

business community, communication may pose some problems when technical details are discussed. As a means of supporting this role, technical support, in the form of regular training sessions in the latest developments and innovations as they relate to the particular product or service is of paramount importance to the representative's training and, ultimately, the product's credibility in the market.

Canadian exporters looking for suitable representation may wish to write to the Commercial Division of the Canadian embassy in Bangkok, enclosing six sets of company brochures, to receive the names and addresses of prospective representatives. The Canadian company should then contact these Thai firms directly, and, as soon as serious correspondence takes place, a personal visit should be planned.

Canadian companies seeking reports on the credit rating and stability of local firms being considered as agents should contact the Commercial Division of the Canadian embassy. Whenever possible, a preliminary investigation will be undertaken by the Commercial Division. However, it is necessary to engage an outside firm to do a complete credit investigation and the costs involved are billed back to the Canadian company.

In selecting agents, care should be taken to ensure that conflicting agents are not appointed or that a firm is not over-committed and thus unable to give the necessary support. Any such appointments may be for a trial period of a year, to be confirmed at the end of the allotted time if performance is satisfactory. Letters of understanding should then be exchanged. It is important to support an agent by providing technical literature and visiting Thailand regularly or by bringing the agent to Canada to learn more about the product.

In summary, effective local representation is an important factor in business development in Thailand. Acquiring recognition in this market requires considerable effort, demonstration of a long-term commitment, the establishment of one's *bona fides* by a regular program of visits over an extended period of time, and lots of patience.

Thai Import Regulations

Most goods may enter Thailand without an import licence. Rather, a simple entry declaration form presented to customs authorities is needed. For a