STATISTICAL REPORT - INTERPRETATION/EXPLANATION

During the period under review, 47 privacy requests were received by the Department. Eight requests were carried over from the previous reporting year. Of these 55, 48 were completed during the reporting year, and processed as follows:

All disclosed	13
Disclosed in part	10
Nothing disclosed (exempt)	9
Unable to process	11
Abandoned	1
Transferred	4
TOTAL	48

It was not possible to process six of the requests under 60 days. A number of these requests involved the retrieval of records from Canadian missions abroad.

As Senior Advisor on Privacy for the Department, the Co-ordinator dealt with a number of important and sensitive policy issues, including the handling and protection of personal information on employee files. A series of briefings on Access to Information and Privacy initiated in 1987 was continued. The briefing program was specifically directed towards new Heads of Mission, new directors and individuals from the assignment divisions in the Personnel Branch. As a result of these regular briefings, awareness of the requirements of the Privacy Act has increased to the point where the Office is consulted on a daily basis in relation to the release of information concerning invididuals. Informal requests for personal information from the Department's information banks were also handled in the Co-ordinator's Office.

Expenses generally relate to personnel costs. With more knowledge throughout the Department at home and at missions abroad, Privacy questions were frequently raised which at times had major policy implications for the Department. The declared costs figure of $142,000 given in Annex C can only be an estimate of departmental resources devoted to Privacy questions.

FORMAL/INFORMAL INTERFACE

There is no change since last year's report. Employees of the Department continue to be able to access personnel files on an informal basis. The volume of such informal requests is generally equal to, if not greater than, the number of formal requests received.