

SECTION 8 - CURRENT PROBLEMS FACING DFAIT WITH RESPECT TO THE INTERIOR DESIGN OF PUBLIC AREAS OF CHANCERIES AND OFFICIAL RESIDENCES.

As one will note from the previous section, the image policies available to DFAIT are quite extensive and detailed. Apart from the Federal Identity Program, which dictates the design standards for the "Canada's" image, DFAIT is guided by space guidelines - suggesting optimum size and use of rooms, and standards to be met in terms of fire, safety and the environment. DFAIT also has policies outlining who is responsible/accountable for purchases, administration and maintenance; what furniture and fixtures can and should be used in particular areas; what upholstery and window coverings are acceptable; and the minimum acceptable quality and quantity of furniture and fixtures.

Unfortunately, the Mission Support Services Division (SRM) of the Bureau of Physical Resources has found that even with these existing policies, standards and regulations, problems continue to arise with regard to the image being presented at Chanceries and Official Residences. When asked for their opinion on this subject, other DFAIT personnel concurred with SRM (SEE ANNEX E for questions asked during the interviews) What follows is a compilation of problems noted by SRM and other DFAIT personnel.

1. INCONSISTENT IMAGE:

There is no standard "look" that is produced or maintained; hence, Canadian Missions tend to present different images to their public. Unlike the CIBC or LOEB customers, DFAIT's clients may not feel a sense of familiarity when walking into Canada's different Chanceries and Official Residences. Some project the soft, relaxed muted tones preferred by some designers while others offer the loud, vibrant and bright colour schemes favoured by others.

2. PERSONNEL PREFERENCES:

Because there lacks a policy outlining the "intended image" of the public areas of the Chanceries and Official Residences, the personal preference of the individual in charge of these areas (ie. the HOM) often dictates the interior design. This is not always a problem; however, in some cases these preferences go beyond the parameters of what is "acceptable" to the interior designers at Headquarters, the HOM's successor, or even the MAO. Unfortunately standards of acceptability do not exist. This makes it difficult for DFAIT personnel to challenge the questionable taste of their colleagues.