain a consultant in 1985 to examine requirements and to submit proposals about ways to respond to them. The full cost implications of this project must await the results of the study, but for planning purposes funds have been suggested for subsequent F/Y's to carry the project forward.

A closely related project is planned which will have as its objective improving the quality of the information the Department makes available to provincial governments, other organizations and Canadian exporters about trade opportunities abroad. This study would also identify the requirements of users and ways of meeting them. The Department's objective would be to provide Canadian organizations, especially smaller companies, with timely and complete information on export opportunities, conditions in foreign markets and the requirements for selling abroad.

A number of smaller projects are also planned for Headquarters and Posts to support specific Trade Development initiatives. These include improvements in the system supporting the Fairs and Missions program to compile and share data with the provinces on their activities. To assist the Department in analysing trends in world markets and establishing priorities for marketing activities a study will be undertaken to determine which existing data banks and economic forecasting services would meet the needs of the Trade Development Policy, Planning and Liaison Bureau and also the best means of making them available. A small project is under development to enable the Trade Development Divisions in the Asia and Pacific Branch to have access to external data banks that will meet their needs. To improve the capabilities of the four Posts in the Federal Republic of Germany to respond to the growing demands they face for information and service from both German and Canadian companies, it is intended to undertake a study of a system to enable them to develop a common base of information on the German economy and of data on German companies.