2. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

2.1 JURISDICTION

The mandate, indeed the requirement to develop and to implement an evaluation program within the Department of External Affairs, is clear. It starts with Treasury Board, is reinforced by the Comptroller General, ends with the Under Secretary and the Evaluation and Audit Committee, and is discharged by the Office of Evaluation and Audit.

The question of jurisdiction for evaluation activity, however, is somewhat clouded by the Department's unique role in providing administrative support for all foreign service departments in posts abroad, and the existence of the Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations (ICER). ICER was established in 1970 to advise the government on the formulation of foreign policy, to make recommendations with respect to personnel policies and appointments, and, most significantly, to "harmonize" the country plans of the various foreign service departments - partly by controlling resource allocations at all posts abroad. It is chaired by the Under Secretary and includes the Deputy Heads of foreign service departments (CEIC, CIDA, ITC, and DND), plus the Secretaries of Cabinet and Treasury Board.

Recently, an expanded mandate has been promulgated for the ICER Inspection Services (ICERIS). This assigns ICERIS the responsibility and authority to carry out, on behalf of ICER, "assessments of the effectiveness and efficiency with which Canada's posts abroad meet prescribed objectives". It also charges ICERIS to "complement the assessments of programs of departments and agencies operating abroad by running a single, centrally managed system of foreign operations".

Given this revised ICERIS mandate, and the fact that a substantial proportion of the Department's resources are deployed overseas (both to deliver its own programs and to support those of other departments), what then should be the jurisdictional mandate for the evaluation function within External Affairs? Should it restrict itself to headquarters activities only, leaving the rest to ICERIS? To this question we would respond with an emphatic no; such a proposition is incompatible with the concept of program evaluation. Virtually all programs are to varying degrees delivered or supported by posts abroad. It makes little sense, for instance, to consider evaluating such programs as Consular Services, Communications, or Public Affairs Abroad without