

While the management of the foreign service at the executive level will be the responsibility of the Department of External Affairs and at the operational level will be split between External Affairs, and Industry, Trade and Commerce, the fact that the foreign service as a whole will be directly responsible for the delivery of the programmes of a number of departments makes it imperative that an effective interdepartmental consultative mechanism be in place. To this end, the Personnel Management Committee of the Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations, the ICERPMC, will be reconstituted. While the management of the foreign service will be entrusted to IT&C and External Affairs, the policies which inform that management and decisions with respect to selection and promotion standards, post establishments, etc., will be taken within the ICERPMC. The ICERPMC will be chaired by a Deputy Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs and the other departments and agencies will be represented by officials of Assistant Deputy Minister rank. It will report to the ICER and through it to the Ministers most directly concerned.

The ICERPMC will be the essential single focus for the consultation which must underlie personnel management, but it will also be essential for each participating department to feel that its interests are being protected and that it is participating fully in the process. This should be accomplished by having the ICERPMC served by a secretariat staffed by all participating departments through secondments. The secretariat will have to work in close collaboration with the Bureau of Personnel Management of the Department of External Affairs and might be collocated with it.

Foreign Service Officers with a background in the work of a particular department or needing to acquire such a background, will continue to be assigned on a regular basis to the department concerned. The ICERPMC, as part of the detailed implementation of this scheme, will establish numbers of returning Foreign Service Officers which each department will regularly accept on assignment. It will be up to each department to ensure that such assignments develop in foreign service officers the skills necessary to advance its own interests when they return to the field.