

- funding of assignments abroad and related issues such as medical examinations, passports, security clearance, etc.;
- criteria for the distribution of candidates to the various geographic sectors such as business needs, quality of assignments, etc.; and
- recruitment strategies to attract members of designated employment equity groups.

4.3.3 IMPROVED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (IM)

Information Management (IM) is not an end in itself, but rather a function to support program delivery and service to clients. Like HR planning, IM planning must be rooted in DFAIT's business objectives. Information Management and Technology provides an infrastructure for electronic dialogue, but it is only part of the story.

A balance between electronic information access, electronic discussion/dialogue and face-to-face interaction is required. Human interaction is particularly challenging for an organisation that is distributed across 159 sites around the globe, when travel is expensive, budgets are shrinking and the enterprise-wide technological platform to support electronic communications is not yet fully-established.

DFAIT's most recent Information Management Plan, published in June 1997, documents 32 strategies and 92 individual initiatives, grouped into seven broad investment strategies. It provides an excellent overview of how our information management investments will help us build the "smart" information-based foreign affairs and international trade ministry that can achieve our foreign policy objectives despite limited resources. It envisions "an unprecedented capacity for planning, analysis, co-ordination, focused action and both rapid deployment and optimum placement of resources, all of which require excellent information management support."⁶

4.3.3.1 Integration of IMT and Other Corporate Resource Planning

The Information Management/Information Technology strategy calls for the ongoing integration of information management requirements into departmental business planning as part of the redevelopment of SIGNET, and for the education of program staff in the creative use of Information Management Technology. As noted in section 4.2.1.1 above, we will ensure that integrated planning this fall also encompasses HR and finance planning as well.

4.3.3.2 IM Support for HR Activities

4.3.3.2.1 Core HR Systems

DFAIT's global reach means that technologies must be used to facilitate HR management. HR uses IM/IT systems as tools for capturing, managing, using and

⁶ DFAIT's Information Management Plan: FYs 1996/97 and 1997/98, Executive Summary, Version 1.3, June 6, 1997.