

One immediate change under way is related to our system of keeping track of advances issued to personnel. Beginning in the new year, a completely new system will issue monthly statements to every employee who has received an advance. Eventually the statements will also indicate all other forms of accounts owing in addition to advances. This will not only help the Division in keeping records accurate, but a monthly update will assist staff holding advances to verify their personal financial records and identify any problems.

- * Materiel Procurement & Transportation Division (MRM) is hiring a consultant to advise on upgrading, improving and extending its computerized procurement tracking system. (Did you know that last year MRM purchased more than \$33 million in goods and services for departmental clients - that's a lot to keep track of without a fully computerized system!).
- * Did you know that the Department purchases about 200 vehicles a year? That's about the same as one month's sales by a major Ottawa auto dealer.
- * A new course on financial administration from a management perspective is being designed specifically for rotational administration officers by the Financial Policy and Systems Division (MFC). The plan is to pilot the one week course in January or February.
- * In another move to decentralize, starting in April 1991 the vehicle purchasing budget will move from the Procurement, Vehicles and Technical Equipment Section (MRMT) to the area managers so that they can decide and control how this budget is spent. (Did you know that we own 771 vehicles abroad? We couldn't even park them all in the underground parking at the Pearson building - there are only 586 spaces).
- * The Financial Planning, Analysis and Reporting Division (MFR) is improving the process for tracking those tricky PYs (or Person Years as Treasury Board calls them). A new module in our Infonnel system is being developed to help keep the count.
- * Speaking of PYs... You may recall that one of the Corporate Review decisions was to devolve responsibility for PY management to one ADM on a pilot basis. This decision has been expanded and work is under way to implement PY devolution to all Branches on April 1, 1991. Guidelines are being developed for the creation, deletion, reclassification or redesignation of positions as well as a new system to provide information on PY utilization to managers. Having responsibility for PY management will give ADMs more flexibility to assign their staff to meet changing demands and priorities.
- * A new Official Residence Materiel Authorization Table 3D (What??) will be published early in the new year. This will provide better information to the missions for making purchasing decisions. (Did you know that the estimated value of the "fine furniture" collections at missions is \$25 million?).
- * The "Encumbrance" feature of the Department's financial management process was again examined at the recent financial officers' conference. Based on those discussions, the control levels will be adjusted to avoid the problem many administrators have encountered with FINEX when the amount encumbered in the budget is exceeded by even the smallest amount. Anyone who has overspent their encumbrance by a small amount and had the whole transaction rejected because of a difference of as little as \$1.00 will welcome this decision. More info on this change to the system will be out soon - don't worry, we'll fix it.
- * Speaking of finances, did you know that among the 4032 original Canadian works of art in the Department's collection are 21 paintings by six of the eight (yes eight!) "Group of Seven" artists? (Rumour has it that the eight artists became a "Group of Seven" when a corporate review eliminated one). The estimated value of the collection is over \$50 million.
- * With the expected passage of the new Federal Real Property Act in 1991, the Department will transfer responsibility to HOMs to purchase staff quarters up to the new Departmental limit of \$750,000. (Did you know that the Department's present limit for all types of property purchases is only \$75,000 - have you tried to buy a house for that lately?).
- * Work is under way to improve and simplify the Department's planning and reporting systems to allow for more accountability and better management. Some may yawn when they read this, but real changes to the way the system operates can have tremendous impact on the work requirements of many of us - in particular it is a chance to get rid of a lot of the paper work that takes up so much time (a big part of the Suggestion Box submissions dealt with this).

As part of this work, much of the information previously requested in the MOPs has been dropped in order to simplify the reports as much as possible for this year (another Suggestion Box frequent request). The headquarters plans now also include Personnel Utilization Profiles (who works where) and organization charts. Some headquarters

staff have protested that preparing these is extra work (this is true). However, this will allow us to have complete and up-to-date data on personnel resources throughout the department. Until now, this information was only supplied by missions.

The Mission and Headquarters Operational Plans (MOPs and HOPs as they are affectionately called) have also been changed this year. One important change requires managers to identify how they would cut 10% of their resources and what would be the program consequences. This information will be used by the Program Management Board to assist in determining the resource allocation for 1991-92.

- * Think COSICS is the project with the biggest budget ever in this Department? Wrong. The Tokyo redevelopment project - chancery and 23 staff quarters - will cost \$230 million (only \$16 million from us taxpayers). It will save \$3 million a year in rent. (Note from COSICS: "We ain't finished yet..")

REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE

MITNET II (sequel to MITNET I in the U.S.) will be launched in Europe. No, this is not a space probe but a new telecommunications network linking the missions directly to each other. The Information Resource Management Bureau (MID) tells us that the installation of these networks would not have been possible without the strong support of senior management and the Branches concerned. This should give improved, modernized telecommunication service at eventually decreased cost. And yes we realize that this is not a Corporate Review initiative but it is interesting to note.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT BOARD (PMB)

Every Wednesday Morning the three Deputies meet in their role as the Program Management Board to consider all issues having departmental resource implications. The creation of the Board was a fundamental and important change in our departmental management system. The Board analyzes proposals from all parts of the Department, and then decides what is a priority for resource allocation given current and upcoming programs throughout the Department. This provides regular opportunities for managers to have ideas for change or new initiatives considered by the Deputies. It allows a more strategic approach to resource management and an ability to continually assess priorities department wide. Agendas and minutes of the PMB meetings are circulated to ensure managers understand the ongoing and ever-changing pressures, as well as the decisions being taken in response.

To give you an idea of the range of decisions taken by the Board over the last few weeks, here are just a few examples of topics:

- resources for the Kuwait Task Force and support for GMD/GMR
- Treasury Board submission for Tokyo Embassy Complex
- five year immigration levels
- purchase of armoured vehicle for Amman
- representation in the Lower Gulf
- corporate review resource requirements for new initiatives
- staffing freeze
- Beijing Embassy Complex
- immigration cost recovery
- expanding the A-8 Conference Room (not agreed to by the way)
- Expenditure Review Committee reductions

BEAM ME UP SCOTTY...

Here is the latest space news on office moves in headquarters. On December 7 the International Expositions Division (BKE) will move to Vanier as noted in the last Update. This will open up what they call "swing space" to allow other moves to start happening. The Official Languages Division (APL) will move to this vacant space and open up their area on D2 to enable the Resource Planning and Management Secretariat (MCBA) to move in. That also means Marlin Travel will move to more convenient space near the cafeteria. The Corporate Review Implementation Team will then move to MCBA's old space and APL will move into our space on B4. Are you still with me?

In other news: Public Works is now tendering out the renovations to A2 (that is where MID, OSS, ISS and ISB will end up). Also, JFX moves to C7 shortly to allow space for IAM. And when IAM moves then finally we will have the full space required for the new Correspondence Unit (the interim unit will expand at that point).

Now if you think this is confusing, imagine if it was your job to plan and carry out all these moves (welcome to your nightmare MFM)! For all of you who wonder why this is taking so long, we must report that the biggest hold ups have been in the negotiations with the various office holders being moved. It seems we all want more space, more windows, more corner offices, computers, COSICS lines etc., or we just don't want to move. (Best threat made by a disgruntled group so far - to barricade the corridor to the A Tower).