

Distribution of the Survey and Follow-up

The survey and a cover letter, signed by Roger Ferland, Director General of the Trade Commissioner Service, Overseas Programs and Services, were mailed to each of the associations.

The associations were asked to complete and return the survey within a month. The researcher followed up on the mailing, contacting the associations three times, on average, following the mail-out, making:

- a call three days after the estimated date of receipt to verify that the survey had been received (those calls were followed by the faxing of a further 23 surveys to associations that had either misplaced the survey or had never received it);
- a second call to determine how the completion of the survey was proceeding (asking the associations to not make extraordinary efforts to complete the whole survey, but rather to indicate any questions they felt were irrelevant in their particular case); and
- a third call to remind the associations of the deadline (followed by the receipt of about 50 percent of all of the surveys in the final sample within two days of this call).

The Response Rate: 58 Percent

The targeted associations returned 48 out of 83 surveys that were distributed, a 58-percent response rate. The replies from three of the associations were not included in the survey, because their mandate and structure varied too greatly from the definition of a bilateral business association: they concentrated on culture, or were oriented exclusively toward promoting the Canadian market to foreign businesses and members of other associations. The researcher thus processed 45 surveys from a total of 80 associations, constituting a sample of 57 percent of the total population surveyed.