

ANNEX 1

A PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FOR FOREIGN POLICY

Introduction

Among the main findings of the *Political Officer Study* are that:

- (a) the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is critical to Canada's success in dealing with the challenges and opportunities of globalization, and
- (b) the department is making sub-optimal use of the officer group best equipped to manage the process.

In the opinion of those who participated in the study, both inside and outside the department, DFAIT has not been able to exercise the leadership role it could because political officers in the FS stream who should be providing the strategic and policy advice required are too few and too heavily tasked to do so.

If the department believes it has too few political officers and is tasking them too heavily, it has both a resources problem and a management problem. But the case for more resources is difficult to make unless the department has first demonstrated that it has taken all reasonable steps to make best use of the resources it already has. This the department has not done, as other findings of the study confirm. Lacking a clearly articulated mission and priority objectives, political officers spend too little time on core functions and too much time serving other interests. And when they do focus on core functions, there is too little discipline to guide their work and too much improvisation.

Managing the trade commissioner service

Five years ago, the department faced similar concerns with respect to its trade officers. Both the department and client groups were dissatisfied with the levels of service being offered, in large part because there were not enough trade commissioners in the field and because those at post were expected to be "all things to all people everywhere". In response, in 1997 the department launched the *Performance Measurement Initiative (PMI)* to make the Trade Commissioner Service more client-driven and more effective, and to develop means for demonstrating the service's value.

PMI improvements included:

- identifying the activities that, from the perspective of Canadian exporters, were most likely to provide added value and results (provision of market information and intelligence, troubleshooting, and face-to-face counselling);