

“Many more Canadian government departments and agencies are active in the world today,” notes Pierre. “We talk about globalization of business, but something similar is also happening to governments because many problems and issues are now global.”

Pierre says that many international problems now have domestic repercussions and vice versa. In this context, more and more government departments want to have a presence abroad. Increasingly, he adds, DFAIT has to be a host to all of these new partners, which introduces new challenges and opportunities for the department.

Enter the International Platform Branch. Success means the Government of Canada will be more competitive in terms of the services it offers and the benefits it reaps in other countries, even those that pose infrastructure and developmental challenges. And it all fits in perfectly with the Transformation Agenda.

The International Platform is a direct response to the department’s second transformation priority, which is, appropriately enough, “strengthening our international platform.” But it also supports and advances all the other priorities, including alignment with government priorities; improving services to Canadians; focusing on our core policy business; strengthening accountability; and renewing our human resources.

To improve services, the branch will focus on key services, including the management of mission infrastructure, finance, procurement and logistics; the delivery of mission security; the delivery of information technology; and support services for Canadian staff abroad.

To maximize these services, the department will seek to improve its ability to modify and adapt itself as situations demand. It will also focus on employee excellence and service delivery, which will be determined by employee satisfaction and their ability to grow. Value for money is another critical component of the new platform that will further increase our competitiveness in foreign countries.

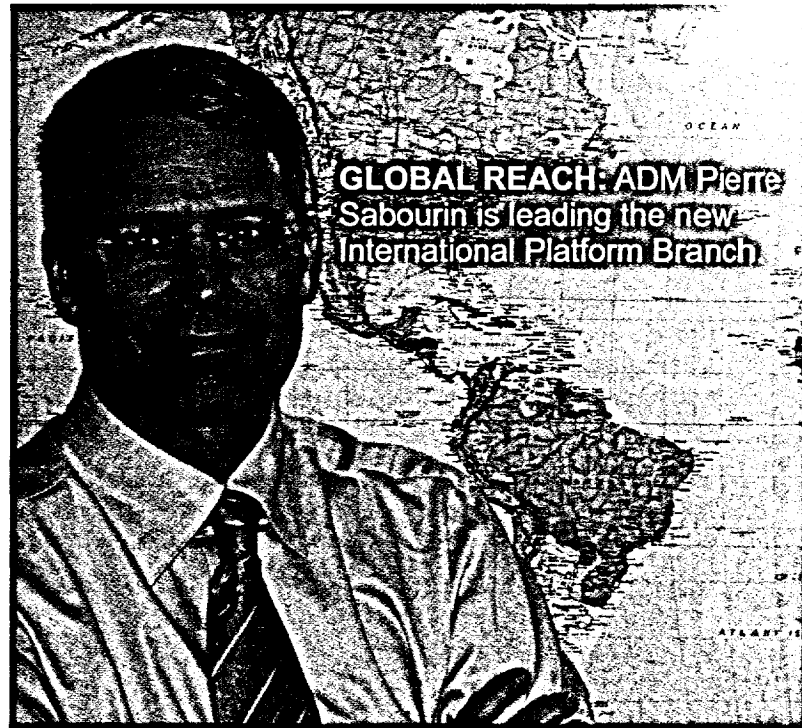
According to Pierre, some specific targets and metrics have already been established to ensure the platform’s progress and ultimate success. Because it is so new, however, specific benchmarks continue to be developed, but effectiveness and timeliness are certainly among them. For example, he says that how quickly the department can open the new posts that were recently announced will be a measure of agility and timeliness.

So far, the department’s partners across government or “clients who pay for common services” are extremely welcoming of the branch and its vision. And the response from within the department, according to Pierre, has been incredibly supportive, prompting great collaboration at all levels.

“People seem very appreciative of our efforts,” he notes, but adds that they are also full of questions. “They want to know more. They want to know how it works.”

Many of those answers will be available on the branch’s intranet site under <http://intranet.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/department/ACM/ACM-en.asp>. He also strongly encourages employees to make their own suggestions

Although the idea is not exactly new, its scope, goals and targets give it a novel approach that will ultimately mean much better value for money and increased job satisfaction.



on the products, services and general notions that will advance the platform’s objectives—to him directly if they like. But be careful, he warns with a mischievous grin, he might also turn to those same people to see the suggestions through.

The branch certainly has its work cut out for it, but Pierre hopes that employees will share his enthusiasm and passion for making it work.

“If we communicate our successes to the government, to our partner agencies and departments as well as to our employees, they will see that we have created maybe the best international platform in the world,” he says.

“It’s daunting,” he concludes, “but that’s why it’s fun.”