

## Implications

The ICMS helped to resolve several disputes during the year. To ensure that employees and managers make better use of the system, it should be given greater visibility and a policy should be developed to promote its systematic use. It may also be beneficial to increase the use of workplace well-being, counselling, mental health, and stress reduction techniques.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, delivery of a greater number of courses on conflict management could help reduce the number of formal complaints. Finally, the Foreign Service Directives should continue to be reviewed to ensure that they reflect current working conditions abroad.<sup>22</sup>

## Occupational health

- 434 clients made use of the Counselling and Consultation Service. Of these, 394 were employees (CBS and LES) and 40, members of employees' families. With regard to work-related consultations, work-life balance issues played a role in 28.8% of cases, while harassment (7%) and interpersonal conflicts (6%) were the other reasons cited most often.
- In 2005-2006, CBS reported 23 workplace accidents or illnesses.
- 69.2% of the 13 workplace accidents reported by LES occurred in the United States.

## Implications

The high percentage of work-life balance issues reported by the Counselling and Consultation Service confirms survey findings. For example, according to the *Public Service Employee Survey*,<sup>23</sup> 31% of employees report they can sometimes or rarely balance their personal, family, and work obligations in their current job. In addition, the *DFAIT Change Survey*<sup>24</sup> revealed that work interferes more with the family life of DFAIT employees than it does in other departments. Consequently, the Department should endeavour to introduce measures aimed at facilitating work-life balance. And, to help prevent workplace accidents, the Department should promote its *Policy on Occupational Health and Safety*<sup>25</sup> and place increased emphasis on prevention.

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<sup>21</sup> The Human Resources Environmental Scan for the Public Service of Canada ([http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/hr-rh/hrp-prh/hrespst-aerhfpc\\_e.asp](http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/hr-rh/hrp-prh/hrespst-aerhfpc_e.asp))

<sup>22</sup> Foreign Service Directives – Policies and Guidelines ([http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs\\_pol/hrpubs/TB\\_8332/siglist\\_e.asp](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/TB_8332/siglist_e.asp))

<sup>23</sup> Public Service Employee Survey (<http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/survey-sondage/2005/results-resultats/14/occgrp-e.htm>)

<sup>24</sup> DFAIT Change Survey (<http://intranet.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/2004/02/duxbury/DFAITEXEC%20REV.ppt>)

<sup>25</sup> Policy on Occupational Health and Safety (<http://intranet.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/department/hr/programs/ohs-sst/fac-policy-ohs-2005-en.asp>)