

A computerized inventory has been compiled of non-rotational employees seeking new challenges, and counselling has been provided to more than 150 of them.

In June 1990, the deputies announced the Department's commitment to minimize the impact of position reductions on employees. Approximately 275 employees left voluntarily and others are being repositioned. The Department hopes to handle future reductions in the same way.

Throughout these changes, the Department has encouraged input by employees including meetings with the deputy ministers. Any group of 8 to 12 employees can obtain a meeting with the Under-Secretary or a deputy-minister of their choice to share concerns and ideas on management and administration of the Department.

The Departmental Awards and Recognition Program was redesigned and strengthened. Recent employee initiatives include the Administrative Officers' Newsletter, and the Management Club, organized to improve training and promote recognition of staff.

DEPARTMENTAL OMBUDSMAN

The office of Departmental Ombudsman, recommended by the 1990 Corporate Review, became operational on October 15. The Ombudsman's

service is additional to redress and counselling services already offered to personnel; it does not replace the Department's grievance process, for example, or the Employee Assistance Program.

The Ombudsman operates independently from the regular Departmental structure and reports as necessary to the Under-Secretary. The Ombudsman's role is to receive and seek to resolve employees' complaints regarding work-related matters. Canada-based employees at headquarters and those abroad have access to this office. Full confidentiality is maintained.

After initial discussion with the complainant, the Ombudsman carries out an investigation and decides whether corrective action is warranted. In many cases the employee has been dealt with fairly in accordance with regulations applying to all employees. In some cases, however, the Ombudsman may seek corrective action with the employee's full knowledge and consent.

As a one-year pilot project, the office of Ombudsman will be evaluated at the end of the term to see if the function should be maintained. While the Ombudsman actively intervenes in only a few cases, there is considerable value to the employee of a confidential discussion of problems with a knowledgeable and impartial senior officer. The friendly but persistent enquiries of the Ombudsman may also have a healthy impact on the personnel bureaucracy.

PROTOCOL SERVICES AND DIPLOMATIC, CONSULAR AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES IN CANADA

The Office of Protocol orchestrates diplomatic relations with foreign diplomats posted in Canada. The Office is also responsible for logistics and ceremonial events associated with visits of foreign heads of state, heads of government, and ministers of foreign affairs and trade to Canada.

The Visits and Conferences Division coordinates foreign travel for the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Minister for International Trade, and the Minister for External Relations and International Development. The Division arranges logistics for these visits through an advance trip and offers direct support when the ministers travel. The Director of the Division provides the same support to the Governor General for travel outside Canada.

During the year under review, the Visits and Conferences Division arranged official or working visits to Canada for 30 heads of state and other senior officials. Included were: President Bush of the

U.S., President Vassiliou of Cyprus, Secretary-General Paye of the OECD, Prime Minister Gonzalez of Spain, Governor Wilson of Hong Kong, Secretary-General Pérez de Cuellar of the United Nations, President Gorbachev of the U.S.S.R., Secretary-General Ramphal of the Commonwealth, President von Weizsaecker of the Federal Republic of Germany, President Mugabe of the Republic of Zimbabwe, President Koivisto of the Republic of Finland, President Diouf of the Republic of Senegal, and Prime Minister Soglo of the Republic of Benin.

A one-week tour of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon was arranged for 18 foreign heads of mission. The purpose of the tour was to promote Canadian sovereignty and environmental, ecological and trade interests in the North. Stops were made in Iqualuit, Resolute Bay, Dawson City, Whitehorse and Yellowknife. This annual tour enables diplomats from many different countries to visit the North and experience its vast scope.