



disseminating information in the conduct of HR activities. For example, the refinement and extension of the competencies-based HR management regime depends upon the development and implementation of an easy-to-use, accessible, automated information system integrated with other departmental core systems. Similarly, Peoplesoft was being introduced in the spring of 1998 to improve the operational efficiencies of many standard HR transactions.

4.3.3.2 Integration of Post and Headquarters HR Management Information

The need for detail at the posts and the level of integration with headquarters HR systems may need to be further explored. That is, is it necessary that a post establish transactions with the headquarters system to manage LES - or is a local system (using the same business rules, categories, competencies, etc.) adequate? What level of reporting and information aggregation is needed? Must the post be tied to the HR information apron strings of headquarters?

For example, what level of information does headquarters require about LES? A local management and information system could manage all LES HR activities while providing summary information to headquarters. Standardised electronic reports, containing all the required data, could be generated by each Post's local system which could in turn be received by an headquarters system capable of providing a department-wide report on HR resources, allocations, use, budgets, competencies, etc.

4.3.3.3 Learning Strategy

The DFAIT learning strategy includes information packages for self-directed study now being prepared with IM/IT tools.

4.3.4 REDUCING THE PERSONAL COST OF ROTATION

Since rotationality is fundamental to our HR framework, we need to ensure that our rotational employees and their families are well supported through programs and policies that minimise the difficulty of life abroad and periodic relocations. In this section we examine two such areas: the Foreign Service Directives, which provide posting incentives and reimbursement of post-related living expenses, and our policy on support for spousal employment.

4.3.4.1 Foreign Service Directives (FSDs)

4.3.4.1.1 Overview

The FSDs are central to every dimension of human resource management of the career foreign service. They were established in their present form in 1969, and are laid out in a codified form filling in excess of 450 pages, every word negotiated and agreed to by both bargaining agents and management. Canada is the only country that negotiates its FSDs within a collective bargaining environment. This helps ensure their broad acceptance within the foreign service population, but we must recognise that negotiations take time.