

Ever wonder what we're up to in Ottawa?



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In the January issue, I talked about how the Trade Commissioner Service is only as good as its people. As part of an ongoing dialogue with you, I want to fill you in on our work in the departmental annual planning process and how it supports our people and the challenges we face.

Every year we're asked to submit a business plan for international business development. This year, the Department asked us to identify strategic objectives rather than our daily activities.

Here are our strategic objectives for this year, and why we chose them

1. Ensure consistent service delivery among posts, and between trade programs and services to sustain and build upon the New Approach.

Improving our services to meet the needs of our clients — that's the basis of the New Approach. Our first objective is key to building on this. The world has changed the way it does business and we have changed with it. Now we need to provide you with the opportunity to upgrade your skills and the tools you need to deliver consistent service.

2. Ensure Team Canada Inc functions effectively for clients.

We rely on Team Canada Inc (TCI) to ensure that Canadian clients are ready to export—and ready to knock on your door. It's an interconnected service that needs to be fine-tuned. If TCI is functioning effectively, then we will function effectively.

3. Ensure that Crown Corporations reporting through Minister Pettigrew — the Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC) and the Export Development Corporation (EDC) — are competitive, responsive, financially sound, and reflect Canadian values.

Like TCI, our work with EDC and CCC is interconnected. These corporations provide important services to Canadian exporters and have brought more SMEs into international business. We provide guidance to EDC and CCC on operational and financial issues, and issues related to compliance with evolving World Trade Organization and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development multilateral agreements.

4. Improve collaboration between innovators of Canadian science and technology (S&T) and their foreign counterparts.

Canada's participation in international S&T lags behind some of our major trading partners. Innovation is one of the main engines of growth for Canadian business and a top government priority. We need to foster a positive environment for Canadian firms to boost participation in international S&T developments.



I'm committed to achieving these objectives and continuing to serve our clients better. The bottom line hasn't changed. I want to ensure that you have the tools, resources and support you need to do your work.