

the heads of the trade policy unit within the same Ministry.

The agenda is considerable and requires very regular meetings, and restrictions on the occurrence of interventions by delegations. The high-ranking or Full Members meet monthly, while the Deputies meet in each of the intervening weeks; such meetings can become daily toward the conclusion of major negotiations. The Council Secretariat General provides necessary ongoing support for the Committee, including the drafting of reports following each meeting, for distribution.

Within the Committee, a first reading, or debate, on the documents and issues on the agenda will take place in the meetings of deputies as a precursor to the more political, policy-oriented deliberations of the Full Members. In the absence of consensus on the direction to be given to the Commission in its negotiations, the subject issues will be forwarded either to Coreper, or to the General Affairs Council.

Effective Advocacy of Canadian interests

In general terms the EC stands for a single economically integrated entity. The preceding sections of this handbook demonstrate that this single entity is actually a complex composite of: 15 independent Member States, politically and economically motivated; and the separate institutions which act in accordance with their distinct, but fundamentally interrelated mandates as set out in the Treaties. In dealing with the EU, the following points must be borne in mind.

- The Member States are, essentially, motivated by a genuine will to unite for mutual economic benefit, as signalled by the introduction of the SEA. However, beyond the internal market, they do not necessarily share a single vision of how much farther the economic integration should progress, nor is there consensus on the degree to which a political union could, or should, evolve.
- The Council and the Commission are the primary actors on the Community stage. However, although it may appear that they each possess different, but comparable, authority to act on the Community's behalf, this impression is erroneous.

It must be clearly understood that the Council, being the vehicle through which the Member States establish and pursue their shared interests, is the primary Community institution. The Commission, on the other hand, represents and acts in the Community interest. It has power to act in specific areas of competence set out in the Treaties, and also in connection with addi-

tional areas of responsibility as delegated to it by Council. The importance of the Commission's delegated powers is at the discretion of the Council, and depends therefore on the intentions of the Member States acting through Council.

Ultimately, action taken by the Community, the passage of Community law and the formulation of Community policy, in all but the fields of Competition policy and Community safeguard measures, require the authority of the Council to have binding effect.

● There are also numerous bodies which are constituted and operate under the auspices of one or other of the Community institutions – the permanent Consultative Committees, expert Council working groups, Parliamentary Committees and other specialised committees set up to address particular issues or conduct specific studies.

These bodies are involved at different stages of Community activity. They exert varying degrees of influence in the development and implementation of Community legislation depending on: the subject matter; the related issues; the prevailing political context; and the legal foundation for the Community involvement in the relevant area.

Relationships with the Member States

The Member States, through the Council, wield the ultimate power in the Community. It is essential that strong contacts with Member States be cultivated and exercised.

These contacts will likely consist of a core of generally "like-minded" States. However, there will be variation depending on: the specific issues; the prevailing political climate; and the expediency, at a given time, for a Member State to take a particular stance.

Actual contact with the Member States has a dual nature. In Brussels, the vital connection is with officials of the Member State Permanent Representation to the EU. These officials have a considerable mandate to represent the Member States' interests to the Community. However, they are ultimately accountable to, and controlled by, their national administrations. As a result, it is essential for Canada to maintain continuous contact with the Member State governments through the Canadian missions in each of the capitals. These contacts are also a means of identifying the key participants, and following the issues being addressed, in the Council Committees and expert working groups. This is particularly useful as these Committees provide the formal context for communication between the Member States and the Commission, which attends all Coreper and Council Committee meetings.