

3.0 MAXIMIZING EXISTING MECHANISMS

3.1 Bilateral Mechanisms

Most of Canada's international S&T relationships are bilateral. They encourage the two-way flow of scientific and technical expertise and knowledge which paves the way for co-operation. They include assigning people with specific S&T responsibilities to Canadian missions abroad and entering into agreements and arrangements with other countries.

3.1.1 The Science and Technology Counsellors' Network

Canada's most important S&T resource is staff located abroad. Science and Technology Counsellors are posted to Canadian missions in the U.S.A., Japan, the U.K., France, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Commission of the European Communities to assist Canadian firms and research organizations to establish relationships abroad. Counsellors provide the following services:

- facilitate technology acquisition and technology transfer;
- search out contacts, make introductions, and locate foreign firms interested in arrangements such as joint ventures and R&D collaborative projects;
- gather information on specific S&T areas and direct specialists to more detailed information; and
- familiarize Canadian firms with the business practices and operations of science and technology organizations in host countries.

The addresses of the offices of the Science and Technology Counsellors are given in the Appendix. A brochure is available with their curricula vitae and mandate.

3.1.2 Technology Development Officers' Network

Canada has also placed 11 locally engaged Technology Development Officers (TDOs) in 9 missions abroad to assist Canadian small and medium-sized firms to acquire foreign technology (see list of offices in Appendix). In addition, Trade Commissioners carry out this function in another 30 posts. TDOs respond to specific requests and act as intermediaries between the supplier and recipient of a technology. Each year, TDOs respond to approximately 3 000 requests for information. They support the Technology Inflow Program (TIP) described in section 4.3.