

designed with the task in mind. Studies have shown that eye strain, backaches and other health and safety problems can be avoided by proper surroundings and exercise. See:

Video Display Terminals PMM 055-3 Aug 1, 1980

Transfer of Pregnant Employees PMM Vol. 7 Ch. 14

Video Display Terminals - A Guide for Managers and Supervisors PMM Bulletin 16-83 July 20, 1983

Ergonomic Guidelines for Micro Electronic Installations TB Circular 1983-24 July 20, 1983

Again this list is not all inclusive, but it provides a starting point for communication with employees.

## 6. Cultural Factor

At External Affairs we take pride in being different from the rest of the public service. While other government departments are struggling to introduce high technology, we are introducing it in our own Department in Ottawa and in other cultural environments. There will inevitably be special problems that will be identified at posts abroad. There will be not only security and maintenance concerns but also cultural differences that we will have to identify and deal with. In Canada, saving time, money and labour are considered good practices. In cultures where labour is cheap, the value is not as strong or doesn't exist. All the concerns identified in the employee section apply equally to locally-engaged staff. The identification of problems and fear may be much harder however. There will be differences of communication, status, and saving face that we may not readily grasp. We may also have to contend with the fact that by training locally-engaged staff on computer terminals we have created a labour force that now considers itself more valuable and more prestigious. We may either have to pay more or face constantly training new people. We also risk making ourselves more dependent upon locally-engaged staff because with the rotation of Canada-based employees, they provide the continuity and knowledge of the systems. Proper documentation is essential because information locked electronically in a machine is harder to get than paper locked in a filing cabinet.