

trade-policy developments of importance to Canada.

Your training period of two years will usually be based in Ottawa. The first year may be divided into two on-the-job assignments: one of a "trade promotion" nature, the other focusing on trade policy or information. A cross-Canada tour will bring you in direct contact with the client companies you will represent overseas, and those branches of the federal and provincial governments involved in international trade. Seminars on economic reporting, negotiation skill, international business plus sessions hosted by the Export Development Corporation and Canadian banking institutions may be part of your preparation. Your second year of training will stress assignments related to your first posting and involve foreign language training as necessary. Your first assignment abroad will be for two to four years.

During a typical day at a Canadian diplomatic mission you could:

- conduct a market investigation on the feasibility of introducing a Canadian product by compiling a list of local agents, determining the competitive costs, checking the availability of public or private financing, identifying product tariffs and assessing the existing competition;
- follow up a recently advertised international tender on behalf of a Canadian manufacturer at a luncheon hosted by the local Chamber of Commerce;
- advance the logistics for a Canadian trade delegation by

arranging appointments, inspecting displays of Canadian products exhibited at the trade fair site and organizing hospitality to introduce Canadian exporters to local business people;

- report on new local government regulations based on an international trade agreement which could restrict the sale of certain Canadian goods;
- lobby local government contacts for completion of a trade agreement beneficial to Canadian industry;
- review the latest import/export statistics released by the local Ministry of Trade and prepare a report for the Export Development Corporation in Ottawa;
- host a reception for representatives of a Canadian investment company and prospective local contacts to make introductions and allow Canadian business people to promote investment in Canada.

Trade Commissioners have a responsible and creative role in helping Canada gain a larger share of the world market. Your appreciation of international trade will be balanced by a sensitivity to local customs and appropriate business practices, plus an ability to anticipate changes. Skilful liaison is necessary to establish and maintain contacts, bring people together and guide commercial contracts to a successful conclusion. Strong interpersonal skills, enthusiasm, conviction, and self-motivation are essential ingredients of the successful Trade Commissioner.