

PRE-POSTING ARRANGEMENTS

CONTEXT

You've just found out where you are to be posted as trade program manager, and the administrative arrangements for your move are under way. As you wrap up your current assignment, your thoughts begin to wander to the next one . . . and you realize just how much there is to learn about the new posting.

This section of the guide has been compiled based on four main assumptions:

- that you will have about two months to get ready for the posting (while continuing to carry out your current assignment);
- that *you* by and large, are *responsible for your own training and preparation for the posting*;
- that if you talk to enough people before you get to Post, there should be few surprises on your arrival (i.e. there are no secrets at EAITC);
- that the pre-posting period is the easiest time to ask a lot of questions without feeling the need to be an authority on your territory.

Do you have a clear idea of your mandate?

The questions that follow are designed to enable you to plan a "self-directed training" program and to compile a valuable list of contacts and resources that can be used once you get to Post. The process of strategically planning for your posting should also put you in a position to discuss and agree on a program of action for your Post trade program with the geographic division; *prior to departure, we suggest that the officer draft, and seek approval for, a statement of objectives or mandate letter.* This letter, or "contract", will serve as an initial guideline.

It should be noted that, for ease of compiling this guide, we assume that you are leaving from Ottawa. In cases of cross-postings, much of this information can still be compiled from your current location, by telephone and fax, and with the help of Ottawa-based colleagues.