

We will have to continue to be systematic in accommodating this reality through such means as:

- shorter postings and hub and spoke posts in difficult regions
- unrestricted and enhanced electronic contact (i.e., virtual family events via video conferencing)

Most critically, we have to **take a more flexible and aggressive approach to coping with environmental hardships that increasingly characterize cities around the world.** We must ensure that we do not jeopardize the health of our staff and take such measures as are necessary to do so, ensuring public support for the expenditures. These measures must be consistent with Canadian standards and should be site specific (for instance, facilitating regular short term absences from environments where respiratory risks are above a certain level). **The Departmental Hardships Committee should be given a new more compelling mandate to deal with these issues, or be disbanded, with significant responsibility for staff welfare transferred to the HOM, subject to guidance and verification from Headquarters.**