

## Shared Services Canada and DFATD: Business as usual

Delivering IT services internationally is now a joint effort between DFATD's Information Management and Technology Bureau (AIT) and Shared Services Canada (SSC). This partnership is now in its second full year and is supported by an SSC-DFATD Business Arrangement and an Operating Protocol—both in place since April 2012.

The renewal of SIGNET—the IT infrastructure supporting Canada's international network—to be completed during 2013–2014, will be a major accomplishment for the partnership. A project now at the planning stage is a common IPB desktop, with improved mobility and collaboration tools, for use by DFATD's partners abroad.

### Key achievements during 2012–2013:

- Improved SIGNET Web by upgrading access to DFATD and Government of Canada (GoC) applications and resources for mobile workers;
- Made BBM and Pin-to-Pin available on DFATD *Blackberries*;
- Released Travel Smart—DFATD's flagship, mobile application;
- Successfully piloted an internal enterprise search-engine that accesses the intranet and Wiki simultaneously;
- Made 800,000 bilingual documents accessible through DFATD's Digital Library;
- Launched a successful IM-awareness and training campaign;
- Made a series of improvements to the IM/IT toolkit, including:
  - Replaced *Connections* with *Agora* (based on open-source software *Elgg*) as the internal social-networking platform;
  - Installed *Windows 7* as SIGNET's operating system;
  - Retired the *Corel* product suite;
  - Installed *Google Chrome* as an additional web browser; and
  - Upgraded to *MS Office 2012* (including *Outlook 2010*).

## FOREIGN SERVICE DIRECTIVES

The Foreign Service Directives (FSD) Services and Policy Bureau (AED) administers the FSDs, a system of allowances, benefits and conditions of employment for Government of Canada employees (and their eligible dependants) who accept assignments abroad. The 41 directives relate to matters such as relocation, education, health care and travel, among others. AED administers the directives for all DFATD employees, as well as for the majority of partners abroad.

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*Canada-based staff occupying 2,165 positions at missions abroad were accompanied by 2,686 dependents.*

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The National Joint Council (NJC) is a forum where participating public-service employers and bargaining agents come together and take joint ownership of broad labour-relations issues. The NJC FSD Committee undertakes a cyclical review of the FSDs every three years, on average. The Committee also hears employee grievances related to the FSDs. Members of the NJC FSD Committee include representatives from Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) and other departments, as well as bargaining agents.

### Key achievements during 2012–2013:

- Supported more than 1,750 Canada-based staff and families abroad;
- Received an overall-service-satisfaction rating of 81 percent in the last posting-cycle client questionnaire;
- Prepared for the next cyclical review by submitting DFATD proposals to TBS for consideration in preparing the employer side proposals for the review;
- The FSD Portal, which was launched in February 2012, continued to meet its key objectives in the administration of FSD 50 (Vacation Travel Assistance) requests and certifications. The next phase of the FSD Portal will