Research On-line: *The DFAIT Research Page*

We are building connections to the world

[This is the second in a series of articles on the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Internet Implementation Plan.]

All users can access The DFAIT Research Page (DRP) from any workstation connected to the Internet. Standalone workstations having access to the Internet can be found in the Library and in the BICOs and LISOs, where you can also get expert advice on how to obtain information from the Internet. The URL or address of the DRP is:

`http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/res`

Internet Plan: Reviewing Our Progress

In July 1995, the Department launched its World Wide Web Site on the Internet. This broadened our profile in the international community, and enhanced our service to clients by providing them with instant, cost effective access to up-to-date information on our services and activities. Another DFAIT Internet initiative for users at Headquarters and missions is The DFAIT Research Page (DRP). From any workstation connected to the Internet, users can easily locate useful sources of information relevant to the Department's work.

Four key projects make up the Department's Internet Implementation Plan: DFAIT Web Site; The Intranet Web Site; The DFAIT Research Page and SIGNET User Access to the Internet. Of these, the DRP is the primary tool to obtain information from the Internet.

Our presence on the Internet, that 'dynamic global connection of people and computers, all linked together by miles of cables and telephone lines, all able to communicate because they share a common language,' is part of the Department's strategy to use technology to help achieve its mandate.

"The only constant in today's business environment is change — constantly accelerating change — change of a scope unimaginable in the past."

In the last few years, the Department has begun transforming itself to master the challenges that change poses for its business. To take quick, responsible and decisive action, the Department depends upon up-to-date information. By having access to the Internet, the Department is better positioned than ever to achieve its mandate and meet the demands of today's changing world. Technology is, therefore, helping DFAIT to become a more effective, productive and successful department.

A Cool Tool
The DFAIT Research Page

A world of information instantly available. The DFAIT Research Page was developed by the Information Resources Bureau (SKD) in consultation with other divisions. A user-friendly research tool, the DRP was designed to help users navigate the Internet as easily and efficiently as possible. It offers a starting point and reference to hundreds of relevant sites on the Internet. Simply put, it is a directory to pre-evaluated and pre-mapped sites that may contain relevant, current information for the business of the Department.

Designed for use with the browser software, Netscape, the DRP consists of over 130 hypertext files, each containing a number of sites (e.g., The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan Home Page) which interact with each other and link to other Internet sites. For ease of use, a brief summary and editorial comment on selected sites have also been included in the pages.

What will The DFAIT Research Page allow me to do? or Neat things you can get from the Net

In this age of constant change, computers are an 'open opportunity for everybody.' Using the DRP as your guide, you can *get* from the Internet current information you need to do your work. For example, if you are preparing for a visit of a minister from the U.K., you can access the relevant U.K. government sites (such as the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO)) through the DRP. Do you need the most up-to-date U.S. export reports? Review U.S. trade statistics at the U.S. Department of Commerce Home Page. You can also obtain electronic newspapers to keep you current with current events. You can scan an NGO report. Read a U.N. press release. Or get free software from a file archive site. The choices are endless.