

such as the quality and timeliness of trade data and on sources, matters which are also addressed in the attached material. I urge you and your staff to attend.

5. One final word. The unfortunate fact is that trade statistics are not certain, precise numbers. There is no magic, off-the-shelf number. Trade data are best used as indicators of long term trends rather than as precise measurements of short term change. Thus, briefing material should focus on year-to-year changes and seek to avoid month-to-month data which are often subject to considerable revision and, consequently, are often quite misleading.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R.A. Kilpatrick', with a stylized, flowing script.

R. Allen Kilpatrick
Deputy Minister
International Trade