

# "Rules of the Road" or How to Avoid Slip-ups by Addressing Messages Correctly

It occurred to us at *SIGNET News* that we had not discussed the particularly important section of the document, **Electronic Mail, Standards and Procedures\*** (commonly referred to as "Rules of the Road"), that has to do with message formatting. We took for granted that everyone who sends messages — especially Action requests — knows how they should be addressed. Recently, however, several examples of narrowly avoided, potentially embarrassing, or even damaging slip-ups because of addressing errors, were brought to our attention with the request that we remind users of the "Rules."

Here, then, at a glance are a few select rules from section IV, Message Formatting, of the **Electronic Mail** document. If followed, they will ensure that

your messages (especially Action messages) are delivered to the right person or mailbox.

- 1 ICONDESK makes no distinction between "informal" and "formal" messages. All messages are official.
- 2 A message that is considered "formal" by the originator and intended for inclusion in the central records of the Department should be assigned an alphanumeric correspondence indicator.
- 3 The degree of formality could be indicated by deciding whether or not a message is sent to an individual only or to both an individual and an organizational address.

- 4 All "formal" messages should be addressed "TO" an individual (or organizational address if the individual is unknown) and "CC"d to the organizational mailbox to be used as an information copy by managers and included in the message "pack", where applicable. A copy of the message should also be sent to CATS.
- 5 All messages require at least one action addressee.

\* the document is supported by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (USS) and is available on the corporate i:/drive as I:/corpinfo/email/ruleseng.wpe

## SIGNET-C2 to be installed at Missions

The installation of SIGNET-C2 at missions will start in February. Installation of the system worldwide is expected to be completed by January 1997. SIGNET-C2 is the next phase of the Department's secure communications system, and it provides an e-mail based classified messaging system. SIGNET-C2 will replace the current telegraphic system for classified messages (SIGNET-C1 or DUCS).

From a TEMPEST SIGNET-C2 workstation, users will process their messages with a mail package similar to ICONDESK. All messages will be delivered over secure communications links to the classified mail server located at Headquarters. This system will permit seamless and direct exchange of classified and PROTECTED (SENSITIVE) messages between missions, selected OGDs and Headquarters divisions.

If you have questions about SIGNET-C2 and the implementation schedule, please contact Peter Caldwell (STOK), SIGNET-C2 Implementation Manager.

## Share the News...

Contrary to popular understanding, *SIGNET News*, like *Panorama*, is distributed to only Canada-based employees at missions. The reason for this, explains André Côté of Administrative Publications (SKIA), is one of economy.

We hope that the information contained in the *News* is of value to all employees of the Department; we certainly write with that view in mind. So, if we may, our modest suggestion to Mission Administrative Officers is as follows (with thanks to Mike Munroe in Paris for bringing this to our attention): to ensure that everyone at the mission gets to read *SIGNET News*, consider creating a distribution list for it for locally engaged staff. In the best possible sense, knowledge of how to use SIGNET is power, and we all benefit from em-powered users!