

COSICS

Canadian On-Line Secure Information and Communication System

Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures
OTTAWA

Message from the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs

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Effective communication is an important element in our work at External Affairs. Therefore, an efficient and productive work environment that takes advantage of technological change and is adapted to increasing demands and shrinking resources is critical to our purpose.

To deal with contemporary and future challenges External Affairs struck a Committee, at present chaired by the Associate Under-Secretary, Mr. Stanford, and comprising three Assistant Deputy Ministers, Messrs. Kilpatrick, Roy and Marsham, to develop a long range management plan (LRMP) for the Department. Out of the Committee's deliberations the accelerated and enhanced use of technology became the focus and pivotal component of the now fully developed LRMP. Mr. Marsham, in the process of establishing the Information Resource Management Bureau, was asked to guide the implementation of this component of the plan, which rapidly developed from an embryonic concept to the fully developed project which is now known as the Canadian On-Line Secure Information and Communication System (COSICS).

COSICS will greatly enhance the Department's communications capability within Headquarters, between Headquarters and its missions abroad, and from one mission to another, at all levels. With COSICS, the Department will be able to do more with less, faster. It is the keystone of the LRMP.

The physical reality of COSICS is a state-of-the-art office automation system, using two-level, fully-compatible computer hardware; one programmed for classified, secure information and the other for the routine unclassified work of the Department.

In essence, COSICS will provide you with computer screens and keyboards that will enhance much of what is now done with pen, paper and the telephone. COSICS is being designed for you, the people who will actually be using the system.

Ensuring that COSICS is a secure system that all employees will find easy to use and with which they can feel comfortable, has been the Committee's principal concern. Now, integrating it into the working fabric of the Department, with as little disruption as possible, is a top priority. COSICS can benefit from your contributions. I encourage you to contact the COSICS Project Management Office with your suggestions.



J. H. Taylor
Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs

COSICS Office of the Future

Ultimately, all External Affairs employees will be able to do amazing things with a state-of-the-art office automation system that is about to be introduced into the External Affairs work environment. This easy to use, two-level — classified and unclassified — system will eventually support between 4000 and 5000 workstations in Canada and abroad and can be expanded as required.

Imagine a futuristic, 21st century work environment with an information production and management capability that has transformed most of today's routine administrative functions from classic paper-pushing to the tap-tap-tapping of keyboard-created, electronically-transferred data — and you have COSICS.

Picture a keyboard and screen on or beside your desk that facilitate the creation and transmittal of everything from critical, highly classified information and official document exchanges, to the production of inter-office memos, personal notes, administrative documentation, bookkeeping and even reminders about luncheon meetings. All this, using a system that will largely replace what is now done with pen and ink, typewriter, telephone, telegram

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